



NEWSLETTER - Sept 2026

HORSFORTH CHAPLAINCY PROJECT

Welcome to our latest newsletter!

Thank you so much for your **support and prayers**.



Horsforth is a great community to live in, with so many **positive things** going on and amazing people & groups committed to the town. Jesus called the church to be **salt and light**. Sometimes that means taking a lead or speaking out, and other times joining in, or standing with others. We do that best when we are **united and prayerful**. May you be encouraged that **God is at work** and **pray along with us** (see insert).

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Prayer Diary Insert

Use this handy daily prompter to pray along with us

Highlights



Inspiring Lent Talks well attended

In Feb/March each of our thought-provoking and diverse **Lent Talks** were enjoyed by over 40 people from across all the churches. You can listen to the **recordings** on the website.

Easter parade & service attracts crowds

Hundreds of people gathered on **Good Friday** for our **Walk of Witness** and we were led through a **moving reflection** by Fr Michael Doody and readers from seven different churches.



Connecting at Horsforth Festival

A team of volunteers provided a Tots Tent, Sumo suit wrestling and big games at the **new Festival**, as well as giving out lots of leaflets - all **very well received** by many families there.

Rev Chris welcomed at St Margaret's

It was a delight to see **Rev Chris Clayton** welcomed to St Margaret's and to Horsforth at his licensing service, and he has been settling in and **getting involved** over the last few months.



Encouraging Story

A **young person** who has attended **lunchtime club** at Horsforth High all year but has been quite a handful at times, **surprised and encouraged** Duncan when at the end of term he said 'I haven't got a Bible, can I have one?' and **was delighted to** lovingly receive one to take away.



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Listening to the Spirit



What will mission in Horsforth look like over the next 10 years?

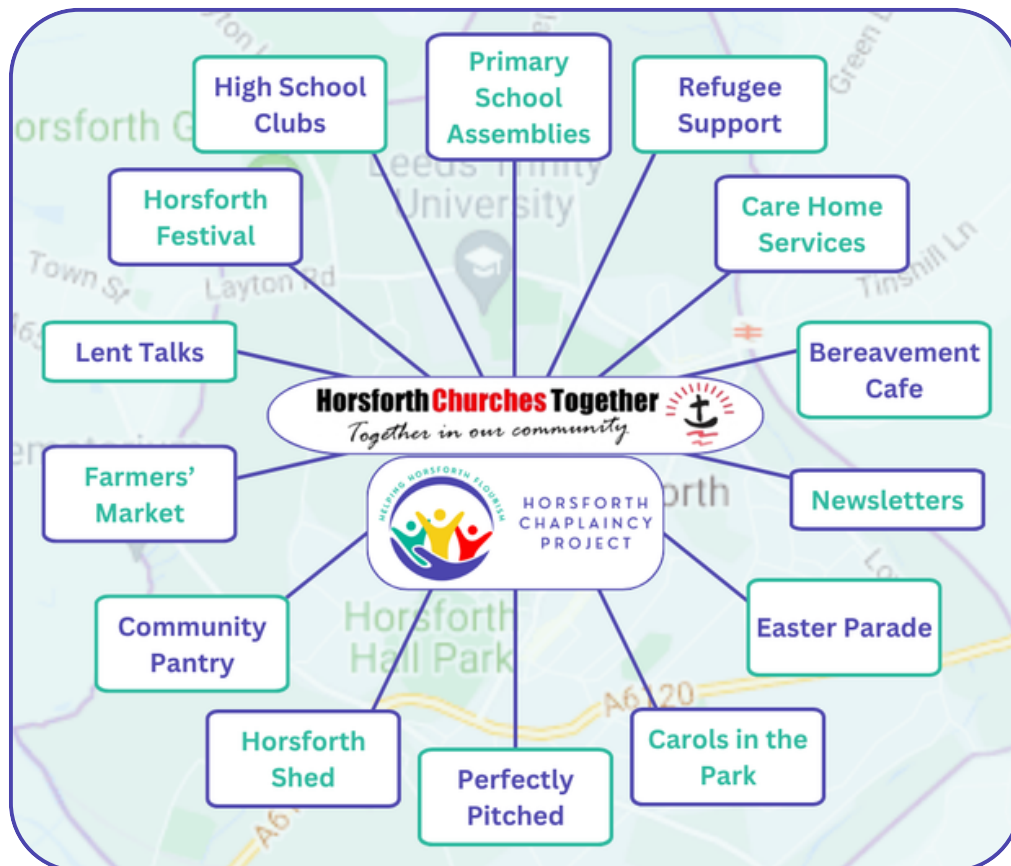
This was a **question** asked at the end of our first Lent Talk. Stirred, provoked and inspired there was a real sense of **deep listening** in the room, and in my own heart, and we collectively leaned in to listen to how Jenny would answer.

Our Lent Talks topic of “Christianity in Britain, movements and influencers and the values they gave us” brought us **four stimulating talks** detailing wonderful ways in which God had moved historically in our nation but inevitably asked the question, **how will God’s people be moved** by the Holy Spirit to ‘usher in’ His Kingdom today?

Motivated by Jenny’s answer **not to start with strategy, but with prayer**, leaders and representatives from across Horsforth churches have gathered to share breakfast, to **sit together round the scriptures** and to **pray**, several times since those Lent Talks. On each occasion there has been a **tangible sense** that God is moving.



15 years ago, when I started in this role, churches met to plan a mission fortnight called Hope in Horsforth and it was significant how God moved us, **changing our focus** from being invitational to be **incarnational** in what we planned. Out of that mission came the Farmers Market, the Primary Schools team, and since then numerous other **mission initiatives** have emerged out of the fertile soil of our **togetherness formed in prayer**; here is an overview of **our current activities**:



As we have met to pray I am once again sensing a **real excitement** and have faith that God is wanting to strengthen our togetherness and **move us on again** in our mission.

This newsletter we are inviting you to add your prayers to this journey.

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As we have prayed, I have not been alone in having my attention drawn to the following **challenges**:

1. The **AI revolution** and youth unemployment
2. Discipling our **young people**
3. Being a people who **carry hope**
4. How to **speak the truth** of the gospel with confidence and generosity

And as I wonder about God's plans..

- I am excited about how **local businesses** have a passion and commitment to the welfare of the town – expressed in the efforts of Horsforth Town Team organising the Christmas Market and the Horsforth Festival.
- I am excited that Laura will start with us 2 days a week in September with **a day dedicated to developing discipleship** among the unreached groups including young people in schools
- I am excited about the presence churches have in the town and the opportunity that gives us to be **expressing hope** rather than despair
- I am excited about what we hear about **a quiet revival** and renewed interest in faith

And I am praying **"Lord help us to see what your Spirit is doing and enable us to join in with you."**

We are inviting you to join us in our prayers by taking a week to pray through our prayer sheet - see insert



A new Additional role

I am excited and thankful to continue supporting **Horsforth Town of Sanctuary** (1 day a week) while beginning a **new role focused on discipleship and outreach** (an additional 1 day a week : both roles are fixed term for 1 year until Aug 2027).

Many people in our community have not heard the **good news** Jesus brings: , **love, belonging, justice, forgiveness and eternal life**. I look forward to supporting our community as we give **young people, migrants and others** opportunities to know Jesus and encounter God's love.

I plan to support **lunchtime groups** at Horsforth High School, **work with churches** to pray and discern who we could reach out to, and **support volunteers** in making Horsforth more welcoming for people seeking sanctuary.



Since February, **Horsforth Town of Sanctuary** have been involved in many different activities, including: hosting two **Great Get Together** events, each welcoming over 70 people for food, music and speeches, running a **Finding Your Voice** course with 15 participants, visiting **Horsforth High School** during Refugee Week, and **helping steward** at Horsforth Festival - all working together with those seeking sanctuary

to help **raise awareness** and create opportunities for **welcome and integration**.

At the hotel, we continue **welcoming people** and providing clothes. As there are currently less new people arriving, we can build deeper relationships and offer support, such as **helping a blind man** obtain and learn to use a suitable smartphone.

In May, five volunteers **led a service** at Guiseley Baptist Church. Mo and Ali's stories of courage during their asylum journey moved many people, while the **welcome and hope** they received there deeply touched them too. I pray people will keep encountering God's light and hope through this work.



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New things get off the ground

Since February in terms of **Comms work**, as well as the regular tasks, I spent time on creating videos and audio files of the **Lent Talks** so that everyone could access them. In **development work** I have really enjoyed journeying with

Lynn Cowling (a retired palliative care nurse) as she has been developing (along with others) her idea and vision to set up a **bereavement cafe** in Horsforth. The monthly cafe at Cragg Hill, with trained facilitators, provides a **safe, informal space** for people to share experiences and talk openly about their loss, or just sit quiet and listen to others, over a cuppa and cake. Here's what one attendee had to say:

Bereavement Cafe:



'The cafe has an accepting welcoming atmosphere where people can speak their pain and be accepted by all. For myself, I always feel better coming out than I did going in'.

It's also been great to support the development of the **Care Home Ministry**, as John Kingsley (a retired chaplain and URC Minister who moved into the area) has stepped up to **coordinate our Care Home Services**; he was keen to bless the Care Homes by having **regular monthly services** at fixed points and this is now in motion with churches taking on what they are able to, and John and others filling in any gaps.

As some of you know I also had another operation in June, this time to remove a nodule on my lung. The operation and recovery has **gone well** and the nodule turned out to be benign, which was a great relief, thank you for prayers. Finally just to note that I have **reduced my hours** from 18.75 to 13 hours a week from 1st Sept, to create a better balance for me. For now I am continuing to focus on Comms and Development, and hopefully being wise with my time!

Coming up soon:

Please use the **PRAYER DIARY** insert to pray along with us, plus here are some specific events coming up to remember in your prayers:

- **Open the Book Assemblies** start again week commencing 14th September
- **Green Festival** Sun 20th Sept in the Park (Horsforth Climate Action and partners)
- Interfaith **Visit to a Mosque** Saturday 26th September **TBC**
- **Horsforth Farmers' Market** celebrating it's **14th Birthday** on Sat 3rd October
- **Rewind to Christmas** for schools 1st and 4th December
- **Carols in the Park** Saturday 12th December

Supporting us

We are deeply grateful to the many people who **give generously** to the Project, without which we would not be able to function. Currently approximately 80 % of our core income comes from individuals who give **monthly or one-off donations**. **Please pass on to others if you can.**

To donate, please make a bank transfer **using these details**:

Reference: HORSFORTH, Payee Name: Leeds Christian Community Trust, Acct no: 20129563 Sort code : 60-83-01, and email support@horsforthchaplaincy.org **for a gift aid form**

With **many thanks** from all of us at Horsforth Chaplaincy Project:

The Steering Group: Peter Mawson, Rozel Daltrey, Jo Bailey, Jane Linley, Pete Gillions, and **The Staff Team:** Duncan, Rhoda and Laura

Feel free to **contact us** at:

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