# Annual Report 2024-25



Universities CHAPLAINCY in Leeds

## Offering support to staff, students, and PGRs of:

Leeds Arts University

Leeds Beckett University

University of Law

University of Leeds

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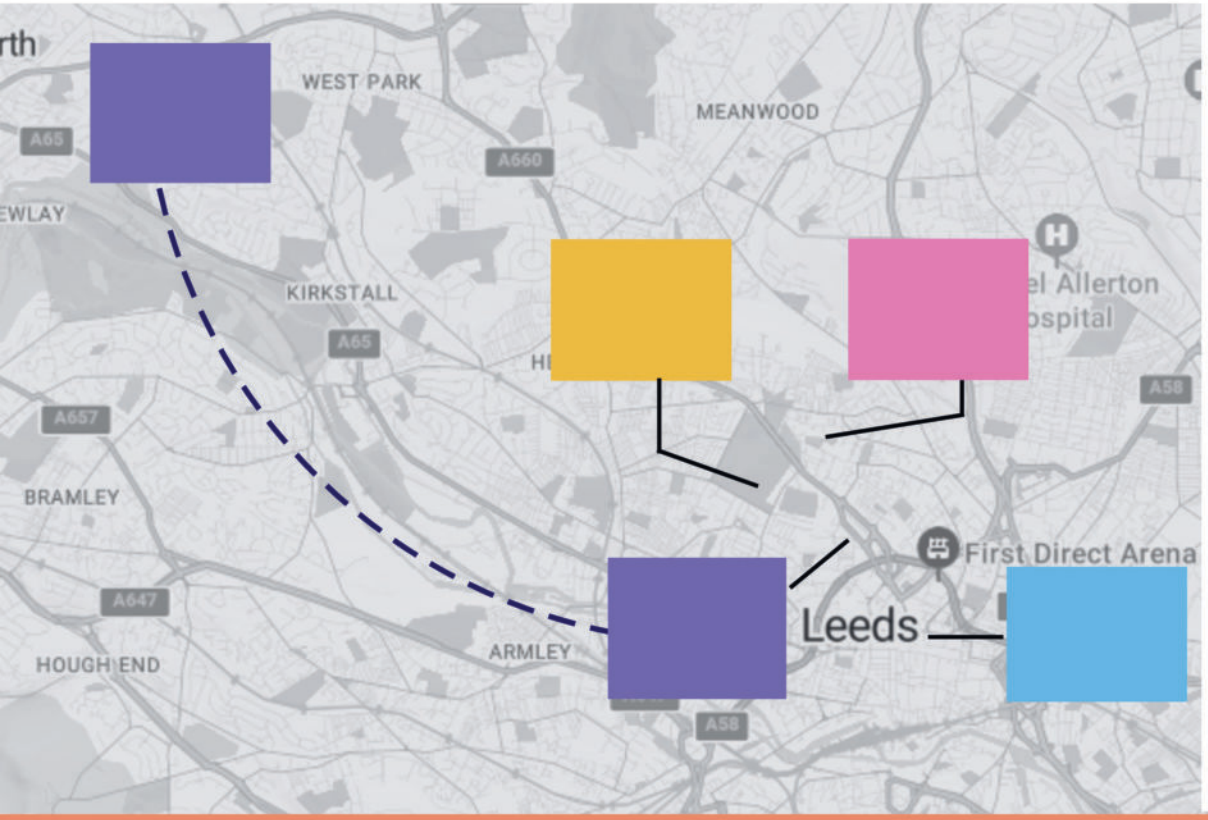
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# About Us

## Our Universities




- University of Leeds
- Leeds Arts University
- Leeds Beckett University
- University of Law

# An ambitious undertaking

The Universities Chaplaincy in Leeds consists of an ecumenical team who offer pastoral and spiritual support for students and staff at the universities in Leeds. Our support is available to around 75,000 people across five campuses studying and working at Leeds Arts University, the University of Law (Leeds), Leeds Beckett University and the University of Leeds.

# Our Vision

Faith-based support plays a pivotal role in ensuring the wellbeing of university communities including through

- provision of non judgemental, confidential and urgent support
- promotion of learning around faith related issues and spiritual development
- connection with faith beyond campus.



Emmanuel Centre, 2024

# Our Mission

1. To enable university communities to encounter chaplains who undertake religious services, counselling and give spiritual direction,

2. To provide advice and counselling on the education, and wellbeing of students, staff and members of universities, and

3. To promote the Christian religion in Leeds and elsewhere.

# Our Chaplaincy Team



**Tim Nicholls**
Methodist / Lead Chaplain



**Robin Fishwick**
Quaker / Coordinating / Lead Chaplain



**Joseph Nelson**
Lutheran / Lead Chaplain



**Marc Homsey**
Catholic / Lead Chaplain



**Ephrem David**
Orthodox Chaplain



**David Gill**
Orthodox Chaplain



**Kim Chan**
Chinese Church Chaplain

Universities CHAPLAINCY in Leeds

**Jessica Ni**
Chinese Church Intern



**Eric Suen**
Chinese Church Intern



**Ryan Lindsey**
Independent Chaplain



**Roz Monagahn**
Quaker Chaplaincy Assistant



**Geraldine Montgomerie**
Chaplaincy Service Manager



**Nikki Barber**
Chaplaincy Service Manager



**Carmen Costanza**
Student Outreach Worker

## Colleagues who left the team during 2024-25



**Ellie McCarthy**
Quaker Chaplain



**Rachel Jeffreys**
Baptist Chaplain

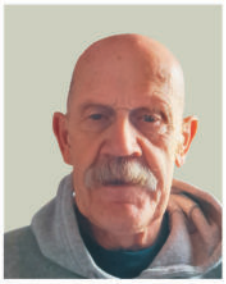


**Foluso Enwerem**
International Student Chaplain



**Samantha Sheehan**
URC / Lead Chaplain

# Our Board of Trustees



**Rev. Prof Simon Robinson**
Chair

| | |
|---|---|
| M J Kelly | Roman Catholic Diocese of Leeds |
| Dr D W Dixon-Hardy | University of Leeds |
| T C W Shaw | Yorkshire Baptist Association |
| Rev. L M Grey | Leeds Diocese of the Church of England |
| Prof. P Cardew | Leeds Beckett University |
| Prof. V M O'Mara | Leeds Quaker Area Meeting |
| C J Maluila | Lutheran Church in Great Britain |
| Dr A Arrigoni | Leeds Beckett University |
| Dr M G J Byde | University of Leeds |
| Rev. Prof. S J Robinson | Trust Chair - WYCT appointment |
| Rev. Dr R M Selby | United Reformed Church |
| Dr R B Moore | Methodist Church |

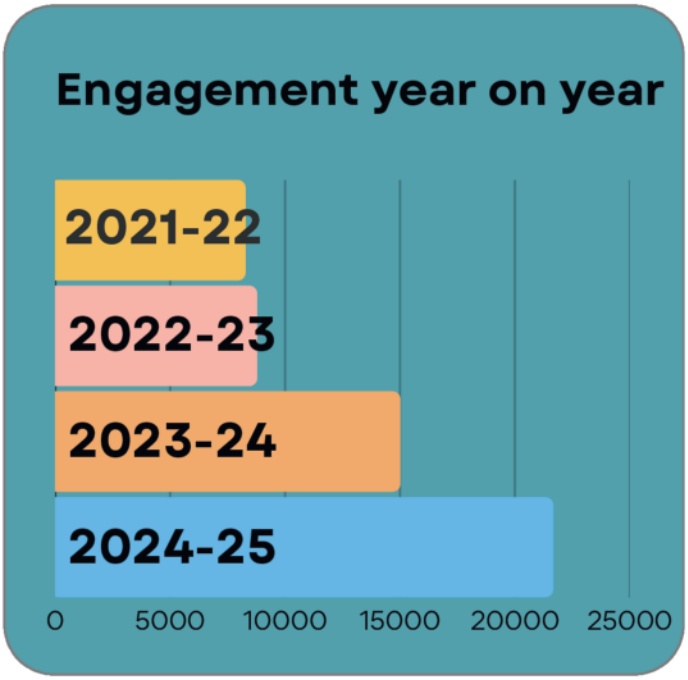
**Board members who left the Trust during 2024-25:**

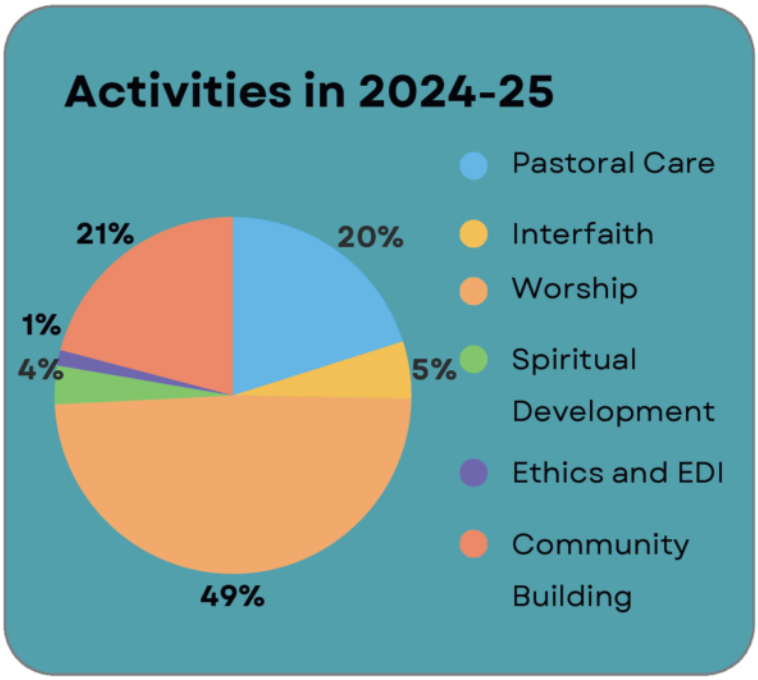
| | |
|---|---|
| A I Fraser | Methodist Church |
| Dr T Wilson | Co-opted to represent Orthodoxy |
| Prof. P D Howdle | Methodist Church and Interim Chair |

# Engagements

Over the course of the 2024-25 academic year the Chaplaincy Team has continued to rebuild relationships with a range of student groups and staff members across five campuses as we re-establish many connections impacted by the pandemic.

We have responded to student and staff feedback to offer new and engaging activities and opportunities to experience and explore spirituality and faith, whilst continuing to improve aspects of our core offer such as upgrading our 'out of hours' phone provision and increasing opportunities for telephone and online appointments with chaplains, when this is of interest.




From reviewing our one to one consultations with university members we have found that approximately 22% are with members of staff and 78% are with students.

Whilst the proportion of our engagements have remained largely the same as the previous year, with slightly more interfaith and community building activities, we have been able to increase contacts with members of the university community by approximately a third compared to 2023-24.

# Pastoral Care

As part of having over 20,000 engagements each year, chaplains find themselves supporting university students - and staff - with a wide range of difficulties. Often chaplaincy can play a vital role in ensuring that students persist in their studies and pursue their goals despite facing significant challenges.

**Adjusting to life in a new city or country and finding where you belong.**

Alongside our longstanding Chinese Church activities, our international student chaplain offered a weekly activity through the university year to support students adapting to studying in a new language, in a new climate and trying to make the most of new opportunities and experiences. This was valued by students in the UK - whether for one term or several years.

**Coping with the pressures of university life from difficulties with accommodation to managing exam stress.**

The academic year began with many concerns regarding housing and adjusting to independent living.

Chaplains also supported many students adjusting to post graduate studies and finding that their expectations had not been met.

**Dealing with unexpected changes and major life events, grief and loss.**

Chaplains have remained a consistent source of support for any crisis or urgent concern including bereavements, loss of research funding, job roles and health concerns across campus including at any time of day or night through our out of hours phone service.



Revd Foluso Enwerem, University Carol Service, 2024

# Freedom to Speak up Guardians



Chaplaincy team at the Worsley building event, 2025

We have been working on fostering relationships with other support groups and networks across campuses. One of these has been with the Freedom to Speak up Guardians who support dentistry and medical students at University of Leeds to speak out when something isn't right. We were invited to join them on a number of occasions meeting with students and other faith based services in the Airport Lounge of the Worsley Building at the University of Leeds and letting students know where they can find support while on campus and while on placement.

# Peer Talk

As part of championing mental health support on campus the Chaplaincy team has supported the establishment of an additional PeerTalk group at Leeds Beckett University - a volunteer facilitated peer support group meeting for people who experience depression. It is often the case that people who experience mental health issues also face difficulties in wider society through discrimination, intolerance and injustice.



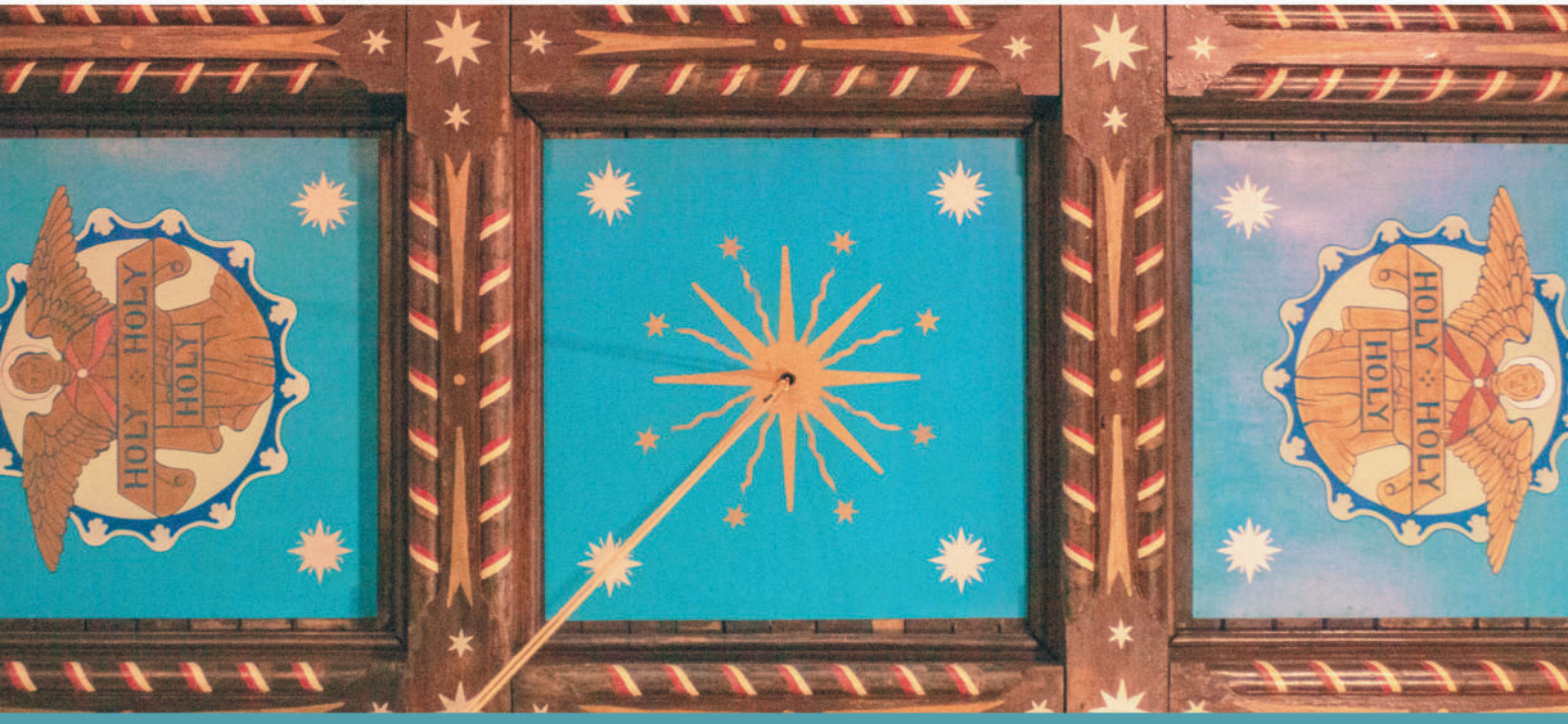
PeerTalk is an independent charitable foundation with strong links with the wider Church. Over the course of the coming year, we will be exploring the potential to partner with other suitable organisations to increase the level of support that can be offered to the University communities.

# Sprituality

Our chaplaincy undertakes a range of work in relation to spirituality including providing opportunities for Christian worship, study and prayer.

We organise Christian services and special events including university remembrance services and private memorials for members of our universities as well as hosting Bible studies, Communions and Quaker meditations across several campuses every week in term time.

We also provide guidance on prayer and accompany anyone exploring questions of faith such as offering an annual Retreat in Daily Life. We support university departments and student societies in relation to faith, religion and belief.




*Emmanuel Centre Ceiling Mural*

We also liaise with different faith groups and representatives both on and off campus, arranging opportunities for discussion and joint action, from talks to vigils.

# Interfaith & Unity

Our Strategic Review focussed considerable attention on our identity as a Christian chaplaincy and how we minister to the different faith communities of our universities, which are themselves secular institutions. In our conversations with our universities, our message has been that we are a Christian chaplaincy, comprised of chaplains from a wide range of Christian traditions, but fully committed to serving all staff and students and to working as co-operatively as possible with other providers of faith-based support.



Robin Fishwick

We have worked hard to promote positive interfaith relations to help foster community on our campuses. In response to divisive issues our work has often been in the form of one-to-one support to staff and students, but staff and students have also welcomed the unity and interfaith activities we have organised and supported out of their need for a sense of community and solidarity in times of division.

Some of these activities have been busy and celebratory like our Shrove Tuesday Interfaith Pancake Party, hosted at the Catholic Chaplaincy, some quieter and gentler like our Interfaith Origami sessions, but most of our engagements have been through going out with the trolley and giving out drinks and refreshments to anyone on campus. Sometimes we have been joined at University of Leeds by the Muslim faith advisor colleague on the trolley. In November the Unity trolley engaged with 'Lovember' offering gifts as part of the trolley provision, demonstrating our shared work to staff and students who were also grateful for the free cup of tea or coffee offered.

Over the course of the future year, we will be re-examining with the Universities around the original rationale for the Unity project, which was created following the murder of the MP Jo Cox. The intention was to explore how collaboration and a celebration of our differences and diversity. As a Chaplaincy team we are saddened by the ever increasing voices promoting fear and division, and will seek out greater collaboration toward the aims of the Unity project from across university communities.

# Carol Service in 2024

We had a fantastic attendance at the 2024 Carol Service with 300 people attending from our university communities. Our scratch choir and members of the Brass Band from the Leeds University Union Music Society created a welcoming atmosphere giving everyone the opportunity to join the singing with confidence.

We were delighted to learn that our collection for Médecins Sans Frontiers raised enough money to provide dressings kits to treat 42 war-wounded people.










# Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2025

As an ecumenical team we seek opportunities to bring together different aspects of Christian faith. This year students were involved the planning and chaplains reflected that it was lovely to see different students chatting together. We had student representation from the Catholic society, the Orthodox Society, Leeds Christian Chinese Church Student Fellowship and Leeds Arts Christian Union.

# Bonhoeffer Memorial Day



Revd Joseph Nelson

On 9th April a significant memorial event was held at the Emmanuel Centre. This marked 80 years since the execution of Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945), the Lutheran pastor and theologian murdered by the Nazi regime at Flossenbürg concentration camp. The hybrid conference event was hosted by Project Bonhoeffer, in partnership with St Luke's and St Matthew's Lutheran Church, and the Universities Chaplaincy in Leeds with funding from the Council of Lutheran Churches.



Bishop Martin Lind and Revd Keith Clements in conversation

The day brought together Christians, students, academics, and church leaders to reflect on Bonhoeffer's enduring theological and ethical witness and particularly the question of what faithful discipleship looks like under pressure, persecution, and public crisis.

The main lecture was delivered by the Bishop Emeritus of the Lutheran Church in Great Britain, Martin Lind, whose long academic engagement with Bonhoeffer's work shaped a thoughtful and challenging address on his legacy today. A formal response from Revd Dr Keith Clements followed, and then a lively second session of public Q&A and discussion, allowing participants - in-person and online - to engage in the theme more deeply.

A key part of the day was its strong Leeds-based partnership, rooted in both church and university life - providing a framework for future events. It was a joy to bring this event from an initial idea to a successful delivery. Importantly, the conference concluded with a memorial service of Holy Communion, placing Bonhoeffer's life and death within the Church's worship, and affirming the conviction that Christian discipleship is always sustained by Christ's gifts - Word, Sacrament, and Fellowship.

Bonhoeffer's name is often invoked in modern debates, but this memorial day sought something deeper: to hear Bonhoeffer again on his own terms, in the context of the Church's witness, and to ask what faithfulness might require in our own time. The combination of theological lecture, open conversation, and worship reflected precisely that aim - that Bonhoeffer's legacy is not merely remembered, but received, tested, and lived.

# Chinese Fellowship Group



Pastor Kim Y.F. Chan

The year started with many students attending our Welcome Night. It was good to see so many come to enjoy themselves and made new friends from the different parts of the world. The first term we continue to see quite a good number turn up at our activities. They gathered together in the city centre to see the Light Night, where there was lots of fun and laughter.



Then we had the Christmas gathering, for some it was their first time to experience a western Christmas in UK.

During the second term, where we have welcomed the New Year and also the Chinese New Year with friends who share much joy in remembering how they celebrate from different part of the country, and some who are from different parts of the world.

In between, the chaplains see the individuals who dropped in as well as those who arranged appointments for chats. Some need encouragement to pressed on with their studies, some need to be encouraged to exercise discipline, some with broken relationships that need to be mended. There are individuals who need to be advised how to get on with their supervisors.

The third term has always been a term of deadlines to be met, so there were students who were depressed and need encouraging to meet their deadlines.



We are thankful that all of them finished their course work and graduated, despite some who had gone through some tough times.



Personally I have been part of the Cultural Shock drama team, it has always been very welcome by those who watch and found it very helpful. It is always good to know that it is effective and helpful to those who are feeling lonely and isolated from the beginning of the term.

The Culture Shock Drama reaches many different students... though not all of them attend our Chaplaincy activities afterward, it is good to know that it is helpful to some and helps them to settle in at the beginning of the new term.



Robin Fishwick, Carmen Costanza and Pastor Kim Y.F. Chan in 2024 Culture Shock Performance

# Orthodox Chaplaincy



Fr. Ephrem - David

I should like to concentrate on all the positives. At the centre of Orthodox life is the Divine Liturgy. Through 'the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the Communion of the Holy Spirit', following the command of Christ, He comes to feed us with Himself and we are caught up in heaven and given a forecasted of the life to come.

This has inspired students from many different backgrounds to turn to Christ within our tradition. We remain a small group but can manage the Our Father in up to 10 languages. It is with much thankfulness that we realise that a majority of our community have been Baptised while at university.

Out of this, a vibrant and outward-looking Orthodox Society, including a variety of Orthodox backgrounds, has emerged - as a result of students coming together, accepting differences and working hard to further the Great Commission under the unconditional love of God.

This, in turn, has affirmed us all as members of of the Chaplaincy, accepting the ethos and purposes of that far-reaching concept, reaching out across the campuses to all, as much as we are enabled. Hence we want to work with other Christians and those of other faiths whenever appropriate to respond to what appears increasingly to be a turning to faith by younger people.

And so we try to do two things:

The first is to deepen our dependency on God's grace. The second is to follow His teaching in responding to those in need, wherever they are, in prayer and action. Typical of this was what happened last Pascha - Easter. The Paschal Liturgy began late on Saturday evening and ended about 2am. Then we continued to celebrate with each other until about 4. Later in the day, members of the Society then took food and hygiene items etc and the love of Christ to rough sleepers.

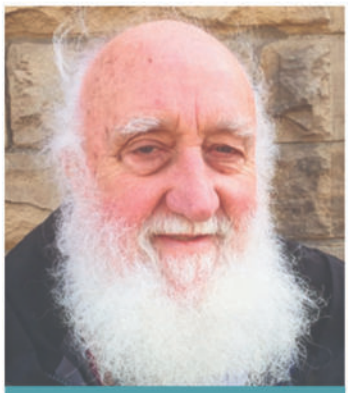


The incoming and outgoing LUU Orthodox Society presidents with Archbishop Atanasie, 2025

Fr David and I are so grateful for the support of colleagues and for how much God has graced us all.

# Orthodox Chaplaincy

We rejoice that the reinstated Orthodox Society is thriving under good leadership. The membership includes students of Coptic Tradition who are very welcome. Good attendance at Sunday Liturgy continues. In this we serve students but also lift the whole of our universities into the providence of God. Fr Sophrony, now St Sophrony of Essex has said that within all of us is a space which can only be filled with God; We pray this may be so for all whom we serve through the Chaplaincy.



Fr. David Gill

**“When I first attended the Divine Liturgy, I was struck by the radical honesty of the members of the congregation. Their words and actions always came across as well-meaning and intentional.**

***It was refreshing to be treated in such a sincere way, especially since the way I had lived before was far from what I witnessed there,***

**and the experience left me with a desire to live my life through God and to treat others with the same genuine care."**

**Undergraduate Student (2025)**

# Catholic Chaplaincy



Fr. Marc Homsey

We started the new academic year with our annual welcome BBQ. This is always a popular event – the free food may have something to do with the large attendance numbers. We were better prepared for the numbers this year, with additional burgers purchased in advance! Free food seems to be a common attractor – the quiz and pizza night two weeks later was also very well attended. The theme of free food also contributes to our best attended weekday Mass, despite its early start at 8.10am on Fridays. There is a free breakfast after Mass, with fresh waffles, hot pastries, toasted crumpets, etc.

Wednesday evenings have become our 'holy' evening. We pray the Rosary at 6pm. Students are encouraged to lead various decades of the Rosary. If they are able, they pray the first half of each prayer in their own language, and everyone replies the second half in English. We've had a wonderful variety of languages, including Malayalam, Polish, French, Italian, Tagalog, Indonesian, to name just a few. After the Rosary, we have a Bible study. In the first term, we explored Mary in the Bible. In the second term, we took at the biblical walk though the Passion. Like last year, when there was no formal Bible study we held a lectio divina, praying through the Gospel of the coming Sunday.

I organised two day trips in the first term. The first was to Ilkley Moor. The weather was much better than two years ago – we could actually see the Cow and Calf this time. The hike took us around the Moor to the Twelve Apostles, finishing at White Well. The students very much enjoyed the visit to the American diner Billy Bob's for American style milkshakes and burgers. The second trip was to Knaresborough. The snow hampered our efforts to safely visit St Our Lady of the Cragg and Robert's Cave. Despite this, we still enjoyed visiting the town and some hot chocolate to warm us up.

We had our best attended All Saints party to date, with so many creative outfits to imitate the saints. This year I went as St Maximilian Kolbe. November also saw our annual Mass for deceased family and friends. Everyone had the chance to light a candle while the names of the deceased were read out.



The Catholic chaplaincy community in festive outfits for our pre-Christmas party

We also celebrate our international community in November, with prayers, readings and music in a variety of languages. This was followed by the ever-popular shared supper. We are always surprised by the generosity of those who bring their cultural food to share.

The Retreat in Daily Life provides steady numbers of retreatants every year. Many students choose to return every year to take part. A number of graduates and staff also return year after year to benefit from the input of their prayer guides. We concluded the first term with our pre-Christmas party. This time there was the addition of gingerbread house decorating, and Christmas karaoke!



Bishop Marcus Stock with the students after answering all their questions.

The second semester saw some of our regular CathSoc events, including fundraising for charity. Two key events are the "bake off", with prizes for best tasting and best looking; and the promise auction. Bishop Marcus also made his annual visit for Mass, staying for questions and answers from the students.

The interfaith pancake party was once again organised by the Catholic Society (CathSoc). Well over 200 pancakes were cooked and enjoyed by all who came!

I organised a retreat for students, which this year took place at the Briery Retreat Centre in Ilkley. The retreat leader gave input on social media, AI, and their impact on our spiritual lives. We also learnt some great tips for working on our prayer life. I also took a group to Ampleforth Abbey for the Easter Triduum retreat. There was great spiritual input from the monks, and plenty of opportunity to mix with others from around the country, including various university chaplaincies.

Time flew by after Easter. Throughout the year I had been preparing a group of four students for various sacraments. In May, I had the privilege of baptising and confirming these students. We concluded our year with our annual trip to the park for a picnic and games. For the first time, we were hampered by rain. We made a valiant attempt to enjoy the park. After the third rainfall, we decided to take the picnic to inside the chaplaincy. We still spread out the picnic blanket indoors!

I am always thankful to God for how He blesses our year. I pray that these graces continue to move the hearts of all we have encountered, especially for those who end their time in Leeds and move on to other opportunities.

# Ethics and Advice on matters of faith to the universities' senior managers

As part of the various Service Level Agreements held with the various Universities, the Chaplaincy is able to offer support and advice to the senior managers at the Universities around matters of faith and ethics. Over the course of this year, this has been carried out in the work of the Lead Chaplains at the University of Leeds and Leeds Beckett reviewing and updating the protocols around support for the University community following a death.



Robin Fishwick

At Leeds Beckett University, by sitting on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion committee, we ensure that the diverse needs of the communities of faith within the University are represented. as well as supporting the University efforts around being inclusive and tolerant. The LBU Chaplain has also been heavily involved in the development of the Multi faith Faith Space at the City Campus, to ensure that the needs of the different faith communities were taken into consideration as part of the development.



Revd Tim Nicholls

The Chaplaincy team has also been involved during the academic year in the University of Leeds review of Chaplaincy services. This work will continue into the new academic year and will develop an understanding of how better to co-ordinate the work of a range of chaplaincy and faith advice providers to further develop co-operation and responding to challenging wider geo-political events. Alongside this we are supporting the University in developing new policies and procedures to ensure an ongoing rigorous approach to safeguarding, and good practice in pastoral care and accountability.

# Community Building

## Student Outreach



Carmen Costanza

This year can probably be described as a year of constant new beginnings. As the writer Cesare Pavese remarked in his journal, "the only joy in the world is to begin. It is good to live because to live is to begin, always, at each moment". And I have had to begin again and again this year, because I had (and still have!) a lot to learn, a lot to accomplish. This past year it's been the year of the THEOS review. Despite the hardships and the difficult conversations sparked from this process, something very valuable has come out of it: it forced us to actively think about and share with one another what is our vision for the Chaplaincy, and to rediscover our personal call to ministry. Going back to the beginning is a new beginning itself, especially when that Beginning is the Living God: eternally unchanged and eternally new.

I am very happy about the fact that, as a team, we are going back to our Christian identity, and that we are more confident in wanting to engage with our environment starting from there. Jesus Christ, being true God and true Man, is the One that can bring us closer to God and to our neighbours at once, and reach everyone else with His love through our very presence. The more we can see this miracle happen in and through our relationships, both within the team and with the people who are entrusted to our care, the more we can visualise our mission and take the next best step, one step at a time, in responding to our call – with both responsibility and accountability. After all, even though we are not ***of*** the world, we still are ***in*** the world.

## Communities

To be rooted in this faith and attentive to the inputs coming from the present situation around me are the two main guidelines that inspire and guide my work. I want people at the Chaplaincy to encounter a place where relationships are genuine and authentic, where they can receive, knowing that they are not required to do or give anything in return, because such is the unconditional love of God.

And the beautiful thing is to see that this has indeed been fruitful! Two small communities of students and staff members have started attending the Emmanuel Centre regularly.

# Dante Reading Group

I started my job as a Student Outreach Worker knowing that I wanted to establish this. And not just because I love Dante and his *Commedia*, but because I see how this amazing masterpiece can bring together people from very different perspectives and allow them to engage in fruitful dialogues, both horizontally and vertically.



Dr. Carmen Costanza at the Dante Reading Group, 2025

Again, when Jesus is truly the heart of something, heaven and earth are reconciled; God and neighbour can no longer be disentangled from one another. Dante's faith and worldview could not be more clearly Christian, and this means that it is also integrally human. God saves humanity, does not erase it... And so, the people who joined the group are both from Christian backgrounds and from clearly stated non-religious ones. Yet, the beauty of the dialogues among us, the depth of conversations, the learning of new perspectives or the new understanding of something already known has been incredible. A powerful sign of the beauty and depth of our human interactions is the ever increasing length of our sessions. Meant to be only 1 hour long, they ended up lasting for about 3 hours, and people felt they belonged to the place, not just as if they were there "consuming" some content. A sign of this is that they started helping me with the cleaning and tidying up at the end of the sessions, but also that some suggested organising other gatherings outside of Chaplaincy just to be in each other's company.

# Communi-tea!

This idea did not actually spark from my own initiative, but from students looking for a simple, informal space where they could engage in deep conversations with their peers, ask questions and share their ideas with others. I thought that I would love to facilitate that, because this is one of the main things Chaplaincy is about: a place where people can journey together

towards meaning, purpose and truth by sharing their own questions and life experiences! I provided drinks and snacks, adding extra love and care by making some well-enjoyed Italian bruschetta, and people just turn up! We have had increasing numbers of students joining us, from different backgrounds and studying different subjects, and some do not miss a session.

This is a great way for them to get to know the Chaplaincy team, and know that if they need us, we are here for them. We have nurturing, fulfilling conversations, and the gratitude shown by some students towards this service we offer them makes me think that they are finding something very good for them; able to intercept some of their needs.




# Reflections by Lead Chaplains

## Revd Samantha Sheehan: University of Leeds





It has once more been a busy and eventful year, with moments of outreach, conversation and plenty of tea drunk. Throughout the year there have been moments for the university's community to spot and reflect, where the Chaplaincy has aided in holding space.

November was our annual Remembrance Day service on Armistice Day, supported by the Brass Band from Leeds University Union Music Society volunteering a trumpet player as we stopped and observed a minutes silence before laying wreaths at the Brotherton Library's memorial.

In March once again it has been a privilege to be a part of the University of Leeds Faculties of Medicine and Health and Biological Sciences Memorial service. This service is organised by the staff and 2nd year students to honour and give thanks to those who have donated their bodies to medical science and for medical and dental education at the University of Leeds.



Meiyan Secco

The Chaplaincy team were invited to support the event and the students as they shared their own personal reflections, poems and music to aid in recognising the donors and to say thank you to the families of the donors.

As always it has been a huge joy to take the Unity Trolley back out on to campus, alongside Sister Jaan, serving tea, coffee and snacks to the busy students and staff who rush past. The trolley provides a great opportunity to stop and breathe, to act as a break from a screen and look into the face of a smiling (we try) human-being. This is also an opportunity to continue to show a sign of unity, standing along Sister Jaan is a very really visible act of sharing love.

I have continued to foster new relationships with departments across campus; working with the Doctoral College and being visible at their welcome events throughout the year, supporting the Staff Festival at the end of the year by hosting a calm space, and forging a relationship with the University Union student support team especially with their recent foodbank.



# Revd Tim Nicholls: Leeds Beckett University

This has been a year of embedding change. Over this academic year the Chaplaincy team was heavily involved in advising and supporting the creation of two new faith spaces at each of the Campuses. Multi faith prayer rooms, Specific prayer and wash facilities for our Muslim siblings, a small Counselling space and Community space was developed.

The Chaplain's offices moved a couple of times during the year as these developments were carried out, from Priestley Building to Campus Central, on Headingley Campus over term one and then began activities in City Campus in term two.

We have worked hard to build strong links with support services across the University, offering faith and pastoral advice to students, to ensure that they could find us when needed, but also signposting students to additional guidance and assistance - especially connecting to the University counselling and wellbeing teams.




We are also discovering new links emerging with student societies and the student union following a restructure and we have supported a re-established Staff Christian Network. Alongside this we have been offering new approaches to exploring faith and promoting spiritual development including programmes called Life Explored and Habitudes.



# Fr. Marc Homsey: University of Law



Fr Marc Homsey, University Carol Service, 2024

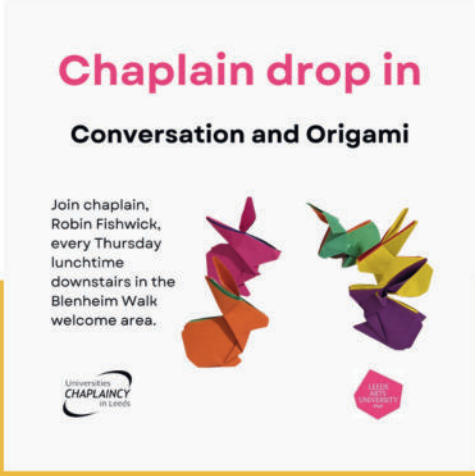
My involvement at the University of Law is now firmly established. At the Freshers' Fair, there were many good interactions with students. Many were glad to know that the Chaplaincy service exists.

I attend a monthly drop-in on campus. There are limited interactions, but I am a visible presence. I trust that, by becoming a familiar face on campus, people will continue to know of the support we can offer as a chaplaincy.

# Robin Fishwick: Leeds Arts University

I am pleased to report that I have now got into the habit of regular sessions at Leeds Arts University. These usually comprise me taking up a table in the main café every Thursday lunchtime and just being available for an hour. At first, I would set out an array of chaplaincy leaflets and flyers, put up a chaplaincy banner behind me and talk to anyone approaching me. Not many people did, and I would take another piece of work with me, or my laptop and get on with that, while displaying a "Chaplain Available" sign in front of me.

Later, I dispensed with most of the leaflets (having them available in my bag if needed) and started doing origami. This created a space where someone could come and join me, either to do some origami with me or to talk with me. I have weekly conversations this way with staff or students and the café staff are very welcoming, often displaying some of the origami pieces at the counter.






The Freshers Fair provided a very good opportunity to introduce the chaplaincy to LAU newcomers. The way in which it was organised this year meant that we were in a small and rather quiet room with other wellbeing services, but because the students all followed a set route, most of them came past our stall and most stopped to engage with us.

One thing I would stress with them is ensuring they knew where the Emmanuel Centre was (making sure they were aware it was their Chaplaincy not just the University of Leeds) and ensuring they were aware of our availability, including out of hours availability. Serving on the LAU EDI committee, I am aware of the efforts made by LAU to improve accessibility to more vulnerable students. It's important they know of the lifeline we may provide along with colleagues in Wellbeing Services.

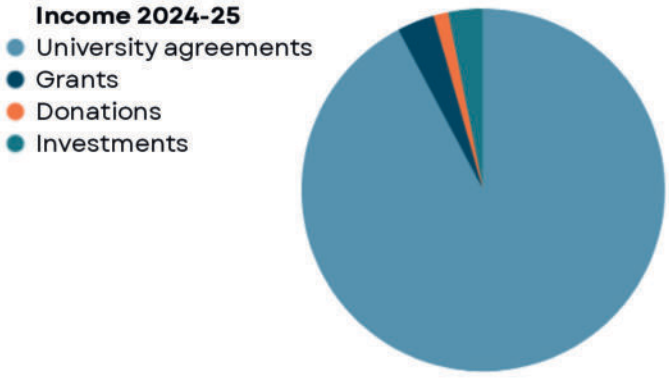
# Resources




Our income streams remain stable and thanks to our partnership agreements with the four Universities we continue to have an essential level of income for provision of the Chaplaincy service.

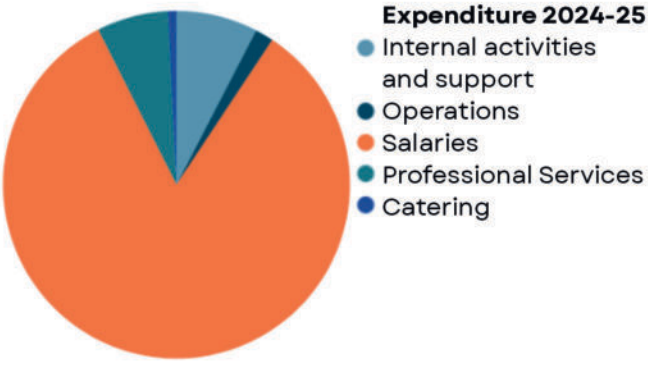
This year our universities have continued to support us with infrastructure services in a few key areas. We were particularly helped by the University of Leeds donating large volumes of snack packs for groups, updating our desktop and laptop computers and providing a portable camera and microphone for online events. We have also established two new chaplaincy spaces at Leeds Beckett University as well as new training for all of our chaplains on campus.

We have been blessed by other financial donations to support the Chaplaincy work. It is with sincere thanks we acknowledge: the Claire Jarvis Trust as well as the Romanian Orthodox Church, Leeds Quakers Area Meeting and Leeds Christian Chinese Church for their denominational contributions.




We have also received:

- A donation from Leeds Alumni from the Anglican-Methodist Society.
- A donation from local church, St Luke's and St Matthews, of candles for worship, and
- A donation from West Yorkshire Churches Together to support with our strategic review this year.




Through our partnerships with churches and denominations we have secured up to 161 hours of chaplain provision per week in term time this year. Finally we recognise and thank our volunteers, who manage - in all weathers - to get in to see and serve students. If you would like to make a donation to support our work, you can contact us using the details on the final page of this report.

# 20 Years of the Emmanuel Centre Chaplaincy

The Emmanuel Centre is older than the universities in Leeds. It was built 145 years ago in 1880 as the Anglican Emmanuel Church, based on a Gothic Revival design by Richard Adams and John Kelly - architects based in Leeds who designed many local churches in the mid to late 1880s.




In 1963 the church became a Grade II Listed Building due to its special architectural and historic interest. Forty years later in 2003 the Emmanuel Church had its last church service and in October 2004 we reopened the Emmanuel Centre as a chaplaincy and 11 seminar rooms.

*"We recall how, before this, we had to worship in a very large cold church. The new Chapel is small and raised in floor level to be with the figures on the eastern stained glass windows, Christ and the four evangelists. This provides a good atmosphere for worship."*

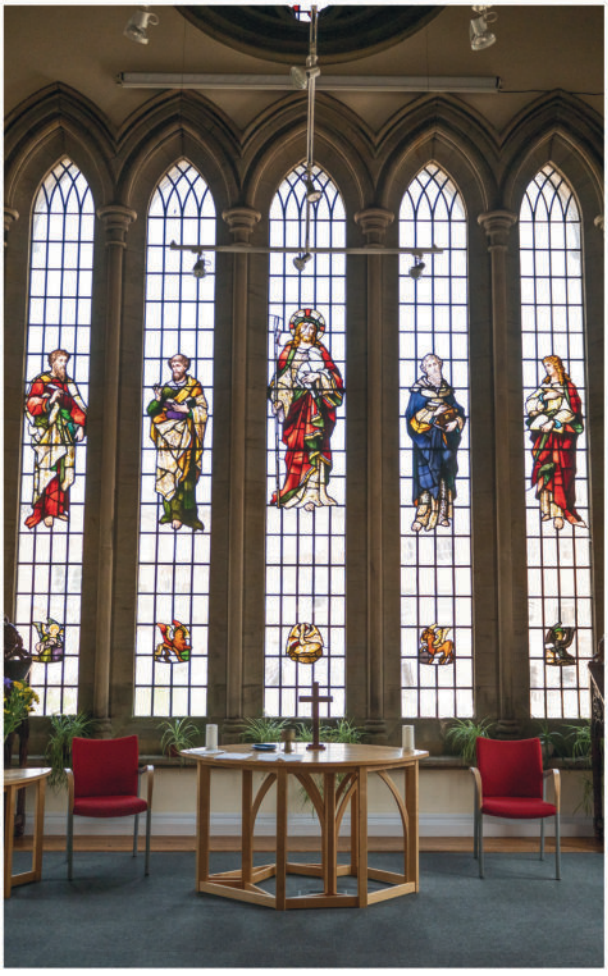
Fr David Gill, Orthodox Chaplain



*Orthodox worship - then and now - at the Emmanuel Centre*

As part of the conversation a second floor was installed in the building with features including a transparent floor to enable the stunning mural on our panelled ceiling to be viewed. Our dedicated chapel space was also created and dedicated to former student, Claire Jarvis.

# Thanks Giving for Linden Jarvis



The father of Claire Jarvis - Linden Jarvis - has been a great support and advocate for the Chaplaincy for a very many number of years. With the support of the Claire Jarvis Memorial Fund we have been able to enhance our chaplaincy provision including establishing our 'Trolley Project', connecting with members of our university community across campus over a hot drink or a snack.

We were sad to hear of Linden's death in 2024 but it was a privilege to be invited to host a small memorial event in our chapel for his close family. Something which we pride ourselves on being able to offer to the whole university community as the need arises. A quiet space to pause, to share stories and light a candle in remembrance.

# Annual Reflection and Strategic Review

In July 2024 we commenced a strategic review with Nathan Mladin, a researcher from the independent think tank, THEOS. We arranged interviews, focus groups and surveys with staff, students and decisions makers across the universities and church bodies related to our chaplaincy provision.




In February 2025 we arranged an Annual Reflection, bringing together church and university leaders to share initial findings which formed the basis for recommendations of future steps in May 2025. We are in the process of undertaken the recommendations with advice from our church and university partners.

## Recommendations

1. Develop a clear articulation of the identity and purpose of the Trust ... and update the Trust's articles of association accordingly.
2. Reform governance structures...
3. Develop a six-month, one-year and five-year plan for the chaplaincy.
4. Build a stronger university presence and relationships...



Dr Nathan Mladin, THEOS, and Dr Carmen Costanza at Chaplaincy Annual Reflection, 2025

# Timeline to August 2026



1

## REVISING MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

Clarifying the role and purpose of our board of trustees up to 2030



2

## UPDATING OUR STRATEGIC APPROACH

Developing communications between board of trustees and the chaplaincy team



3

## REVIEWING OUR OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE

Ensuring the best roles and leadership within the chaplaincy team for our work



4

## IMPROVING ACCOUNTABILITY

Ensuring clear accountability between chaplaincy team, trustees and denominations



5

## STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS

Increasing engagement between our trustees and university partners



6

## REGULAR MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Bringing our stakeholders together and sharing progress

# Reflections from the Chaplaincy Trust Chair

Last year I suggested that we were heading for a time of challenge and change, so the Trust and chaplaincy needed to carefully work out our direction. Little did I know the extent of the challenges to be faced either by the Trust or myself. As noted the Trust has had a strategic review and also the two biggest Universities have also undertaken reviews into how they structure Chaplaincy.

It is the task of the Trust, church leaders and team, to carefully work through the lessons of these over the next year. The biggest lesson, as in all reviews of strategy or governance, is to listen more carefully so that chaplaincy can respond to the needs of the learning communities it serves.



The simplicity of the message from the review process can be understood in the Incarnation. The presence of Jesus reveals a God who is listening, and so chooses to hold herself to account and to be open to question. And God is a partner in discovery, of self, each other, and community and the responsibilities and possibilities in those relationships. That is where all can locate hope, and that is what chaplaincy is all about.

Revd Prof Simon Robinson, 2024

The process of learning for myself over this year has been at times a dark one. A year ago I did not expect to be waking up in ICU after a quadruple bypass. ICU embodies both depths and heights of human experience; an absence of agency and hope in the most caring environment you can imagine.

At this point, however, I have learned I have to let go of the chair and leave it to the Trust, chaplains and church leaders to do the listening and learning. As it happens, I also have a lot of other commitments next year which in any case would have made it too hard. One of these is a book on University Chaplaincy.

I wish Trust, chaplaincy, church leaders, and universities in Leeds joy in your learning partnership.



"I'VE HAD A BLAST EVERY TIME I HAVE COME HERE"

## CHARLES

International Post Graduate Masters Student (2025)

## Our Locations

Emmanuel Centre
183 Woodhouse Lane, Woodhouse, Leeds, LS2 3AR

Leeds Beckett University Chaplaincy,
1st Floor, Campus Central - Headingley Campus, Church Wood Avenue Headingley Leeds LS6 3QS.

Leeds Beckett University Chaplaincy,
City Campus - Faith Space, Woodhouse building, Woodhouse Lane Leeds LS1 3HE.

Catholic Chaplaincy
7 St Marks Avenue, Leeds, LS2 9BN

The Universities Chaplaincy in Leeds Trust is a Registered Charity (Number: **1128626**) and Registered Company (Number: **03848337**).

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