



## January 2026 News

Dear friends,

Happy new year! Welcome to the Winter St Hilda's quarterly news bulletin.

### **Special services and events this quarter:**

*Epiphany – Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> January at 10:30am, including blessing of chalks.*

*Healing Service – Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> January at 10:30am*

*Pancake party – Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February at 10:30am*

*Ash Wednesday – Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February*

Our 10:00am service will take place at St Hildas and our 7:30pm service at Warley Woods Methodist Church.

*Earth Hour – Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March 8:30pm –9:30pm*

## **Holy Week**

*Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March – palm Sunday Service at 10:30am*

*Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March – Holy Communion Service at 7:30pm*

*Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> March – Holy Communion Service at 10:00am and 7:30pm*

*Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> April – Holy Communion Service at 7:30pm*

*Maundy Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April – Ecumenical community meal at 6m, followed by a Holy Communion Service at 7:30pm, venue to be confirmed.*

*Maundy Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April – Striping the church altars at 8:30pm*

*Good Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April – Service at 10:30am, followed by walk of witness finishing in Bearwood.*

*Holy Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> April – Self guided garden pilgrimage from 10am until 4pm*

*Holy Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> April – Outdoor vigil, around the fire 8–9pm*

*Easter Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April – Dawn service at 6:15am*

*Easter Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April – Holy Communion service at 10:30am*

***More details coming soon!***

## **Eco Church 2025: A Year of Growth and Action**

This past year has been one of great progress for St Hilda's as we continue our Eco Church journey.



Building on the foundations laid in 2024, we have deepened our commitment to caring for creation, strengthened our community engagement, and celebrated milestones that reflect both faith and action.

One of the most significant achievements of 2025 was receiving the Silver Eco Church Award, a recognition of the many steps we have taken across worship, teaching, land management, lifestyle, and community involvement. Alongside this, the PCC adopted a new parish environmental policy, ensuring that sustainability is embedded into the very fabric of our church life and guiding our future decisions.

Our worship and community life have been enriched by eco-themed initiatives. At Harvest Festival, we offered a prayer for peace, provision, and the planet, written by members of the congregation, which captured both gratitude for creation and concern for climate justice. We also joined the global Earth Hour movement, gathering around a campfire for storytelling, reflection, and activities that reminded us of our shared responsibility for the planet. Even at Christmas, we found creative ways to reduce waste, introducing an eco-friendly approach to cards by sharing greetings on a communal board rather than exchanging individual cards and hosting book, gift and toy swaps.

Nature and biodiversity have remained central to our efforts. A compost bin was installed, transforming food and garden waste into rich soil for our grounds. Despite the rain, we took part in the Big Garden Birdwatch, spotting wood pigeons and a blackbird (we hope to spot more on 25 January, after the service, all are welcome!), and contributed to the Big Butterfly Count, recording four species in our gardens. Our participation in the Churches Count on Nature revealed over 80 species of plants and trees on our grounds.

Food and fair trade have also played an important role in our journey. A bumper crop from the church apple tree was shared among the congregation, with surplus fruit turned into jars of chutney. We have also hosted Fairtrade stalls, offering food, crafts, and seasonal items, supporting ethical trade and raising awareness of the importance of justice in our consumption.

We hosted parish litter picks, beginning with our first in February and continuing in June and October, as volunteers worked along the parish boundary to keep our community clean and cared for.

Looking back, 2025 has been a year of joyful action and faithful stewardship. From achieving Silver Eco Church status to expanding biodiversity projects and strengthening our Fairtrade commitment, we have shown that small steps taken together can make a big difference. As we look ahead to 2026, our goals include working towards the Gold Eco Church Award, expanding our biodiversity initiatives, continuing parish litter picks, and deepening our commitment to sustainable living.

## **Scriptural Reasoning with the Dialogue Society**

A few of us have taken part in Scriptural Reasoning with Muslim neighbours and we are looking forward to more evenings together this quarter. We usually share some food and then look at scriptures from the Hebrew Bible, New Testament and Qur'an, sharing thoughts, questions and ideas. The group is open to anyone – you don't need to be an expert or scholar! Dates for this quarter are; 1<sup>st</sup> February. For more information please ask Jenni.

## **NEW FOR 2026 - BREATHING SPACE**

"Breathing Space" is a new monthly gathering for contemplative, silent prayer. This is an ancient Christian practice of being attentive to the presence of a loving God within us and around us, and offers us a time of stillness and peace in our noisy and distracted world. Each gathering will begin with a short introductory reading leading into 20mins silent prayer, following our breath or reciting a prayer word to still our minds. We end with 5 – 10 mins of conversation about the practice.

Breathing Space will take place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month: 16<sup>th</sup> Jan, 20<sup>th</sup> Feb, 20<sup>th</sup> March, at 10-10.45am in the vestry. Please enter the church through the back door in the car park. It is open to all who are seeking peace and who long for connection with God and community.

## **Conservatoire concerts**

We are pleased to say that concerts given by Conservatoire students will continue in 2026. They offer the chance to hear a wide range of music, from classical to folk and jazz, with free entry. However, donations are welcome to help cover costs of heating and performer expenses. There is the chance to talk to these very talented musicians over a cup of tea or coffee and biscuits after their recitals, which you will not get in a concert hall!

The concerts last between 45 minutes and one hour. They take place twice a month on the second Friday, starting at 13.00 on the last Saturday, starting at 19.30. Students like giving recitals at St.Hilda's, because we have excellent acoustics, a lovely piano and they feel welcomed. The first Concert of the New Year will be on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> January. On 13<sup>th</sup> February we have a singer. We are awaiting confirmation as to who will be coming on 28<sup>th</sup> February. On 13<sup>th</sup> March we have an organist and on 28<sup>th</sup> March a brass quintet. Please do your best to come and support these musicians.

If you wish to be kept up to date about concerts, please contact [sthildasconcerts@gmail.com](mailto:sthildasconcerts@gmail.com) and we will add you to our mailing list.

## **Rambles**

St Hilda's ramble groups meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month. If you'd like to join one of the walks please contact Julie Batham (details on the back page) for more information.

**Youth group: Second Sunday of the month, 5:30-7:30pm**

Open to anyone in school years 7-11, we meet monthly for food, creativity, conversation and games. Our dates for this quarter are: 11<sup>th</sup> January, 8<sup>th</sup> February and 8<sup>th</sup> March.



**Open Church: Tuesdays and Wednesdays**

Church will be continue to be open on Tuesdays and Wednesday between 9:30 and 5pm.

**Worship and Prayer at St Hilda's**

Sundays at 10:30am – 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays Holy Communion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday family service

Tuesdays at 9am – Morning Prayer (in the choir vestry)

Wednesdays at 10:00am – Holy Communion or occasionally Morning Prayer (in the choir vestry).

**April 26 News sheet**

If you'd like to have anything included in the next newsletter please email it to Jenni by 27<sup>th</sup> March.

Paper copies of this bulletin are available in the church. If you would like a printed copy sent to your home please let Jenni know.

## Useful Contacts

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Enquires about hiring hall or church		<a href="mailto:sthildasbooking@gmail.com">sthildasbooking@gmail.com</a>
Safeguarding Team		07946 147 703 <a href="https://bit.ly/sthildas-safeguarding">https://bit.ly/sthildas-safeguarding</a>
<u>Safeguarding information</u> 1. Never promise to keep a secret.  2. Assure the person that what they say will be taken seriously.  3. You might say "I will have to talk about what you have told me to the Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator or the Vicar or the Bishop's Safeguarding Advisor, and this will be with as much confidentiality as is possible". <a href="http://www.sainthildawarleywoods.co.uk/SAFEGUARDING.html">http://www.sainthildawarleywoods.co.uk/SAFEGUARDING.html</a>		

For weekly notices see our weekly pewsheet on Sundays. You can also download it at [www.achurchnearyou.com/St-Hilda-Warley-Woods](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/St-Hilda-Warley-Woods)



*St Hilda's is proud to be a member of the Inclusive Church Network.*