



From our Lay Director, Cheryl Taylor.



Happy New Year to everyone I have not yet met with in 2025.

Now the longest of dark days has passed, the snowdrops are showing their white heads, and the promised shoots of other spring bulbs are coming through, I feel we are stepping out of winter's hard grip and turning our thoughts towards a new calendar of events for the year ahead, full of possibility and hopefulness.

With our first Ultreya of the year celebrated at St Aidan's Hull, thanks to our wonderful hosts David & Catherine Huntridge, we heard a great witness talk from the lovely Jan Watts. Jan talked about the trials her church has faced during their recent vacancy with no Vicar, when the heating boiler blew up, literally! The challenges faced keeping the congregation warm throughout

services and the task of meeting all application requirements to replace their heating. Jan said that without the support of her Reunion Group, the members of which represent many of the churches in Scarborough, she would have crumbled under the strain of it all.

Thankfully, the key cornerstone of the Cursillo movement is our capability to meet at Reunion Groups which support us both in spirit and prayer. Having the opportunity to speak about our faith and to hear witness from our fellow Cursillo members is, I believe, that which restores our spiritual energy levels to allow us to go out and support others in our environments.

Ultreyas do the same. I usually arrive feeling quite empty and in need of the energy which always comes from the minute I see another member of York Anglican Cursillo. The joy and love immediately lift my spirits. The more the merrier as we gather and energise each other, share our experiences since we last met, speak of our encounters with the Holy Spirit and share our journey with each other. The love and support is so empowering I feel full to the brim as I leave, often singing on the way home. It is then that I feel that I am able to help and support others within my community and so we spread God's light.

Our Ultreyas are now planned for 2025, with our next being on **Saturday, 22nd March at St Michael's Church, Skidby, Cottingham HU16 5TX**. Our thanks to everyone who has kindly offered to host this year, and if you did not make it on this year's list and would like to hold a future Ultreya at your Church please do speak with myself or David Huntridge and we can reserve a slot for you for next year. It's a great excuse not to have to travel too far from home and is a wonderful opportunity to invite members of your congregation or friends along to experience Cursillo on home turf.

You can always bring a friend with you to any Ultreyas to experience Cursillo, and if you would like to sponsor a friend or member of the Clergy on our next weekend forms are available from Lynn Stephenson and Margaret James for **York 34, Friday 24th – Sunday 26th October 2025**.

Another important date for your diary is that of the National Ultreya GB, where British Anglican Cursillistas gather from all over the country for the first Saturday in September - **6th SEPT 2025**. If you missed Sheffield in 2024 then you don't want to miss **Durham in 2025**, put it in your diary now.

If your diary is not already full, we have a **Quiet Day Reflection** at Wydale Hall on **Friday, 13th June 2025** with a planned mornings peaceful meditation, followed by a 2-course lunch and an afternoon

relaxing in the Hall and grounds of our amazing Diocesan Retreat House. The cost will be £37 per person - with restricted numbers you will need to confirm bookings early with Lynn Stephenson.

Please try and attend as many events as possible to support each other and to visit areas of our Diocese and Churches you may not have experienced of before.

As always to you all my love and prayers. Yours in Christ.

Cheryl x

Our Lay Director, Revd Dr Tim Kelly, writes.



Have you made a new year's resolution for 2025? If you have, I wonder if you've already managed to break it? I'm certainly not going to judge! It's not easy, is it? Things happen, and they can challenge our best of intentions. The resolution and willpower to go to the gym can get easily challenged by a bad day at work, or an hectic diary. The resolution to cut out chocolate completely can be challenged when you find left over half a box of After Eight mints in the kitchen. When life happens its hard not to be blown 'off course'. Now these examples may be silly and minor things, but sometimes life can hit us with much more significant trials.

In the bible, in the book of James, we are urged not to be like people tossed about in the waves, pulled this way and that by the power of the water and the wind. Rob Lacey's 'Street Bible' uses the alternate image of a plastic bag being blown about by the wind. If we're honest that can be what life feels like sometimes ... being buffeted by the wind. James says that we will face troubles of many kinds. That may not be nice to hear, but at least it's honest.

No-one ever said that life was going to be easy, that somehow we'd be free from any of the troubles. I like the words used in the 'Street Bible'. It talks of us having to face "a hundred types of hassle". There are indeed many kinds of trial we can face - job concerns, bereavement, money worries, stress, persecution. It's hard not to be knocked sideways by these kinds of events. As Tom Wright puts it, "The challenge of faith is the challenge not to be a wave".

But when things get tough for some this is when our faith can crumble. We might even choose to blame God ("Why are you doing this to me?") rather than accepting that the events of life happens to us, just as they happen to others. When life's challenges occur we can walk away from God or we can lean into him. There is an opportunity to draw from the one who can provide us with strength and hope.

We're also told in the bible that if we can't cope, and we don't know what we're doing, we should ask God for the wisdom and peace to get us through. And I believe this means asking others for help too, including asking the church to pray for you and to pray with you. We are here for you. No-one should ever be afraid of calling on others for support.

So may you not be blown "off course" in 2025 as life's challenges come your way, and may you hear the reassurance offered in the book of Isaiah:

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.

Tim

Jan Watts gave an inspiring Witness Talk at our February Ultreya in Hull. For those that weren't able to be there it is printed here.

My church is St. Mary's in Scarborough - a big Medieval church nestling under the castle on the headland and with Anne Bronte's grave in the graveyard. I've been going there for about 35 years and have had numerous roles. Before Covid I ran a prayer chain, which I still continue to do, have had a long spell on the PCC and in later years I worked with 2 other ladies to establish a luncheon club in our Parish House for those living on their own. Then Covid arrived and changed everything.

Post Covid there were various changes made to the times and venues of our services and with the reluctance of many to return to church at all our numbers fell dramatically. I was deeply unhappy – my own service had disappeared, and I felt entirely at sea and considered moving churches. Then I began to ask myself, “What is the Church?” It isn't a denomination or building, it certainly isn't a chain of social clubs for “good” people. The essence is far more profound.



The Church is literally a union of Jesus and all those who have decided to follow Him. And the mission of the Church is to share the Good News of salvation with all people.

I was very challenged by a question I read; “Why are so many churches nearly empty today?” The answer that was given was “Perhaps it's because they've lost sight of the original mission of the Church.” In the words of the old hymn, “The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ our Lord. She is his new creation by water and the word. From heaven He came and sought her to be his Holy Bride, with His own blood He bought her, and for her life he died.” In other words, the Church wasn't simply there to feed me or give me a place of comfort and familiarity, but as a symbol of Christ. It says in Colossians 1 “He is the Head of the Body – the Church”. I was looking to the church for my own comfort and fulfilment and only if the church was fulfilling it's mission would I know fulfilment in it. While I was facing my own personal struggle things moved on.

In November 2023 our Vicar announced he was leaving just before Christmas. He led his final service two weeks before Christmas and during that morning service there was a terrific bang and our boiler blew up – blowing the toilet door off and leading to a swift evacuation of the church! From then on we had no heat at all; we only regained heat just before last Christmas, a whole year later. The winters were numbingly cold; hot drinks available right through the service, blankets draped on every pew for folk to use and a bulk order of hot water bottles. My husband even lit the bottom of the pillars with red lights to make us FEEL warmer!

Things do not move swiftly in the Diocese and we had to meet all sorts of advisors before considering how to replace the heating. The Diocese were keen on electric heating, but our power supply wasn't up to it and we would have had pay for a spur to be taken off the mains at a roundabout about 300 yards away and for the cost of digging up 300 yards of road! Wind power wouldn't have looked great with the church in such a prominent place and solar panels could only be placed where they didn't spoil the architecture but also didn't get any sun. And so it went on.

Eventually it was decided we should replace our broken gas boilers with with more efficient gas boilers, and at the cost of around £50,000. If you want a mission church that attracts people through its doors then it needs a certain level of warmth. But God honoured all the work and the final decision and there was much rejoicing when we learnt at a PCC meeting that most of the cost had been met by a local business. There were other setbacks though – much more difficult to come to terms with.

Within a very short time we our much-loved PCC Secretary died soon after she had lost her husband, one of our much valued Readers. Not much later we also lost the long-time chair of the Friends of St. Mary's and we also lost Revd John Wells, a dear associate minister who worked with our Rainbow Centre community at the Social Action Centre we have. A real sense of grief and loss weighed heavily on our community and our determined efforts to survive the vacancy.

I thought often of the words in Romans 8. “In the same way the Spirit helps us in our WEAKNESS. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.” The building continued to plague us. Because the stone was cold and damp we suddenly lost large bits of plaster from the side chapel ceilings. More money and more urgent work. A large glass screen with a door in it which soundproofed a side chapel was found to be un-

safe and could have fallen on someone. Again, more money and urgent work to be done, with a smaller congregation to raise the money. But prayer was ongoing, and we knew that what we needed was to use this time of adversity to prepare ourselves for growth and a new leader.

More people deepened their commitment to taking on more roles, giving more volunteer hours or increasing their financial support. Last May we became one of the main venues for a wonderful Art's Festival over 2 weeks called 'Big Ideas by the Sea'. We had professional archaeologists helping hundreds of school children explore a new dig just outside the church grounds where they found lots of Civil War aged artefacts etc. Inside we had a stream of excellent talks by interesting people from all over the country, drama and concerts. I was part of a team of church people who provided endless refreshments and welcomers throughout the fortnight. And several hundreds of people passed through the doors of the church, lit candles, asked questions, left prayers etc.

From May until October we opened the church at least 4 days a week from 10am to 4pm for refreshments, and our numbers of volunteers were almost back to pre-Covid days. Again, it was wonderful to hear visitors talk about their encounters with God during their church visit. Some came back week after week. So many of us, me included, were committing ourselves to so many things at church but still more was wanted of us. A lady I love and respect said to me one morning that she had it on her heart to start a Breakfast Club for all the ladies of the church and my name kept coming into her mind! Would I help her with it?

Meantime the luncheon club, which I had been helping to run since before Covid, had suffered its own problems. Of the two ladies who worked with me one had died suddenly, and the other was caring for her sick husband, so I was more or less left with the weekly responsibility. I didn't know whether I could cope with a breakfast club as well. Ah well, it was only once a month! The lovely part of the breakfast group is that it draws on ladies from our two very different morning services – our very traditional morning prayer and our all singing, all dancing music group service with screens all over the church! It's such a joy seeing the ladies really get to know each other and develop friendships.

During this last Christmas we all worked incredibly hard, downed many bottles of mulled wine and ate an unhealthy number of mince pies, but we had 55 non-church folk at the outdoor carol singing event around the Christmas tree on an atrocious night. We had 224 at our Lessons and Carols by Candlelight, and 193 at the Family Nativity, including 70 children. We had 170 at midnight communion, 63 on Christmas morning, and we also hosted Christmas carol services for the Sea Cadets, Scarborough College and St. Catherine's Hospice.

Numbers are only a part of it. There is a joy and a closeness amongst the congregations now and a deep sense of love and support. As well as all those who have died this year our amazing and hardworking Verger struggled through chemotherapy and then had a long series of radiotherapy appointments. His wife doesn't drive so we had a rota of folk taking him daily to Hull. We feel as though we are once again a church that cares very much. Determined to get in on the action the men have started having a monthly breakfast together and a couple of Saturdays ago we had 20 men eating breakfast and 30 ladies later in the day sharing a New Year Prosecco and party food afternoon in church.

Our new Vicar arrives any day now and her Collation and Installation is on February 25th. The Vacancy is almost over. We know that she too wants to bring all sorts of people into church but also wants to take the good news of Salvation out into the town. We are excited to welcome her, but we are so grateful to God for the way He has brought us through this last cold, dark year.

And a final note – this has been a really hard year not only for me but for many of the congregation in different ways and indeed for the Anglican Church in general. Without my fortnightly Group Reunion I don't think I could have survived. For the more than 20 years I've been part of York Cursillo I've always been in a Group Reunion. My first one was at Wydale when the wardens were both Cursillistas. When I was working I joined Trevor at a 5 o'clock one straight after work. At one time I sponsored a dear friend on a week-end and of course tried to encourage her to join a group afterwards as I had with



Jan's church, St Mary's, Scarborough.

others I'd sponsored. She had some issues with confidence so didn't want to join a group. Another friend of mine had been her table leader and they had got on well so I suggested she and I and her table leader should meet once a fortnight as a small Group Reunion. We did that for years whilst I continued to host my other group alternate weeks. The three of us

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

One of the delights of Cursillo Ultreyas is that they encourage us to visit so many of the wonderful churches within our own Diocese. If you would prefer to host an Ultreya rather than have to travel do get in touch and we will be highly delighted to add you into the schedule for the year ahead. If you feel you would struggle to host an event we would be happy to arrange a team to assist you with refreshments, so please feel confident to raise your hand. Contact our 4th Day Officer, Dave Huntridge: davehuntridge@hotmail.co.uk

Our 2025 Ultreya dates have mostly been set and, as always, full details and maps will always be sent out to the membership prior to each event.

2025

Sat 22nd March	Ultreya at St Michael's Skidby, nr Cottingham. HU16 5TX
Sat 3rd May	Ultreya at St Luke's Scarborough. YO12 5DP
Fri 13th June	Quiet Day Reflection at Wydale Hall.
Sat ?? July (tbc)	Ultreya at St Michal's Eastrington, nr Goole. DN14 7PR
Sat 6th September	National Ultreya GB at Durham Cathedral.
Sat 13th September	Ultreya at St Catherine's Barmby Moor. YO42 4EF
Fri 24th – Sun 26th October	York 34, at Wydale Hall.
Sat ?? November (tbc)	Ultreya at Emmanuel Church Bridlington. YO15 3JT
?? December (tbc)	Christmas Lunch at Wydale Hall.

The logo for Cursillo is written in a large, stylized, brush-stroke font. Each letter is a different color, creating a rainbow effect: 'C' is orange, 'u' is yellow, 'r' is green, 's' is light green, 'i' is blue, 'l' is dark blue, 'l' is purple, and 'o' is pink. The letters have a soft, glowing shadow behind them.

Prayer Diary

- Mondays** - Hull and surrounding villages.
- Tuesdays** - Bridlington, Driffield, Beverley, Pocklington, Rudston, and Huggate.
- Wednesdays** - Scarborough, Hunmanby, and Filey.
- Thursdays** - Whitby.
- Fridays** - Redcar, Brotton, Saltburn by the Sea, and Marske by the Sea.
- Saturdays** - York and surrounding villages.
- Sundays** - Other places such as Northallerton, Tadcaster and any I have missed out!



Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this issue of York Diocese Anglican Cursillo Newsletter.

The next issue is planned for the summer and items for inclusion should be sent to: trevorking3355@gmail.com Trevor King, Editor: 07941 338466



York Anglican Cursillo is faith funded, so thank you to the increasing number of Cursillistas who support York Anglican Cursillo through Gift Aid donations, particularly by monthly standing order. Under Gift Aid, each £1 donated is worth £1.25 to York Anglican Cursillo, the extra 25p coming courtesy of HM Revenue and Customs. If you would like to start making monthly donations, please contact:

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