

Benefice of Fulford-in-Stone with Hilderstone



PARISH PROFILE



**DIOCESE OF
LICHFIELD**

January 2022



Our Profile Outline

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BACK PAGE (Clockwise right to left from Top): **CHRIST CHURCH** - Front view of Christ Church and its War Memorial; our churchyard neighbours, the sheep; a detail of the candelabra decorated for Remembrance; a robin resting on a grave stone; a view across the medieval strip farm. **ST NICHOLAS** - Plough Sunday celebration; entrance decorated with flowers; floral decorations on the pew ends; St Nicholas in Spring.

WELCOME to Fulford & Hilderstone



Vision & Mission:

WILL YOU JOIN US IN OUR PATH TOGETHER?

Are you a good team player, who is willing to work alongside our active congregations to promote faith in our communities through collaborative leadership? We offer an open, welcoming community, with a congregation comprising of those from varied church traditions and backgrounds. We listen to, encourage, and respect a diverse set of views in our community, and this had led to a ministry which is consultative as well as collaborative, placing great value on unity and inclusivity.

We will look to you for guidance and leadership to make prayer a priority for all; to challenge, where it is required, and to develop and flourish in our faith.

We require someone who is not afraid to support 'traditional' worship where it best serves the community, recognising and respecting that some in our congregations need the stability and continuity found in the traditional, Eucharistic church approach.

But working alongside this, we seek someone who will bring fresh and innovative ideas to a willing congregation to help us move forward in our faith. We recognise the need to always challenge and sometimes change our direction to answer the needs of all in our community, but most especially the young and young families who may not regard faith as being important in today's society. Will you stimulate and educate us in our drive for new approaches?

Can you work alongside us to appreciate and strengthen our vision to grow our church? Our Mission Action Plans show our commitment to grow our faith in the community; will you embrace that vision with enthusiasm, build upon what we have already achieved, help us to remain focused and encouraged to create a way forward to achieve what God is calling us to do in our congregations, our churches, and our wider communities within this Benefice?

Do you have the organisational abilities to lead, manage and grow our Benefice? We are blessed with a congregation and communities which offer much experience, many skills, who value the church as a central player in village life and are committed to support and encourage its place within the wider community. We hope that you can bring us together through leadership, encourage and inspire us to work together, and guide us sensitively, so we can work to the greater good of our Benefice and the people it serves.

WELCOME to Fulford & Hilderstone



Vision & Mission:

Are you comfortable addressing financial matters in a spiritual context? Our small rural community is facing the same financial challenges of many churches, however, to ensure we continue in our commitment to fulfil our pastoral duties and engage in our planned projects, we must manage our finances accordingly; prioritise our expenditure, and realise our limitations, without allowing financial restraints to overshadow our Mission in Faith.

Can you work alongside us to build on our pastoral care in the community? Are you committed to making the church relevant, welcoming, supportive, and understanding of, not only those who go to church, but the whole of our local community? Can you reach out and connect with young people and young families, show the importance of faith in modern family life, identify and build links with non-church groups and build upon the existing connection with village life?

WE WILL:

Respect your terms of service and rest days, and that your valuable time will be split between the two parishes in our Benefice. Our PCCs will support you at every opportunity and we accept that you are human, and we do not want you to be swamped by our parishes' needs.

Guarantee a warm, enthusiastic, and joyful welcome. We hope that you will approach your calling with a warm and caring manner, and with a sense of humour. Also, that you will relish the diversity within our congregations for all the many blessings such differences bring to us.

Honour all expenses associated with the Benefice.

Support, Listen and Work alongside you in our path together.

We are a Benefice which reflects all the different views, skills, strengths, and anxieties of any group: our small rural community continues to face the uncertainties and difficulties of recent months yet remains enthusiastic and committed in its resolve to find new ways forward. We recognise our need for good leadership, with the knowledge that we offer a welcoming and competent community network willing and able to support our new Incumbent.

***Thank you for reading our Parish Profile;
we hope you are as excited by this opportunity as we are.***

WELCOME to Fulford & Hilderstone



The Vicarage:



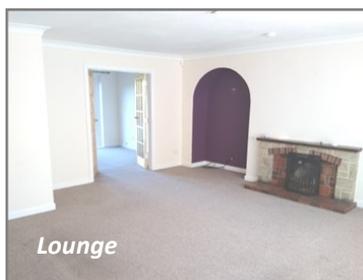
The Vicarage for both parishes is located in the village of Fulford.

Built in 1980, this good sized family home sits on a quiet residential road, enjoying views across open countryside to the rear (*Below Right*).

The property features a gas-fired central heating system with a combination boiler, an intruder

alarm, a single garage and parking for two cars on the driveway.

Ground Floor:



Lounge

Situated at the front of the property is a large family Lounge with fireplace.

The Dining Room joins the Lounge with double doors and features patio doors opening to the garden, with views across the fields.



Kitchen

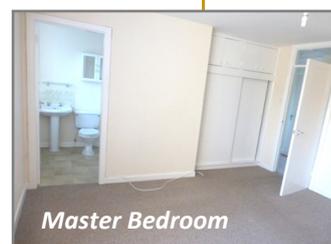
The Kitchen was refitted in 2017, has space for a cooker, upright fridge/freezer and dishwasher, with sufficient space for a table. There is a small utility/porch leading to the rear garden with a worktop, wall cupboards and plumbing for a washing machine and dryer.

At the front of the property there is a separate entrance to a wide corridor with a downstairs Toilet. There is also access via the Entrance Hall and Utility Room. This leads to a large Study with views across the fields. It is equipped with an office desk, office chair, drawers and shelving on one wall. A separate phone line in the office has a telephone/answer phone serving both churches.

First Floor:

There are four Bedrooms. The front of the property has a large Master Bedroom with built-in wardrobe and e-suite shower room. There is also a small single bedroom. To the rear is a family Bathroom, smaller double Bedroom and large single Bedroom.

There is a large walk-in storage cupboard on the landing in addition to the airing cupboard.



Master Bedroom

WELCOME to Fulford & Hilderstone



St Nicholas & Christ Church: A BENEFICE

The Parishes of St. Nicholas' Fulford-In-Stone and Christ Church Hilderstone are in the Deanery of Stone and in the Diocese of Lichfield: The Venerable Dr Megan Smith is Archdeacon of Stoke-upon-Trent; The Right Reverend Matthew Parker is Area Bishop of Stafford; and our Rural Dean is the Reverend Prebendary Ian Cardinal.

The Benefice was formed in 1980 and, whilst we operate as two independent parishes, we work closely together to support, encourage and share our workload and expertise to the benefit of the whole Benefice.

Services: Christmas services are shared within the Benefice, with Hilderstone celebrating the Crib Service and First Communion of Christmas on Christmas Eve, whilst Fulford hosts the Midnight Communion and Christmas morning service. At Easter, Maundy Thursday services have usually taken place at Hilderstone and a Good Friday service at Fulford. Both Churches, however, hold their own service on Easter Day.

	FULFORD	HILDERSTONE
1st Sunday	9.30am Holy Communion (BCP)	11.15am Family Communion
2nd Sunday	9.30am Holy Communion (CW)	11.15am Holy Communion (CW)
3rd Sunday	8.45am* said Holy Communion (BCP) 10am* Family Service	11.15am Holy Communion (CW)
4th Sunday	9.30am Holy Communion (CW)	11.15am Holy Communion (BCP)
5th Sunday	United Service alternating between the two churches, at either 9.30am (Fulford) or 11.15am (Hilderstone).	

** Since the return to worship following the first Lockdown, these have been replaced with a single 9.30am service due to Covid-19. ** CW refers to Common Worship (Order 1) above. *** BCP is the BCP Revised version.*

The two churches work closely together to ensure the efficient running of the Benefice; the PCCs, especially Wardens, come together and support each other and share a number of PCC posts: **Deanery Synod** - represented by Fulford PCC; **Safeguarding** - a representative from Hilderstone PCC acts as the Safeguarding Officer for the Benefice and all PCC members from both parishes meet the training requirements for Safeguarding. This is supported by each Parish's Safeguarding Policy, which is approved on an annual basis.

Both churches share a commitment to care for God's Acre, to protect the environment within their churchyards and encourage a programme of sustainable biodiversity within their parishes. Traditional Plough Sunday, Rogation Sunday and Harvest Festival services stand as testament to the importance these rural communities place on the environment and the livelihoods it supports to so many in their area.

WELCOME to Fulford & Hilderstone



BENEFICE STATISTICS:

	FULFORD		HILDERSTONE			
Population	1863		641			
Electoral Roll	51 (14 from outside the Parish)		33 (8 from outside the parish)			
AVERAGE SUNDAY ATTENDANCE:						
Fulford	Average		Christmas		Easter	
	Adults	Children	Adults	Children	Adults	Children
2018	28	2	107	15	49	14
2019	24	1	116	15	39	7
2020*	13	0	8	0	**	
2021*	12	0	16	0	**	
Hilderstone	Average		Christmas		Easter	
	Adults	Children	Adults	Children	Adults	Children
2018	16	1	110	19	35	5
2019	18	1	96	21	40	2
2020*	13		19	3	**	
2021*					**	

* Held under Covid-19 Regulations and guidance at the time. No Carol Service or Christmas Eve services.

The 2021 averages are calculated on the weeks where services were able to take place.

** No Services due to Covid-19 Lockdown

OCCASIONAL OFFICES:			
Fulford	Baptisms	Weddings	Funerals/Burials
2018	2	2	8
2019	6	0	3
2020	0	0	6
2021	3	1	12
*1 Wedding from 2020/2021 postponed to 2022 due to Covid-19			
Hilderstone	Baptisms	Weddings	Funerals/Burials
2018	5	2	6
2019	1	4	1
2020	0	0	4
2021	2	0	0



FULFORD: Church of St. Nicholas

The Grade II listed church, dedicated to St. Nicholas, was built in 1826 on the site of an older chapel, where past Incumbents are recorded continually from 1682. The church features a semi-circular apse and vestry at the East end. The stained glass window shows Christ in glory, with St. Nicholas to the left and St. Chad (holding Lichfield Cathedral on his palm) to the right. The Bell Tower houses two bells on the West end. The church has seating for up to 140 people and has a hearing loop system installed.



The church is situated within the conservation area of Fulford. The Churchyard is covered by a Tree Preservation Order and is bordered by agricultural land. The church is signposted from both ends of the village and has the advantage of a large car park next to the church. Two public footpaths run through the Churchyard, which is governed by the Diocese of Lichfield Chancellor's Churchyard Regulations and its own Churchyard Policy.

Fulford Parish War Memorial is on the right as you approach the church's main doors. It was restored in 2019 and rededicated at the Remembrance Service that same year. Twelve names from the First World War, and three from the Second World War, are carved into the base. The Roll of Honour hangs inside the church.



The church was extended in the 1990s, when an annexe was added, providing a meeting room, with a facility for providing hot drinks, and a W.C. suitable for disabled use, and a small porch, linking the annex to the Bell Tower, providing disabled access to the Nave. There is a separate wheelchair access from the car park to the Churchyard.

WELCOME to FULFORD-in-STONE



FULFORD: A Brief Outline

The church's tradition is central, with cassock & surplice (or cassock alb) and stole. The average Sunday congregation numbers have remained reasonably static for some years (with the exception of Covid-19). Members of the congregation read both Epistle and Gospel, lead intercessory prayer and assist at the altar. One of the Eucharistic Assistant is also licensed to distribute extended communion.



The church produces a free monthly magazine, which provides news and information on the upcoming church services and events. It is delivered to every property (over 700) in the Ecclesiastical parish by volunteers and posted to those who live outside the parish, but are currently unable to attend.

Pre-pandemic, the weekly services aimed to provide a mix of ancient and modern liturgies and there was a monthly, non-communion, family service which gave an opportunity to incorporate Baptisms from time to time. Currently Baptisms are held on Sunday afternoons. However, to comply with Covid-19 Regulations and recommendations, all services have been a said communion. Singing is now being re-introduced.



Church Groups:

Prayer Group: The church is open every week on Wednesday mornings for prayer. It would be good to see the Prayer Group grow in numbers.

Lent Courses: Lent courses have been held regularly over the years and have been well attended. More recently, Lent Courses have been held jointly for both parishes.

There are opportunities to run courses aimed at attracting the younger generation, for those who work or have other commitments during the day and at weekends.

Social & Fundraising Group: St. Nicholas Church has a well-established and committed Social and Fundraising Group, which organises events such as coffee mornings, Harvest Supper (with a different Speaker every year), a stall and bran tub at the Village Christmas Fair and an annual Christmas Draw. Other events, slightly further afield, are also organised. These events bring the whole of the village together, whilst at the same time raising funds for the church.



WELCOME to FULFORD-in-STONE



FULFORD: The Ecclesiastical Parish

The Parish of Fulford-in-Stone comprises four distinct areas: **Fulford Village, Saverley Green, Cross Gate/Moss Gate** and **Stallington**. The majority of people live in Fulford Village, where the Church of St. Nicholas is to be found.

Fulford

Fulford is an attractive and welcoming semi-rural village, surrounded by beautiful countryside. It has a primary school and an active village and farming community, where events take place throughout the year, providing enjoyment for the local community and visitors. Information of forthcoming events can be found in the monthly church magazine (which is also available on www.achurchnearyou.com/church/4282), the quarterly village newsletter and by visiting the village website (www.fulfordvillage.com). Good food and drink are sold at the Shoulder of Mutton Public House, situated by the Village Green.



The **Fulford Village Group** (FVG) is an enthusiastic group which provides information about our village and events which are taking place. FVG co-ordinates our entry into the Best Kept Village competition (which Fulford won in 2015, in the Small Best Kept Village, Stafford area category) and organises a range of activities, including monthly walks from Autumn through to Spring, carols and mulled wine on the Village Green and other social activities throughout the year. The village's first Fulford Flower & Produce Show, incorporating the annual photographic competition, took place in 2021.

The **Fulford Community Choir** was formed in 2012 and has over 60 members. There are regular concerts and the choir performs annually at the Victoria Hall in Hanley. 'Carols on the Green' is now a regular event, raising money for local charities, and the choir takes part in the annual Carol Service at St. Nicholas (pre-Covid 19).

Fulford Village Hall is situated on Fulford Road, a short walk from the school. It is easily accessible, has modern facilities and a large car park, making it a popular venue for many special occasions. A number of church fundraising events take place in the hall, including the annual Harvest Supper. The hall is used for meetings and has a variety of regular weekly events, including Little Learners (Fulford Pre-School), Art Club, Patchwork & Quilting, Badminton, Bluebells (children's dance Lessons), Table Tennis and the Village Coffee Morning. (www.fulfordvillagehall.org.uk).



WELCOME to FULFORD-in-STONE



FULFORD: The Ecclesiastical Parish



SAVERLEY GREEN - The hamlet of **SAVERLEY GREEN** is one mile from Fulford and includes farms, equestrian stables, terraced cottages, some former social housing bungalows and substantial late 1970's properties. There are two public houses - The Greyhound Inn, serving good food and drink (*shown RIGHT*) - and The Hunter, incorporating the Gandhi Indian Restaurant & Take-Away.

STALLINGTON - The majority of the properties are around Stallington Road, and range from farms to modern housing, whilst the houses in the direction of Blythe Bridge are substantial inter-war houses. Stallington Village is a modern development in the grounds of Stallington Hall, comprising of 160 homes, ranging in style from mews-type houses to semi-detached and prestigious detached dwellings.



CROSS GATE/MOSS GATE - This residential area was served by a Methodist chapel from 1860 until its closure in 2008. It shares a parish boundary with Hilderstone, with the consequence that some residents use Hilderstone Church, whilst others look to Fulford.

Fulford Primary School: *'A place to smile. Hand in hand, inspiring a love of learning.'*



The school is inclusive, has a Christian ethos and aims to develop the 'whole child' so they leave as rounded individuals. Historically there have been close ties between the school and St. Nicholas Church, through regular assemblies and governor representation when there was a full-time post at the Benefice. Pre-pandemic, the school held a spring celebration and their Harvest Festival at St. Nicholas' Church.

Fulford Parish Council:

The Parish of Fulford is one of the largest in Stafford Borough and includes four wards, one of which is Fulford (which includes Cross Gate, Moss Gate, Saverley Green and Stallington communities). Until 1940 the civil parish boundaries were almost contiguous with the ecclesiastical parish, then subsequently the Meir Heath area was transferred to Meir Heath ecclesiastical parish and Blythe Bridge was transferred to Forsbrook.





HILDERSTONE: Christ Church

'The inhabitants of Hilderstone and its vicinity, who were before well-nigh destitute of religious ordinances, are now blessed with a near access to them; and it may be hoped that the benefits resulting from a church being built in this place will be experienced by everyone connected with it in each successive generation'.

Extract from The Staffordshire Advertiser, 1833.

Designed by notable architect Thomas Trubshaw, and consecrated in 1833, Christ Church sits in a tranquil rural setting within the village, with a quiet and beautifully maintained churchyard overlooking the fields. With seating for approximately 150 worshippers, it is of a modest size and has the benefit of good car parking facilities adjacent to the church.

Amongst its many features is the striking East Window, executed by William Collins in around 1833 (pictured RIGHT). This window is one of only a few remaining examples of enamel on glass rather than the more popular stained glass. This gives a wonderful depth of colour to the window.

Over the Baptistry, there is a Choir Gallery, with organ and Singers' Seats, both of which are still used for special occasions. Recently relocated to the front of the church, close to the Reading Lectern, sits the Font, presented to the Church in 1909. The Roll of Honour from the First World War, recording the names of 43 local men, 9 of whom failed to return, was moved recently to its new location in the South Aisle, in the main body of the church. The Fallen are also commemorated by the Small Altar, installed in 1927, which incorporates a piece of stone from the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. The altar was used on HMS Queen Mary (1914-15) and HMS Highflyer (1915-18), as were the three flags which hang above the altar.



Christ Church retains many of its original box pews and distinctive candelabras; the Altar, carved reredos, credence table and prie dieu, however, are a more modern addition, as is the electronic organ in the North Aisle.

The building includes a Bell Tower (with clock and single bell) and a vicar's vestry. Much work has been undertaken over recent years to install a permanent disabled ramp from the car park



to the Bell Tower, with a new entrance point into the Baptistry. There is also disabled parking at the side of the church. A hearing loop system has been installed and large print orders of service and hymn books are available. The church is currently working towards the installation of a full disabled toilet in the main church and tea bar to ensure it provides good facilities to assist all those who visit the church.



WELCOME to HILDERSTONE



The churchyard is open and well maintained, with costs shared by the Parish Council and the PCC. The approach to the church entrance through its original ornate iron gates, is marked by six trimmed yew trees, with the village War Memorial nestling to the left of the Entrance Gates to the Churchyard. The Maintenance Plan for the churchyard records Trees of Significance, environmental plans and areas for re-wilding. It has encouraged the young members of the parish to construct a Bug Hotel to help promote the value of wildlife and there is a wild garden area beside the Memorial Garden. The church promotes God's Acre amongst its parishioners and produces regular updates in the Parish Magazine.

The 2019 Quinquennial Report for Christ Church identified a number of issues which required immediate attention, all of which have been completed; all other areas identified in the report are on-going. No major areas of concern were detected.

The style of worship at Christ Church is broadly central, with cassock and surplice (or cassock alb) and stole. The congregation is predominantly village residents of all ages, including an encouraging increase in younger families who have recently moved into the area attending the family services.

Village Life:

The tranquil village of HILDERSTONE nestles in the heart of the north Staffordshire countryside. Situated in the village conservation area, the charming Grade II listed church lies at the heart of a thriving rural community of approximately 641 inhabitants, with its spire dominating the landscape around about and marking it as a central focus to the community it serves. Standing on the side of the main road through the village, it is a familiar sight to both commuters and villagers alike.

Dating back to Saxon times (670AD), and recorded in the Domesday Book, the village's ancient roots are still evident in the fields surrounding the church, where the Saxon technique of strip farming can still be seen. In the late 18th Century, the village developed into the settlement we now see, with the erection of 19 Grade II listed buildings, including Christ Church, the School House, Hilderstone Hall, and numerous farm buildings. The 1980s saw the most recent phase in the village's expansion, with the creation of a mixed housing development.



TOP: The church from the churchyard. A close-up of part of the re-wilding area with our Bug Hotel. RIGHT: Showing its rural setting, the church can be seen from the fields.

WELCOME to HILDERSTONE



A Brief History:



With its roots firmly established in farming, Hilderstone now faces the challenge of a 'commuter community', with many who live in the village working in near-by towns and cities and not, therefore, readily engaged in village life. Nevertheless, Hilderstone remains a flourishing village due to the commitment of its local community, which supports a wide selection of activities, both within the Church and the wider village.

The challenges of Covid reinforced the value of community, bringing the village closer together. In July 2021 a 'Celebration of Community' Big Village Party and Community Celebration Service were held, with Christ Church holding events to coincide with activities in the Village Hall and The Roebuck Pub. These included The Flower Festival and the Christmas Tree Festival, both of which brought all the elements of the village together, with the church very much at the heart of all the celebrations.



Church Groups: Children's Group: This is run by two members of the congregation and takes place every third Sunday. Meeting in the Baptistry, it encourages children to participate in themed activities during the service, such as creating a Remembrance display and Christmas decorations.

Churchyard Group: A team of dedicated volunteers maintains the churchyard and has helped restore some of the churchyard's original features, including graves lost in overgrown hedges. Amongst the graves discovered was that of Amelia Coutts (Governess to the Bourne household), whose father was a servant to George III. The Churchyard group comprises both regular members of the congregation and villagers who value the church.



Scarecrow Weekend: Staged every second year, this fun event is a firm favourite with the whole village; in 2015, it attracted some 50 Scarecrows to the village - with "Her Majesty and Prince Philip" even attending the celebration service on the Sunday, much to the amusement of all in attendance.

Village Fair: Another important calendar event, this takes place in July each year and brings the whole community together. Featuring all the usual stalls and activities, it is well-attended by both local residents and visitors to the village.

TOP: The official reopening of the Village Hall at The Big Village Party 2021.

ABOVE: the 2021 Christmas Tree Festival at Christ Church.

BELOW LEFT: Humour is never far away in Hilderstone. A favourite Scarecrow at the Festival.

WELCOME to HILDERSTONE



Harvest Supper & Auction: Harvest offerings are auctioned off at the Harvest Supper, which continues to be an important fund-raising event for the church and is popular with many in the village.

Social & Fundraising Team: Christ Church is fortunate to have a strong team within the parish which organises several events each year

to promote the church within its community, raise much-needed funds and celebrate key events in the Church calendar.

Local Activities:

Hilderstone Hall Nursing Home: Formerly the home of the Bourne Family, this grand house is now a residential nursing home. Over the years it has had strong links to both the village and the church. It lies within the parish boundary, just a short walk from the church.

Youth Club: A new Youth Club was formed during the Pandemic, to support local school-age children. Run by two teachers in the village, this has supported Christ Church with the Flower Festival, the Christmas Tree Festival and produces articles and pictures for every Parish Magazine. The church continues to build strong links with this important youth-orientated organisation.

Village Monthly Craft Market: As with the Youth Club, this was born out of the Pandemic, in an effort to support and bring the community together. Aimed at promoting local artisan businesses, this bustling monthly market is popular with the community and is well-attended. It is supported by a café on site, where locally-produced oatcakes are served.

Oak Tree Farm: Oak Tree Farm is situated just outside Hilderstone village and provides training and supported occupation for adults with learning disabilities, in a rural environment. The Project provides opportunity, support and encouragement for people to learn new skills and to improve their existing ones, paving the way into sheltered employment, whilst giving purposeful occupation to others. There is a coffee shop, which sits next to a pleasant farm area where visitors can meet a variety of animals.

LEFT: Great fun is had by all at the annual Harvest Supper & Auction.

BELOW: A display for the Fallen for the Remembrance Day Service.

BOTTOM RIGHT: One of the many displays for the Flower Festival.



WELCOME to Fulford & Hilderstone



Welcome to the Area:



The semi-rural parishes of Fulford in Stone and Hilderstone are surrounded by beautiful North Staffordshire countryside and lie 3 miles to the south-east of the city of Stoke-on-Trent and four miles north of Stone. The area has excellent communications with the M6 and A34 providing access to the north and south, whilst the A50 takes the traveller to the M1 and east. There are main line railway stations at Stoke-on-Trent, Stafford and Crewe, alongside five airports within easy access (Birmingham, Coventry, Manchester, Liverpool and East Midlands). For more leisurely travel, the Trent and Mersey Canal runs through the city, as does the River Trent.

Stoke-on-Trent is renowned throughout the world for its prowess in the field of ceramics and is home to such famous names as Wedgwood, Doulton, Emma Bridgwater, Portmeirion, Moorcroft and many more. The Potteries Museum and Art Gallery houses the world's best collection of Staffordshire ceramics – 'unrivalled on both national and international levels' and The World of Wedgwood at Barlaston opened a new museum and visitor facilities in 2015.

Culture

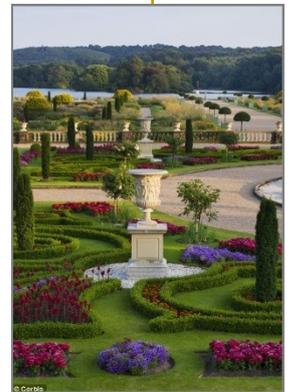
There are theatres in Newcastle-under-Lyme (The New Vic), Hanley (The Regent Theatre) and Stafford (The Gatehouse), a concert hall in Hanley (The Victoria Hall) and further afield the theatres and concert halls of Birmingham, Manchester and London.

Recreation

For those who enjoy walking or simply driving through rolling hills, the Staffordshire Moorlands and Derbyshire Peak District are within easy reach, with Barlaston Downs, Cannock Chase and Trentham Gardens (and the Monkey Forrest) just a stone's throw away. Also well worth visiting are the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, Alton Towers, Shugborough Estate and Waterworld.

Sports enthusiasts (active or passive) will find much to interest them in this part of North Staffordshire. Stoke-on-Trent boasts two professional football clubs, Stoke City (Championship) and Port Vale (League 1) in addition to a number of rugby, cricket and football clubs.

LEFT:
*Hand Painted
Potteries
Winter Bottle
Kiln Vase by
Lyn James*



ABOVE:
*Trentham
Gardens*

BELOW:
*Shropshire
Union
Canal -
Brewood.*



WELCOME to Fulford & Hilderstone



There is active rowing at Trentham, canoeing at Stone, Water World at Festival Park and clubs offering a variety of activities including racquet sports, golf, crown and carpet bowls, table tennis, cycling, climbing, running and keep-fit.

Local events include an annual **Food and Beer Festival** at Stone, **Farmers' markets, Exhibitions, Fairs and the annual Agricultural Show at the Staffordshire County Show Ground**, in addition to Well Dressings in Staffordshire, Derbyshire and elsewhere.

Uniformed organisations, such as Brownies, Cubs and Guides, can be found in Stone, Uttoxeter and Blythe Bridge.



ABOVE:

Stafford & Stone Canoe Club

Schools & Colleges

UNIVERSITIES:

Keele University (*pictured RIGHT*) and Staffordshire University offer a wide range of courses and lectures.



PRIMARY & SECONDARY SCHOOLS:

Fulford Primary School is a Staffordshire Local Authority maintained community school serving the village of Fulford and the surrounding area. It's latest OFSTED rating was 'Good' and it currently operates close to its maximum with 88 children between Nursery age and Year 6. (*See Page 11 for more details*).

Children also attend Green Lea First School at Milwich, Christ Church C of E (V.C.) First School and Christ Church Academy in Stone.

Secondary education is provided by Blythe Bridge High School, Ormaston Meridian Academy, Alleynes Academy in Stone (*pictured RIGHT*) and Painsley Catholic College in Cheadle.



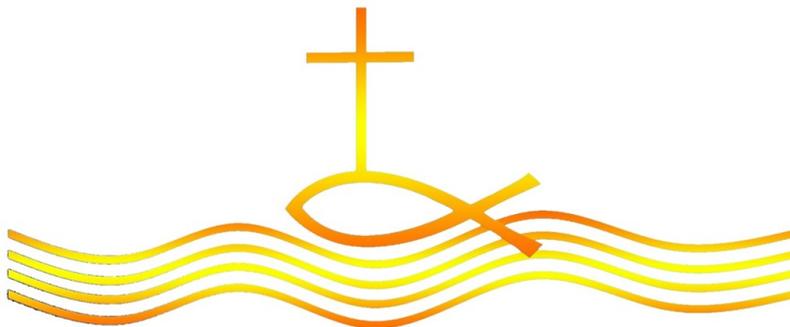


FULFORD: Our Mission Action Plan

- ◆ St. Nicholas' Church mission action plan is focused on discipleship and evangelism.
- ◆ We aim collectively to reach new generations and bring the gospel to everyone, but especially to young people, to support Fulford School where the head teacher is keen to continue links with St. Nicholas' Church.



- ◆ In addition to Sunday worship our church is open on Wednesday mornings to encourage people of all age groups to private prayer.
- ◆ Although the church has disabled access those who prefer can request a home visit (covid-19 permitting).
- ◆ Prayer cards have been placed on the seats around the churchyard for those visiting loved one's graves to use.
- ◆ St. Nicholas' Church belongs to the Stone Deanery of churches.
- ◆ During 2021 members of St. Nicholas' Church, Fulford - also representing Christ Church, Hilderstone - took part in the Stone Deanery Shaping for Mission:
- ◆ There are five Benefices in Stone Deanery who are all looking forward to working in co-operation with each other to further the mission of the church in the Stone area.



WELCOME to HILDERSTONE



HILDERSTONE: Our Mission Action Plan

Bring the facilities at Christ Church into the 21st Century in order to expand the range of activities to the wider community.

Much has been achieved over the past four years with our Access for All Project: we have relocated the Font and Roll of Honour and installed a permanent Disabled Access ramp and new entrance point to the church. We are currently seeking funding for a Disabled Toilet having received a Faculty, and plan to include a Tea Bar at a future date.

Review services and consider fresh approaches.

Under the guidance of Rev'd Marion Reynolds, Christ Church embraced several new methods of worship, namely: Stations of the Nativity; The Service of Light; Taize Stations of the Cross; and Advent Group. We even had Baby Jesus on a zip wire at a Christingle Service! We are open to new challenges and keen to adapt and grow in our faith.

Explore opportunities to include a wider range of music in services.

We have expanded our range of hymns in our church services, with great success and have enjoyed children playing at the Crib Service. We look to host more musical events, linked to Worship, when we have improved facilities. This is very much a work in progress.

Increase the participation of the congregation in services through intercessions/readings.

We are blessed with an active congregation at Christ Church: many participate in the Reading Rota for services and have participated in Intercessions and acted as Servers to the Incumbent.

Identify two charities a year to support through fund raising.

These charities, both local, and global, include: Church Mission Society, Christian Aid, Midlands Air Ambulance and Fulford First Responders.

Continue the Open Church policy from April to September.

We aim to reintroduce this in 2022. We open the church for the Flower Festival, Christmas Tree Festival and other key events in addition to Open Church to welcome and encourage visitors from the community. We have produced a new Church Guide to welcome and inform visitors about Christ Church, features of significance and invite them to enjoy the tranquillity of our churchyard in our special seating areas.





HILDERSTONE: Our Mission Action Plan *Continued*

Look at ways of communicating PCC information to the congregations and encourage proactive support, feedback and engagement from the wider community.

Fives issues of our Parish Magazine are published each year, and cover stories and events from throughout the community: a children's section with puzzles, poems and recipes; a section on local news (Parish Council, W.I., Village Hall etc); a section on the history of the area, with general articles of interest; and a central a pull-out section covers church matters, aimed at keeping the village informed about its church. Christ Church also uses the Village Information Network to send messages of forthcoming events, invitations to participate etc and features in the village website, where visitors can access a brief history of the village, contact details and the newly upgraded Church Guide (www.hilderstone.org.uk).



Establish a maintenance programme for the church fabric.

We have a maintenance programme, managed by Roy Clark and Phil Davies. A brief report is given at each PCC meeting and recorded. The church is maintained to a good standard as a result.

Look for opportunities to engage with the wider community in participating in joint events.

Christ Church is very much at the heart of this small rural community and is actively engaged in many village events. In 2021 the whole village held a Big Village Party to Celebrate Community and this culminated in a Service of Celebration at Christ Church. The Harvest Supper and the Churchyard Tidy Up Team also comprise members of the village who are not regular churchgoers and the church maintains close links with Hilderstone Home, the local residential care home.

Members of the PCC are also committee members on the Parish Council, Village Hall and Women's Institute. This commitment to be involved with, and work alongside, other village groups remains at the heart of our MAP strategy moving forward.



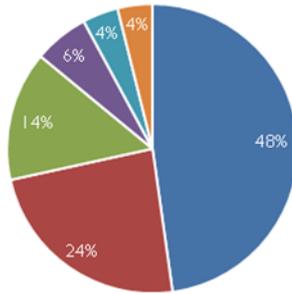
ABOVE: Benches are situated in the tranquil churchyard to encourage visitors to enjoy the peace and beauty of the area. INSET: A carved head believed to be based on one of the stonemasons. RIGHT: A village dinner party in full swing.

Combined Financial Statistics

Fulford

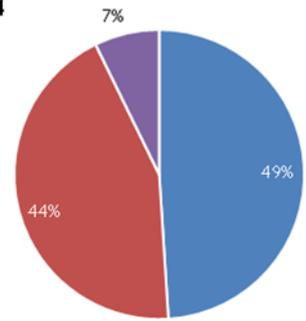
Income 2019: £16,110

Direct Giving	£7,701
Fundraising	£3,824
Donations	£2,334
Parochial Fees	£987
Investments*	£640
Other Income	£624



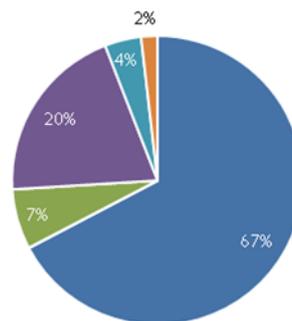
Expenditure 2019: £18,134

Parish Share	£8,886
Running Expenses	£7,941
Churchyard	£0
Other Expenses	£1,307



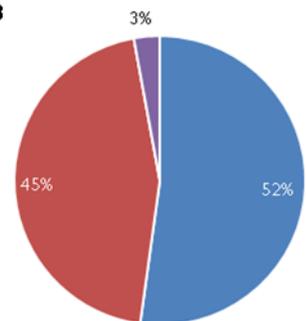
Income 2020: £15,600

Direct Giving	£10,495
Fundraising	£6
Donations	£1,047
Parochial Fees	£3,136
Investments*	£632
Other Income	£284



Expenditure 2020: £15,183

Parish Share	£7,921
Running Expenses	£6,826
Churchyard	£0
Other Expenses	£436



Bank Balance (30/12/2020)	£4,080
CCLA* (30/12/2020)	£30,938
Other Investments	£100
Liabilities Parish Share	£0

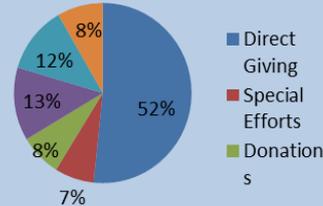
*The CCLA fund can be split into 3 funds, capital, repair and income fund. It is restricted, as too is the income generated from these funds and may only be used for 'keeping the churchyards and the Church in good order and repair'.

Hilderstone

Income 2019

	£
Direct Giving	9,819
Special Efforts	1,360
Donations	1,450
Parochial Fees	2,499
Investments	2,300
Other Income	1,583
Total Income	19,011

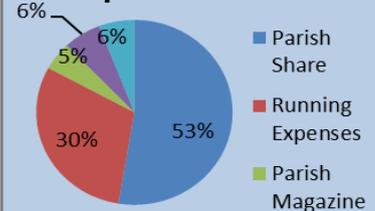
Income 2019



Expenditure 2019

	£
Parish Share	9,659
Running Expenses	5,568
Parish Magazine	900
Churchyard	1,148
Other Expenses	1,076
Total Expenditure	18,351

Expenditure 2019



Bank Balance (31st December 2019)	£1540
Deposit Account (31st December 2019)	£2038
Liabilities Parish Share	£1407

Bank Balance (31st December 2020)	£1561
Deposit Account (31st December 2020)	£2076
Liabilities Parish Share	£4651

Income 2020

	£
Direct Giving	6,886
Special Efforts	511
Donations	1,633
Parochial Fees	1,533
Investments	0
Other Income	0
Total Income	10,563

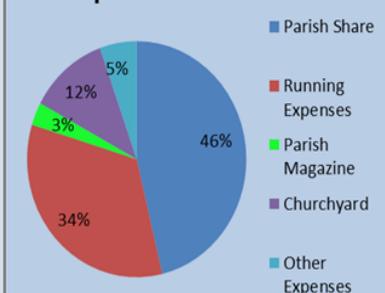
Income 2020

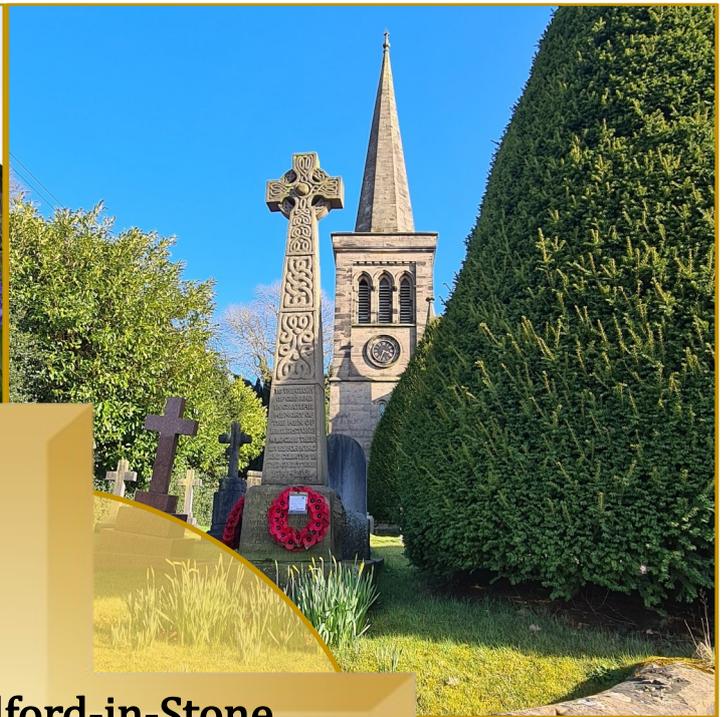


Expenditure 2020

	£
Parish Share	4,875
Running Expenses	3,531
Parish Magazine	330
Churchyard	1,232
Other Expenses	574
Total Expenditure	10,542

Expenditure 2020





**Benefice of Fulford-in-Stone
with Hilderstone**

*Where we cherish our
Heritage, our Countryside and
our Community*

