

# IMPACT REPORT

## 2022/2023



**LEEDS  
SANCTUARY**

THE METHODIST CHURCH  
IN THE CITY CENTRE

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This has been an amazing year for Leeds Sanctuary. Reading over all that we have achieved and been part of this year is a joy. It has been a year of solidifying some of our work as well as trying and testing new things. Some of these new things have worked and others haven't, and we pleased to have the freedom and support to try, fail and learn.

Our wellbeing offer has developed a lot this year and I have been humbled by the depth of relationships that have been built, particularly in the Life After Stillbirth Group. We are now very clear as to who we are and what we have to offer into the wellbeing space in Leeds.

Life on Leeds Dock continues to be challenging as we seek out the things people want to engage with. Saturday Sanctuary has developed this year into something that feels a valued part of Dock life. We know reaching people on the Dock is known to be tricky, but have a vision that we can be part of creating a sense of community and discipleship in that place.

Our justice seeking work through Craftivism last year was very exciting to be a part of. Hundreds of people have contributed to our campaigns, we have engaged with our MP and some celebrities. It feels our scope is bigger and our focus is clearer than ever and I am excited about what the next year will bring.

One thing that hasn't got a mention elsewhere in the report is the relaunch of our podcast which Emily worked incredibly hard on. It has been a real team effort to draw together a podcast to release every fortnight based on our four values and the key themes of our work. Emily also worked on a phenomenally successful limited podcast series on inequality in the UK, called "At What Cost", in partnership with the Manchester and Stockport District. It received very high acclaim from people significant in the world of justice seeking.

# Reflection

# Reflection

We were pleased to be nominated for a Compassionate City award for our contribution to city life in Leeds. It felt nice to be recognised in that way. It hints at the general sense I have that Leeds Sanctuary is increasingly known in the City of Leeds and in the wider Methodist family.

This is exciting but comes with a responsibility to live up to the theology, vision and values we have set out for ourselves as well as to our community members.

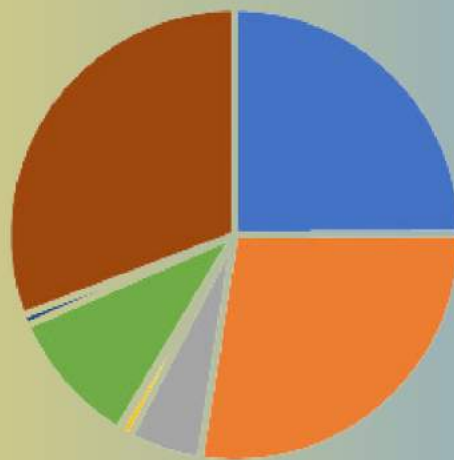
It is a privilege to lead the Leeds Sanctuary Team; they are an inspiring and passionate group of people who have made the 2022/23 year the incredible year it has been. Each year we grow in depth and number, increasingly bringing about our vision of the flourishing of Leeds and its people in the ways of God's love and fellowship.

*Anna Bland  
Team Leader*

# Summary - Our Communities

Our regular Communities are:

	Gatherings:	Attendees:
Monday Mindfulness	37	162
Leeds Craftivists	14	179
What Does God Think About...?	9	34
Leeds Dock Community Drop-In	7	5
Wellbeing Walks	6	1
Saturday Sanctuary	9	64
Life After Stillbirth Group	18	5
Breakfast Club	11	200



- Monday Mindfulness
- Leeds Craftivists
- WDGTA
- Dock Drop-In
- Wellbeing Walks
- Saturday Sanctuary
- Life After Stillbirth
- Breakfast Club

In the 2022/23 Connexional Year, we had **650** individual encounters through our regular Communities.

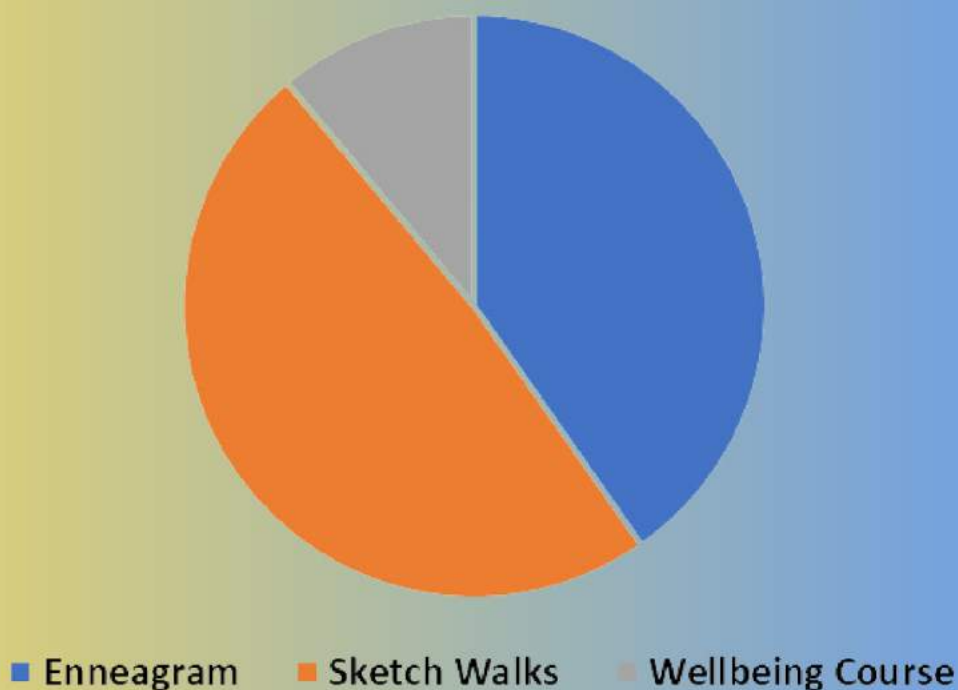


# Summary - Our Event Series'

Activities classed as an Event Series are those which occur semi-regularly, or temporarily, but which follow a theme or appeal to a specific audience.

Our Event Series' are:

	Gatherings:	Attendees:
Enneagram Retreat Days	3	29
Sketch Walks	2	35
The Wellbeing Course	4	8



In the 2022/23 Connexional Year, we had **72** individual encounters through our Event Series'.

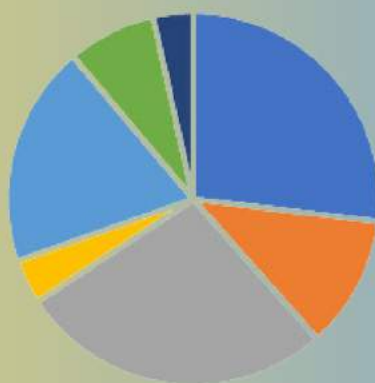
# Summary - Our Events

Our Events included:

Leeds Sanctuary Launch Event  
Huddersfield Craftivists Day  
Gaia: Hope & Despair  
Reflect & Create  
Carols on the Dock  
Beer and Carols  
Dying Matters Retreat

Attendees:

70  
30  
71  
10  
50  
20  
9



- LS Launch
- Hudds Craftivists Day
- Gaia: Hope & Despair
- Reflect & Create
- Carols on the Dock
- Beer and Carols
- Dying Matters Retreat

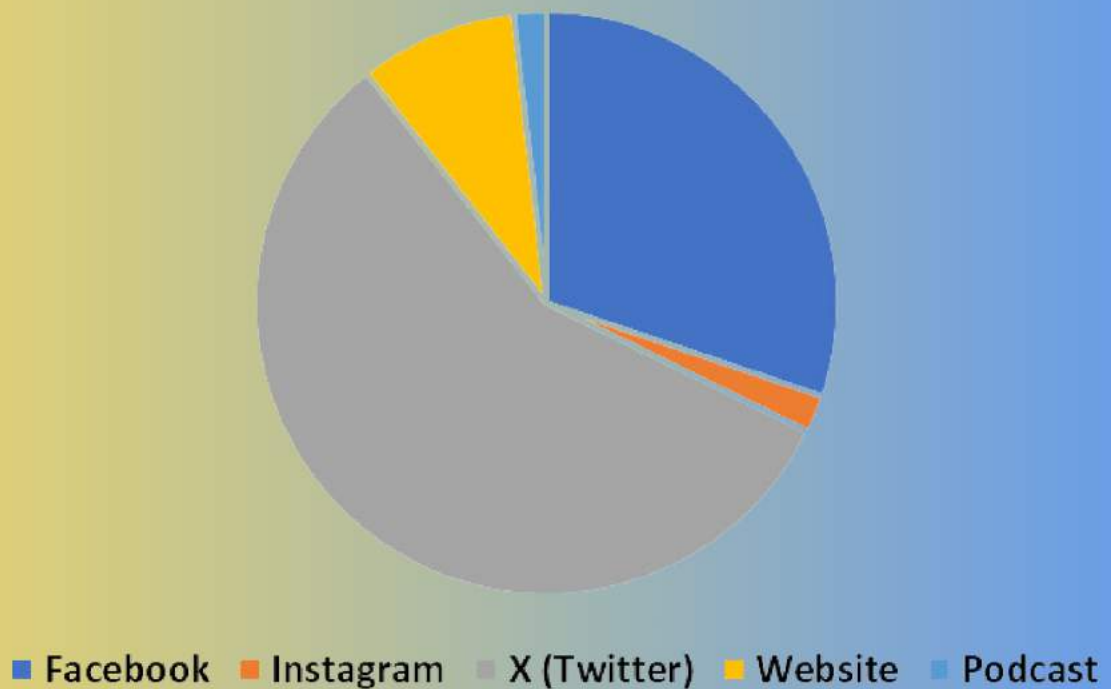
In the 2022/23 Connexional Year, we had **260** individual encounters through our Events.

# Summary - Our Digital Spaces

We are conscious that many people in our target audience (those who work and live in Leeds City Centre) will access digital spaces frequently. As such, we are present online and aim to not only promote our events in digital spaces, but also create content which will inform and enrich people.

Each of the digital platforms we use uses different terminology to measure reach and engagement. We class each post reach, impression, view or listen as an encounter with us in a digital space.

Facebook	29,506 post reach
Instagram	2,044 post reach
X (Twitter)	55,872 Impressions
Website	8,548 views
Soundcloud	1,792 plays



In the 2022/23 Connexional Year, we had **97,762** individual encounters through our Digital Spaces.



# A note on measures of success

How we record and measure success has been an ongoing reflection for us at Leeds Sanctuary over the last two years. We have reflected on a number of approaches and come up with a model that we hope takes into account the depth and breadth of our work.

## **Fruitfulness markers**

One model that really helped us work out what success might look like for us and gave a wide and deep enough picture were the Fruitfulness Markers. The Methodist Church offers a framework of “fruitfulness markers”, which encourages consideration of both qualitative and quantitative measures of success. These are Vision, Contextual Relevance, Gathered Community, New People, Deepening Discipleship, Social Justice, Connection to the Wider Church, Long-term sustainability and Replant.

We hope that as you read through this document, the ways in which most of these markers are fulfilled will be apparent.

## **Qualitative**

We gather feedback and stories to give a sense of the quality of what we are offering. We find that where a group is well-established, the purpose and vision of the group is clear, and there is a consistent membership as we have been able to offer something of value – this could be a sense of belonging in a community; a wellbeing tool or technique; a thought-provoking conversation; or action over anxiety. Nurturing groups in this way requires reflection and consideration, and it is a deliberate choice to prioritise this as we consider our finances and time. It is so rewarding to see people in our communities flourish, and ultimately these people then invite others to come and see what we are doing.

## **Quantitative**

We record attendance at our communities and events. We consider each individual encounter to be a seed sown, and recognise that not every single encounter will result in someone coming back to us. We also record how many people are new to us at each community or event, and how many people we consider to be “regulars”. This raw data is helpful as we can review whether or not the core of the group is growing, and if not, why not? If so, what's working well? Combined with feedback and stories, this gives us a good picture of what is working and why and vice versa.



# Breakfast Club

The Breakfast Club was started in 2019 by local charity "It's Our Day", who recognised that local University students needed community-based support. The Breakfast Club was set up to provide a welcoming space where students can help themselves to homecooked food on Saturday afternoons during the semester. We saw an opportunity to support the students and It's Our Day in providing wellbeing sessions alongside the buffet, focusing on topics that students are both interested in and benefit from.



Dates run: November 2022 - June 2023

No of gatherings: 11

No of new attendees: 200

Facilitated by: Sam Havis

## Sam's Highlights of the Year

Reaching a group of young men who came back the next week and brought their friends. Amazing conversations with over 50 students initiated by taking my dog along for them to cuddle. Hosting a retreat day for volunteers at the Breakfast Club to discuss the feedback from the students and to focus on their own wellbeing.

“ A wonderful space where you can disconnect from uni and be welcomed with a smile. ”

“ A time to relax away from uni, a sanctuary. ”

“ A feeling of community and being cared about. ”

“ It makes you feel supported and there's always a friendly smile ”



# Leeds Dock Community Drop-In

The Leeds Dock Community Drop-In was a collaboration with the Royal Armouries and the Canal & River Trust. The Royal Armouries reserved a space in their café each week where members of the local community could meet for a free hot drink, and activities would be provided for children. We agreed to run the Drop-In for a trial period in November and December 2022, and due to low numbers we didn't continue after Christmas.



Witness | Guardian | Expert | Leader



Dates run from and to:	Every Thursday from 03 November to 15 December 2022
No of gatherings:	7
No of new attendees:	5
Facilitated by:	David Goodall

## David's Comments

This was a risk we took that didn't work and as we pioneer we know that's part of the journey. We received positive feedback about the proposed gathering but didn't attract anymore than 1 person on a regular basis.

“  
It's good to talk with  
people.  
”



# Life After Stillbirth Group

The Life After Stillbirth Group was set-up to provide ongoing support to women who had experienced stillbirth, however long ago it happened. The group began with six weekly Zoom discussions, followed by six weekly sessions of art and creativity, and finishing with six weekly sessions of walks and mindfulness.

The group was supported by Woodhouse Community Centre, Mill Hill Chapel and Hope Bereavement Support.

Dates run from and to:	November 2022 to June 2023
No of gatherings:	18
No of new attendees:	5
Facilitated by:	Sam Havis



## Sam's Highlights of the Year



Arts and crafts at the beautiful and peaceful Mill Hill Chapel, with one woman making earrings for her upcoming wedding so the group could be connected to her wedding.

Yoga and meditation sessions in the Zen Buddhist room at Woodhouse Community Centre.

A mindful walk through St George's field at the University, connecting with memorials and graves.

# Life After Stillbirth Group

“ At first I thought it would be difficult but the energy the group harboured was love and above. Straight away I felt a sense of welcome and belonging and nurturing connection and environment to be, feel and grow! I appreciate the seed that was planted for this group and want to be a part of its branches going into the future – thank you! ”

“ LASG is something that has helped me immensely. Being able to spend time with women who completely understand what I've been through, and to meet others who haven't experienced stillbirth but have shared their life events with me has been the biggest help in my mental recovery to date. [The activities] and just chatting with a cup of tea have been a perfect way to spend time together and create a life long bond. The group really opened my eyes to the fact that people are always going through something, experiencing their own pain, and the relationships we have can be an invaluable support to making it through each day. I'll forever be thankful to the group and the ladies I've met along the way. ”

“ LASG has been a really positive experience for me. Connecting with other amazing women who have gone through such a challenging event in their lives is very healing. I came to the group expecting to be helping but of course, I ended up being helped and healed too. In the 22 years after my own child loss, I have gone through tremendous personal growth and healing but what I've learned is that there is often a bit more work to do... I'm grateful that this opportunity to share came into my life when it did and for the wonderful support that this group gave me. Thank you. ”



# Leeds Craftivists

Leeds Craftivists are a group of climate activists who believe that campaigning for change can be gentle, hopeful and successful.

In the 2022/23 year, the Craftivists implemented quarterly rather than monthly campaigns – launching the campaign online, meeting once in-person and finishing the campaign off online. Themes and actions have included a Cost of Living Blanket made of individual squares, Biodiversity Bees and an art installation made of crafted water droplets on the theme of Water Quality.

Community started:	2020/21 Connexional Year
No of gatherings this year:	14
Attendance:	179
No of new people:	103
No of regulars:	51
Facilitated by:	Anna Bland

## Anna's Highlights of the Year

Hundreds of people from across the region and country have contributed to our campaigns sending in blanket squares, rain droplets and bees. Through the campaigns we have raised awareness on the Cost of Living Crisis, got a “win” in terms of planting wildflower seeds in the city centre, and engaged lots of people, including Michela Strachan, in our water quality campaign which continues into this connexional year.

We also helped start two new Craftivist groups and spoke in various places about Craftivism, including a festival.





# Leeds Craftivists

“ Many thanks for the session today, Anna. It was really inspiring and everyone seemed to participate brilliantly - and enjoy it too ! 😊 It was very well put together and led. ”

“ I just wanted to say how much I appreciated you coming across to Huddersfield to lead the Craftivism Workshop on Saturday. It generated some interesting conversations and has certainly got people thinking. It was also good to have the opportunity to be involved in some social action and respond to the challenges faced by the current cost of living issues. To contribute to and be part of a bigger campaign, led by Leeds Sanctuary. Personally I found it to be a really positive experience, providing much food for thought. One thing I've taken away - in the quest for social justice, it's the social action that is at the heart of the craft. ie. not craft first. This Craftivism Workshop was always intended to be an introduction to Craftivism and to show people a different means of engagement with voicing social justice issues. However, I would like to build on this and feel that there's definitely potential to get something established - just not sure what that will look like yet. ”

“ Leeds Craftivists has built my confidence. ”



# Lunch & Prayers

Lunch and Prayers is a weekly drop-in space where people are invited to join us for prayer and/or community over lunchtime.

Community Started:	2021/22 Connexional Year
No of gatherings:	22
Attendance:	Unknown
No of new attendees:	Unknown
No of regulars:	5
Facilitated by:	David Goodall

## David's Highlights of the Year

The highlight through this year for Lunch and Prayers has been a number of regular attenders who want to make space to pray in the middle of the week and to support the mission and ministry of Leeds Sanctuary through prayer.

As a Leeds Sanctuary team gathering to pray regularly is really important and on a number of occasions the scriptures appointed for the day have spoken into our work.





# Monday Mindfulness

Monday Mindfulness is a weekly online gathering which aims to create a reflective space for participants, also equipping them with mindfulness tools and techniques to use through the week.

Community Started:	2020/21 Connexional Year
No of gatherings:	37
Attendance:	162
No of new attendees:	Unknown
Facilitated by:	David Goodall and Kate Spooner

## David's Highlights of the Year

Kate building community in the group and changing the style, so people are getting to know one another and engaging on a deeper level with the practice.

The way in which the community has evolved and been able to contribute to the mindfulness practices we share together.

The introduction of the enquiry time at the end of the practice where people can share their noticing's and feelings. This again has contributed to a deeper sense of community.

Providing a space for a new mindfulness teacher to practice leading mindfulness when Kate has been on holiday.

“

It has helped me explore mindfulness as a way of managing stress and anxiety... I had found app-based mindfulness difficult but coming together with others in a safe space has helped me relax into it and develop my own mindfulness practice in a way that is meaningful to me. It is also helpful to hear others experience of the week's practice and to have that break in the middle of a busy day.

”



# Saturday Sanctuary

Saturday Sanctuary is a monthly space at Leeds Dock where we supply free tea, coffee and pastries; newspapers and board games; and curate a relaxed environment for local people to start their weekend.

Community Started:	2021/22 Connexional Year
No of gatherings:	9
Attendance:	64
No of new attendees:	20
No of regulars	5
Facilitated by:	David Goodall

## David's Highlights of the Year

The highlight of the year at Saturday Sanctuary has been the sense of a community emerging and a number of individuals who make sure it's in their diary and want to be there.

Our relationship with the Dock Swimmers and the local bookshop is a joy; they smile when they see us setting up, point people in our direction and enjoy the coffee when they are able to drop in. It feels like Saturday Sanctuary is part of the Dock community on a Saturday morning.

A highlight was seeing a 6 year old teaching 4 20+ year old's a board game.



“ Thank you for a lovely morning, when can I come next? ”

# What Does God Think About...?

“What Does God Think About...?” is a safe space for bold and open theological discussion of topics we know people care about. Topics this year have included Queerness, Social Media, and Disability, among others.

The group has met once a month on Monday evenings at The Canary Bar on Leeds Dock.

Dates run from and to:	September 2022 to July 2023
No of gatherings:	9
Attendance:	34
No of new people:	15
Facilitated by:	David Goodall and Anna Bland

## David and Anna's Highlights of the Year

The topics of Queer Theology, Social Media and Disability all went really well. Engaging new people and people asking big questions about life.

The openness of the Canary to hosting us and allowing us to host others in their space. Its feels like we are guest and host at the same time.

The beautiful moment when someone who had missed Saturday Sanctuary came to What Does God Think About as we discussed discipleship.





# Wellbeing Walks

The Wellbeing Walks have been an opportunity to meet other members of the Leeds Dock community on a Thursday lunchtime, enjoying some fresh air and a change of scene in the middle of the day. We walk for around half an hour and people can stay to share lunch together afterwards on the picnic tables at the Dock.

We ran them fortnightly on Thursdays through May, June and July as a trial.

Dates run from and to:	May to July 2023
No of gatherings:	6
Attendance:	1
No of new people:	1
Facilitated by:	David Goodall

## David's Comments

The beauty of discovering the waterways and the peace that you can find in the middle of the working day was a highlight.

This was another risk we took that received good feedback but low attendance, in fact zero attendance apart from on one week. We will be trying this again in Autumn 2023 in partnership with Leeds City Council.



# The LS “Thrive” Programme



Thrive is Leeds Sanctuary's wellbeing programme. It is a conceptual framework from which our events, workshops and courses are developed.

In developing Thrive, we took the concept of wellbeing and went beyond the simplistic view of health and happiness to ask “What does a good life look like?”

Building on a basis of physical and mental wellbeing, Thrive embeds a spiritual

perspective of finding meaning as well as tying together social and environmental issues of our responsibility to each other and our planet.

Thrive's core concepts are:

- Caring for yourself,
- Knowing yourself,
- Connecting with others,
- Flourishing, and
- Finding your purpose.

Through these concepts we explore topics such as mindfulness, core values, nurturing relationships, nature therapy, activism, creativity and play.

Working with groups of students, Leeds Dock residents, charity volunteers and women who have experienced stillbirth, these topics have been woven into activities, games, conversations, excursions and interactive exhibits in 2022/23.

*Sam Havis*  
*Wellbeing Practitioner*

# Enneagram Retreat Days

The Enneagram Retreat days are an opportunity for people to grow in knowledge of themselves and those around them using the personality typing tool, the Enneagram.

The themes of these days have been “Growing with the Enneagram”, “Understanding Wings and Arrows” and “Developing Spirituality”.

No of gatherings:	3
Total no of attendees:	29
No of new people:	14
Facilitated by:	Anna Bland and Revd Jude Smith

## Anna's Highlights of the Year

Seeing some people come back to every session and deepen their understanding, The vulnerability of sharing in the group and the way people relate to one another and learn from each other is amazing.



“ I enjoyed the opportunity to reflect in a group where we move on from the Enneagram basics to more depth. Really good pace of the day, good content, well organised. Thank you. ”

“ I thought the atmosphere was so calm, thank you for holding the space so well. ”

“ I enjoyed sharing vulnerability with others. ”



# Sketch Walks

The Sketch Walks are an opportunity for local people to meet outdoors, learn about our city and get creative. We run these in collaboration with Leeds Church Institute and Sketch Club Social, and this year's themes were "Night Vision" and "The Gifts of the City".



No of gatherings:	2
Total no of attendees	35
No of new people:	30
Facilitated by:	Anna Bland, Bronagh Daly, Clifford Stead and Yusuf Arjomandkhah

## Anna's Highlights of the Year

Sitting round and chatting to new people, the way the group bonded and how into the sketching people get.

“  
[I enjoyed] food, people,  
sketching, trying  
something with others.  
”



“  
[I enjoyed] the sketching, the  
friendly and fun organisers, the  
food, no experience was  
necessary.  
”



“  
[I enjoyed] the social aspect of  
it, the fact you could explore  
Leeds, [it was] very calm/ low  
pressure.  
”



# Spotlight: Dying Matters Retreat

Anna and Sam hosted an afternoon of activities and resources at Headingley Methodist Church, during “Dying Matters Week”, organised by Full Circle Funerals. The theme was “a creative place to explore grief”. The stations included memorial making, reflection on meditative artwork, spoken word meditation, grave talk discussion cards and a place to light candles for loved ones.

9 people attended in total.

## Sam's Highlights

A young family coming in all together and exploring their grief together. It was lovely to see the children engaging with the activities.



“  
I loved it – would have liked more time.  
”

“  
[I really value] being able to access and engage with the activities. I am going to take more time to reflect as a result.  
”



“  
[I will take away] taking time to be quiet and allow thoughts and feelings to run.  
”



# Spotlight: Carols on The Dock

This was an outdoor Carol Service in Armouries Square with carols played by the University Brass Band. The readings and reflections linked to the Methodist Church “There is Room” Campaign.

Towards the end of advent we’d distributed “There is Room” bags to residents and workers on Leeds Dock. These included a Christmas Card from Leeds Sanctuary, an invite to Carols on the Dock and links to the There is Room Campaign website and short film.

The brass band played for about 20 minutes which drew people in; we then sang carols together, heard part of the Christmas story and a reflection on the fact there is room for everyone in God’s story.

50 people attended in total.



## David’s Highlights

It was a clear evening with a sense of magic under the Christmas lights. The music created an atmosphere which drew people in and they were keen to stay and take part.

As we sang together it felt like we were breathing the Christmas story into the community in a participatory way, people were pleased to be part of the event and glad to hear the story.

Many of those who passed by said they wished they could stay which was an encouragement.



“  
The music was fantastic.  
”

# Spotlight: Leeds Sanctuary Launch

In October 2022, we hosted a Leeds Sanctuary Launch event at the Royal Armouries. The afternoon was a fantastic celebration of the work we had begun in the centre of Leeds, giving us an opportunity to thank everyone who had supported us in the previous three years.

We were joined by the President of the Methodist Conference, Revd Canon Graham Thompson, who led us in prayer and officially commissioned us.

## Team Highlights

It was really uplifting and humbling to see how many people were praying for us and cheering us on in our work, including our families - Emily

I loved the visual way people engaged with our vision and values - Anna

I loved the sense of hospitality and community we created from across Leeds and beyond at the heart of the city - David





# Spotlight: Gaia - Hope & Despair

Gaia is a suspended, spinning globe created from NASA images of the earth from space. It aims to show people the beauty of our planet but also its fragility, and the need for us to protect it.

It came to Holy Trinity Boar Lane in November 2022. We ran an event in partnership with our friends at Leeds Church Institute where we invited voices from various faiths to share creatively on their spiritual response to Gaia and climate change. The evening included Buddhist meditation, a Muslim poet and Sikh musicians. Anna shared a Christian perspective through conversation with George Otieno from Tanzania, a conversation of Christian perspectives from the Global North and South. It was a rich, varied and beautiful evening of sharing in hope and despair.

71 people attended in total.



## Anna's Highlights

A fantastic event with varied performers from different faiths and cultures. Good numbers and a lovely atmosphere. Gaia is amazing!



Leeds Sanctuary is a network of communities based in Leeds city centre. We aim to embody sanctuary and justice for everyone we encounter, providing opportunities for individuals and the city to flourish.

## REACH US



[www.leedssanctuary.org.uk](http://www.leedssanctuary.org.uk)

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[@leedssanctuary](https://www.instagram.com/leedssanctuary)

43 The Calls

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**LEEDS  
SANCTUARY**

THE METHODIST CHURCH  
IN THE CITY CENTRE