



Leicester Anglican Cursillo

REPORT to BISHOP MARTYN, for 2021-22

This report covers the period from the last AGM, June 2021 to the AGM of June 2022.

AGM

The Leicester Anglican Cursillo Annual General Meeting will be held on Tuesday, 5th July 2022 hosted by Holy Trinity Barrow-upon-Soar.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS:

Cursillo operates a team of ordained persons who serve as Spiritual Advisors, being the clergy team on staff duty for a Cursillo weekend. These are supported and overseen by a three-person team of Spiritual Directors for LAC who also support the Ultreyas, day of deeper understanding and other Cursillo events and also serve on the LAC Secretariat. The Spiritual Directors are also available to provide support, guidance and pastoral care to the Lay Director, the secretariat and fourth day community where this is required and appropriate. The Spiritual Directors usually serve for three years with one being replaced each year.

Since Rev'd Alison Iliffe stepped down as SD in September 2021, recruitment of a replacement has been delayed, however I am delighted the Rev'd Elaine Wykes is currently seeking Permission to Officiate in the diocese to enable her to take up that role. Sadly, Rev'd Noel Colley has moved away from the diocese in retirement, this has meant his earlier than anticipated withdrawal from the SD team. This has by necessity meant that Rev'd Clive Watts has become the only SD currently serving LAC. We are actively seeking an SD to replace Noel, however it is proving difficult to recruit someone with the appropriate amount of experience, though we are actively working to increase the number of clergy with experience of staffing as an SA and of LAC in general. As such we would like to recommend that Rev'd Clive Watts continue for a fourth year as SD to ensure continuity and an experienced presence within the team, soon to be joined by Rev'd Elaine Wykes with a further SD to be recruited, meaning that the three-year rotation effectively restarts after this AGM.

WEEKENDS:

LAC#48 was held in November 2021, having been long delayed due to Covid restrictions with Jan Harding as Lay Rector and in May 2022 we held LAC#49 with Viv Froggatt as Lay Rector. Both weekends were well attended with 16 participants or pilgrims on LAC#48 and 13 on LAC#49. Once again testimony from the both participants and the staff team reveals the deep moving of the Holy Spirit within all taking part along with a deepening of discipleship and a fresh experience of the love of God for us all.

We were delighted to welcome Bishop Martyn to preside at the Clausura service for LAC#48 and Bishop Saju for LAC#49. The involvement of our Diocesan Bishops at these services is a much appreciated and welcomed aspect of the weekend, marking the close link between the Cursillo movement and the wider church.

The next Cursillo weekend LAC#50, will see a change in the programme structure, as we trial a two day weekend format rather than the usual three. The aim being to try and make Cursillo more accessible to those we are not currently reaching. Evidence from other Diocese suggests that the impact of the weekend can be retained in its shorter format, but it does not necessitate participants taking a days leave from work to attend. We hope this change might remove one of the barriers to attendance. This will run Friday evening to Sunday afternoon. The usual series of meditations, talks and discussions, each of which builds on what has gone before, will continue unchanged. The opportunities for times of reflection and silence, time away from our everyday lives, and also to share and laugh together will all be preserved within this shortened format and we look forward to seeing the outcomes of this trial, which has already worked well in four other trial diocese (York, Chelmsford, Scotland, Southwell & Notts). Further weekends are currently scheduled on the existing Thursday to Sunday three day format, these may be reviewed in light of this trial.

Dates for future planned weekends are:

- LAC#50 – 10-12 Feb 2023 – Trial of new two day format.
- LAC#51 – 23-26 Nov 2023
- LAC# 52 – 15-18 Aug 2024

The whole weekend is underpinned with the prayers of the wider Cursillo community and the calm influence of the Holy Spirit. As the weekend progresses, we find that a real sense of being a Christian community and fellowship naturally develops. We find that Cursillo weekends have a profound effect on the on-going Christian pilgrimage of both participants and staff.

ULTREYAS:

The word “Ultreya” originated from the Camino de Compostela where it was a cry of encouragement from pilgrim to pilgrim, roughly translated as “onwards and upwards - keep on going”. These provide an opportunity to gather, worship and pray together,

encourage one another and hear inspirational witness talks. The sense of encouragement these provide has been very welcome during and following the pandemic.

Since the last AGM we have held a mixture of Ultreyas on Zoom which were very well attended and over recent months have returned to some of these being held in person, the most recent being Wednesday, 8th June 2022 hosted by Christchurch Thurnby Lodge. The next Ultreya will take place at the AGM on Tuesday, 5th July 2022 hosted by Holy Trinity Barrow-upon-Soar.

FOURTH DAY COMMUNITY RETREAT DAYS:

A new initiative following the COVID 19 pandemic was introduced in June 2021, with two one-day retreats at Launde Abbey on 2nd and 3rd June. These were well attended and well received by members of the Fourth Day Community. Taking their inspiration from the Prodigal Son, time was spent dwelling in the word, reflecting theologically on our pandemic experience and emergence post pandemic, as well as worshipping, praying and spending time together. The video message you recorded for these days was well received as was the visit from Rev'd Liz Rawlings in her role as Discipleship and Vocations Enabler.

Fourth Day, refers to our continued journey of faith, calling and discipleship following the three days of a Cursillo weekend, perhaps best described as the Cursillo way of referring to 'Everyday Faith'.

Historically, much emphasis has been focused on "getting the weekend right", but as the 4th Day community grows in number we recognise that it is important that we also serve and nurture our 4th Day over and beyond our meeting together for worship at Ultreyas and via our seed groups and we will look to develop teaching and training for the 4th Day as part of our programme going forward alongside The Days of Deeper Understanding which have been held on a regular basis.

SECRETARIAT:

Secretariat have continued to meet, both on Zoom during the pandemic and in person since restrictions have permitted, under the very able leadership of Adrian Trotter as our Lay Director. The launch of our new LAC website <https://leicestercursillo.org> has been very successful and the increased capability of electronic communication has enabled us to keep Cursillestas in the diocese well informed. A small working group have been established to look at accessibility to Cursillo in terms of geography and diocesan spread, diversity of ethnicity, economic power and other factors among Cursillestas.

The Lay Director has attended Cursillo Leaders workshops and also the recent Cursillo National Conference at the Hayes Conference Centre at Swanwick. Rev'd Clive Watts is attending the national meeting of Spiritual Directors (held on-line).

DAY OF DEEPER UNDERSTANDING:

This is an opportunity for those who have more recently been on a Cursillo weekend to find out about the ongoing ministry and work of Cursillo across the Diocese. As Cursillo weekends have been postponed during the Covid pandemic no Day of Deeper Understanding has been held during this period.

The next Day of Deeper Understanding is scheduled for Saturday 8th October 2022

FINANCE:

LAC is almost wholly faith funded and at present the finances are sound. Debe Dean is the Leicester Anglican Cursillo treasurer. We continue to support some participants and some staff who would not have otherwise been able to attend or staff on weekends. We were grateful for a further generous donation which enabled us to offer a bursary fund for the Fourth day Community retreat days.

BRITISH ANGLICAN CURSILLO COUNCIL (BACC):

Jacqui Johnson serves as our British Anglican Cursillo Council representative alongside the Lay Director. The Secretariat is kept well informed of all national matters and developments, and in particular the trial of the new two day format weekends. A National Ultreya is planned for Saturday, 3rd September 2022, this year being hosted by Southwark Cathedral.

CONCLUDING REMARKS:

Bishop Martyn, we remain grateful for your continued pastoral care and interest, which is greatly valued by the Secretariat and Cursillestas. We assure you of our continued prayers for our Bishops and for the wider leadership of the diocese, particularly as we seek to continue to be shaped by God together. We look forward to our future weekends and the continued development of LAC and the contribution this makes to the deepening of discipleship within our diocese.

Rev'd. Clive Watts, on behalf of the Spiritual Directors of Leicester Anglican Cursillo.