



# Chester Cursillo

## Summer NewsLetter 2023



Dear Friends,

When I took over as Lay Director I couldn't have predicted that the next four years was going to be such a rollercoaster ride.

Chester Cursillo was hosting the Ultreya GB that year so I hit the ground running. There was a lot to do, both practical things like negotiating with the police and council to organise road closures, gathering information about local hotels, car parks and tourist attractions for visitors coming from afar. Then we had the arrangements for the Ultreya itself in Chester Cathedral, liaising with the cathedral staff ensuring we adhered to their protocol whilst still maintaining the Cursillo traditions of joyous lively worship. Due to the fantastic team of volunteers who worked together the day was a great success with lots of lovely positive feedback from other Dioceses.

We were then plunged into the Covid 19 pandemic, which of course caused such tragedy and brought life to a shuddering halt. The 2 positives I gained from the lockdown was a crash course in technology, in particular video conferencing and a quick update up on my vaccination techniques! Covid is the virus that keeps on giving and I know many people, including my family are still coping with its impact. Cursillo like many church communities was affected by the pandemic, with people being unable to get together for such a long time. As we came out of the restrictions, we realised habits had changed and confidence had been shaken. It was important that at that stage we addressed some of these issues within Cursillo which is why we had the Servant community weekend to re-engage people and relight the enthusiasm for Cursillo.

I'm delighted that we've been able to have 3 Cursillo weekends since the Covid lockdown and trialled an inclusive, extended and online Cursillo for a Cursillista who couldn't attend the weekend for long term health reasons. The feedback from her was fantastic and all our organisational plans have been sent to BACC in case any other Diocese finds themselves needing to accommodate someone who can't attend an intensive residential weekend.

When I took over the role of Lay Director from Mary Mitchell I could only think, what a person to follow! I'm not Mary I can't be like her. I was reminded that when Jesus chose his disciples they didn't all come from the same background or have the same skills, we all bring our own strengths. I was reassured by Mary that I wasn't alone, not only did I have God to rely on, I also had a great Secretariat to guide me. I feel very privileged to have been your Lay Director and I want to thank each and every one of you for your prayers and support.

I'm very excited about the future of Chester Cursillo as I hand over to Bev Nixon, she will bring some new fresh ideas which is just what we need. I hope like me you will hold her in your prayers.

There's only one thing left to say, all together, very loudly...

**Ultreya!**

Carol



Hello! I'm Bev Nixon and I will be officially succeeding the lovely Carol as Lay Director for Chester Cursillo, this Autumn.

Firstly, I would like to thank Carol for her leadership and guidance over the past 4 years, which has meant that Chester is fortunate to be in a much better position, post pandemic, than many other dioceses.

So, how did I get here?

I have been a Christian my whole life. My parents brought me up in the Anglo Catholic tradition and I had a Grandfather and Uncle who were Vicars. But despite regular church attendance it wasn't until 2013 that my faith really developed into something tangible. I was encouraged to go on a Cursillo weekend, and it had a profound effect on me. I don't remember much about the talks, but I do remember coming away from that weekend with a passionate desire to serve God.

I felt that God was calling me to put my various skills to good use in building up the family ministry in Bollington, so I started working voluntarily as their Children & Families Worker. I gained the Church Colleges Certificate in Children's Ministry in 2016 and then spent several years leading the children and family's ministry at St Oswald's. This ministry sadly came to an end last spring and around the same time I suffered two close family bereavements. Feeling rather lost and adrift, I turned to God to ask what plans he had for me but I couldn't seem to find an answer. It was then that I realised I was being too impatient. I needed to chill for a while and wait for God.

Not long after this, I was approached to consider standing as Diocesan Lay Director!! I certainly wasn't ready to do that last year but promised I would give it thought and prayer...

I kept recalling Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Was this really the plan God had for me? Was I even capable of carrying out the role? To be honest, I'm still not sure about this, but what I DO know is that if God asks you to do something for Him then He will equip you to be able to do it.

So, as I take on the role of Lay Director this year, I am trusting in God to provide me with the necessary skills and aptitude required.

And can I ask, that this is your prayer for me too. Ultreya!





Once upon a time, when I was a young Curate, and the Church of England had money, I went on an Outward Bound team-building course in the Lake District, courtesy of the Diocese of Wakefield.

After the evening meal one day, we were told that we were camping that night - only first we had to find our tent, hidden on the hills, in the fading evening light. Actually, it was worse: we were given a series of Grid References, because the various components of our tent - poles, pegs, guys, covering - were in different locations!

Well, your heroic Clergy team soon had all the items assembled, and the tent triumphantly erected...which was when we discovered that it was a 6-person tent, and there were 11 of us! So, for the first time in my life, I slept out - on the ground, under the stars. I've done it many times since; in fact, just a fortnight ago, I slept out on the Kinder Scout plateau.

I say 'slept', but there isn't usually much sleep involved! Not that that matters much. A verse from Psalm 130 comes to mind: "My soul waits for the Lord, more than those who watch for the morning."

So, I lie.....and sleep fitfully....and wait and watch. The ground beneath me is solid, unmoving, dependable, supportive, the ground of my being; the wind above me is volatile, fickle, playful, brushing my face restlessly, calling me to play.

And "when I look at your Heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars you have established, what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?"

On a clear day, I can see Wales from Kinder Scout - over 50 miles; on a clear night, I can see millions of miles, back into the light-year history of this expanding universe: constellations embedded in the Milky Way. What depth of mystery is this!?

On a Summer night, it takes a while for the animals and birds to settle down. On Kinder Scout a fortnight ago, Snipe were 'drumming' until almost midnight - an eerie, pulsating noise they make with their bills.

And then, slowly, slowly comes the dawn, banishing the darkness in the triumph of light and colour. "Praise with elation, God's recreation of the new day!" "The night has passed, and the day lies open before us.....so, as we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence set our hearts on fire with love for you, now and forever. Amen."  
And home for breakfast!

Tony Rablen



## Power of Prayer

At the beginning of September 2022, Dean, the youth worker explained he would be in church, each Friday at 1.00pm, if anyone would like to join him to pray for young people in the area. Please pray at home if unable to come.

At the first meeting Dean explained that Fushion 12, a group of young adults, meet on Sunday evening to explore and discuss Gods word. They had been to Satalite during August and grown in faith as they listened and took part in discussion and worship. Dean went on to explain what God had placed on his heart regards reaching out to young people.

Therefore, I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.  
(Mark:11.24)

Prayers for local schools/organisations that work with children/young people.

I wrote prayer for Education Sunday, 11th September 2022. National Day of Prayer for schools, 22nd September 2022, group walked around local schools and High school, praying for all those inside. Prayed weekly for prayer requests, Dean and Gods work with young adults and children.

### Fushion 12

Young people made a life size post box, with 2 slots, one for prayers that they had written, which would be prayed for on Friday, second slot was for people to write prayer request and they would pray Sunday evening. Dean told us that Fushion 12 have become more confident in praying aloud and asking for prayer. It has been very encouraging feedback on how prayers have been answered from the members and people. Satalite booked for August.

### Event in church inviting young people to take part!!! BUT what?

Answered prayer - Life Exhibition rang Dean to ask if he would like them to set up the exhibition in church, 17th-20th October 2022, free of charge. YES FREE!! Kevin who takes the Life Exhibition around the country was returning from Ireland and rather than travel home, God directed him to Frodsham, plus Kevin would be closer to Derby, where exhibition was booked next. Group of Year 6 pupils visited church on 15th June 2023, wrote prayers before they returned to school. Dean given 10 tickets for Church Fest 26th May 2023, 1 young member was baptised and 2 renewed their baptismal vows.

With God all things are possible (Mark:10.27)

### High School

Praying every week for Dean and Nicola to be invited into High School but staff busy. After further discussion in November and December 2022 they were informed maybe in the New Year.

Knock and the door will be opened.

Dean and Nicola attended the AGM of PTA Helsby High School, on 15th February 2023 and school would like them to begin pastoral work with their students. Door ajar, not fully opened. WOW Dean received email to go into High School on 27th April, with Nicola. Dean emailed 14th July, to thank him for all the work he had done with one particular student and how students work had improved, also crafts Nicola had done with other students. Yes, praise the Lord they have an invite to go back in September.

### Youth Club

Continued prayer for youth club to start February/March 2023. Dean arranged a half term holiday club. On 2nd March the youth club began, and numbers are increasing. There will be an end of term party on 20th July and youth club will start September.

Prayer is a process that is ongoing, answered in God's time. Praise, honour and thanksgiving to our Lord, Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit. We cannot do anything in our own strength.  
To bear fruit, the branch must stay united with the vine. (John:15.4)

Prayers for Dean, volunteers, children and young adults for all that has come to fruition since last September.

Father God, thank you for answered prayers, definitely exciting, interesting ways You have answered. God continue to place on our hearts what and who to pray for but most importantly how to listen and discern Your will. Amen

God's blessings, love and peace be with you all. Xx  
Rita

PRAY

PRAY

# Focus on 4th Day Communities...

## North Cheshire & Wirral

Initially, North Cheshire was just that. A small group that met every Wednesday evening for group reunion. During Covid lockdown, Zoom came into the mix and as one of our group had now moved to the Wirral we decided to join together; it made sense...still does.

Post Covid; we still meet on Zoom and because no travelling is involved, our group has expanded. Our members come from Kingsley, Helsby, Runcorn, Widnes, Warrington, Birkenhead, Wallasey and Irby.

Our group reunions are still held on a Wednesday, but during the day, as most of us have retired. Once a month we have an evening Ultreya, again on a Wednesday, again on Zoom. We're using the Witness talks to revisit the weekend talks which we are finding relevant and beneficial.

We are also trialling face to face Ultreyas on a Sunday afternoon. We haven't made a decision yet about how often these will be, as our first one was this Sunday past [4th July] at St Paul's Tranmere. It was lovely to see people in "reality" and be together enjoying each others company. We finished with a Eucharist Service, which was very special. Their curate, Rev George Roach, made the whole service about the Cursillo movement and how important it is to God's work here. Our next one will be at St Chad's Irby. We are also looking into a roving Ultreya within the group to make it more accessible to this wide flung group.

I was delighted to have the opportunity to send Palanca to Ukraine, what a wonderful example of faith that it should be going on. After the weekend I was astounded to receive a thank you email from them. It touched my heart.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity.

Regards Ann  
Frodsham.  
Ann Parker





[www.foxhillchester.co.uk](http://www.foxhillchester.co.uk)

### Encounter Days

I am what I am    Wednesday 9th Aug  
I am the door    Friday 15th Sept  
I am the vine    Thursday 19th Oct  
£25 pp

### Retreats

#### Drawing Near Tuesday 5th September

A day retreat exploring methods of prayer with the Revds.  
Hannah and Timothy Hupfield  
£25 pp

#### Glimpses of God: the lost art of beholding

4pm, Friday 22nd September - 3pm, Sunday 24th September  
with Wendy and Andrew Rudd  
£200 - includes en-suite accommodation, meals and refreshments

# Whats On!



Step back in time to learn about Chester's law-defying Mystery Plays in the place they were born with Chester Cathedral's The Mysteries of Chester exhibition

Open from Monday 26 July – Sunday 3 September.

The Chester Patchwork and Quilters are celebrating their 40th anniversary!

Friday 8th and Saturday 9th September

[www.chestercathedral.com](http://www.chestercathedral.com)



Retreat House Chester offers ways to peace. Rooted gently and deeply in Christian spiritual tradition, we offer a wide range of ways to retreat for all people, not in a traditional retreat house but as a part of living. Find local non-residential retreat right in the middle of Chester and in the midst of everyday life.

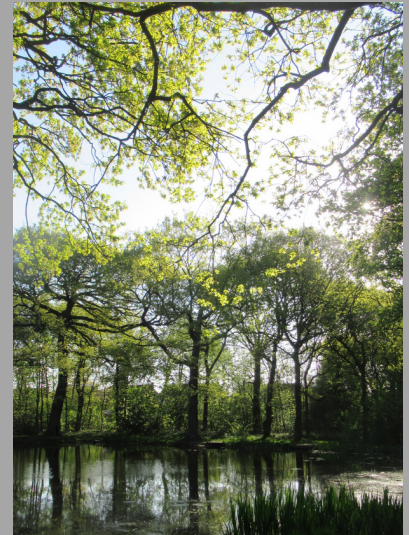
[www.retreathousechester.co.uk](http://www.retreathousechester.co.uk)



That we can glimpse you within creation  
is a beautiful thought,  
but also tells us that you desire to be seen,  
to be found and known.

Open our eyes, Lord,  
as we walk through this world,  
feel the wind and sunshine,  
see the majesty of creation  
unfolding before our eyes.

Help us to see you  
faithandworship website



Thankyou to all who have shared their thoughts and good news  
With love and prayers, Communications Team.

