

Rainbow Connection

Anglican Cursillo Tasmania

December 2024

A Reflection from Diocesan Spiritual Advisor Lee Weissel

Luke 21:28

"When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

Advent is here again. Episcopal priest, Fleming Rutledge, writes, 'Advent is not for the faint of heart. As the midnight of the Christian year, the season of Advent is rife with dark, gritty realities.' As we delve into the season, and think through the implications of Christ's incarnation and his second coming, we can again appreciate the enormity of the role of the people of God now.

How we read the advent story is affected by our experiences and what we have read and understood. Author Hal Lindsey passed away last week at 95, but some of us may remember the book he wrote, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, where he sought to look at current events and interpret them through biblical prophecy. It is an interesting read, and tells us a lot more about the time it was written, than about the fulfilment of the things of God, but it does remind us that our God is active as active today as throughout history. The type of writing though can cause us to miss the point. I have known people who see the church only as rescuing people from a dying planet. That we only grab the ones we can, and leave everything else. I have known others who have been so keen to watch events unfold and quickly point out who the Anti-Christ might be, rather than lean into God.

In hearing again the story of advent, we see that is not only about the past and the future, it is about now. Who are we as the people of God, and how do we respond. In school chapels we do a number of things, but two are very important. We try to bring the message of the Bible into a current context, so young people can see the gravitas of Jesus' words. We also celebrate communion once a month. For a young person, it is a touchstone for something very old and very ancient. The service and its ritual resonates in a way that speaks of a deep dimension to them. In having both, we seek to provide an experience of community. So, when the question is asked about helping people who are crushed by life, or seeking to tear down the structures that crush people, which do we go for? The experience of community answers both. It is not an either/or but an and. It also lets us understand that we need to ask the question each day - who is Jesus for us now, and how do we stay connected in his Spirit.

Advent reminds us of who we are, and may it call afresh for you this season.



A Message from Ruth Thomas, our DLD

A lot can happen in a year – when I sat down to write my message for the December 2023 Rainbow Connection, I was expecting a simple lumpectomy and preventative radiation to “fix” my breast cancer. It got a little more complicated with more surgery, chemotherapy and radiation before the reassuring news of remission and a real sense of return to wellbeing. Throughout it all God was faithful and the wonderful prayer support from the 4th Day was both reassuring and uplifting. Many of you have experienced pain, suffering and family tragedy during the year. May you know the presence of our loving Father as he strengthens you to face each day. May we all discover afresh the wonder of Christmas as we hear the marvellous news of God’s love for us.

The message of Christmas and the eternal truth of God is the same even if the presentation or format is different. Perhaps you have seen or own a few different translations of the Bible. Sometimes we use a variety of translations in our church services so aspects of a passage will be highlighted differently. The message is the same but our understanding may be enhanced by the subtle changes which bring a different perspective to the reading.

So, it is in the Cursillo Movement. The message will be the same but there is potential for a different format and presentation.

At the National Cursillo Secretariat meeting in Newcastle from 25th – 27th Oct there was much discussion around the theme of “Adapting the method without changing the message”. We were encouraged to try something different that may better suit local conditions while still staying within the boundaries of the Cursillo movement. During 2024 the Bathurst Cursillo Secretariat prepared and ran a 2-day Cursillo Weekend and generously shared all their developed material .



Spiritual Reflections were presented at every session. The Rev Lee Weissel and the Rev Doug Newman were photographed by Ruth.

The Tasmanian Secretariat is very supportive of the idea and George Humphrey (Lay Coordinator for MW37) is willing to trial the new format. I thank God for the vision, experience, and commitment of all the Team for MW37 who are stepping out in faith to bring this latest concept to life. I pray the shorter Weekend (Fri 20th June – Sun 22nd June will open the way for attendance by those previously held back by other commitments.

A Message from Ruth Thomas, our DLD, continued

While at National Secretariat I had the opportunity to promote Launceston as the venue for the next National Meeting on 24 – 26 October 2025 which will dovetail nicely with the 30th Anniversary of the introduction of Cursillo to Tasmania by the Diocese of Gippsland. Sat 26 Oct 2025 is the date of the Bishop's Training Event in Launceston. The National meeting Agenda will be kept free on Saturday afternoon so that local Cursillistas can focus on that Training Event. There will be a dinner on Saturday evening to celebrate the 30th Anniversary.

Blooming Church will be held at St David's Cathedral on 8 – 10 Feb 2025 with Judy Maplestone helping Chris Gibbons create the Cursillo floral arrangement for the Festival theme of, "In the Garden". Thank you to Susan Pearce for her leadership in Cursillo's participation in the Festival over the last 3 years.

On March 22nd there will be an Ultreya and gathering at Holy Trinity, Launceston with Margaret and Jon Hosford as Witness Speakers and Rev Lee Shervill as Spiritual Advisor.

While at National Secretariat there was discussion about providing the wider 4th Day Community with a chance to revisit a Cursillo residential Weekend on a 2-day basis and a different set of talks. This would be an opportunity to build new connections and understandings. 2026 is being considered. Catherine Woodberry (Cursillo Secretary) will send out a survey to gauge response.

May God richly bless you throughout 2025.

De Colores

Photos of the National Secretariat Meeting taken by Shirley Tongue



Margaret Brodie, Sylvia Hitchick
& Doug Newman



The National Secretariat



Lee Weissel at breakfast,
Diggers Club, Wallsend



David & Ruth Thomas, Desley
Ryan, Rhonda Callender

A Report on the recent Commissioning by Shirley Tongue

On November 16th, members of the Fourth Day Community attended the MW37 Team Commissioning at Church House in Hobart. The Rev Lesley Borowitzka led us in Communion and then commissioned George Humphrey and her team. The team training began with talks by Shirley Tongue, Greg Stanford (pre-recorded), and Ruth Thomas. We extras then left and the team continued under George's capable guidance. The theme for the weekend is "A faith to die for", with their theme song "Yet not I". The breadth of experience and abundance of enthusiasm in the team bodes well for another amazing, Spirit-led weekend. Please continue to pray for George and her team and for potential candidates for MW37 in 2025 at Dodges Ferry.



Photos of the Commissioning and the Training taken by Shirley Tongue

DATES TO REMEMBER 2025

8-10 February - Blooming Church Flower Festival St David's Cathedral

22 March - Ultreya at Holy Trinity, Launceston

20 April-31 May - Easter to Pentecost – Hope 25

30-31 May - MW37 Overnight Training

20-22 June - MW37 Weekend, Blue Lagoon, Dodges Ferry

5 July - MW37 Welcome Day, St David's Cathedral complex

26-28 Oct - National Secretariat, Launceston [including] 30th Anniversary of Cursillo in Tasmania

