



GOHEALTH
The Guild of Health and St Raphael

Our Story 2023 - 2024





The Guild Prayer

Loving God
through Christ you offer to creation
your gifts of healing, wholeness, and salvation.
Bless and strengthen us in answering your call
to cultivate these gifts within your Church.
Fill us with your grace,
so that each member of the Guild
may reveal the Good News of your love.
We make our prayer through Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you in the life-giving Spirit,
ever one God,
now and forever.
Amen



Contents

Message from the Chairperson	4
Message from the Chief Executive	5
Summary of our vision, purpose and why we exist	6
An overview of the year 2023-2024	7
Getting into the detail	8
Some stats & feedback 2023-4	14
The people we connect with and serve	16
Photo Gallery	18



"Healing is at the heart of the Christian mission and GoHealth is at the forefront of exploring the engagement of faith, community and medicine. With theological depth and practical innovation it serves not only the church but all who want to see healing in an often broken world."

Prof David Wilkinson



From the Chairperson:



I am so pleased that you are interested in the work of the Guild. It is nearly three years since I took on the role of Chair of Trustees and I am more convinced than ever that individuals, communities and nations need the fullest forms of healing, health and wellbeing, which Jesus Christ came to bring.

It remains a great pleasure to work with the team - Gillian, Wendy, Sue, Theresa and Graham - and with our newly expanded Board of Trustees - Victoria, Catherine, Ken, David and Michael - who are joined by three new Trustees - Nicky, Eleanor and Rod. They are an amazing group of people and conversations with them always leave me with food for thought, inspiration and renewed energy. As always, I am grateful to them all for giving their time, expertise and wisdom so generously. I am also very grateful to Professor John Swinton for serving and supporting in his role of President of the Guild of Health and St Raphael.

I am part of a small book club as part of my church. Earlier this year we read 'Jesus and the Disinherited' by Howard Thurman, the extraordinary Black preacher, leader, pastor, activist, academic and author. In the book, he says:

"The religion of Jesus makes the love-ethic central. This is no ordinary achievement. It seems clear that Jesus started out with the simple teaching concerning love embodied in the timeless words of Israel: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might,' and 'thy neighbour as thyself.'"



Wendy, Graham and Gillian

"Once the neighbour is defined, then one's moral obligation is clear. In a memorable story, Jesus defined the neighbour by telling of the Good Samaritan. With sure artistry and great power, he depicted what happens when a man responds directly to human need across the barriers of class, race, and condition. Every man is potentially every other man's neighbour. Neighbourliness is nonspatial; it is qualitative. A man must love his neighbour directly, clearly, permitting no barriers between."

When I hear about the work of GoHealth, I hear stories of where churches are making 'the love-ethic central', where churches are responding 'directly to human need', and are being good neighbours. It is what the world needs.

The Guild of Health and St Raphael, 120 years after it was founded, is actively addressing the needs of the 21st century and is as relevant, expert and applicable as ever. In this past year, topics explored through podcasts, articles, teaching, workshops, talks, prayers, discussions and reflections have included pain, trauma and burnout. All those resources remain available and, if you haven't yet done so, do check them out and spread the word about them. They are beautiful, powerful, helpful and healing.

Finally, let me conclude with a really big 'thank you' to you and all the other members, supporters, funders and pray-ers of the Guild. We could not do it without you.

Mr Steve Coles, Chair of the trustees



Theresa



Sue

From the Chief Executive:



I'm delighted to be sharing this Annual Report with you, celebrating all the different ways we've been working to integrate healing, community, faith and science to make a powerful difference in people's lives. At GoHealth, we seek to turn up in the world offering compassion and being inspiring and empowering.

And this year this has led to growth and flourishing. We have settled into new ways of working, honing how we deliver our purpose, working with experts and producing high quality resources to reach as many people and organisations as possible with our vision.

For over 120 years the Guild of Health and St Raphael have been focused on the healing ministry of the Christian Church, interweaving healing and mission following the mandate of Jesus Christ. There are as many ways to do this as there are human beings, because each of us is a unique beloved creation of God, who wants us to experience life in all its abundance. It is a vision of being that puts flourishing in a symbiotic relationship with vocation. It is not a one size fits all approach.

So, whether you are ordained or lay, expert or beginner, in good health or otherwise, we can all live into being a healing presence in our own life and in our communities.

In this year's series *Burn Like Stars*, we explored how to 'shine like stars', as St Paul said, getting into a conversation with theology and science about how to work deeply and keep well, especially those who feel tired and 'singed out'. But shining like a star, burning on well, is something that we aim to do as an organisation too.

The American Christian singer songwriter Flamy Grant puts it this way:

**Everyone has a star that lights their way
We see our paths by someone else's shine.**

This year the Guild has illuminated the path for many exploring how to be a healing presence in their own life. And at the heart of being a healing presence is that idea

that through our work, life and presence we light the way for others. Illuminating the truth in the faith that even when we are ill, there is hope; even when it seems dark, God is with us; even when the world seems broken, lost and abandoned, Jesus promised that every prayer is heard, and that God will never leave us.

But doing this can be tough. Especially today when the church is in decline, there are wars and aggressions, the climate is in crisis and there is economic and political uncertainty, so it is important to find connections with others for inspiration, support and healing.

At a recent gathering of the GoHealth Community one member commented - "I have found my tribe". This is what we hope to be - kindred spirits shining for others and gathering in for support when times are tough.

None of this is possible without the GoHealth team - Wendy Lloyd, Graham Fender-Allison, Theresa McDowall and Sue Martin. It is a privilege to work with you, and an honour to know you. Thank you to Steve Coles, our Chair, for your wisdom and support, and his leadership of the board. And indeed, thank you to the whole board. There are many 'alongsiders' with whom we work, not least the team at Creative Stream, Steve Collins who helps with Marketing and Wendy Ball, our communications consultant.

The Guild has no official office, no building. But I would like to acknowledge and pay respects to all members and leaders in our 120-year history for keeping safe this precious gift and passing it on to us.

And finally, the Guild is our members. We work to serve you and to build up a movement of healing presences, thank you for being part of this journey and for all you do as healing presences in the world.

May God bless you all.

The Revd Dr Gillian Straine, CEO (Chief Executive Officer)



HUBS



COMMUNITY



CHRISM



Summary of our vision, purpose and why we exist

We are an ecumenical, Christian charity with over 100 years' experience in holistic health and healing.

We exist to enable churches and individual Christians to be healing presences in the world – for the benefit of all. This is the mission Jesus has given us and what God empowers us to do.

Our purpose is to equip and inspire people to nurture health and healing in ourselves, our communities, and our world.

Our vision is to see and be flourishing communities made up of flourishing individuals.

At the Guild, we believe that we are each on a unique health and wellbeing journey. We start where we are, as we are. Our wellbeing – individually and collectively – lies at the intersection of faith, science, evidence-based healthcare, and flourishing communities. This is holistic health, and our spiritual life is a core part of our humanity. Christian faith invites people to follow Jesus Christ – which includes an honest engagement with the experience of suffering and his command to heal.

For us, it is important to acknowledge that our individual health is inextricably linked with our community and wider world, so that we know that holistic health is enabled through just and flourishing communities. Sadly, individual and collective suffering are widespread, and the health of our planet is being undermined. Much of this is driven and exacerbated by social injustice, including health inequalities.

Modern medicine has theological foundations which grew out of practical healthcare offered by faith communities. We continue to celebrate science as a key tool to understand the world and ourselves and we recognise its limitations. It is important to sense that health is complex and multifaceted, yet the siloed nature of many academic contexts limits the knowledge we foster and use to shape health practice and community life. Further, healthcare is not the sole jurisdiction of healthcare professionals. Everyone has a part to play in enabling health for themselves and others. At the Guild we believe that with attention and training we can grow in our capacity to be healers.

Given the various global instabilities, faith-based organisations have a significant opportunity to work with local and national bodies in bringing positive impacts to their communities. But we face this situation with hope and energy, because history shows that when people of faith offer health and healing, lives are changed and the church grows.

The Guild of Health and St Raphael joins with others in the wider movement pursuing health and wellbeing for all and we are excited about the distinctive contribution we bring. We are not a community of the healed, but we are empowered by God to journey with our health challenges and the pain of the world, towards flourishing.



An overview of the year 2023-2024

The Guild's small team seeks to deliver our ambitious vision in several modes which are carefully crafted to align with our values and be impactful and relevant to the world in which we operate:



1 To be active learners, tending to our own journeys towards health, and wellbeing, and encouraging others as they tend to theirs.

2 To nurture communities and networks of learning, knowledge, and practice (especially, but not limited to, churches and Christian networks).

3 To provoke and inspire wider engagement in health and healing that is person-centred, rooted in Christian faith, valuing of medical science, and serving our communities.

4 To be a mobilising and animating presence within the wider movement of wellbeing and health, bringing the perspectives and power of our faith to this work.

We do not and we cannot work alone. Therefore, we purposefully try to maximize our impact by enabling communities of knowledge, learning and practice. These support individuals and groups to feel more confident and equipped to bring the gifts of healing and health where they are.

This is our “multiplier model” and our efforts are focused on two groups:

- The GoHealth Community and
- The Healthy Healing Hub network

We also deliver training, run social media channels, and respond to invitations to preach and speak in various locations to reach other audiences with our work so as to encourage the Guild's aims to be met, and both the GoHealth community and the Healthy Healing Hub networks to grow.



Getting into the detail

In this section, we summarise all our activities this year under the four ways that we offer our gifts into the world and tend to our community and network.



We deepen our faith, including through prayer and exploring theological and liturgical perspectives.

In 2023-4, this included the following:

- The GoHealth community was resourced weekly with a range of topics that touched on faith, science and health. This included new prayer material and suggestions for practical ways to deepen faith.
- We have responded in times of crisis with prayer responses and support. This included a new prayer for Israel and Gaza which was used by members and taken into the community.
- We continue to take prayer requests 24/7 through the website. The intercessions are shared with the GoHealth Community.
- We have continued to populate our Prayer portal with a range of content for members to use personally and/or in church services.



Wendy Ball working with the board on The Charter



Jane Cook presenting at the trustee away time



Gillian at the ChurchWorks Conference



A group discussion at the workshop on burnout at Sarum College, Salisbury



Gillian presiding at the Healing Festival

"The GoHealth podcast has opened the door even wider to the wholeness and healing that God delivers. A privilege to connect and engage with."

Rev Steve Speight (Life Church Lichfield)



Steve Coles opens the Healing Festival



We engage with science, the world, and our communities

Our unique way of working involves us having a conversation about faith and healing while drawing into the insights of the academy, what is happening in contemporary culture and the healing needs of our members and their communities.

We see ourselves as a place to centralise, translate and share this "mash up", integrating scientific insights into our training, resources and wider activities. In 2023-4 this led to the following achievements:

- We hosted the first Advisory Group, gathering experts to help us learn and shape content. The first one focused on the topic of pain, which led to the Lent Series, 'The Pain we Know'. Experts on the Advisory Group include Prof Amy Wachholtz (University of Colorado, Denver), Dr Mike Platt, Prof James Woodward (Sarum College) and Prof Neil Messer (Baylor University).
- The **Burn Like Stars** series explored burnout and how to avoid it. This series was written by Wendy Lloyd and supported through interviews on the podcast. Interviewed experts included Alex Pang (author and Silicon Valley futurist) and Jonathan Malesic (theologian and author based in the US).
- We have published one edition of Chrism Journal. Authors include Prof Christopher Southgate and Prof Fraser Watts.
- We listened and responded to the needs of the Healthy Healing Hub network, this included working on small group resources.
- We ran two online workshops: Lifestyle medicine with Dr Richard Pile, and Dr David Smart and Sue Griffiths ran one focusing on Social Prescribing for church communities.
- We forged and sustained partnerships with other organisations in academia, para church communities and those in the wellbeing sector. These include Sarum college, Holy Rood House, Churchworks, Sanctuary mental health, and The Tragedy and Congregations project.
- We engaged in cross sector conversations for example, with The Churchworks' coffee house events, and with the Bishop of London in her work around health inequalities.
- The Trustees invited Jane Cook (Public health specialist, nurse and charity leader) to speak with them during the Trustee away time in May 2023.



We shape content and opportunities to learn, reflect and connect.

We curate, co-produce and contribute to a range of resources, training opportunities and events. This is a wide-ranging list which reflects the breadth of our vision, but we focused the outcomes of this activity on growing the GoHealth Community and the Healthy Healing Hub network.

It is within these that community is tended to so that, as our motto goes, 'Together we Flourish'. This year we took a themed approach to the resourcing. This enabled us to go deeper, engage with experts and produce resources with a longer shelf life. In 2023-4, this included the following:

- **The GoHealth Community** has been resourced with topics across the year – *Burn like stars* (How to avoid or recover from burnout), *The Pain we Know* (in Lent), a short focus of the ministry of laying on of hands, and the ever-popular Advent series. Each topic comes with a weekly bespoke blog, prayers, and activities to deepen knowledge and practice.
- **The Advent retreat** is always a highlight. This year the theme was *Waiting Well with Presence*. Interweaving scripture, prayer, and the wisdom of the Christian faith into each day of Advent, we learned how to wait well together in the presence of God.
- **Monthly online gatherings** of the GoHealth Community, where we explore the topic that is happening at that time, steadily grew.
- **We added 3 hubs** to the Healthy Healing Hub network. The Diocese of Brechin has become a Gold hub offering the Everyday Healing Course to ten churches and bringing us to train clergy. The Church of Scotland Priority Areas group bought ten churches places on the Everyday Healing Course, encouraging them to join the Healthy Healing Hub Network.
- **Four cohorts went through the Everyday Healing course.**
- **Eight episodes of the GoHealth podcast** were launched across two seasons. Guests on the podcast included Dr Sarah Horsman from Sheldon, Alex Pang the author of 'Rest' and Joe Forst Director of Music at Kings College London. The podcast was generously supported by a grant from The Anchor Foundation.

- **We launched three new online self-led courses** on the Articulate platform. Three of these courses used material from previous Denis Duncan Lectures. The *Being Trauma Informed* course with The Revd. Hilary Ison has been picked up by the Archbishops' Council for the use of General Synod Members.

- **Our annual Denis Duncan Lecture** was delivered by The Revd. Hilary Ison on the topic of *Being Trauma Informed*. We filmed in Devon and it was launched live to a large online audience. The event included a live Q and A with Hilary, live music and a poem read by Prof Christopher Southgate.

- **We hosted online and in-person workshops** on trauma, social prescribing, and lifestyle medicine, and in-person workshops on Healthy Healing Hubs and trauma. This included our AGM day at Gold Healthy Healing Hub St. Paul's Knightsbridge. At this event, we welcomed our President Prof John Swinton who gave a lecture, and we joined in with a Songhaven concert which provides free classical concerts to those in need in the community.

- **We were called upon by other organisations** to offer expertise in health and healing, clergy wellbeing, and health mission.

This year this included the following events:

- A three-day clergy training event at Diocese of Brechin
- One day workshop on Burnout at Sarum College
- Preaching at the Sanctuary First online worship, Lichfield Cathedral and St. Paul's Knightsbridge
- Preaching Holy Week at Winchester Cathedral
- Contributing to the Relational Church meeting on Clergy stress
- Leading worship and workshops for Diocese of Monmouth clergy
- Leading an online workshop with Priority Areas Scotland
- Writing for the Ascend program (Church of Scotland)
- Leading workshops for the diocese of Bath and wells leaders
- Writing biblical commentary and worship resources for Weekly Worship (Church of Scotland)
- Gillian provides coaching for people exploring the connections between faith, health and vocation.

"This is an excellent short program that helps inform good practice. It offers very good resources and the journal 'Chrim' is outstanding. This program is very good value for money." Andrew

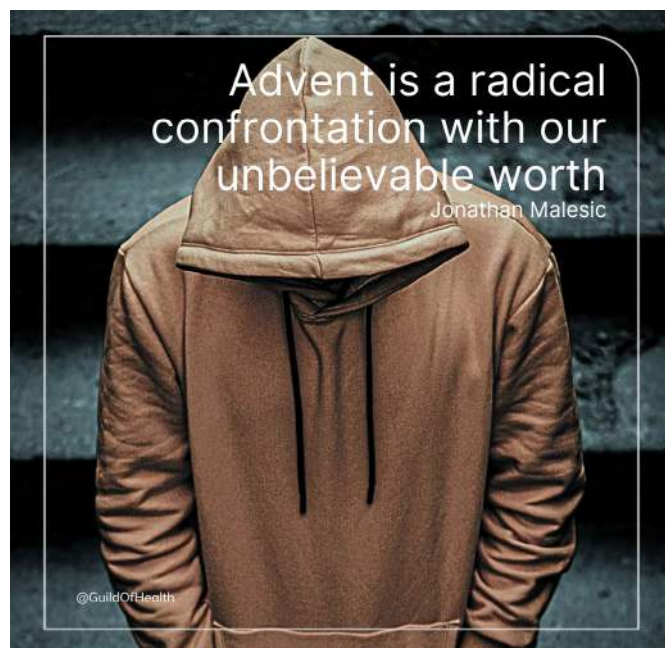
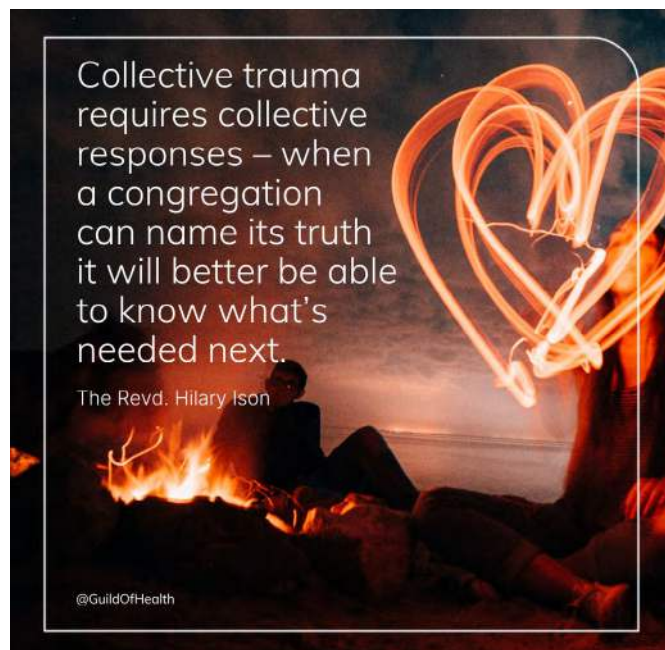
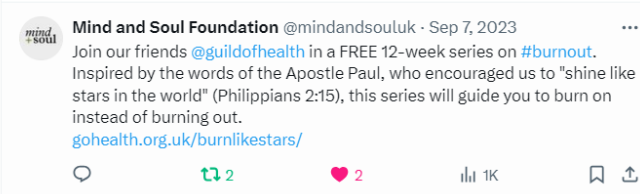


We share what we are learning and making as widely as possible

We work hard to communicate what we are doing and be a clear voice in a noisy wellbeing market, speaking of the hope and power of the Christian faith for human healing and flourishing.

In 2023-4, this included the following:

- Our wider communications work includes social media content, short films, e-newsletters and promotional materials, for example the Lent campaign. We aim to be a healthy voice encouraging, inspiring and empowering people with compassion.
- We have been invited to appear on local and national radio to provide expertise on the role of church in community, mental health, or wellbeing in general. This year, this included Premier FM and UCB radio.
- We provided expert input to panels and organisations; for example, The National Healing Advisors group, ChurchWorks, The Bishop of London and Relational Church.



Keeping the lights on

As with every organisation, there is a range of day-to-day activities that we engage in to ensure that we are a healthy and sustainable organisation.

This includes:

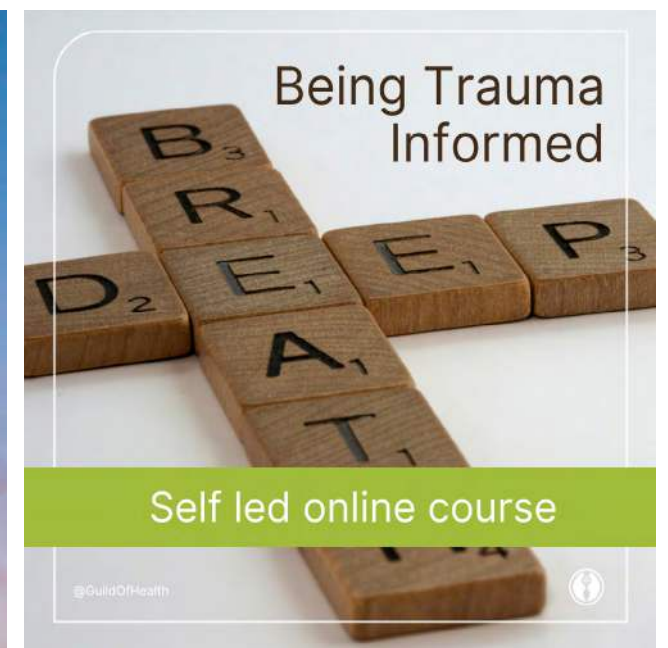
- Staff and volunteer support and training.
- Team time away
- Wellbeing for the team
- Work from home safely
- Tending to our organisational development, culture and structure, through policy work, time together as a team, and regular meetings.
- Developing a Trustee Handbook for our Trustees and essential policies for staff, including General Data Protection Regulations, Health and Safety, and Safeguarding.
- Maintaining good governance and financial health.

"It's been a joy to learn from others in the community, share stories, and gain personal and professional insights to aid in the well-being of myself and others. Their website is packed full of great resources, including podcasts covering a range of topics."

Sarah

"Trauma. No Trauma. This brilliantly presented course will enrich your understanding of trauma, its impact and the hope of recovery through Christian-based healing. Thoroughly recommended."

Stephen





Some stats & feedback 2023-4

Online



GoHealth Community

grew by:

91%

(40% last year)



The Healthy Healing

Hub Network grew by:

25%

Our Website

gohealth.org.uk

19k New Users

Social Media

Facebook reach

68.5k

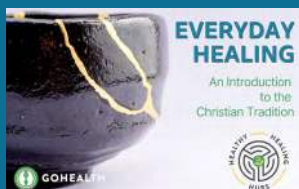
Training Numbers

73

Online self-led course sales

46

Online workshops

**4****Everyday Healing** courses**109**

participants, including 9 church groups

6

gatherings attended by

45

GoHealth Community members - a new Guild of Health offering

Podcasts

**1837**

listens

8

episodes

An increase of
41%
on the previous year

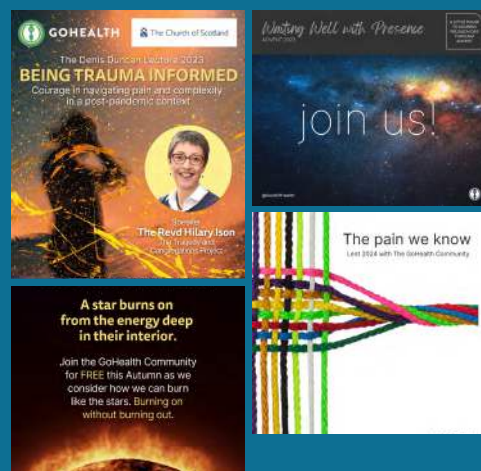
Lectures & special series

Denis Duncan Lecture

tickets

224**Burn Like Stars**

12 weekly emails for deeper
reflection, prayer & practice



Advent journeyers on

Waiting Well

114 with **25** daily reflections
for our members

The Pain We Know

12 weekly emails of content
and support through this topic

"This course has equipped me with a greater understanding of the vital ministry of healing and wholeness that our local churches can provide in our communities."

Revd Mark



"I loved this course - I felt humbled when encouraged to reflect upon the unbroken healing tradition in the Christian church, and empowered to follow my calling in some form of healing ministry."

"I have been a nurse for over 30 years and have always had to maintain an artificial separation between my work and my faith. It is liberating to participate in a course that itself 'heals' this divide."

Sue, a participant on the Everyday Healing course



The people we connect with and serve

We want everyone to flourish – as individuals and communities.

To enable this, at GoHealth we are particularly focused on supporting Churches and individual Christians – including those who have held a Christian faith or are curious about faith.

We want our activities and materials to be relevant for a wide variety of people, including:

Church leaders (lay and ordained)

People seeking healing for themselves or others

Academics, particularly those who value interdisciplinary approaches to research and practice.

Leaders in related organisations including parachurch organisations, faith networks and health organisations

Doctors, nurses and allied health professionals especially who align with a holistic perspective for their practice.

In order to grow and deliver our purpose, it is vital that we pay attention to our impact so that we can continue momentum, sense opportunity and be focussed on the change that we hope to see in the world. While 'counting numbers' can help us get a sense of the reach of our work, for us the more important measure is whether or not any real change has happened for people. As a result of what we do, do people feel more, **'equipped and inspired to nurture health and healing in ourselves, our communities and our world'**?

Ultimately we want more people to know that they are truly beloved by God. From this foundation each of us is able to live 'as we are' with more confidence and courage, and from this our day-to-day discernment can be strengthened as we learn how to be a healing presence in our own lives, in our communities and in the wider world.

We believe this approach is deeply aligned to the ways

God is working to reduce suffering and enable flourishing.

How our resources, activities and communications are 'meeting people' really matters to us. We are always exploring ways to

- Offer tools and resources that are relevant and useful, and
- Communicate in ways that feel good and connecting

We regularly check-in with people who are part of our community or participating in our activities to see what impact these courses, resources and opportunities are having. What changes are people experiencing? In what ways are they feeling equipped and inspired in being healing presences? What can we be doing more of – or less of – to be useful to them?

You will find some of these stories throughout this report – they warm our hearts, provide evidence of what we have done this year, and inspire us all to continue in our work.

Do you have a story to share about how our work has helped or supported you?

Please get in touch – we'd love to hear from you! Email support@gohealth.org.uk

"I appreciate the thoughtful approach of the Guild of Health and St. Raphael. The emphasis of integrating scientific research with lived spiritual experiences to improve full person health and well-being is unique.

"Only by focusing on the bio-psycho-social-spiritual approach to health will we be able to fully address the needs of current patients, as well as develop preventative wellness care practices."

Dr Amy Wachholtz

"I have enjoyed being part of the recently established Advisory Group of the Guild. It provides an excellent forum in which to bring scientific and other academic perspectives to bear on the Guild's work to promote the health and well-being benefits of the Christian life."

Dr Fraser Watts



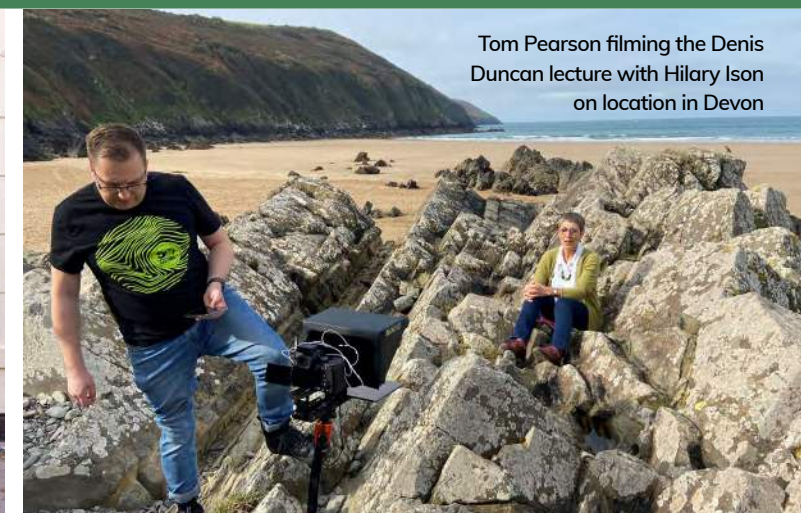
Sue Martin with members at the Healing Festival



The Bishop of London and Gillian at The Churchworks event in May 2023



Out and About at the Healing Festival



Tom Pearson filming the Denis Duncan lecture with Hilary Ison on location in Devon

"The staff members at GoHealth are incredibly welcoming, enthusiastic, and passionate about their work, which creates a supportive and inspiring environment for all members."

Ross



Gillian welcomes everyone to the Healing Festival



Time to chat at the Healing Festival



Prof John Swinton addresses the audience at the Healing Festival



At the Healing Festival

"Gillian and Wendy were great to work with. They were enthusiastic about partnering, responsive to emails, and creative in the way they put the course together."

The Revd Dr Susie Snyder



David and Sue running the social prescribing workshop



Filming Burn Like Stars on the Isle of Mull



Gillian and Wendy



Steve Coles



Theresa McDowall at the Healing Festival



Graham Fender-Allison

**// I have come
that they
may have** **life,** **and have** **full //**
it to the
John 10:10



GOHEALTH
The Guild of Health and St Raphael

#togetherwefLOURish

Join our thriving community:

@guildofhealth



gohealth.org.uk