



NEWSLETTER - February 2026

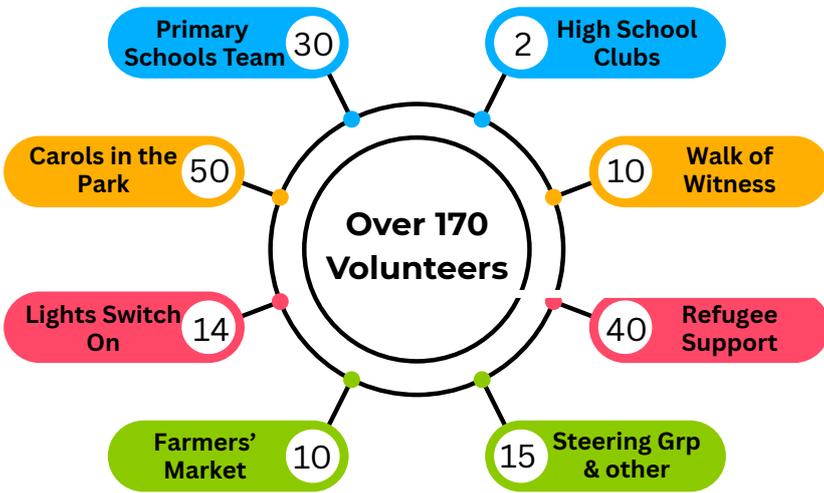
HORSFORTH CHAPLAINCY PROJECT



Welcome to our latest newsletter!

In this edition we are **celebrating volunteers** and hearing some of their stories! Without these volunteers, our activities simply would not happen - and we all **enrich each other's lives** as we **work together** to see God's Kingdom grow in Horsforth. Do browse through to find out **their motivations**, and what they **enjoy** about their roles!

Celebrating Volunteers



Over 3,700



Volunteer Hrs in 1 yr

Volunteers in Action!

Leading Groups at Rewind



Serving drinks at Carols in the Park



Dressing up at Christmas Market



Greeting people at Farmers' Market



Sharing Bible stories in schools



Giving out Clothes



Helping Horsforth Flourish



As we enter 2026, we are encouraged by a sense that **God is on the move**. There is talk across the county of a **quiet revival**, a renewed interest of faith. We wonder if we are seeing the first shoots of that in Horsforth, the **excitement** we receive from Primary School children, the **deepening conversations** in High school groups, **increased numbers** attending Alpha courses in Horsforth, the popularity of events like Carols in the Park, and the **hunger to pray** witnessed in the recent HCT prayer week.

We are **so grateful** that so many are feeling called to **serve voluntarily** in so many areas and it is great to feature **a few of the folk** who do so in this special edition of our newsletter.

Graham



I've been involved with **Horsforth Farmers' Market** from the beginning (14 years ago); for me it was an opportunity **to do something for the environment** by reducing food miles. In our small team I helped with things like finding a site, setting up policies and insurance etc (with advice from Headingley Farmers' Market) and then I took on the role of **Stallholder Liaison** for some years before moving to other roles. What I feel is **so great about the market** is that it has become a **real meeting hub** with people chatting, kids playing games, live music playing and a great **sense of community coming together**. I really enjoy meeting people and particularly former pupils and their parents who remember me as a teacher at Horsforth School! I also value the **great relationships** we have built with the stallholders, who often tell us that they appreciate our market for its good organisation and friendly atmosphere. My hope is that HFM can continue to be an expression of how we as Horsforth Churches Together **cherish our environment and support our local producers**.

Comms Volunteer needed!

The Farmers' Market are currently in need of a **Comms Volunteer** to do simple updates to the website and share stories and information on social media - **do you know anyone** who could do this for a few hours a month?

Liz

I **really enjoy** being involved in **Open the Book** Assemblies as well as **Rewind** to Christmas and Easter - I love seeing the **children's enjoyment** of the stories and their enthusiasm for God's word. We meet before the assemblies to run through the story and practice, which is **good fun**. At the schools we are **greeted with excitement** by the children and staff. It is certainly a **fantastic experience** and not taxing at all. I feel it is a wonderful way to **share the bible stories** with children and staff at the schools who **may never get the opportunity** to hear them otherwise, and as a team we are able to reach **every school in Horsforth** with the Word of God and build up great relationships, as well as **sharing our faith** and God's love. It makes me think of this verse in Isaiah 55:11 'And so is my word that goes out from my mouth, **It will not return to me empty**, but will accomplish what I desire, and **achieve the purpose** for which I sent it.'



The **Open the Book Team** would really **love more people to join them** - no experience necessary and as Liz says, it is great fun! You can find out more details of times and frequency **on the website** at horsforthchurchestogether.co.uk/activities-for-schools/, or **email Duncan** at duncan@horsforthchaplaincy.org

Helping Horsforth Flourish



One thing I have been learning during the past 5 months of my internship with Unreached is that we do not just have **a message of hope and love**, but also that we **are that message**, just as Jesus showed who God is. Welcoming, honouring and relating to people in culturally sensitive ways enables people to **experience God's love** and power, not just hear about it.



Over the past months, it has been amazing to see our team of volunteers **rise to the challenge** of supporting Horsforth to flourish as a Town of Sanctuary while I reduced my hours. Volunteers have **organised awareness raising** at Horsforth Green Festival and Horsforth High School, enabled people who are seeking sanctuary to attend the local Alpha course, and **continued running clothes, football, gardening and social events and the weekly conversation club**. Thanks to the generosity of local schools, we were able to **gift presents to over 100 people** from a refugee background at Christmas. As we work together, it's wonderful to **see friendships grow** between experienced volunteers from the local community who have been involved for years, **new volunteers** joining who first connected through Instagram, and enthusiastic volunteers who have **lived experience** of seeking sanctuary, like Souran (below).

Linden is a secondary school teacher and has volunteered with us for the past 12 months. Recently she has also got a job as the Lead for Schools of Sanctuary in Leeds which we are really excited about.

Linden



I began volunteering with **Horsforth Town of Sanctuary** in January 2025 and it has been a life-enriching experience. The commitment, compassion and generosity of the regular volunteers who I meet at the weekly hotel conversation club and volunteer meetings has been inspiring and encouraged me to get involved in as many of the events as possible! I have particularly enjoyed **supporting the men** at the hotel who are seeking sanctuary. It has been wonderful to welcome them and offer an hour of fun and levity whilst practicing and improving their English-speaking skills. One of the events that left a lasting impression was the **Finding Your Voice presentations**. I was **moved to tears** when hearing their stories and have been amazed by the positivity and hopefulness of the men I have met, given all they have had to endure.

Welcoming, supporting and advocating for these men seeking asylum has been an **incredibly humbling and joyful experience**. I feel proud to have been a part of something that is working towards building a **better, fairer and kinder world**.

Souran



Souran has been a brilliant volunteer

with us since October 2025. In January we got to celebrate Souran's baptism, and that he was granted leave to remain and refugee status from the Home Office.

My name is Souran, I was born in Iran. I am married and have one son. I have volunteered in activities organized by local charities to **support the community and refugees**, such as clothing distribution, Apple Day, Carols in the Park, and translating for my peers at the hotel. Volunteering has helped me **connect with people** and **feel included in the community**, and has helped me **grow personally** by teaching me patience, kindness, and how to help others.

My faith in Christ guides me to **serve others with love** and live a positive and meaningful life, and my faith is very important to me.

To get involved in any aspect please email Laura on laura@horsforthchaplaincy.org Thank you!

Helping Horsforth Flourish



I am pleased to say that after spending most of 2025 not feeling myself due to the cancer treatment, I am now **feeling much better** - thank you for your thoughts and prayers. I have been encouraged by **volunteers stepping up** for our Christmas activities (such as Christine below), and a great response from churches resulting in a **lovely varied** series of 6 Prayer Events during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Recently I have been enjoying helping with more **developmental aspects** such as supporting Lynn C in the development of the Bereavement Cafe, and bringing people together to discuss our Older Peoples' Ministry.

Christine

Over the past 3 years I have **responded to 'requests for volunteers'** from Horsforth Churches Together, which I initially found on the service sheet at St Margaret's. Why did I say 'yes'? well for several reasons - firstly we are relatively new to Horsforth (having moved from Edinburgh 3 years ago to be closer to our daughter & family), and **finding new friends** and acquaintances can be challenging when you are retired, so this offered an **opportunity to meet new people**. Secondly I like the idea of **belonging to a community** (Horsforth) and know that to be part of a community you need **to give something** to it. Thirdly, I like the concept of Horsforth Churches Together. There seem to be quite a few churches of various denominations locally, and the idea of **presenting a united front** to the community appeals. We all share the same Christian faith, just worship in different ways. So I have enjoyed my various volunteering stints; got to know new people and **feel more embedded in the community** as a result. This is me at my last volunteering stint **dressed as an angel** at the Christmas Lights switch on! Whatever next??



COMING UP VERY SOON!

We would love to see you at our series of **LENT TALKS** in March

Lent Talks Series

Christianity in Britain

- **Movements and Influencers** and the **Values** they gave us



Thurs 5th March 7.30pm

Lister Hill Baptist Church

Christian Witness in an Age of Unravelling:

From the Sheppard Worlock Story to the Catholic Social Tradition with Jenny Sinclair

Tues 10th March 7.30pm

St Mary's School Hall

John Wesley's Methodism:

A Movement for the 21st Century with Rev Leslie Newton

Tues 17th March 7.30pm

Central Methodist Church

A Trio of Victorian Philanthropists:

Barnardo, Carpenter and Stephenson with Andy Lloyd

Thurs 26th March 7.30pm

St Margaret's Church

The Interfaith Movement

'A South African Christian and a Bangladeshi Muslim reflect on each other's faiths and values, after a decade of community work and partnership in Inner City Leeds' with Rev Heston Groenewald & Abdul Hannan

Scan for more



Horsforth Churches Together
Together in our community

Helping Horsforth Flourish