

A photograph of a cow in a field under a cloudy sky. The cow is brown and white, standing in a lush green field with a large bush in the foreground. The sky is blue with white clouds. The text is overlaid on the top and bottom of the image.

Christ Church Hilderstone
PARISH MAGAZINE

A Celebration of Village Life
SUMMER EDITION 2025

Thanks to Charlie Hughes for
the front and back cover.

WHAT'S ON:

JUNE:

Tuesday 10 th	W.I. Meeting Talk: North Staffs Folk Tales	12.30pm – 3pm	Village Hall
Saturday 21 st	Churchyard Tidy-up	10am – 12pm	Christ Church
Saturday 21 st	Jazz in the Village <i>(See advert in magazine)</i>	8pm – 10pm	Village Hall
Wed' day 25 th	Parish Council Meeting	7.30pm – 9pm	Village Hall
Saturday 28 th	Community Hub Café Pop-Up Pub & food vendor	10am – 1pm 6pm – 10pm	Village Hall Village Hall
Sunday 29 th	Benefice Service	11.15am – 12.15pm	Christ Church

JULY:

Tuesday 8 th	W.I. Meeting Talk: Goose Grease & Brown Paper	12.30pm – 3pm	Village Hall
Saturday 19 th	Churchyard Tidy-Up	10am – 12pm	Christ Church
Wed' day 23 rd	Parish Council Meeting	7.30pm – 9pm	Village Hall
Saturday 26 th	Community Hub Café THERE IS NO POP-UP PUB	10am – 1pm	Village Hall

AUGUST:

Saturday 2 nd	Big Village Party <i>(see ad in magazine and Facebook for more details)</i>	10am – 10pm	Village Hall
Sunday 3 rd	Community Celebration Service	11.15am – 12.15pm	Christ Church
Tuesday 12 th	W.I. Summer Outing		
Saturday 16 th	Churchyard Tidy-Up	10am – 12pm	Christ Church
Sunday 31 st	Benefice Service	9.30am – 10.30am	St Nicholas Fulford

Weekly Events:

Mondays	Taekwondo	6.30 – 8.30pm	Village Hall
Wednesdays	Circuit & Stretch	6pm – 7pm	Village Hall
Thursdays	Freestyle Fitness Yoga	10am – 11am	Village Hall
	Taekwondo	7pm – 9pm	Village Hall

Big Village Party

Saturday 2nd August, Hilderstone Village Hall

We are in the process of working out all the fun activities we will be putting on for this great event. There will be:

- **Children's activities & café in the morning**
- **Tea Dance with professional dance instructors in the afternoon**
- **Early evening event for the children**
- **Pub event for adults in the evening**

Please see our Facebook page and email notifications for more details as they are confirmed.

Come and join in the fun; support your village and meet new friends.

VILLAGE HALL 100 CLUB LOTTERY DRAW WINNERS:

February:

Ball:	64	£100
	6	£ 50
	27	£ 25
	51	£ 10
	45	£ 10

March:

Ball:	14	£100
	23	£ 50
	7	£ 25
	60	£ 10
	55	£ 10

April:

Ball:	86	£100
	23	£ 50
	47	£ 25
	43	£ 10
	36	£ 10

Get your winnings quicker by giving us account details for where you would like them transferred. Email: hilderstonevillagehall@gmail.com. The MAY draw will take place at the Village Hall Committee Meeting on 3rd June 2025.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



Like Marian Baldwin in her charming recollections of summer days gone by, I have very fond memories of playing on beaches, examining rock pools, paddling in the sea, and eating plenty of ice cream. Of

course, I also remember trying to keep warm on a blustery Scottish beach, covered in towels and eating sandwiches laced with sand, but I think I prefer my rose-tinted memories!

Nostalgia seems to weave its way through this magazine like the canal boats in both Marian and Helen's articles: In Jim Davies' presentation at our VE80 Commemorative Service, as we remembered the horrors endured by so many in the Second World War; and again we were reminded of the heartbreak of seeing sons go off to war in Harry Titley's moving account of his grandmother, Lucy Lowe, in Part 2 of *The White Rose*. This moving account quite rightly closes this edition of the magazine; how could we follow Harry's tender words?

Whilst we have much to be grateful for in our busy village of Hilderstone (as shown in the pages of this magazine), this edition also marks the passing of two very dear friends of the village; Sue Stubbs and Bill Holmes. Both Sue and Bill were very well-known and active members of our community, giving so much of their time over many years, to various groups, but most notably Christ Church (where Sue had been Churchwarden and Bill a frequent member of the maintenance team), the Village Hall, the WI (Sue that is, not Bill!) and so much more. It goes without saying that they will be sorely missed by many of us and we are grateful to them for all they did to make our village what it is today. Let's hope we have others in the village who will step into their shoes and take up the work they did so well.

As Bill only passed away recently, we have not been able to provide the tribute we would wish to in this publication but rest-assured, we will make up for this in the next issue. In the meantime, our thoughts and prayers are with Anne Holmes and her family, and to Neil and Roger Stubbs, and their families at this time.

I am delighted to include in this edition a lovely piece from Helen Walker, Lay Reader and Waterways Chaplain entitled 'Get out of the Boat'. I had the pleasure of meeting Helen, a friend of Rev'd Lucinda Wray-Wear, during the Churchyard Tidy-Up session in April. It was here that she told me she was a Waterways Chaplain. I must confess, I had never heard of this post before. Naturally intrigued, I asked Helen about her work, and she kindly agreed to provide the article you find in the magazine today. I am sure that, like me, you will find it very interesting.

If, however, it is music, dance and entertainment you are after, well you will not be disappointed. We have a fabulous jazz night in June at the Village Hall which if, like me, you love jazz, is not to be missed. We also have a lovely Tea Dance as part of our Big Village Party celebrations, in the afternoon of Saturday 2nd August, again in the Village Hall, with all proceeds going towards our 'Access for All' project at Christ Church. All this, in addition to our monthly Community Café and Pop-up-Pub events.



And finally, you may notice that Martin Philips' fascinating articles on Hilderstone are missing from this edition. I am delighted to say the reason for this is that our friend had the wonderful excuse of getting married and jetting off on honeymoon! We offer our heart-felt congratulations to Martin and Lucy. Martin writes: "*The wedding was on 5th April. Lucy and I had*

worked together for 20 years before retiring and reconnected via Facebook after the deaths of our partners. Unfortunately, Lucy is not from Staffordshire but a Cheshire lass from the Wirral".



From Your Parish Council

The Parish Council is committed to serving the needs of all our parishioners.

News

Parish Council Vacancy - We still have one available seat on the Parish Council. Being a Councillor is all about giving back to your community by bringing your energy, passion and hard-working attitude. You can make a real difference to the local community and wider society in many ways as a Councillor. For example, you could be representing the views of local people to ensure the community gets the right services, supporting a resident with an issue, or helping to shape the community by driving new ideas.

Being a Councillor is a varied and highly fulfilling role. You don't need any experience or special qualifications, and you'll gain lots of new skills, experience, knowledge, and confidence.

If you want to find out more about becoming a Parish Councillor, or have a specific query, please get in touch with our Clerk (*See back page for details*).

Village Maintenance - We have noted that various areas are looking a little untidy and politely request residents maintain their frontages, including the kerbside, and keep our lovely village tidy. Should anyone require assistance with this, please contact us and we will be able to put you in touch with a landscaper that can help.

The areas that Hilderstone Parish Council are responsible for are as follows:

- Eastholme/Whitesytc island
- Severn Trent Corner
- Grass verge at the railings
- Roebuck Hill
- Small area in Dingle Lane
- Village Green
- Roebuck Flowerbeds
- Various flower boxes around the village.

Any public areas not on the above list are not the responsibility of the Parish Council, however if you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us, we may be able to contact the landowners.

Your Council

Cllr Jim Davies (Chairperson) Cllr Audrey Stringer (Vice Chairperson)

Cllr Jenny Crump Cllr Mike Shelley

Cllr Hazel Woodward Cllr Peter Higgins

Clerk – Nikola Evans – *see contact details at the back of this magazine.*
Please note, the clerk only works 5 hours/week, there may be a delay in responding to your queries.

We encourage all parishioners to attend our monthly Parish Council meetings. Your feedback and involvement are vital to the development of our community. Meetings are held on the 4th Wednesday of the month at the Village Hall from 7:30pm, all are welcome. If you are unable to attend, minutes from the meetings are always available on the parish website.

There is a 20-minute public participation sections at the beginning of the meeting for residents to report any issues or future projects to the Parish Council.

25 th June 2025	From 7:30pm
23 rd July 2025	From 7:30pm
August – No Meeting	
24 th September 2025	From 7:30pm
22 nd October 2025	From 7:30pm
26 th November 2025	From 7:30pm
December – No Meeting	

Afternoon Tea Dance at the Village Hall to Celebrate the Big Village Party



If you have ever fancied having a go at dancing, why not join us for a traditional Afternoon Tea Dance at our Village Hall and give it a go?

The event will be held between 2pm and 4:30pm on Saturday 2nd August 2025, the afternoon of the Big Village Party.

There will be approximately two hours of dancing to recorded music, including Ballroom, Latin, easy sequence, and a mix of social dances such as line dance and rock barn dance.

This is a ticketed event priced at £12.50 per person. The maximum table size that can be accommodated is eight and there will be a seating plan. The dress code will be smart casual.

Your ticket includes group dance instruction from Mrs Hannah Trever from the local dance studio Quick Quick Slow and we will be serving a classic cream tea at 3pm, with tea or coffee, scone with jam and cream, plus a small selection of cakes at 3pm.

In addition, a bar will be available throughout the event where you can purchase additional refreshments.

The event is being run by Christ Church Hilderstone PCC, we hope this will be a great chance to catch up with local friends, have a lot of fun and learn a new skill that may just turn into a new passion.

***Please contact Simon Shaw on 07772 600363
for more information and/or ticket purchase.***

theWI

INSPIRING WOMEN

Hilderstone W.I.:

Our March speaker was Eleanor Bane, who presented a slide show and talk about the history of Hilderstone, including the establishment of Christ Church and the village school. An enjoyable afternoon was had by all.

April saw one of our own members, Pat Gates, talk about her collection of Moorcroft Pottery and her love of being a member of the Collectors' Club (the week before the collapse).

May was our AGM with a lovely talk from our own member Jean about her years as a house sitter and her experiences -good, bad and funny!

The current committee was voted in for 2025/2026, with a small change of roles and Gill remaining as our President. We then enjoyed cheese and biscuits refreshments and time to chat.



As always, new members are welcome to visit on the 2nd Tuesday of each month from 12.30.

See the back of the magazine for contact details.



ABOVE: Pat Gates during her presentation on Moorcroft Pottery in April. ABOVE RIGHT: Pat Gates presenting Eleanor Bane with a rose as a mark of thanks for her talk.

Village Hall Pop-Up Pub

Are you new to the village? Do you wonder where to go to meet your fellow villagers? Come and try our monthly Pop-Up Pub night at the Village Hall!

On the last Saturday of the month (except August and December) your fully licenced Village Hall hosts a pub night from 6pm to 10:30pm with last orders at 10pm.

We usually have a food vendor and we proudly serve bottled ales, lagers, and ciders that are made in Staffordshire. Our current suppliers are:

- Limestone Brewery, Stone
- Freedom Brewery, Abbots Bromley
- Weal Ale Brewery, Chesterton
- Yoxall Cider Company, Yoxall

We'll be exploring the Uttoxeter Brewery in May during a brewery visit so we're hoping to sign them up too!

We buy all our wine products from Whitebridge Wines, Stone and all our other drinks from established local suppliers.

At the rear of the hall, we have an outdoor seated area with picnic tables so you can enjoy the balmy evening sunshine and a friendly atmosphere.



Everyone's welcome. Of course, we have to operate the Challenge 25 policy - so if you look under 25, you'll have to prove you're over 18.

Visit our Facebook page (see back of magazine for contact details).

Jazz in the Village

"Very cool music played in a magical atmosphere - this will appeal to jazz novices as well as hardcore enthusiasts." THE SCOTLAND MAGAZINE

from Scotland



as seen at the
fringe



Ian Millar
saxophone

Dominic Spencer
piano

"Beautiful soaring magic! I was blown away by your show, just breathtaking!"

"...expect warm, intelligent, reflective, human music..."



Accompanied
under 16s free

HILDERSTONE VILLAGE HALL

Sandon Road, Hilderstone, Staffordshire, ST15 8SF

Sat 21st June 8pm £15

ticket sales number- 07810 332559 and from

<https://buytickets.at/hilderstonevillagehall/1627376>



www.millarandspencer.co.uk

Community Café @ the Village Hall

Many of you are aware of, and hopefully will have visited, our Community Café at the Village Hall on the last Saturday of the month. It is one of only a few opportunities within our village to meet up with friends and neighbours outside of our own homes, which is what our Village Hall is all about.

But it is more than simply a chance to meet up: we take pride in the fact that all of our produce is sourced from local suppliers, from the delicious bacon and sausages to the milk and eggs, which make up our fabulous full English Breakfasts! What is more, our food offers excellent value for money.

We have recently added pancakes to our Breakfast Menu, thanks to Harry Norwood, our youngest (and most charming) waiter. Below is Harry's very own recipe, as served at the Café. Trust me, when drizzled with Maple Syrup, Golden Syrup or Nutella (Harry's favourite), they are truly delicious. They really are worth a trip to our Café in their own right.



Harry's Drop scone pancakes

Ingredients

- 1 medium egg
- 150ml of milk
- 130g self-raising flour
- 1tsp/14g butter

Method

- Preheat a frying pan and add a small amount of oil
- Beat the egg
- Add milk and mix
- Add flour and mix
- Melt the butter in microwave until it is runny then add and mix
- Pour some mix into a frying pan and cook until you can see it has thickened and has bubbles on the top, then flip over (it should be golden brown) and cook until golden brown on the other side. Repeat this with the rest of the mix.

Cook's Tips:

Chocolate Cupcakes Recipe

(makes 12 cupcakes)

Ingredients:

- 5 oz softened butter
- 5 oz superfine caster sugar
- 2 tablespoons cocoa powder
- 6 oz self-raising flour
- 3 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract



Method:

Pre-heat your oven to gas mark 4.

Line a 12 cup cake pan with cupcake papers.

Crack the eggs into a cup and beat lightly with a fork.

Place all the ingredients in a large bowl and mix until light and creamy.

Divide the mixture evenly between the cake cases and bake in the oven for around 15 – 20 minutes until the cupcakes have risen and are firm to touch.

Transfer the cupcakes to a wire rack, allow to cool before icing and decorating.

Enjoy!

Kid's Corner: Summer Puzzle

A	D	P	A	D	D	L	E	Z	S	T
B	U	T	T	E	R	F	L	I	E	S
U	U	O	F	V	H	U	D	B	A	C
C	R	M	M	A	E	R	C	E	C	I
K	C	U	B	E	A	C	H	G	I	N
E	Z	L	I	L	Y	F	U	S	E	C
T	F	L	O	W	E	R	S	P	U	I
A	S	G	W	U	Y	B	C	A	M	P
Y	C	A	L	E	F	W	E	D	I	U
E	S	U	N	X	R	L	H	E	W	A
P	I	D	O	D	B	G	O	V	S	T

Bumblebee

Butterflies

Wasp

Bucket

Flowers

Picnics

Beach

Spade

Owl

Sea

Sand

Icecream

Paddle

Sun

Camp

Swim

Page 2 Stage
Creatives

Life's Little VicToms

A comedy by Steven Powell

Following married couple Vicky and Tom as they navigate life together



Just superb! Genuine laugh out loud, brilliant!
Well Observed humour....honest, raw and frank.

DIRECTOR: KELLY-MARIE SINGLETON

Hilderstone Village
Hall
Sandon Rd,
Hilderstone, Stone
ST15 8XS

6th Sept

7PM

£12 Per Ticket

Get your Hands on the hottest tickets in town!

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Or use QR code to book now!



16+

Life on the 'Cut'

This is the time of year when the canal cruising season begins and I find myself loitering on the Stone tow path waving or chatting with canal folk, both 'live aboards' and Holiday Hirers. There are times when, at the Stone lock, boaters indicate that they are beginners and I am still able to recommend the best way to manage the task of filling the lock.

My Canal narrowboat was named *Taupe et Loir*, her name was intended to be 'Mole and Dormouse', but French friends translated it. The renaming led to many enquiries from, and conversations with, boaters and towpath walkers, and friendships made, during the boating years.

When my husband died, I became a solo cruiser and loved the life. Lingered along the canal, at the obligatory three miles an hour, drifting through the early morning mist, or finding an isolated spot on a stretch of canal with a picturesque view in the evening was the life that suited me. It was often a choice that encouraged me to stay for a few days writing and painting, during which time I would converse with regular dog walkers or 'walking to the Village regulars,' often resulting in a friendly coffee, wine or whisky gathering in the prow of a summer evening.

I met such interesting people during those cruises, 'live on' boaters, holiday makers, working boats and even an Australian couple spending time touring our canal system. They contacted me the following year to tell me that they were repeating that part of the system where we'd met the year before... It was a reunion waiting to happen!

Sadly, I waved farewell to *Taupe et Loir* 12 years ago: I continue to miss those days; remembering, particularly, the evenings of candlelight and fire light.

I recommend a Canal Narrow Boat holiday and wish that it will bring you the same joy that I experienced.

Marian Baldwin

This verse was influenced when cruising through the Stoke Lock at the end of a trip on the Caldon Canal.

Elation

There are times when I feel a shivering

Deep within me.

A feeling that my heart is soaring

Out of me.

Times, when looking at sunlight shafting

Through bridge arches,

Mist swirling, mingling with smoke

On early mornings on the cut...

Such happiness, such helpless wonder

Absorbs me in unexpected places.

This morning, in a dark lock, deep in the Stoke reaches,

I was filled with such joy and

I knew that Heaven was with me.



Reflections: Get Out of the Boat



Walking along the canal, you may have noticed plaques on some boats which tell tales of past journeys. One plaque, reading “Do not walk on the water,” caught my eye recently.

It reminds me of one of the most memorable walks in the Bible, taken by Peter when he stepped out of the boat to walk on water.

We read in Matthew’s Gospel how, whilst the disciples were in their boat, battling a storm, Jesus appeared on the lake to calm them. Bold yet hesitant, Peter leaves the safety of the boat and walks on water toward Jesus—but when doubt overcomes him, he begins to sink, and Jesus reaches out to save him. This act powerfully illustrates the essence of faith and trust.

A book called “If you want to walk on water, you’ve got to get out of the boat” profoundly influenced me, inspiring my call to ministry. The book challenges us to see Peter’s walk as an invitation to step out in faith and experience the power and presence of God. For me Peter’s walk was one of the greatest pictures of trust, faith and discipleship.

We too, have the opportunity to get out of the boat and experience something of God’s amazing love and power in our lives.

Some time ago, we broke down on a canal renowned for its inhospitable mooring and we needed a tow! We were very fortunate when a working boat came along and towed us to safety. We offered to pay the gentleman for his time, but he said “I don’t want payment, all I ask is when you see someone in need, please help them as I have helped you.” What he said made such an impression on us both and inspired me to get out of the boat and become a Waterways Chaplain.

Waterways Chaplains are volunteers from local churches who regularly visit the waterways, offering pastoral, practical and spiritual support to anyone in need. Our key values are based on Micah 6.8 – “Act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God.” We are God’s hands and feet along the canals. We support people of all faiths, in the good times and in challenging times.

Walking along the picturesque towpaths you can imagine the idyllic lifestyle, but it is not always so, just as the disciples were battling the storm, so are many boaters. Not having a postcode is a challenge. Next time you fill in a form online, see if the postcode is a required field – many boaters do not have a postcode so find accessing healthcare, insurance and benefits difficult.

Jesus calls us all to get out of the boat. It doesn’t have to be as dramatic as walking on water or becoming a Waterways Chaplain, but I would encourage you to listen to God’s call, believe and trust that he will be with you every step of the way and get out of the boat, maybe just a little each day.

Helen Walker, Lay Reader and Waterways’ Chaplain

First Responders’ Raffle Success

The Stone First Responders Raffle draw was held on 26th April at the Village Hall and was a huge success, raising £2,520 which will go towards the purchase of a new car, required to meet the legal requirements.

Twenty-three villagers completed their CPR and defibrillator training in the afternoon, facilitated by the First Responders. The last training session we held in our village was back in 2018.

Thanks to the generosity of the villagers and like-minded people, who donated and gave their time. My thanks to Jim Davies for his excellent service at the raffle.

Lilley Moore



Harvest Supper

The harvest supper is on
Monday 22nd September 2025

7pm for 7.30pm
at Hilderstone Village Hall
with the auction of produce afterwards

Cost of tickets:
Adults £10.00 Children £5.00

Tickets available from
Phil Davies on 01785 747836



Church Matters: Reflections from the Vicar

We have, by no means, stood still in these last 12 months! Alongside our regular Sunday services, we continue to celebrate the farming year with our Plough Sunday, Rogation Sunday, and Harvest Festival services together with our traditional Advent, Christmas, Holy Week and Easter services.

We have shared the joy of several Christenings and paid our final respects to members of the parish community, one of whom was a former churchwarden, Sue Stubbs. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.



In June, the village once again rose to the occasion of our bi-annual "Scarecrow Festival" culminating in a special "Scarecrow Service" at Christ Church. It was wonderful to see both the church and the Village adorned with scarecrows of all shapes and sizes – and in all kinds of places! It was a credit to everyone involved.

For the first time, Christ Church held a "Longest Night" service for the joint Benefice of Fulford-in-Stone with Hilderstone. This was a quiet and reflective service for those who find Christmas, and the build-up to it, challenging - for whatever the reason.

Christ Church opened its doors for its annual Christmas Tree Festival in early December, culminating in a Christmas Carol Service in the evening. The church was graced with a wonderful array of Christmas Trees, all beautifully decorated by members of the community. Our thanks to everyone who was involved and enabled it to be the success it was.

As always, I would like to thank our church community who work tirelessly to ensure Christ Church remains very much part of our community; a calm and welcoming presence within the everydayness of our lives, helping to bring us all into an ever-closer relationship with God.

Rev'd Lucinda Wray-Wear, Associate Vicar

Church Matters: Services & Readings

Date		Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel
1 st June	Easter 7	Acts 16: 16-34	Revelation 22: 12-14, 16-17, 20 to end	John 17: 20 to end
8 th June	Pentecost	Acts 2: 1-21	Romans 8: 14-17	John 14: 8-17 {25-27}
15 th June	Trinity BCP	Proverbs 8: 1-4, 22-31	Romans 5: 1-5	John 16: 12-15
22 nd June	Trinity 1	Isaiah 65: 1-9	Galatians 3: 23 to end	Luke 8: 26-39
29 th June	Trinity 2	UNITED BENEFICE SERVICE: Hilderstone, 11.15am		
6 th July	Trinity 3	Isaiah 66: 10-14	Galatians 6: (1-6) 7-16	Luke 10: 1-11, 16-20
13 th July	Trinity 4	Deuteronomy 30: 9-14	Colossians 1: 1-14	Luke 10: 25-37
20 th July	Trinity 5 BCP	Genesis 18: 1- 10a	Colossians 1: 15-28	Luke 10: 30 to end
27 th July	Trinity 6	Genesis 18: 20-32	Colossians 2: 6-15, [16-19]	Luke 11: 1-13
3 rd Aug	Trinity 7	Ecclesiastes 1: 2, 12-14	Colossians 3: 1-11	Luke 12: 13-21
10 th Aug	Trinity 8	Genesis 15: 1-6	Hebrews 11: 1-3, 8-16	Luke 12: 32-40
17 th Aug	Trinity 9 BCP	Jeremiah 23: 23-29	Hebrews 11: 29-12:2	Luke 12: 49-56
24 th Aug	Trinity 10	Isaiah 58: 9b to end	1 Corinthians 4: 9-15	Luke 13: 10-17

31 st Aug	Trinity 11	UNITED BENEFICE SERVICE: Fulford, 9.30am		
7 th Sept	Trinity 12	Deuteronomy 30: 15 to end	Philemon: 1-21	Luke 14: 25-33
14 th Sept	Trinity 13	Exodus 32: 7-14	1 Timothy 1: 12-17	Luke 15: 1-10
21 st Sept	Trinity 14 BCP	Amos 8: 4-7	1 Timothy 2: 1-7	Luke 16: 1-13
28 th Sept	Trinity 15	Amos 6: 1a, 4-7	1 Timothy 6: 6-19	Luke 16: 19 to end

From the Registers:

Baptism: 15th March

We welcome Taylor Christian Topping into God's loving care.

Funeral: 10th April

Susan Stubbs. We extend our sympathies to the family and friends of Susan.

Internment of Ashes: 18th May

Barbara May Barker. Our sympathies are extended to Barbara's family and friends.

Bill Holmes' funeral will be held at 2pm on Thursday 12th June at Christ Church Hilderstone. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family at this time.

Services & Events:

March brought the joyful **Confirmation** of seven members of our Benefice on Sunday 23rd March. The service, led by Rt Revd Matthew Parker, Bishop



of Stafford, was held at St Nicholas' Church, Fulford, where six of the confirmands attend services. Our congratulations to them all and, most especially, well done Charlie Hughes from Hilderstone.

ABOVE: Rev'd Lucinda Wray-Wear, Charlie Hughes, Daniel Gaold, Lynsey Gaold, Rt Rev'd Matthew Parker, Alex Shorey, Sophia Shorey, Anna Shorey and their mum, Sarah Shorey.

The following week saw us celebrate **Mothering Sunday** at which mothers and grandmothers were presented with a small posey of flowers by members of the congregation. This is always a lovely service and one which clearly means a great deal to the families within our community.

Lent & Easter. Palm Sunday (23rd March) marked the celebration of Palm Sunday where we would normally walk around the churchyard, carrying our Palm Crosses. This year we were delighted to welcome our friends from Hilderstone Hall and so opted for a procession around the church interior, followed by our service. Some fine singing was heard from the ladies of Hilderstone Hall and we were delighted to see so many attend our service. We look forward to welcoming them again in the near future.



After a reflective **Maundy Thursday** service on 17th April and the solemnity of the **Good Friday** service, our attention turns to the celebration of **Easter** in the church calendar as, for the next 50 days, the Church celebrates Jesus' resurrection. The church was awash with beautiful blooms thanks to our fabulous team of decorators, and the Easter eggs were ready to be handed out to the congregation.

For many, the introduction of **Sherry Sunday**, following the morning service, has been a most welcome addition to our church activities. Taking place on the last Sunday of each month, it offers a perfect time to mingle with friends, over a glass of sherry, an array of home-made cakes and biscuits and, for the drivers, a coffee or tea. It has proven very popular and is full of plenty of lively conversation and much laughter. I think it is safe to say it has fast established itself as a permanent fixture on our church calendar at Christ Church! If you would like to come along, you would always be assured of a very warm welcome - and delicious cakes and biscuits!

VE80 – A REFLECTION. *Like churches up and down the country, Christ Church held a commemorative VE80 Service on Sunday 11th May, at which Jim Davies, Chairman of Hilderstone Parish Council, presented his Reflections. We thought it would be appropriate to mark this very special event by including Jim's presentation below.*



Early in May there were many celebrations and commemorations around the country including large-scale national events. Locally our neighbours in Stone had been flying the special VE80 flag and at 9.30pm on the anniversary of VE-Day itself the Town Mayor lit the VE80 beacon - timed to coincide with the lighting of beacons across the whole country – a symbol of the light of peace and of hope, and of celebration and unity.

On 7th May 1945, in his broadcast to the nation, Churchill said, "Hostilities will end officially at one minute after midnight tonight, May 8th. We may allow ourselves a brief period of rejoicing; but let us not forget for a moment the toil and efforts that lie ahead. There is another foe - the Japanese."

Indeed, in Stone there will be another gathering in August to celebrate and commemorate the 80th anniversary of the conclusion of World War 2 that came with victory over Japan – VJ-Day.



ABOVE: Audrey Stringer serving celebration cake after the service.

During the war, our community may not have had to endure direct attacks such as the bombing of Coventry, Birmingham, Liverpool and, especially, London. But, as much here in Hilderstone as anywhere else, people, of all ages, were caught up in the struggle and the inevitable privations. The impact of the war locally included the massive American presence at Yarnfield, the RAF Wellington bombers at Hixon, the

huge RAF maintenance depot to the east of Stafford, and the Swynnerton ordnance factory. Many were serving on the front line, many at home were worrying constantly about the fate of their loved ones – and we remember those who didn't come home such as Flight Sergeant Frank Spencer of our village. Some were engaged in war work, in fund raising, in keeping the wheels of the community turning in the most difficult of times; and here in particular were involved in the crucial agricultural effort. As Churchill said on VE Day, "this is your victory". VE-Day was a moment when those great tensions, which had built-up over some 5½ years, could be released in celebration.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting. This is the Church of England's equivalence to the annual general meeting, where we reflect on all Christ Church has achieved in the past year, from services & events to maintenance projects and finance. This public meeting was held after the morning service and our monthly Sherry Sunday get-together on 25th May 2025 and was open to anyone wishing to attend.

If you would like to see a copy of our annual Church Report, contact Eleanor Bane on: 07767 763938 or email: Eleanor.bane@safersystems.co.uk.



Why not come along and join our **Churchyard Tidy-up Group** at 10am – midday on 3rd Saturday of the month?

Our cheerful group of wonderful volunteers tackle weeds, overgrown shrubs, general maintenance etc to ensure the churchyard continues to look its best for everyone. Our friendly team has been meeting for several years, and their hard work has certainly paid off.



We welcome new members to our team – just bring your own tools and join in the fun. Our monthly tidy-up starts at 10am, and finishes at 12 noon with, of course, time for coffee/tea at 11am and a good old natter with friends. As you can see from the photographs, all ages can join in the fun!

Dates for the churchyard tidy-up 2025:

21st June

19th July

16th August

20th September

18th October

Christine Clark





Our Reflective Walk – This is a new feature of the churchyard at Christ Church and consists of a winding circular path connecting the main entrance to the church, to the Garden of Remembrance, interweaving between the old graves, wildflowers and fungi which call our churchyard home.

Over time, we hope to place a bench close to the original entrance to the churchyard (where the gap in the hedge is), surrounded by Bluebells, Wood Anemone and other native flowers. Looking towards the church, with the Garden of Remembrance to your right, and views across the Medieval strip farming beyond, it will offer the perfect spot to sit and be still for a while, to listen to the birds, admire the flowers and enjoy

all the beauty of country life. This is a work in progress, so do please come down and see it evolve with the seasons. Our churchyard is open to all and offers a place to just sit and be quiet if you wish, away from the distractions of everyday life.

Perhaps you are visiting a loved one in the churchyard? Our benches offer a moment of silent reflection and a time to enjoy fond memories shared.

Benefits of reflective walks in churchyards:

- **Spiritual growth:** Providing opportunities for deeper reflection on faith, spirituality, and personal beliefs.
- **Community building:** Fostering connections among individuals and creating shared experiences within the church community.

- **Historical understanding:** Providing a deeper understanding of the churchyard's history and the lives of those buried there.
- **Nature connection:** Offering a way to connect with nature and appreciate the beauty of the natural world.
- **Emotional processing:** Providing a safe space for individuals to process emotions and reflect on personal experiences.



The 'new' area of our churchyard will be maintained as before, with regular mowings to ensure it remains neat and tidy.



Help us to grow our tranquil wildflower area for everyone in our village to enjoy.

If you have any native Bluebells, Primroses or Snowdrops to spare, we would love to plant them in our woodland area. Please do NOT remove wildflowers from woodlands, grass verges etc – only those you may have in your own garden.

Contact Eleanor Bane if you wish to donate to our wildflower area.

Thank you

St. Nicholas' Church
1825-2025



23rd, 24th & 25th August 2025

St. Nicholas' Church, Fulford

will be celebrating 200 years

since the current church was re-built and extended in 1825.

To mark this occasion, the church will host a Flower Festival, plus an exhibition of photographs reflecting the history of the church and village. Refreshments will be available over the 3 days.

This is a community event and everyone is welcome to help.

Flower arrangers, if you are able to create a floral display, or would like to contribute or sponsor a floral display, *please contact Rowena Tel: 01782 397838 or Josephine Tel: 01782 393141.*

Anyone who has photographs of the area and events over the centuries, particularly involving St. Nicholas' Church, please contact *Julie Tel: 01782 394070 or email: julieholand100@gmail.com.*

Do please join us for this joyful celebration of 200 years at St Nicholas. A warm welcome guaranteed to all.



For more information:

Benefice of Fulford-in-Stone with Hilderstone.



A Life Well-Lived: Sue Stubbs



The passing of people we hold dear is always difficult but when the individual is someone who has been at the very centre of village life for so long it seems to leave a seemingly unfillable hole. Sue Stubbs was one such person. Below is a selection of tributes from family and friends, often very moving and beautiful in their memories. I am only sorry that we could not include every word – she certainly deserved the love and deep affection shown by so many in these tributes.

The quality of village life is characterized by the people who live, work and socialise in the village. One of those very villagers was Sue Stubbs whose funeral was held at Christchurch, Hilderstone on Thursday 10th April.

Often those who do not live in a village imagine that village life offers a tranquil environment and goes at a slower pace. Sue's involvement was anything but, despite her coping with the after effects of catching Poliomyelitis at an early age. Her contribution to village activities is well documented by photos which bear her cheerful smile. Her skill at baking, learnt in her teenage years at catering college were put to excellent use.

Sue was a woman of faith and belief in God, which moved her to become a member of the Parochial Church Council and later a Churchwarden at Christ Church; a role she fulfilled for 30 years.

Sue, throughout her life, certainly exuded a sense of belonging, helping to create a supportive environment where individuals feel valued and connected. **Audrey Stringer, Churchwarden at Christ Church Hilderstone**

OVERLEAF: Sue (left) at the Village Party in 1996, alongside Hazel Timmis (now Woodward), Jean Jones and Audrey Bostock.

Sue joined the WI in the 1970s at a time when there were some 30-40 local women members and proved to be a very active member for many years. Right from the start, Sue was involved in entering the monthly competitions and her talents were boundless, from cake-making, jams & chutneys, to tarts, quiche and, especially, good cheese straws! Whilst she enjoyed cooking, she also entered photos, flower arrangements and craft items on other occasions.



It was not long before she joined the committee, promoting the good work they were involved in locally, including our popular (and profitable) Jumble Sales. Sue became President of the Hilderstone WI from 1986 – 1989 and then Vice-President for several years thereafter.

Life was never easy for her but she never lost her sense of humour and fun. She would arrive in her van and ask me for help in getting her wheelchair out of the back. After several attempts, she would sigh, laugh at me and give me simple step by step instructions to do it correctly.

Whilst Sue was unable to come to meetings in the past few years, she was often mentioned by those members who had enjoyed her companionship in the past. She will indeed be sadly missed. *Pat Gates, Hilderstone W.I.*

Tribute to my sister Susan. My darling Susan was born in 1946, 12 years after me, the eldest child. I had a younger brother, Stanley (Stan Robinson – yes that one) and the youngest of the family Ivor, born in 1950.

My Father was a haulage contractor and Mother a Farmer's daughter. Mother bred Large White pigs and I recall Susan helping my mother looking after the piglets and getting covered in pig manure many times. She had recently returned home after a year in an Isolation Hospital, recovering from Polio and was wearing callipers on her legs to help her walk. She would often go out with our father in his lorry, always dressed in overalls or dungarees,

like us boys. A proper little tomboy! She was always a determined little character even in those days. She had an instinctive love of animals, nature and the environment before they became popular. She was a strong believer in God and all His creatures, and this was reflected in her Funeral Service, in her choice of the hymns, including "All Things Bright and Beautiful."

Susan had a long but challenging life, suffering all her later years with the after effects of Polio but this did not stop her from becoming involved in village and church affairs in her beloved Hilderstone. Susan has left her legacy for us all to enjoy and follow. I am proud of her. **Brother Gerald (Gerry)**

Life passes by so fast. It doesn't seem five minutes since I was a child, almost feral and carefree, playing with my brother on the farm, being guided by mum to be a good, kind and considerate person and work hard: her values and values which have made her family good people.

Mum loved the simple things in life, especially this time of year: the warm sunshine, the long days, turning the farm animals back out into the fields, the spring flowers and the baby lambs playing in the sun.

The highlight and pride of mum's life was when her two sons were born – Roger in 1970 and myself in 1972. Mum would always have some handicraft on the go – anything from needlework, baking and cake-decorating, to brewing ginger beer and wine-making, which I remember regularly ended up with exploding bottles – very funny as a child.

Although dyslexic, she produced the Parish Magazine for many years and joined the Stone U3A Photographic Group. However, in the past 10 years, the Post Polio syndrome started to affect Mum's mobility again. She eventually lost her previous physical strength and was not able to get out safely and became housebound. Latterly Mum was able to listen to her audio books and to watch her favourite Harry Potter and Downton Abbey videos, to her heart's content." *An extract from Neil Stubbs' address at Sue's funeral.*

Bill Holmes: It was a very sad day hearing of the passing of Bill. I have known Bill for more than 30 years, firstly when I was Chairman of the Parish Council, and then through my involvement with Christ Church and the PCC.

Bill was a true Country Man and was always ready to work for his beloved village and church. He took immense pride in the village, ensuring the kerbsides throughout the village were kept weed free, the bus shelters and road signs were clean and kept in good order, together with the footpaths along the Hilderstone Walkways.

I was impressed with Bill, with his forthright view of life and his energy in getting things done. If anything needed doing all you needed to do was ask him. Hilderstone will truly miss Bill.

Roy Clark



Bill's funeral will be held at Christ Church at 2pm, Thursday 12th June.

ABOVE: Ever the keen gardener, Bill was presented with this water feature by Hilderstone Parish Council in recognition of all his sterling work around the village over the years, including the maintenance of the flower planters.

LEFT: As many of us will remember Bill – tools in hand, helping to maintain Christ Church and its churchyard, and ALWAYS with a smile on his face!

August Holidays

I have always considered myself privileged to have lived in the North Devon hamlet of Georgeham when I was young, because the amazing sands and dunes of Putsborough into Woolacombe beach were a mere two miles from our home.

Every day of our August School Holiday was a shore, sand, dunes and rock pool day.

By seven o'clock, I would leave the house with my haversack of food for Sandy, our Labrador, and myself, for the day.

The rock pools at the base of Baggy Point cliffs were our starting place. We would splash and paddle and search in the pools before settling with breakfast. This was early 1950s - there were no ice cream kiosks lining the beach in those days and very few people. Only families with a motor car could get to Putsborough.

I enjoyed my August holidays. My mother ran a Guest House and often a visiting family would announce that the next day they planned to drive to Lynmouth and on to Exmoor, in order to visit Dunster and the Castle ... "Would Marian like to join us?" Of course I would!

During the War we lived in Barnstaple and when I was invited to join some visitors for a trip to Appledore, which happened to be only a short bus trip from Barnstaple, I was able to tell them about the Americans training with their landing crafts for the D Day landings on the beaches of Normandy; those young soldiers treated children to trips across to Instow beach opposite Appledore, where we would all jump off and run up the beach then back to the waiting craft and back again to Appledore ...such fun!

I often wonder if those young men now tell the tales to their great grandchildren, or are they resting in Normandy?

Back to August Holidays! We always hope for sunny weather, but I recalled earlier this year a storm in North Devon on a day when I was rock climbing on the rocks near Woolacombe one year.

Alone on Morte Point

Alone on Morte Point I watched the storm breaking.
A sudden sharp wind, a darkening sky,
A tide of strong currents forcing waves
To swirl around jagged rocks
Spitting spitefully through thin crevices
Relentless in their purpose.

The Summer mornings' playful surf
Had changed identity
Into a forceful enemy,
Thrashing its fury
Into violent waves vomiting anger onto craggy rocks.

I knew the dangers and moved carefully
To a rocky overhang, turning towards the safety of the dunes.
It was time to escape Morte Point
Where Wreckers, centuries ago,
Watched sailors drown or die upon the rocks.
I felt the stinging spray striking the cliff... And scrambled on to safety.

Marian Baldwin

THE WHITE ROSE: Part 2

I look up and peer through the small cottage window. There is my Grandma sitting on an old armchair by the fireside and nursing her latest grandchild, the last she will hold. It is me, William Harry, named after her second born. Her once dark hair, now white with age and child-bearing, mostly covered by an old bonnet. She's wearing a white, long-collared shirt and white spotted scarf knotted at the throat, a grey colourless cardigan with a handkerchief tucked under the left cuff. Her long, grey skirt, lightened through over use and over washing, lifts slightly as she rocks me and barely reveals the wrinkled density of her black stockings and the hem of her buckram petticoat. In her left hand is the large back door key on an enormous ring used to jingle when the baby disturbs. Her arms and bosom create a natural cradle wrought from a lifetime of motherhood. She is content but reflective.

Lucy Lowe was born in 1872 at Black Brook, Mere near Market Drayton, where she lived with her parents Abraham and Susannah, and her siblings William, Henry, Samuel, Matilda, Ruth and Hannah.

She was four years older than her tall, handsome, auburn-haired husband.



Her first born was a son, Reginald. As she sits there so lonesome, she muses over her life and, in particular, her motherhood; a life that revolved around her family; the fears for Sam in the pit; for herself in childbirth; for her children through illness and accident and later for her sons when they went to war; the three girls when they went into service; the relief and pleasure when they came home.

Reg, such a bonny, chuckling, cherubic, round-faced boy. I see him sitting on the railway bridge chatting to the engine driver. She smiles as she recalls his urgency when he asked his dad if he could join the railway at Crewe when he left

school. But the smile quickly evaporates as she sees him, four years later, waving goodbye as he disappears on the curve of the railway line making his way to Madeley and ultimately to the trenches in Northern France.

Almost unconsciously she wipes a tear from her cheek with the back of her hand and, once again, rocks the baby on her lap. Harry, her second son, born just thirteen months after Reg. A joy of a boy. Everything a mother desires in a son. Strong and handsome; independent and free spirited; mischievous and fun-loving; yet responsible and reliable; caring and loving. She recalls his truancy, his excuses and his hardly believable stories; his desperation to leave school and to be grown up; the argument with the Head Groomsman at the Big House when he first went to work; the wild-eyed steed that lashed out whenever Harry came within kicking distance and the marks of the pitch fork on its rump that Harry gave it to remind it who was boss. Her amusement is substituted with horror as she recalls the telegram from the War Office informing her 'Private W H Tomkinson is being detained at Dover until confirmation of his age is forthcoming'. He is only sixteen years old! He was sent home only to sign up nine months later and follow Reg to France.

The fire settles in the grate. The kettle murmurs. The baby gurgles. Lucy jingles the key. Albert, her third child and the most serious of her sons. His sandy hair suggests a short temper; she was needful of that. Thoughtful, intelligent, sometimes secretive, he grows up in the shadow of his elder brothers. He follows Reg and Harry into the army and after joins the railway, first at Stoke, then at Crewe.

Wilf, the last of the boys, was born in 1900. The four brothers born in less than five years. Wilf, so handsome, tall and athletic, the apple of every young girl's eye; the trail of broken hearts, not least his mother's, as she prays the war be over before he is old enough to join the army. Even her own Sam, queuing up at the recruiting office to enlist and consumed with disappointment when he's told 'sorry mate, you're too old'.



Lucy is visibly sobbing as she reflects on the most tragic phase of her life; a period of heart-rending and unbearable sadness. She conceived six times; all but the last either miscarriages or stillborn. She agonises and wrings her hands as she relives the pain and torn emotions. She saw the one surviving daughter of the six, Ileen May, a toddler, scalded to death when she pulled the large kettle of boiling water on top of her. Within four years of this terrible accident she gave birth to three others, all girls, Beatrice (centre), Ruth (left) and her last, Dorothy (right), my mother. She is so grateful for the survival of her seven children, all of them grown up, married and some with families of their own. She is proud of her twelve grandchildren; the twelfth on her knee and is unaware that she will not live to see another four.



I see a thousand kaleidoscopic, half-forgotten images through my magic lantern. Those happiest of days are once more presented before me to enjoy. I can hear the sounds of daily life and sense the odours of country living. A piece of lace curtain flapping through an open window gives credence to 'here rather than gone', to 'living rather than dead'. And yet, although hungry for more, desperate to remain in this long-forgotten place, the scenes fade away. The abandoned cottage, saddened by its loss, appears aching to be reunited with

its family. And now it's time I was reunited with my dear wife to resume our life; life present not past; to enjoy now, at this time.

The White Rose is long gone and only the decomposing, skeletal branches remain on the walls as evidence of what used to be.



Will, Harry, Granddad, Reg and Albert. Location, Madeley Heath Cenotaph. This was to say 'thank you' for their safe return from War and to share their remembrance with friends and schoolmates who didn't make it.



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You can help by volunteering for one, or all, of these groups – even if it is simply offering an hour here or there, it all mounts up.

You can also come along and support our various events: without villagers turning up, there is no event, no funds raised for worthwhile causes etc so your support is crucial. See our What's On page for details of forthcoming events or see our Contacts Page (inside back cover) and ask how you can help support these various groups.

Ways you can support your village:

- Help to keep our village looking its very best by keeping paths, driveways etc clean, tidy and attractive.
- Become a local Parish Councillor (see magazine for details).
- Help us maintain the church fabric & churchyard by joining our friendly team of helpers, whatever your skill set.
- Litter picking. Help reduce unsightly litter in our lanes.
- Help keep our churchyard tidy for visitors and the wildlife.
- Join our group of volunteers at the Village Hall – as bar staff, helping keep the grounds tidy etc. Helpers always welcome.
- Send us your pictures, articles etc for our Parish Magazine.
- Donate towards the Parish Magazine.
- Recycle old ink cartridges at Christ Church. Contact Phil Davies.

Contact Details:

Christ Church, Hilderstone:

Vicar: Rev'd Lucinda Wray-Wear
Tel: 01782 397073

Churchwarden: Audrey Stringer
Tel: 01889 505638

Parish Council:

Parish Clerk: Nikola Evans
Tel: 07971 226170
Email: clerk@hilderstone-pc.gov.uk
Website: www.hilderstone.org.uk

Hilderstone WI: 12.30pm- 3pm 2nd Tuesday of the month, Village Hall.
President: Mrs Gill Slater
Tel: 07935 999424
Email: hilderstonewipresident@gmail.com

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