



SANCTUARY
Mental Health Ministries

Becoming Sanctuaries

A CALL TO EMBRACE A HURTING WORLD

A Case for Support from Sanctuary Mental Health Ministries

The Mental Health Crisis and the Church's Response

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."

- GALATIANS 6:2

We are living in a time of profound disconnection.

The statistics are alarming. Rates of anxiety, depression, and suicide are rising across every age group. One in four people will experience a mental health challenge in their lifetime, including an estimated **600 million Christians**.

When individuals suffer alone in silence, it can make them more vulnerable to suicide today and can increase their future risk of developing conditions like dementia by 50%. Further, individuals experiencing mental health challenges often struggle to make and keep friends, or to belong and participate in community. This isolation and disconnection fuels the cycle of stigma, ill health, and community fracture.

With Christians more likely to go to their pastor than a professional medical provider, research shows that

nearly **70% of pastoral care work** is now mental health related. Despite being uniquely positioned to interrupt this cycle, churches don't feel they know how.

Congregations and church leaders want to help, but lack the tools to do so.

There are **2.4 billion Christians** in the world. Imagine the transformation that's possible if a fraction of our churches were equipped to meet this moment; to listen deeply, support inclusively, and dismantle the stigma that creates barriers to belonging.

The Opportunity:

A CHURCH EQUIPPED TO CONNECT

“We want this to be a defining feature of our church—that this is a safe place to come.”

– COURSE PARTICIPANT

Sanctuary Mental Health Ministries equips churches with the tools and skills they are asking for to respond to this vast and often invisible reality embedded within the heart of faith communities.

Sanctuary provides free, high-quality resources that are theologically grounded, clinically informed, and centred on lived experience. We help churches respond with confidence instead of silence.

Our flagship resources, *The Sanctuary Course* and *The Sanctuary Course for Catholics*, are eight-session, small group study guides designed to spark honest conversations, reduce stigma, and cultivate communities of resilience.

And the results speak for themselves: **92% of participants** said the course successfully opened essential

conversations and **98% would recommend it to others.**

This tells us our resources aren’t just educational—they’re transformational.

Recently, we’ve also launched *The Sanctuary Youth Series* to equip churches, youth ministers, and caregivers to walk alongside young people aged eleven to fifteen—an age group facing a global mental health crisis and asking tough questions about faith.

Together, these resources are fueling a movement of churches embracing their role as sanctuaries for all people.



OUR MISSION

To equip the Church to support mental health and wellbeing.

OUR VISION

We envision a future where the Church plays a vital role in supporting mental health and wellbeing in every community.

Spotlight: The Sanctuary Youth Series

If we want young people to stay connected to faith, we need to meet them in the midst of the struggles they’re actually facing.

Mental health challenges among youth are soaring. Most churches report they don’t know how to respond. *The Sanctuary Youth Series* helps fill that gap.

Created for teens aged eleven to fifteen, this resource opens honest conversations about anxiety, identity, and emotional wellbeing from a faith perspective. It’s theologically grounded, developmentally appropriate, and built around the voices of young people with lived experience.

This is early intervention at its most effective—helping young people feel seen, supported, and spiritually rooted before crisis hits.

Sanctuary is not only responding to today’s crisis, but also looking ahead and equipping the next generation of the Church.

Proven and Scalable:

A MOVEMENT ON THE RISE

“People were very, very open...we can bring our sorrow and suffering, and it’s okay.”

– COURSE PARTICIPANT

- Since its launch, *The Sanctuary Course* has reached over **365,000 participants** in **102 countries**—a staggering **4,500% growth** rate driven almost entirely by demand and word-of-mouth.
- Churches who utilize Sanctuary materials report that congregants feel an increased sense of engagement and connection with one another. Churches also report that Sanctuary’s resources have catalyzed creative new ideas for outreach, enhancing the relevance of church ministry offerings. Sanctuary equips churches to become a bridge, reconnecting those who have felt alienated from their faith, their communities, and themselves.
- In 2024 alone:
- **More than 170,000 people** engaged with our website, programs, and resources—each encountering the truth that God is present in life’s challenges.
 - **560 churches** across multiple denominations were equipped to offer mental health support.
 - **10,000+ resource portal accounts** were created.
 - Our *Sanctuary Songs* worship album (produced with The Porter’s Gate Worship Project) was streamed over **9 million times**.

Now, Sanctuary is ready to scale this tremendous impact, aiming to reach **1 million Christians** worldwide thanks to the contribution of visionary donors like you.



In May 2023, Sanctuary Songs launched at the Alpha Conference in London, England. Artists including Matt Maher, Issac Wardell, Ike Ndolo, Leslie Jordan, and IAMSON (Orlando Palmer) took center stage at the Royal Albert Hall to introduce the album.



After working on *Sanctuary Songs* with my husband, Orlando, I went to an artist retreat at Barnabas Landing hosted by Sanctuary. There, I was given so much language for my mental health journey—language to understand and language to pray. I was reminded that it’s both; it’s not either Jesus or medicine. It’s Jesus and therapy. It’s Jesus and community.

The beauty of community is that God uses people to help people. I’m so thankful for Sanctuary, because you were the beauty of community, and the power of community, for me in that moment. Thank you so much, Sanctuary, for being a part of my story, of my journey.

– DOE, 2025 GRAMMY® Winner, Best Contemporary Christian Music Album



The Campaign:

A \$6 MILLION INVESTMENT IN TRANSFORMATION

To meet the global demand we are launching a \$6 million campaign that will establish Sanctuary as a trusted global voice in faith-integrated mental health.

HERE'S A LOOK AT HOW WE WILL DO THIS

1. Broaden Our Reach

We intend to evolve Sanctuary from a program provider to a platform for global impact. These strategic initiatives will position us to reach over **1 million people**:

- Strengthen and invest in our **digital infrastructure** to ensure worldwide accessibility.
- Launch **Sanctuary Studios**, a creative hub for digital storytelling and resources.
- **Engage diverse cultural contexts** and adapt resources to amplify authentic voices across multiple platforms and art forms.
- Expand partnerships with platforms such as **YouVersion**, **CREATR**, and **Life.Church's Open Network**, positioning us to reach tens of millions.

2. Deepen Our Resources

Equipping churches for compassionate, contextualized ministry to meet demand for faith-integrated mental health resources is a key part of our strategic mission. Key projects will include:

- Launch new modules focused on **specific mental health conditions** that respond to real community needs and allow churches to customize their learning journeys.
- Refine *The Sanctuary Youth Series* as feedback is captured and demand grows, helping churches **support youth** in navigating anxiety, identity, and emotional wellbeing.
- Update our **impact assessment measures** in order to better understand church needs and report on the impact of our programs.
- Develop *Becoming Sanctuaries*, a highly requested community development resource that will offer a practical guide to implementing mental health ministry.

3. Sustain the Mission

With a participation growth of 4,500%, Sanctuary requires a solid foundation to sustain it and a revenue engine to power its potential. To keep up with this demand we must:

- Hire a **dedicated fundraising team** and **digital** engagement staff.
- Diversify our foundation-dependent funding and transition to a **community-supported model**.
- Cultivate a base of **monthly donors** committed to fueling ongoing impact.
- Strengthen internal operations to support the next phase of growth.



My partner and I have just co-facilitated our first run of The Sanctuary Course at Christchurch Church of England, Lancashire, UK. The feedback was amazing from the course participants. Your quality of material, rich resources, and brilliant layout enabled us to deliver the course effectively to an increasingly engaged and enthusiastic group. What happened over time was the development of trust amongst the group, the opening of selves to each other, growing courage to be vulnerable as individuals and the deepening and strengthening of that wonderful skill of listening. Silence became easier for them to sit in while listening and the results were palpable. We simply want to convey our thanks to you for such a course, its quality, its production and accessibility. We looked at other courses and none were up to your standards. You have inspired and helped begin a wonderful work in our lives and church which we are, by the help of the Holy Spirit, compelled to see, reach out, and touch many lives.

- GRAEME SCROGGIE
AND VICTORIA BURTON

Why Donors Are Giving to Sanctuary

SANCTUARY SITS AT THE INTERSECTION OF THREE POWERFUL PHILANTHROPIC PASSIONS:

1. Strengthening the Church

Donors who care about the health, relevance, and resilience of the Church are investing in Sanctuary as a means of renewal. After implementing Sanctuary programs, churches report increased engagement, a deeper sense of community, and an expanded sense of mission. *The Sanctuary Youth Series* is helping youth ministries create safe, grounded spaces where teens can navigate mental health through the lens of faith.

2. Expanding Outreach

Caring for people with lived experience of mental health challenges is not just an expression of compassion—it's a bridge to those who have felt alienated from the Church. Sanctuary's presence has helped congregations re-engage spiritual seekers and marginalized believers with a message of radical welcome.

3. Supporting People with Lived Experience

For donors whose lives have been touched by mental illness—in their families, friendships, or personal journeys—Sanctuary offers a way to unite faith and advocacy. Our resources centre lived experience as a *source of wisdom*, not shame.

Why Sanctuary? Why Now?

Because mental health is one of the most urgent issues of our time.

Because the Church has the reach, the people, and the Spirit to respond.

Because the model works and the movement is growing.

Because **Christian philanthropy can catalyze a global transformation** in how the Church shows up for a hurting world.

Because **you can** make the difference.



In 2014, our son, Josh, was admitted to the psych ward. We met with our family doctor and were told that we needed to learn about psychosis. This was not the news we wanted to hear. Thankfully, we received great professional support. However, as followers of Jesus, we were left wondering: "Where was God in all of this?" "How do we talk about this at church?" "Can we even talk about this at church?" We were left feeling very alone and isolated, but not for long ... We found Sanctuary. We can't describe the excitement we experienced as we realized there was an organization working to equip the church to support those of us on mental health journeys. Sanctuary's resources have provided invaluable training and encounters over the years, and they continue to help form the culture at our church when it comes to mental health challenges.

- CAL AND SUZIE WARNEKE

Join Us

For more information or to request Sanctuary's full Three-Year Strategic Plan (2024–2026), contact:

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Partners and Friends



As Seen On

YouVersion

