

**SanctuaryFirst**

*Your Daily Walk with God*

# IMPACT REPORT 2022





***Dear God,***

***Help us to find the words,  
the gestures,  
the expressions,  
the pictures,  
the melodies,  
that witness to your love and grace.***

***Give us the language,  
the posture,  
the outlook,  
the imagination,  
the tune,  
to  
straightforwardly and honestly  
speak of where we have come from  
and where we are going.***

***Amen.***



## Opening Letter

*I am delighted to commend this report to the wider Sanctuary First Community. In it we have tried to outline the range of work with which we have been involved in 2022.*

*This year was always going to be a difficult one as we adjusted to new working patterns and as people began to reconnect with their in-person lives. Nevertheless, our community continues to still be 100% larger than in 2019.*

*You will see from our aims and objectives that our main focus is to help individuals grow in their Christian discipleship and to bring others to faith in Jesus Christ. It has been a real joy for me to connect with people from all around the world who have been strengthened in their faith as they seek to follow Jesus through the ministry of Sanctuary First.*

*So much of what we do at Sanctuary First relies on the outstanding and unwavering commitment of a small group of committed volunteers and a small group of paid professionals who also contribute as volunteers. It is this combination of professionalism and passion that we know we must build upon if we are to fulfil our aims and objectives. In other words, I believe our present team has reached it's capacity and if we are to see our aims and objectives through to the end we need to recruit more staff and volunteers. This will be the challenge facing us over the next 18 months.*

*Continuing on the theme of sustainability, while a ministry like Sanctuary First will almost certainly continue to require ministerial and financial support from the central church, it is essential that the regular members of the community contribute financially to the ministry. In doing so they will help to sustain the authenticity of digital ministry.*

*As we move forward into 2023 with a new board and a greater opportunity to help shape the digital ministry of the church in Scotland, Sanctuary First is in an exciting season of growth and development opportunities. However, it is essential that we never lose sight of our calling to make disciples.*

*Yours in his service*

**Very Rev Albert Bogle**

**Minister of Sanctuary First**



## Introduction

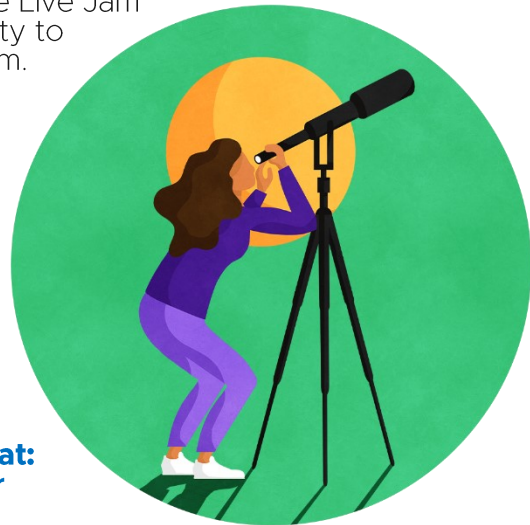
Sanctuary First is a vibrant, openhearted online worshipping community within the Church of Scotland. We are passionate about exploring new ways for people to connect with God, spirituality, and one another.

We publish prayers and readings in our Daily Worship which you can access here on the site, through our app, on social media, or by signing up to our email list. We also regularly produce live streamed events, music, short films, podcasts, blog posts, conferences, worship leading and personal reflection resources.

We are continually exploring creative ways to allow a greater interaction within the Sanctuary First Community, giving those who participate, the opportunity to meet online in a variety of settings. Through our digital Connect groups, people are able to come together weekly to discuss and share their faith in an open and welcoming environment. Our online events such as our Sunday Live Worship Service and the Live Jam Friday, enable people from all over our community to join in worship and praise, across a digital platform.

At 7am every morning, the community comes together on Facebook in prayer as part of our daily Morning Prayer. The range of different events happening on Sanctuary First such as our regular Book Clubs, Art Groups, and in-person music and worship events across Scotland, offer various ways for people to get involved in our growing worshipping community.

**Further details of all our events can be found at:**  
**[www.sanctuaryfirst.org.uk/events](http://www.sanctuaryfirst.org.uk/events) and via our App.**





We aim to be a lifeline for many Christians who have become disconnected with the institution of traditional church and a welcoming place for people who are new to faith. Whilst many in our community continue to worship in person with their local congregations, the ministry of Sanctuary First has become a valuable source of daily worship and inspiration.

Over the past five years, a distinctive worshipping community has grown up around the daily worship material. This material is written by our volunteer writers from a variety of perspectives and backgrounds. We greatly value their contributions which have helped to grow and nurture the Sanctuary First Community.

**The Daily Worship reflections, can be found at:  
[www.sanctuaryfirst.org.uk/daily-worship](http://www.sanctuaryfirst.org.uk/daily-worship) and via our App.**

In August of this year Sanctuary First became a SCIO of the Church of Scotland with its own charity number SC051969. This change in governance will position Sanctuary First to become a key contributor to the Faith and Action program and enable us to continue to help and shape digital ministries within the Church of Scotland.





## Aims and Objectives

- To help individuals into a deeper Christian discipleship journey.
- To bring others to faith in Jesus Christ.
- To connect with a worldwide population who have, for whatever reason, become disconnected from traditional church attendance but who none the less wish to be recognised as committed Christians and grow their faith.
- Through conferences and partnerships with others, support congregations especially within the Church of Scotland, to explore effective ways to use the internet as an additional tool for mission and discipleship.
- Encourage Presbyteries and local congregations to consider pursuing a hybrid ministry of in-person and online worship and to engage with innovative ways of growing fresh expressions of digital church in partnership with others within their local communities
- In partnership with interested bodies and institutions, promote training and research into digital theology and a greater understanding of how new communication technologies can shape our mission and ecclesiology and the future leadership of our congregations within the Church of Scotland.
- To create opportunities to engage and work with creatives in the wider community - including technical specialists, film makers, writers, and those involved with the performing arts. Encouraging artists from varied disciplines to explore their faith with us, in the context of our weekly and monthly themes.
- Help establish social enterprise income generating projects that promote the arts in order to create sustainable ministry and mission programs over a longer period of time.



## Progress in 2022

Sanctuary First continues to be recognised as one of the first pioneering digital ministries. During the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020, there was unparalleled interest in online church, and we became the subject of a number of academic papers, as theologians and church leaders began to think about the implications of online worship - this interest continues.

Dr Pete Phillips, now head of Digital Theology at Spurgeon's College, London, and a leading academic in Digital Theology, continues to have a close association with Sanctuary First. Recently, he complimented the board on the outstanding continuous development of the App.

We continue to build on our experience to offer a strong base from which others wishing to be involved in digital ministry can learn. Using Sanctuary First as an inspiration, congregations are beginning to see the opportunities for mission and growth that are waiting to be explored in the world of digital technology.

We have been able to continue to build on our experience and to offer a strong base from which others wishing to be involved in digital ministry can use Sanctuary First as an inspiration and support.

Over the last year we have continued to develop our App including new major new features. The App and website now has a new commenting system and the ability to create profiles for each of the community, this enables the online community to better interact not only with us in an online space but with each other, furthering the opportunity of fellowship and growing an active and engaged online community.

As the work goes forward it is our hope that the ministry of Sanctuary First will become a missional expression of the Church of Scotland, not only to those living in Scotland but to the Scottish diaspora, and indeed anyone seeking faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.





## Financial and governance developments

It has been our long years of experience in this area that has brought us to this point, where we have been able to begin the transition from being a pioneering ministry of Falkirk Presbytery to becoming a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) of the Church of Scotland working from within the Faith Nurture Forum. This means that Sanctuary First, while receiving an annual funding grant from the Church of Scotland, will in the longer term seek to gain greater financial support through the gifts and donations from within the Sanctuary First community.

However, Sanctuary First will almost certainly for the foreseeable future require the long-term support of the central church in order to maintain and sustain a high-quality digital presence for the Church of Scotland. This support will also ensure that the community is led by an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament. The estimated budget for 2023 excluding gifts in kind is around £170,000.

As the work goes forward it is our hope that the ministry of Sanctuary First will become a missional expression of the Church of Scotland, not only to those living in Scotland but to the Scottish diaspora, and indeed anyone seeking faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

We believe it is essential that our support base continues to be broadened. We are particularly grateful to a number of charitable foundations and high net worth individuals who have contributed financially to our work, and in particular during the past year, for the number of our Sanctuary First community members who have taken out regular standing orders to support the work. This number has to grow considerably, and we aim to have a stewardship giving campaign in March 2023.

This will be launched with an invitation to give financially and will be followed up with a stewardship page on the website and App highlighting areas where the community can offer their practical voluntary support in many other areas.

**If you would like to support our work with a regular contribution you can do so through our giving page on the Sanctuary First website:**

**[www.sanctuaryfirst.org.uk/giving](http://www.sanctuaryfirst.org.uk/giving)**



## **Worship Programs**

Online Daily Worship reflections, prayers and scripture readings following the Revised Common Lectionary continue to be among the most popular areas visited by the members of the community. The creation and selection of images to accompany the daily reflections, including original images to reflect the monthly theme, highlights the exceptional original creative input required to sustain a digital ministry.

Regular artistic and musical contributions for Sunday Live, add to the unique artistic quality of Sanctuary First's worship program. Our podcasts, blogs, short films, meditations, and the popular Weekly Message, enhance the depth of ministry being offered. The early Morning Prayer at 7am on Facebook has become a daily routine for many in our community. We intend to migrate The Morning Prayer from Facebook into the App and website in 2023. If we had to include the voluntary contributions in monetary terms, it has been estimated it would be around £200,000.

The podcasts, blogs, short films and meditations and the popular weekly video sermon enhance the depth of ministry being offered.

One of the most interesting developments to come out of using a digital platform, has been the creation of an interactive sermon in which two or three people are able to share together, various aspects of the scripture, blending it together into a coherent commentary and reflection in an open-ended way. This has proved popular with many in the Sanctuary First Community who feel included as they are able to join in live with the discussion through Facebook, the website, and our App.

Elements from our live events are made available afterwards, as independent resources for those who wish to catch up and reflect further.

Our music library continues to grow as our network of musicians and contributors continues to expand. This has allowed a greater number of worship songs to be used by the community in conjunction with the Daily Worship reflections and readings. These songs are available to other congregations for use in their weekly online or in person worship services.



## Partnership Programs

We value our long-established partnership with Sanctus Media (a not-for profit company). We recognise the close synergy we have with their team of creatives and the important role the board of Sanctus Media has played in helping to establish Sanctuary First as a worshipping community. The three founding directors of Sanctus Media: Albert Bogle, Neil MacLennan and Rae Manger were instrumental in the creation of Sanctuary First. Albert Bogle continues to be a non-executive unpaid director of Sanctus Media. Sanctus Media is our preferred provider of technical, internet and digital services. Since becoming a SCIO, we have also begun to develop new links with a wider group of congregations and Presbyteries, and we aim to build further upon this in the coming year.

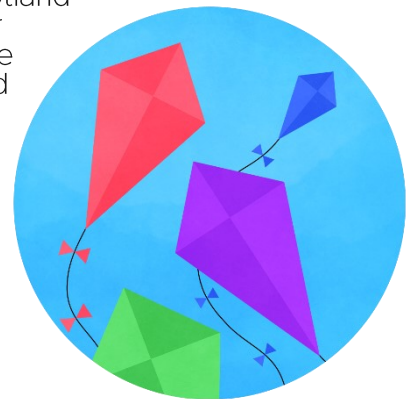
### Partnerships with other churches and communities

We have been able to widen our partnerships with other churches this year through a range of online and in person events made in partnership with different congregations.

This year we continued and expanded on our 'Live & In Person Sunday Live' program and went on the road to reach and connect with several communities around Scotland. In February we visited Fullarton ConneXions and streamed Sunday Live from Irvine, in March we visited Arbroath and live-streamed Sunday Live from St Andrew's Parish.

During August we visited several communities around Scotland and collaborated on a digital Sunday live service with their community members contributing to the online Sunday live service. These visits to congregations for an in-person and digital services allow us to engage congregations in the work and ministry of Sanctuary First, building in-person links.

The events not only create an in person or online worship event but result in a range of material being produced such as short videos and prayers that reflect and tell the story of the community in that area and the work they are doing in outreach, youth work and other charitable and community-based programs.





We have furthered our collaborations with St Cuthberts parish church, this year hosting not only several Sunday live services but the windows on the resurrection art installation again and we were grateful for their involvement with the faith at the fringe podcast program.

Later in the year St Cuthberts also hosted our 'New Beginnings' conference event where some of our key supporters gathered to hear about our plans for the future. We were delighted that Rosie Frew, the Convener of Faith Nurture Forum was able to attend along with a number of the community. Several of the community then joined in our afternoon Advent Praise event live and in person.

Unfortunately, this year our Live Jam Carol concert at St Georges's Tron was cancelled due to adverse weather conditions and the rail strikes at the time, but we hope to run it again next year and further this connection in the Glasgow area.

### **Partnership with Premier Radio**

Our partnership with Premier Radio continues to develop. This year they broadcast several episodes of our Faith at the Fringe podcast series in August and Albert and Jack were invited on to host a weekly segment diving into some of the shows and artists we spoke to as part of the series. We are currently in talks with them to take a weekly episode of the Live Jam Friday to broadcast which will further broaden the reach of our live music outreach and introduce hopefully a new pool of people to Sanctuary First. We hope that this will commence in the Summer of 2023.

Laura Digan has been involved with a number of broadcasts with Premier Radio and Albert Bogle has contributed to their one-minute prayer slots. All of which overall has broadened Sanctuary Firsts voice and reach into the broader Christian community.





## Mission Programs

Following on from 2020, we continued to develop our mission program in the light of the pandemic. We developed a three-fold strategy.

### **The Open Door Connection**

Here we are developing a missional response that welcomes anyone who might be looking for a connection or re-connection with the Christian Faith. The Virtual Coffee Shop, the Live Jam Session and Art Connection groups all offer opportunities for people to connect with Sanctuary First at an introductory level for those who are perhaps just beginning their journey of faith.

The Encourage Me section is an area of the site we would like to develop further. It covers topics like divorce, unemployment, mental health, bereavement, and many more pastoral issues. Part of our vision is that in due course, we will have an on-duty Pastor of the week available to chat through issues with members of the community looking for pastoral support and guidance. Meanwhile pastoral matters are often dealt with by members within the various connect groups and by the minister of Sanctuary First.

### **The Touching Place Connection**

Our regular new videos podcasts such as the Sanctuary First Late show, and the Time of the Month podcast along with our blogs offer a place where people can explore their faith further covering a wide range topics and points of inspiration. Our regular Tales from the Library Book Club creates a place where people can approach faith through a piece of secular writing or Christian writing, allowing faith to be explored at the pace of the individual. We hope that members of community will begin to take a role in the organisation and running of the book club, handing it over to the community to continue with.

This year the development of the online Prayer Festival, Song Festival and the Art Installation entitled 'Windows on the Resurrection', and the Faith at the Fringe podcast series, all created quite an interest within social media. The Art Installation at St Cuthbert's Edinburgh drew a large in-person attendance of over 1,300 people over a four-day period and was very well received on social media.



## **The Growing Space Connection**

The website retains a number of areas that are open for Christians to go deeper and reflect with others upon the challenges they face in their every lives. Daily Worship has been growing steadily over the past six years. We estimate that that, across all our platforms, well over 1,000 individuals read the daily worship every day.

Our Sunday Live services are attended by people from all around the world. To grow the community further, we advertise on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter which helps to develop our online profile. All of this has helped to promote and grow our online community.

## **Windows on the Resurrection**

In May during the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, St Cuthbert's Parish Church in Edinburgh played host to the Art Installation entitled 'Windows on the Resurrection'. This was created by members of the Sanctuary First Community under the guidance of Jack Steel, our freelance Creative Director. The installation had over 1330 in person visitors and the social media interest ran into just under 14,000 views.

## **Connect Groups**

Connect Groups are where people meet in- person or online using the Bible study material written by Albert Bogle and James Cathcart. This material can be downloaded and is accompanied by a weekly video. During Lent 2022 we had 6 on-line groups and 4 in-person groups meeting, (that we know about). The material can be used in small groups without our permission, around 350 visits are made to the Connect Group pages each month.

**Find out more about our connect groups:**

**[www.sanctuaryfirst.org.uk/connect](http://www.sanctuaryfirst.org.uk/connect)**



## Faith at the Fringe

In August 2022, we built a podcast Studio, sponsored by the Vardy Foundation, within the Church of Scotland Central Offices, in Edinburgh. This created a space where we engaged with the creative community that attended the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Premier Radio were delighted to take a number of these interviews and broadcast them as part of their contribution to promoting understanding of the relationship between faith and art among Christians. We were greatly helped by a number of local ministers who used their contacts to highlight the role local churches play in this, the largest Art Festival in the world.

During a three-week period the podcast studio, which faced directly onto George Street in Edinburgh became a hive of activity as we created 14 podcasts entitled “Faith At The Fringe”. This allowed us to enter into conversations with a variety of artists some who were overtly Christian, while others were using their art form to explore the deeper meaning of life. The podcasts were very well received attracting a large online interest around the world.

Around 14,000 people viewed the podcasts, and we made connections with artists who might never have engaged with faith if the podcast studio had not been built. Unfortunately for a number of practical reasons we were unable to sustain the podcast studio in this venue. However, the experience has enabled us to appreciate the value of having a permanent space out of which Sanctuary First can work.



It is our hope that in 2023 we will be able to find premises that will enable us to pursue the opportunities of creating some new and interesting podcast series. At present we are working with Neil Urquhart from Fullarton Connexions on a pilot for a new podcast series entitled 'Emerging Emmaus'. Meanwhile we are confident that we will be able to return to the Fringe once more during the Summer 2023 to create a pop-up podcast studio to allow us to produce Series 2 of Faith at the Fringe.



## Resources program

Our website and App have allowed us to better showcase our new creative resource and promote our extensive back catalogue of material. Our App, available on Apple and Android devices, launched during Lent 2021, continues to have many updates giving easy access to our resources and materials.

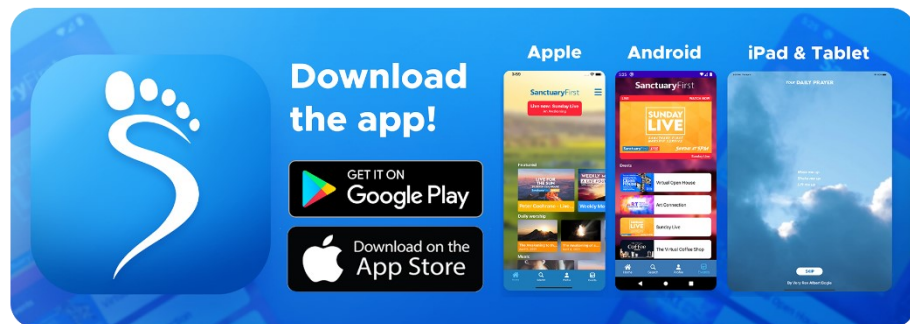
At our regular production team meetings, we have an opportunity to suggest material that might be 'highlighted' on the website home page and App. By doing this, we are finding a great deal of older material is still relevant and becoming current again.

We have over 5,000 prayers and reflections, and well over 1,000 videos and a growing number of blogs and podcasts available on our website. During 2023 we plan to archive some of this footage as we seek to maintain and improve quality control. We continue to develop our 'tagging' and SEO to allow for easier access using the website search engine or Google. Volunteers who might help with this work would be most welcome. The inclusion of original and cover versions of well-known worship songs have been popular over the past few months, as Church leaders look for material to livestream.

This is an area which if we had studio premises to work from, we could increase the material available to church and could be an income source for our ministry.

We believe if we are going to be an inclusive and relevant worshipping community in a society where the majority of children no longer attend Sunday schools, we need to start creating material online to help children worship and develop their spirituality. We are eager to find ways in which intergenerational worship events can be promoted and sponsored.

However, our team is small, and this limits us to the projects we can tackle. However, it is an important area of digital ministry that must not be overlooked.

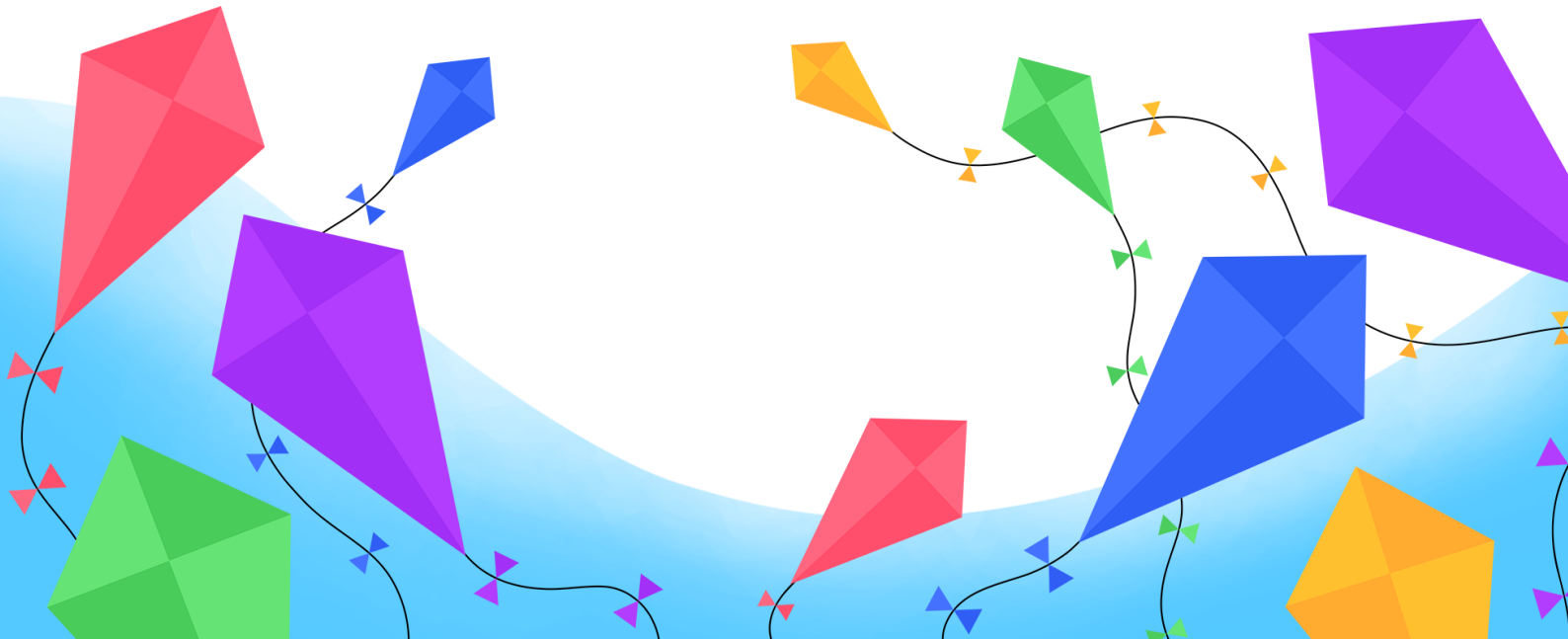




## Theology Program

We continue to value the advice and support of Dr Pete Phillips of the Centre for Digital Theology, now working out of Spurgeon's College in London. We are keen to promote research that will nurture and grow the Church both on and offline. As we move into 2023, we are looking at how we might contribute to the development of a media training school that would engage with the 16–25-year-olds. Our plans to establish our Media Day Conference in October 2022 had to be put on hold, but it will be hosted in February 2023 by our friends at Fullarton ConneXions.

We believe that we can contribute to the ongoing research and understanding of digital theology and the future of Church online. We look forward to making it possible for candidates for the Church of Scotland Ministry to have meaningful placements with us here in Sanctuary First.





## **Ecumenical & International Program**

We continue to network across the denominations as we receive invitations to take part in online conferencing. Laura Digan has been involved with a number of broadcasts with Premier Radio and Albert Bogle has contributed to their one-minute prayer slots. This has meant that we have spoken to hundreds of people across the UK and in parts of Europe from various denominations.

The dialogue has been stimulating as we begin to realise that online Church is bringing us together in a more positive manner. Millions of Christians around the world on a Sunday are exploring worship in different settings, as they browse the internet in search of a worship service with which they can connect.

We are delighted that we have had contributions from our community in India, Australia, Tanzania, Mexico, Germany, Greece, Canada, and the USA. It is our hope in the future to be able to develop these international links, as we begin to align ourselves with more of the international partners within the Church of Scotland.

## **Mission and the Arts Program**

At present we have a pool of writers and musicians and a number of creative people who would value the establishment of a Centre for Digital Creatives, to enhance a dialogue between faith and art. We hope that a Digital Media Creatives Day can be planned for October 2023 as part of the follow up to the “Create Conference” being planned for February 2023.

Our Christmas music video allowed us to network with a local charity ‘Stirling4Community’ supplying us with ‘film extras’ who volunteered to appear in the video. The song ‘Mary Rock Your Baby’ was written and performed by Albert Bogle and Iain Jamieson. This allowed us once more to have some radio plays and to have the work of Sanctuary First brought to a wider audience.



## Income Generating Program

We continue to be open to finding a social enterprise partnership that would reflect our knowledge and expertise to help us become more self-sustaining. One based around recordings, music and food we believe would be a good fit. While this continues to be an aspiration, we believe 2023 could hold opportunities to explore some of these ideas.

Our Giving campaign in 2022 raised our profile once again and encouraged further followers to contribute both in financial terms and in kind by giving of their time.





## Facts and Figures

### Website

During the pandemic in 2020 and into 2021, we saw unprecedented growth in every area of our work, as people reached out to enable them to connect to church online from their homes. This interest has continued although stabilised from the incremental surge we saw at the beginning of lockdown.

**We had 28,232 unique users to our website in 2022.**

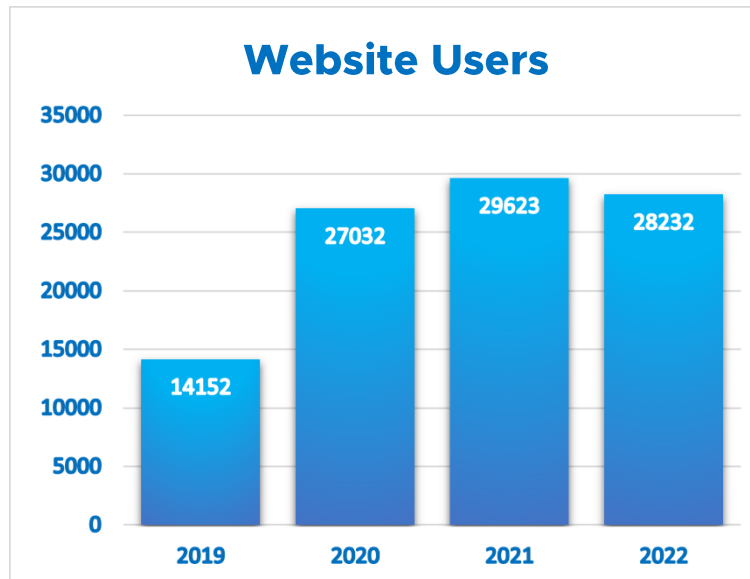
54% of our website audience is UK based, with 4.9% based in the USA and the rest throughout the world.

Our website usage has grown very quickly over the last 2 years.

There has been a slight decrease since the high of 2021 during lockdown, yet we are still in a place where we have retained more than double our unique website users from 2019.

In 2022 Sanctuary First received 140,328 page views.

The Daily worship still proves to be the most popular section of our site with it receiving 46,064 of these overall views.



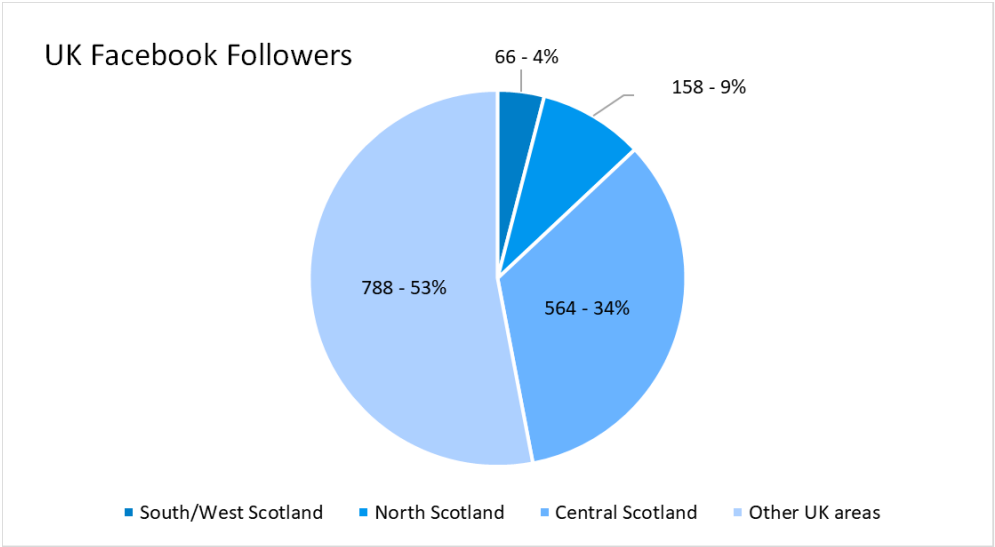
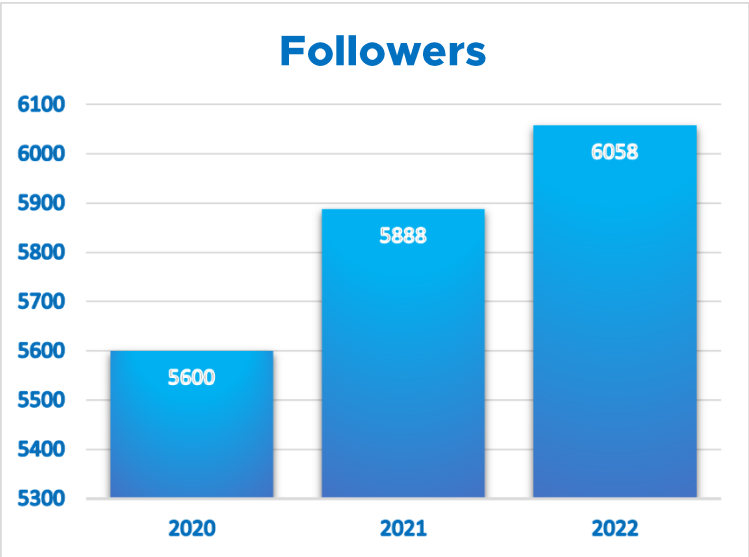


# Facebook

On Facebook our followers have continued to grow in 2022 now at 6058 up from 5888 in 2021.

34% of our UK followers are in the Central belt of Scotland, with 66% throughout the rest of Scotland and the UK

Our UK users on Facebook, which is one of the most active and engaged segments of the overall audience has also risen steadily, although we have a rapidly growing European and International followers also, particularly in areas of the world where it is challenging to be a Christian.





## Facebook Views and Reach

Facebook has recently changed the way they have accounted for reach and views.

Reach is the number of unique Facebook account users that we have seen and come across Sanctuary Firsts page or content.

As you will see from the graphs it would have you believe that we are up 32.7%. This however is not the case as our Facebook reach in 2022 has dropped slightly from 74,000 in 2021 to 70,480.

Despite this slight drop in overall reach however the number of people who have visited the Sanctuary First Facebook page is slightly up from 14,490 to 14,954.

It should be noted that the reach of our top 40 posts adds up to more than 70,000 and on average we post 40-45 posts per month.

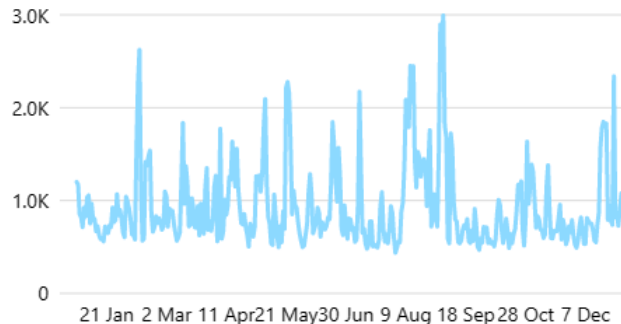
Our top performing posts this year has been the 'Mary Rock your Baby music video with a reach of 5,000 and more than 3000 views.

The other top posts have been the Faith at the fringe podcasting project, the Live Jam Friday and the Windows on the Resurrection art installation.

### Reach

#### Facebook Page reach ⓘ

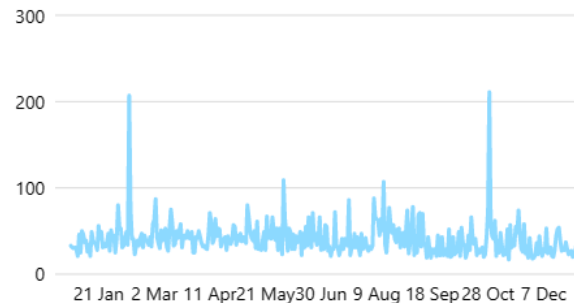
70,480 ↑ 32.7%



### Page and profile visits

#### Facebook Page visits ⓘ

14,954 ↑ 56%

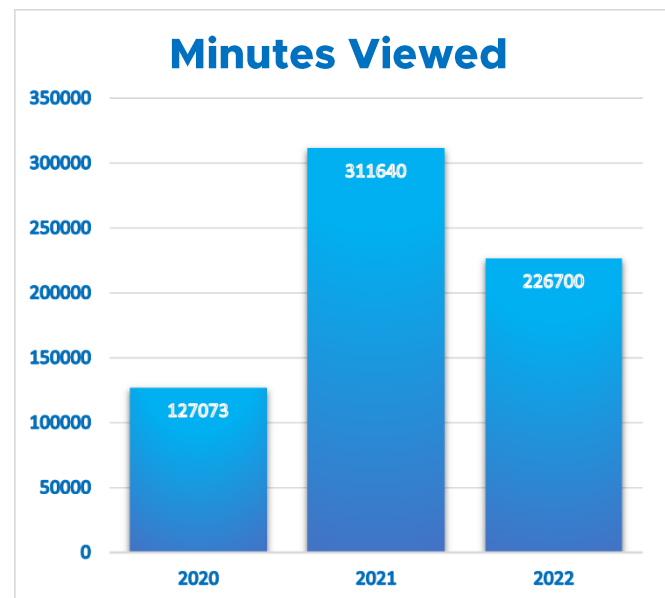
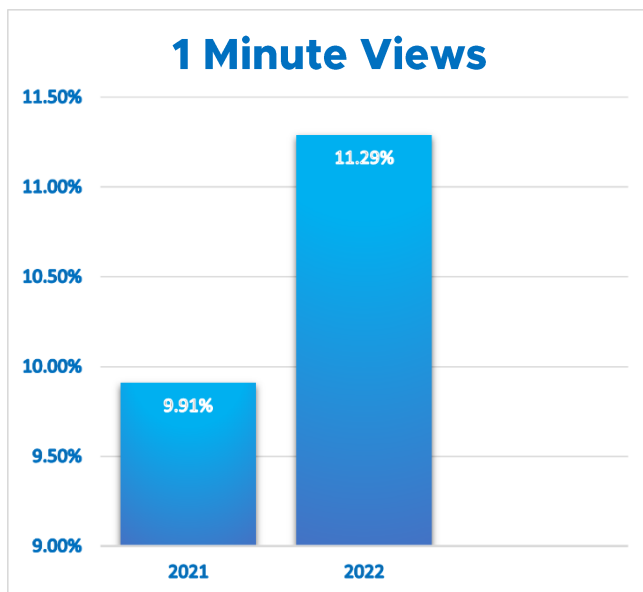




Our overall minutes viewed on Facebook for 2022 was 226,700 down slightly from 311,640 in 2021.

However, despite this decrease in overall views our 1-minute views were proportionately higher with 11.29% staying to watch a minute or more against 9.91% in 2021.

This tells us that despite the views dipping against the high of lock down in 2021 the people that are viewing are now watching for longer.





## Daily Worship

Prayer and daily devotion are at the heart of what we do, and Daily Worship is delivered in multiple ways to our community.

On our website, our Daily Worship had 58,302 pageviews in 2022 up from 55,063.

In 2022 697 people receive the Daily Worship by email up from 665 In 2021 and 611 in 2020 with a strong 55-65% read rate.

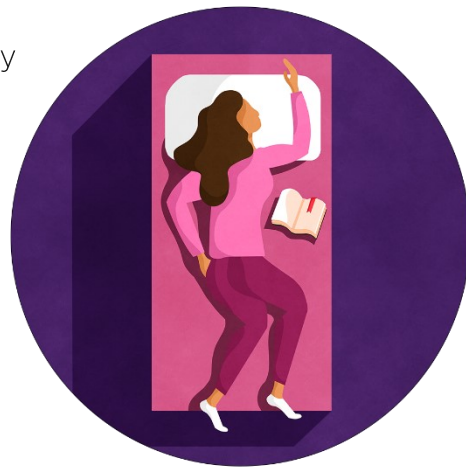
On Facebook, Daily Worship has an average reach of between 500-900 every day.

## Morning Prayer

Typically, 20-35 people tuned in daily to our live 7am prayers on Facebook and on average a further 200-300 people watch the recording later in the day. More importantly the Morning Prayer will regularly receive 30-50 comments every day with people in the community connecting with each other in this online space.

This initiative was launched in December 2020 and encourages the community to come together every morning in prayer. In 2023 we aim to transfer the Morning prayer so that it will also broadcast to the Sanctuary First website allowing people who do not use Facebook to take part in this time of community prayer.

Many of the people who join here often then go onto be further involved with Sanctuary First, either by doing readings for Sunday Live, taking part in the Festival of Prayer or joining a connect group.





## Connect Groups

Our Connect page was visited 4928 times in 2022.

This year we have made a push to start up new connect groups in local communities encouraging people and congregations to get together and set up a connect group with their friends or families.

We now have more than 10 connect groups running that are directly involved with Sanctuary First some targeted directly at under 40s.

We aim to expand this section of our work and further improve the ability for people to search for local connect groups in their area.

## Music

Our Friday Live Jam music event on a Friday afternoon continues to be very well received, with 1986 page views on the website in 2022, but with the majority of views are on Facebook and the App with the Jam regularly appearing in our top 5 most viewed posts each month with the most viewed episode reaching 2.6 thousand people alone.

Our Music section on the website is popular, with 4,926 visits in 2022.

Our most popular Facebook post this year was our Christmas song. 'Mary Rock Your Baby' recorded and written by Albert Bogle and Iain Jamieson.

We hope to reinvigorate our Secret Chord Sessions music project when studio premises to operate from become available.





## Events

### Sunday Live

Our Sunday Live worship service had 1,420 website views in 2022 and is watched by a further 350-450 people each week on Facebook.

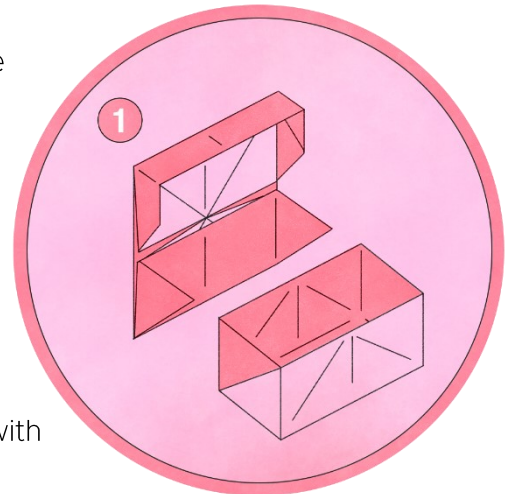
### Art Connection

Every week a small group of 4-5 people meet to paint and draw together. This is often a great place for people to be introduced to Sanctuary First and enjoy fellowship and a place to creatively express themselves. This section of the site received 642 page views in 2022.

### Book Clubs

Our Tales from the Library book club continued to be popular in 2022, with 2180 page views. A small group joining online each week. Interestingly, the recorded audio books proved also to be very popular to others around the world, who did not join the group with people returning to the audio books produced again after the groups have concluded. This may be school groups using the material as book club material.

In March 2022, we held a 'The Greatest Thing' book club, based on the book, 'The Greatest Thing in the World' by Henry Drummond. This was very popular with our community.





## **Festival of Prayer**

The Festival of Prayer received 243 pageviews on the website and each of the 12 hour slots reaching 600-700 people.

Held in Feb 2022, our Festival of Prayer was a 12-hour event with live prayer on the hour every hour from 9am to 9pm. This was very well attended by our community and watched throughout the remainder of the year.

## **Festival of Song**

The Festival of Song received 638 page views on the website. Each hour slot reached about 700 people on average with the top performing post reaching 1300 people alone.

Held in Oct 2022, our Festival of Song was a 12-hour event with live worship music on the hour every hour from 10am to 10pm. This was exceptionally well received and resulted in many of the top performing Facebook posts of the year.

## **New Beginnings**

The New Beginnings event reached 1778 people on Facebook and had 167 page views on our website.

Our New Beginnings event was held in Nov 2022 at St Cuthberts Parish Church in Edinburgh, where a small group of our local community were invited to hear our future plans following our move to become a SCIO. It was attended by about 35 people who contributed with their own ideas on future opportunities for Sanctuary First. In the afternoon following the meeting, we held an afternoon praise event which was live streamed. This live stream gained one of the top 10 performing Facebook posts in 2022.





## **Faith at the Fringe**

Our 14 part podcast series the Faith at the Fringe received 1743 page views on our website. Each podcast episode appeared not only on our website but on Facebook, Spotify and Apple Podcasts.

On Facebook the top performing episodes were the final episode with Ian Rankin, reaching 3000 people. Episode 3 reached 2300 people. Overall, the full project is estimated to have reached 10,000 – 15,000 people.

## **Windows on the Resurrection**

In May 2022, this art installation was placed for a weeklong period within St Cuthberts Parish Church, Edinburgh. It had a fabulous in-person attendance over this week of about 1500 people.

Online there was also an excellent interaction of Facebook and Instagram as images and videos of the windows installation were shown and shared by others along with video posts and a special Sunday Live service and Episode of the Live Jam Friday both taking part in St Cuthberts parish Church surrounded by the Windows. These posts became some of the top 20 posts in 2022 on Facebook with the top post reaching 2800 people.



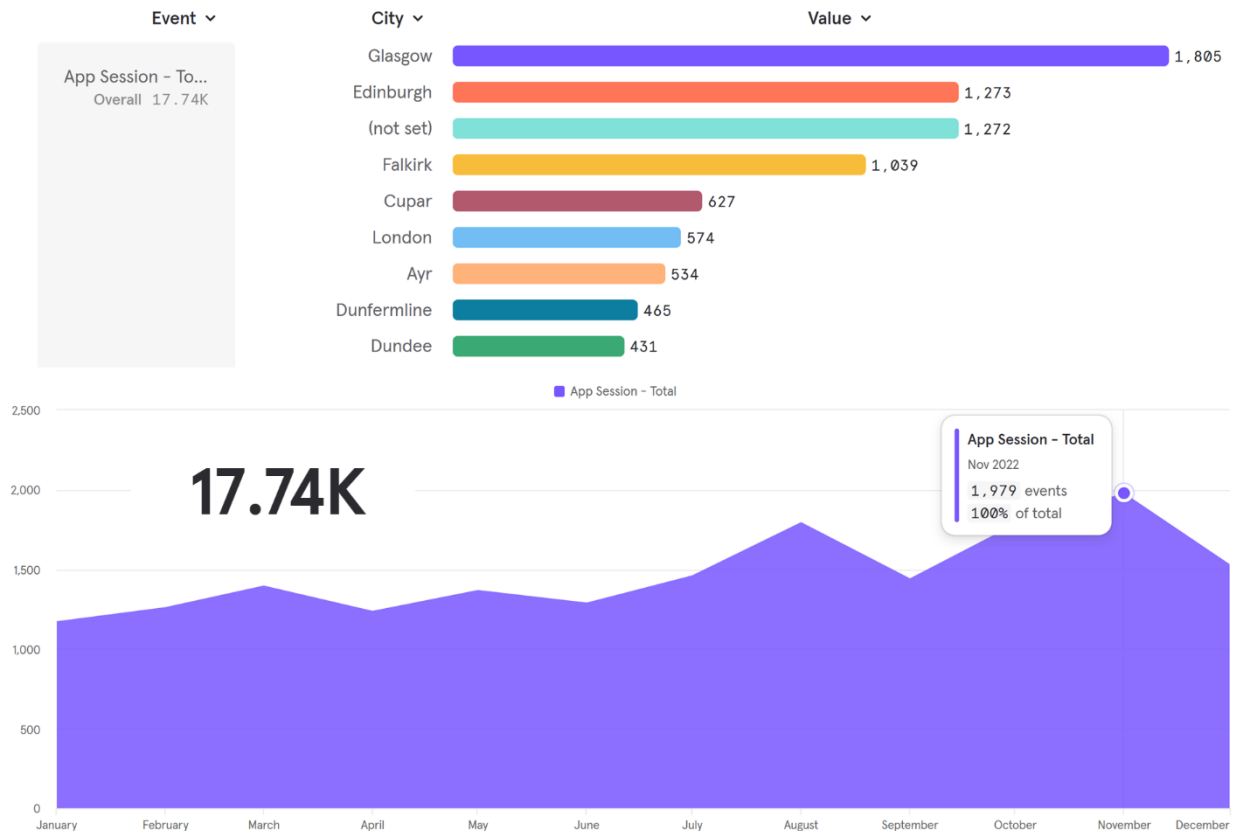


## App

Our new App was launched during Lent 2021. In 2022 we developed a major update creating a new profile system and a new comment section. We developed a suggested content function encouraging people to explore further and added a function to add items to playlists. These features will launch in 2023.

In 2022 we had 449 new downloads bringing our users to an estimated 875.

Our app sessions total in 2022 was up to 17,740 from 10,350 in 2021 (The times people have opened and used the app) with a high of 1979 sessions in November.





## For Scotland and the World

While much of our audience is UK based (49.96%) Sanctuary First is truly international. In 2022 visitors came from 172 countries, including guests from areas where access to worship can be more problematic. (33.2% of visitors on Facebook come from one of such countries)

Our second biggest audience is the USA (16.61%) where we reached 50 states, including Alaska!

## Overall

We offer an extensive range of materials and experience at Sanctuary First, providing something for everyone, from those just starting their walk with God, those who have been following Christian faith for many years, or those who have lost their way.

As we have grown as a community year on year, we must remember the purpose behind our mission. Although our numbers continue to be encouraging, Sanctuary First is about reaching out and bringing community together, no matter the numbers – even if we reach just one person it is every bit as important as reaching thousands.

Our statistics show we are a community that engages together. The comments and conversations on our Facebook page, the cheerful greetings of folks around the world to each other and genuine concern for their well-being is very evident.

Friendships are blooming across our digital community, and we are delighted that we are continuing to grow a vibrant Christian community.





## Summary

In order to progress our aims, we have in collaboration with others, developed a strategy that embraces a number of different programs designed to connect, encourage, research and create a more comprehensive approach to worship and mission in a digital age.

These programs are designed to connect with individuals, congregations, institutions, and creatives from various disciplines in order that the shape of the church of the 21st century can be more effective. We believe it is essential that Christian leaders understand the potential of digital technology as a tool to help Christians and seekers connect with the heart of the gospel. We believe the gospel is rooted in justice, reconciliation, and communion. The role of the artist and the creatives in helping this message to be understood and received cannot be underestimated.

This diversity of Sanctuary First's programs with one central focus means that we can direct various funders, who wish to support our work, to the program that best fits their criteria. If on reading our material, you feel able to contribute to our vision financially or as a contributor or indeed as regular user, we'd love to hear from you.

**Copies of our 2022 Annual Accounts can be provided by emailing:**

**[contact@sanctuaryfirst.org.uk](mailto:contact@sanctuaryfirst.org.uk)**









# SanctuaryFirst

*Your Daily Walk with God*

Find out more

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

Download our App:

