

An aerial photograph of Rose Castle, a large historic stone building with multiple chimneys, surrounded by lush greenery and trees with vibrant autumn foliage in shades of orange and yellow. A stone wall and a small bridge are visible in the foreground, and rolling green hills extend into the background under a soft, golden light.

ROSE CASTLE FOUNDATION 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



CONTENTS

Message from the Founder	3
Universities	7
Seminaries	11
Faith-based organisations & NGOs	13
Houses of Worship	17
Networks & Conferences	20
Rose Community	26
Celebrating a decade	29



Message from the Founder

We remain committed to tomorrow's leaders today.

Rose Castle Foundation celebrated our tenth anniversary this year, building on the previous five years' of Cambridge Summer Schools with our Co-Chair, Professor David Ford, and team. Together, we have equipped and mobilised nearly 2,000 reconciling leaders to act across some of the world's most challenging divides. They continue to connect, convene and capacity build in diverse global contexts – from South Africa to South East Asia, US to UAE, UK to Ukraine, Israel, Palestine and Egypt.

This is no mean feat in a world that is increasingly polarised politically, racially, socio-economically, culturally and religiously. According to the Global Peace Index (June 2024) we are witnessing the highest international conflict since World War II, with 56 wars, and 92 countries involved in conflicts outside their borders. North America saw the largest regional deterioration, driven by increases in violent crime and fear of violence.

Pedagogy and programmes: the Rose Way

Against this backdrop, Rose Castle Foundation has had an extraordinary year. We were immensely encouraged to receive a Templeton Religion Trust award to continue investing in evaluation of the Rose Way – our pedagogy of leadership across societal divides. This is an experiential journey rather than a one-off programme, in which participants are invited to identify and name their most significant local divides, convene with others across those divides, invest in a collaborative action initiative, and implement 12 formational Habits of a Reconciler within their spheres of influence.

2024 also saw completion of our Biblical research project on the Christian Wisdom of Reconciliation, generously funded by the McDonald Agape Foundation. Working with over 50 scholars from ecumenically diverse traditions at Aberdeen, Cambridge, Durham and Oxford Universities, we explored inter-disciplinary foundations for each of the 12 Habits of a Reconciler. The outputs of this initiative will resource reconciling leaders across the worldwide church as they apply the 12 habits to their own contexts.

It has also spurred an innovative and vital practice of Christian Biblical Reasoning (reading the Bible with Christians different to ourselves), addressing contemporary challenges facing the ecumenical church today. See Professor David Ford's report later on for more on this.



Partners: collaborating and contextualising

We remain committed to tomorrow's leaders today – prioritising faith-formed young influencers in universities, seminaries and schools, as well as communal leaders in houses of worship and faith-based organisations. We are so grateful for our in-country partners, with whom we collaborate to contextualise the Rose Way, ensuring its local relevance and sustainability. Some of these are featured in this Annual Report.

Place: Rose Castle

As well as our pedagogy and partners, we are blessed by a unique and beautiful place in which to model our reconciling approach – Rose Castle, with its 800 years of prayer and hospitality. This year has witnessed a leap forward in the Rose Castle Community – our local staff and volunteers who contribute to making the castle a place of welcome, in which visitors feel seen, heard and valued.

Georgia May is growing our local community practice at Rose, through prayer, workshops, public events, gardening, hospitality, family gatherings, and more (see her report on page 26). Their creative engagement spills over to our Rose-based programmes, as the local community meets with participants from very different contexts. Our gardener of nearly 30 years, Janet Queen, has introduced regular outdoor workshops to the Rose Way, including the rich image of an apple seed she planted, which 25 years on has become a healthy tree producing its own delicious fruit.

Likewise, we at Rose Castle Foundation, love seeing fruit from the seeds we plant. We know we are part of God's far larger work of reconciliation, and that sunshine, water and good soil are needed for healthy reconciling leaders in a world of change, chaos and conflict.

People: Rose teams

All of this would not be possible without the extraordinary dedication and gifts of our Rose teams – Trustees, US Board, advisors, staff, faculty, alumnae, volunteers, pray-ers and donors. On the staff team, we said goodbye to amazing Joe this year, after 7 years, though continue to interact with him as he turns his talents towards rebuilding post-conflict education in Israel-Palestine. Neil and Robbie have stepped formally into leadership roles as RCF Co-Directors, working closely with Hannah as Head of Programmes. Phoebe brings her exceptional creative talents to developing our pedagogy, and church engagement, and Anna leads our projects and events with prayerful and compassionate attentiveness. Together we punch way beyond our small size, not least because of the dedicated support and expertise of those around us who volunteer their time and talents so generously. Thank you all for being a part of this reconciling movement. We look forward to another year equipping and mobilising a generation of leaders to collaborate for God's sake across our most challenging societal divides.

Canon Sarah Snyder, Founding Director, December 2024



The Rose Way

We work with emerging leaders who are motivated by their faith and moving into positions of influence across societal divides.

We equip them to lead through change, chaos and conflict, not just today but for the long term. They **learn with those on the other side** of their divides, re-humanising those they no longer see or hear, and working towards a more peaceful future where both sides flourish – one in which their differences still matter.

This is something we call '**deep-to-deep** encounter'. In a carefully facilitated space, in which nobody is asked to leave their faith or ideology at the door, searching questions can be explored because it feels natural and safe to do so. This depth of interaction draws out vital common ground, but, more importantly, allows space to understand our differences. Instead of seeking shallow agreement, it enables a better quality of disagreement.

This **focus on difference** as well as common ground, with space to explore and articulate our **faith or ideological motivations**, makes the Rose Way unique. Our programmes bring this approach to life, with an enduring package of support that leaders can draw on as they become key decision makers across challenging divides.



Impact & Learning in Four Sectors



RCF works with emerging leaders in places of formation – universities, seminaries, houses of worship, and faith-based organisations – training tomorrow's leaders to transform unhealthy conflict and build peace.

In 2024 we commenced a systematic, multi-year learning journey to assess the nature and scope of RCF's impact. We will continue to work collaboratively with our core partners across four sectors in settings of polarisation and division all around the world (including the US, UK, the Middle East, South Asia and Northern and Southern Africa). Together with a trusted team of expert advisors we will capture key learnings about the impact of the Rose Way

The aim of this five year learning phase is to equip RCF to adapt the Rose Way to meet reconcilers' needs - which are always unique and context-specific - to scale our approach, cascade learning, and deliver facilitator training across our global network. This learning will empower us, our partners and our funders to create sustainable, transformational impact in a range of sectors and settings.





Princeton University

2023 Alumni refresher

It was a joy to start the year by engaging with our alumni. They are an incredible group of students who shared about the reality of their day-to-day on campus, and the many ways they are showing up differently in public spaces, since their time at Rose Castle. We heard which habits feel more or less relevant based on their current life season, and dived into some practical planning for the types of spaces they are hoping to curate.

Faculty and Staff Winter session

It was a privilege to be invited to deliver one of Princeton's Winter Session workshops. These two days on campus were full of authentic and meaningful interactions, with a new cohort who threw themselves into this experience. We reflected together on what cultural change can look like, and how to create 'Rose Shaped Spaces' on campus - for dialogue, deep listening and recognising one another's humanity.

Faculty and Staff June session

In June we were invited back to work with a group of student-facing staff, many of whom have been deeply affected by the pro-Palestine and pro-Israel protests on campus. Participants were from the chaplaincy team, DEI team, health administration, student life and other departments. The hope was to create 'nodes' for reconciliation on campus, equipping support staff with the skills to defuse situations of unhealthy conflict, and to model a better quality of disagreement in a context of increasing polarity.



“It was amazing how vulnerable people were willing to be in this space with their experiences and histories.”

Participant



2024 Rose Castle Encounter

In October we partnered with Princeton University's Office of Religious Life (ORL), led by Dean Theresa Thames, to host 18 students at Rose Castle, Cumbria, UK, for an immersive reconciliation programme. This initiative, part of RCF's ongoing collaboration with Princeton, supports the student-led Princeton Rose Castle Society (PRCS) in fostering reconciling spaces on campus and to model authentic encounters across divides.

It is pleasing to see students start to recognise that the work of reconciliation and peace building is difficult, non-linear, and often fragmented. Put positively, it is a life-long commitment to a transformational process rather than a destination. One student captured this when they said:

"I still struggle to have the hope to imagine change in the world and particularly on campus. However, I feel much more aware of my own conflicts and how I will move forward in relationships with those different from myself." In light of this, it is perhaps important to remember that each cohort joining the PRCS [Princeton Rose Castle Society] is at the start of a journey, and that they are contributing to a student-led dynamic of cultural change on campus that began before them and will go on long after they have left Princeton."



"My time at Rose Castle has been a deeply transformative experience, helping me build friendships and cooperative relationships with the other participants."

Participant





President cites Programme

In December 2023, Princeton Rose Castle Society was featured in a letter from Princeton's President to a Congresswoman following public scrutiny of universities' response to the Middle East crisis.

Tigers Leading Tigers

PRCS was invited by the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students to host a reconciliation workshop for Tigers Leading Tigers.

477

Students trained by Princeton Rose Castle Society alumni on campus in academic year 2023/24

Northeastern University London

This year we have been delighted to start a programmatic partnership with Northeastern University's London campus. Over three events throughout the year we have worked with over 40 students, many of whom have attended all three sessions to continue building their understanding of tools to cross divides. As a result of discussions during the sessions, the students have set up a Jewish Society and Islamic Society, and along with the Arab Students Association they have run interfaith events on campus. We look forward to this partnership expanding in 2025.

London School of Economics Faith Centre

In January 2024 the RCF team hosted a day of shared interactive learning sessions with the LSE Faith Centre team in Cambridge. Our aim was to share our strategic plans for 2024/25, and to act as 'critical friends' offering mutual support around common questions faced by both organisations. Specifically, we were keen to explore the intersection and relationship between research and practice, and identify what helps inform effective impact strategy and evaluation. We were delighted that Revd Canon Prof James Walters, the Director of the LSE Faith Centre, and Professor David F. Ford, the Co-Chair of RCF, could join us for a hugely beneficial day of mutual learning, marked by a true generosity of spirit. Following this, RCF ran an event at the Faith Centre on faith and conflict, exploring the habits and the role of joy in conflict transformation.



Virginia Theological Seminary



We are grateful for our partnership with VTS Center for Anglican Communion Studies (CACS) and our continued collaboration on developing the interfaith practice of Scriptural Reasoning (SR).

In April we ran SR facilitator training to support expansion of the practice on and beyond campus, alongside an introduction to reconciliation for the wider student body. We returned in September to run an introduction to SR for students and local faith leaders, as well as an advanced facilitation training for those already familiar with the practice. For the advanced group we discussed the Habits of a Reconciler, and how different Scriptural traditions empower followers to harness and model particular habits. It was a joy to host CACS director Professor Katherine Grieb at Rose Castle as part of the Christian Wisdom of Reconciliation project. We look forward to continuing our partnership next year.

“I appreciate the permission Scriptural Reasoning gives to sit with an unresolved concern and take time to be with/see the humans who are in that space with me.”

Participant

Auburn Theological Seminary

In 2024 we began our partnership with Auburn Theological Seminary (ATS), whose mission is to 'identify and strengthen leaders – from the pulpit to the public square – to build community, bridge divides, pursue justice, and heal the world'.

During two programmes in March and June we shared the Rose Way, working with 36 emerging leaders from across the US. Participants included university chaplains, faith leaders, trainee faith leaders, practitioners, civil servants, community workers, and students. We had a mix of Christian, Muslim and Jewish participants.

Following the two co-delivered pilot programmes, ATS has successfully run its third emerging leaders programme, incorporating aspects of the Rose Way alongside their wider content and pedagogy. We look forward to hearing more about the ongoing impact of their emerging leaders cohorts in 2025.

Following our programmes with ATS, we have been privileged to collaborate with programme participants working in diverse cohorts. Rabbi Jacob Leizman from North Shore Congregation Israel Synagogue in Chicago invited RCF to deliver a workshop to the congregation as part of their conflict transformation series. Together we held space in which difficult conversations could be raised, and different viewpoints expressed. We look forward to welcoming some of the congregation to Rose Castle next year. Another participant, Liz Turnwald, a Catholic theologian, teacher and facilitator based in Boston, has brought her expertise in the Enneagram to support the RCF team and develop our teaching resources. We are so grateful for this mutual sharing of relational tools.



“Before I did this programme, I was so wrapped up in conflict and the tenuous, flimsy nature of many interfaith relationships. The Auburn Rose Way Programme showed me another way is possible: a practice of hospitality grounded in the hearted recognition of and love for one another and who we really are.”

Participant



Tanenbaum Peacemakers



Rose Castle Foundation was delighted to host the 'Peacemakers in Action' Network Working Retreat in partnership with the Tanenbaum Centre for Interreligious Understanding this September. The Peacemakers are a diverse group of religiously motivated individuals from countries including Nigeria, South Africa, El Salvador, Iraq, South Sudan, Bosnia, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. They carry out their efforts on the frontlines of conflict as well as in post-conflict zones, bringing together the most divided communities through their hope for a better future, often at deep personal risk.

Through seven days of rich conversation, prayer, laughter, walks and deep reflection, the Peacemakers were able to share strategies, build relationships and collaborate on new approaches to peacebuilding in some of the world's most challenging contexts. By sharing tools and best practice in one context, others were able to reflect on new approaches in their own conflicts. Each Peacemaker's story, dedication and work were a true inspiration, and we are pleased that the time they spent at Rose Castle gave them the opportunity for much-needed rest and reflection.

The programme was generously supported by the Wayfarer Foundation, a grant-making organisation that partners with spiritually or religiously motivated and justice-oriented nonprofits to co-create peace and unity in the world.

One of the cohort, Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, was able to stay on in one of the cottages on site for another month, with her husband Jeremy Routledge. Nozizwe and Jeremy hail from South Africa and have spent their lives committed to peace, working to end apartheid, and continuing to work to build a prosperous nation. It was a joy to have them join other programming taking place at Rose Castle during their month with us, including Marble Church and Princeton.



IDEOS Institute

In January we were thrilled to join the Ideos Institute and their Fellows cohort for a gathering to explore empathic intelligence. The Fellows are deeply formed by their Christian faith, working as faith leaders, activists, community leaders or creators. It was powerful to gain an insight into the impact of the fellowship programme model, and to experience the hospitality of the Hilltop Retreat Center in California. We are excited to partner with Ideos again in 2025, this time at Rose Castle. There is clear alignment between their work on empathic intelligence and the Rose Way, with much learning to share as we equip Christian leaders to engage across divides.

National Cathedral School

In June we welcomed a new cohort of students from National Cathedral School, Washington. Our time together involved two days at Grasmere YHA exploring the Habits, an introduction to reconciliation and the roles identity and story play in peacebuilding. From Grasmere we travelled to Rose Castle for our final two days for a deeper dive into the theory of conflict transformation. This inspiring group of students and supporting staff brought joy and creativity to the space alongside a real depth of curiosity and desire to learn. Back on campus the students have launched a Rose Castle Society, and are exploring what it looks like to integrate the Habits of a Reconciler into school culture and classroom dynamics. They have a permanent exhibition of the Rose Habits of a Reconciler on display in the school, used by teachers to integrate reconciliation into classroom activities.



IDEOS
Institute




National Cathedral School
FOUNDED 1900



Learning lessons with the United States Institute for Peace (USIP) Colombia team

Over the last 20 years, USIP Colombia's programmes have become some of the institutes most strategic and impactful. Since the signing of the 2016 Peace Accord, which drew to a close one of the world's longest running civil conflicts, the USIP Colombia team have been contributing directly to sustaining and lending technical support to implementing the Peace Agreement. Significantly this includes partnering with Colombia's Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP), one of the bedrock institutions in creating a lasting just peace for the country's population. The JEP has been charged with investigating and determining individual responsibility for the most serious human rights crimes committed over the five decades of conflict.

In September, team member Anna was welcomed with incredible warmth to the headquarters of the USIP team based in Bogotá, Colombia. The conversations unpacked the Rose Way, the 12 Habits of a Reconciler, the development of our tools around the CWR project, and the emerging practice of Christian Biblical Reasoning (CBR). The USIP team expressed a deep synergy with the Rose Way and are now keen to partner with RCF, specifically seeking to learn from our pedagogy as they implement a coherent faith-based approach across the three pillars of their activity and engage with faith communities as part of the ongoing battle to sustain peace. We look forward to welcoming the USIP team, along with guests from the JEP, to Rose Castle in February 2025.



Heartlines, South Africa



This November we were invited to South Africa to join Heartlines, a like-minded centre for values promotion, working to support people to live out their faith values across divides. We learned about their inspiring 'What's Your Story' programme, which supports leaders in divided communities to practice curiosity and vulnerability listening to each other's stories in order to appreciate their differences. We also shared elements of the Rose Way pedagogy, including the Habits of a Reconciler, with their programme facilitators.

This trip was also an opportunity to engage with the context in South Africa, and to recognise how far the country has come since the end of apartheid, but also to see which challenges still lie ahead.

In 2025 we are pleased to be partnering with Heartlines in South Africa and at Rose Castle, as we continue to collaborate around one another's toolkits and approach.



HEARTLINES

THE CENTRE FOR VALUES PROMOTION

Marble Church Reconciliation Retreat

In October 2024 we welcomed 24 guests from Marble Collegiate Church in New York to a 5-day residential retreat at Rose Castle. Our time together included generous hospitality, rhythms of daily prayer and reflection, and group expeditions into the Lake District. During interactive sessions we explored the 12 Habits of a Reconciler, Scriptural reflection on the Road to Emmaus, the PIN Tool, and fireside chats on the theme of Truth and Reconciliation.

Our aim for this retreat was for members of the congregation to learn more about living out the reality of disagreeing well, specifically helping them prepare for the 2024 US Presidential election. When reflecting on the learnings from the retreat, the group felt they had gained a much clearer understanding of what reconciliation could look like for their own communities, including practical skills and tools to create spaces which would encourage others to encounter difference well.

Particular sources of delight included the depth of relationship and trust developed among the cohort and the spiritual nourishment experienced through exploring scripture and collective prayer. Participants reported leaving the retreat with an increased capacity to empathise with those on the other side of a divide.



“I felt that the content led me to delve into my own spirituality, as it drew me closer to God and humankind”

Participant



Trinity Church Wall Street

**TRINITY
CHURCH
WALL
STREET**

In April we welcomed the Trinity Church Wall Street leadership team to Rose Castle, exploring potential opportunities for collaboration. In September we hosted 18 participants for a weekend retreat in the lead up to the US election. Many young adults were experiencing deep divides amongst their families and friends, to the point that conversation about those divides had become almost impossible. Through the 12 Habits of a Reconciler, and conflict transformation tools, the group were able to explore the theme of 'peacebuilding and presence'.

In 2025 we will trial resources generated by our Christian Wisdom of Reconciliation project with a cohort from Trinity Church.



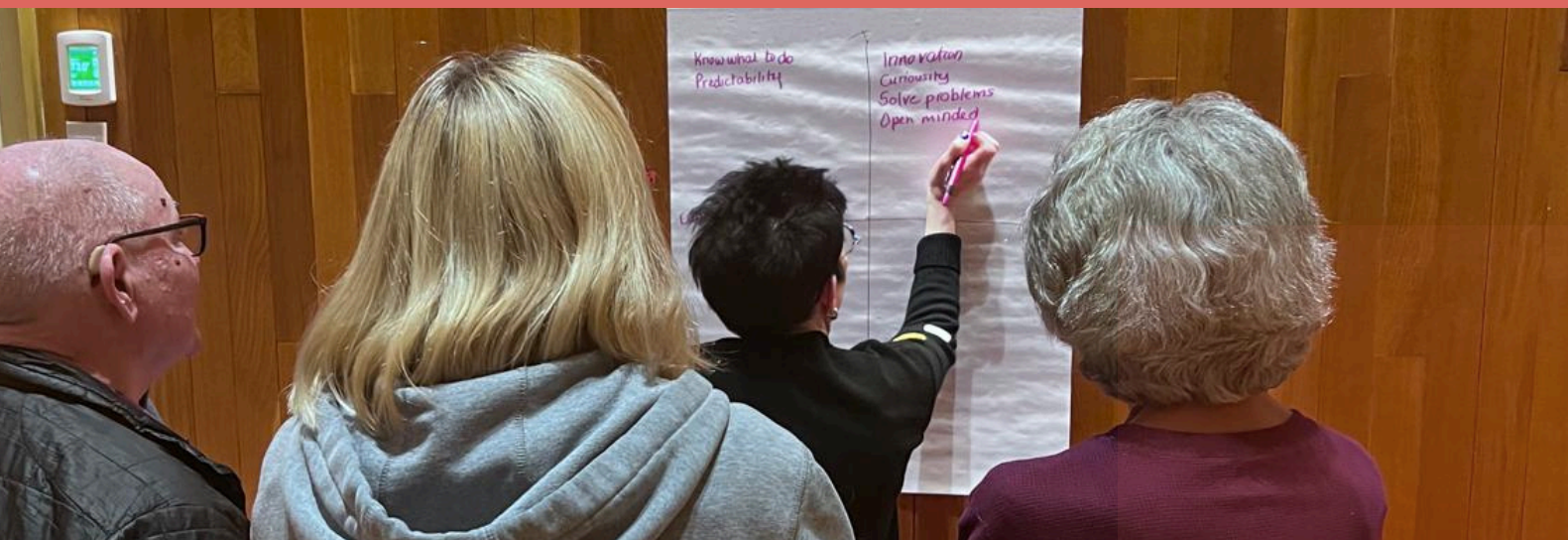
Trinity Episcopal Church, Indianapolis



This autumn we partnered with Trinity Episcopal Church, Indianapolis for a digital series on the Habits of a Reconciler. Timed around the US election, we were grateful for the opportunity to support their community in exploring the habits of hospitality, lament, forgiveness, gratitude, and creativity to live into God's call as peacemakers. Through interactive teaching participants reimagined how to live out these habits in their communities.

In November we hosted a two-day retreat for young adults and ministry leaders. Participants gathered to focus on navigating conflict, building resilience, and envisioning radical hospitality. The retreat sought conversation, personal growth, and shared joy as participants engaged deeply. We are profoundly grateful to the Episcopal Diocese of Indianapolis for their support, which made this event possible, and inspired by the renewed commitment to peacebuilding that emerged.





All Angels' Church

all angels' church

In April we travelled to NYC to help facilitate a two-day retreat for members of the vestry and senior leadership team of All Angels' Church in New York. All Angels' has been one of RCFs longest standing partners, and this retreat was on the theme of stewarding change with a special emphasis on reconnecting with God, one another, and ourselves. During our time together we opened up a reflective and restorative space enabling participants to journey together through the 3 R's of Reconciliation: Remember, Rehumanise, Reimagine. The days were held within rhythms of prayer, Lectio Divina Bible study, and times of generous hospitality kindly provided by All Angels'. There was a particular focus on the Habits of Hope, Forgiveness, Lament and Creativity, during a deeply refreshing time of reconnection.

North Shore Congregation Israel Synagogue, Chicago



This autumn we were grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with one of our alumni from the Auburn Emerging Leaders programme. Rabbi Jacob Leizman hosted us for an evening at North Shore synagogue to engage with his congregation, following on from a reconciliation series he had been leading. The programme has been integrating Rose pedagogy with the teachings of 'makhloket l'shem shamayim' (argument for the sake of heaven), 'eilu v'eilu' (these and those are words of the living God), and 'teiku' (let it stand). During our time we explored a polarities mapping tool and built new relationships. We are excited to see how this partnership will grow in 2025.

Networks & Conferences

Sharing our work and learning



2024 has been a remarkable year for Rose Castle as we've had the privilege of sharing our work and vision for reconciliation on different stages around the world. These moments of thought leadership and action have not only amplified the heart of our mission but also sparked meaningful interactions about the transformative power of the ministry of reconciliation in communities globally.

The year began with an opportunity for Canon Sarah Snyder to deliver a TED Talk at the 2024 annual gathering of the Templeton Philanthropies (John Templeton Foundation, Templeton Religion Trust, and Templeton World Charity Foundation). In this deeply personal and compelling presentation, Sarah shared her own story of reconciliation and the foundational role of habits in shaping relationships and communities. Speaking to a captivated audience, she illustrated how intentional practices can lead to healing and transformation. This opportunity to gather with others who collaborate with Templeton Philanthropies provided a springboard to new collaborations, such as with Heartlines, a centre for values promotion based in South Africa.

Later in the year, Sarah was invited to speak at the DeNicola Center's conference at the University of Notre Dame, themed 'Ever Faithful, Ever New'. Sarah joined an esteemed panel on Reconciliation and Forgiveness in the Catholic Imagination, alongside Dr Daniel Philpott, Dr Jacqueline Rivers, and Dr Jason Springs. Together they explored the interplay of truth-seeking, forgiveness, and healing, drawing on diverse traditions and experiences. Sarah's reflections brought the principles of reconciliation to life, emphasising the importance of being willing to seek truth even when the truth may be painful and require from us a reimagined response.



Our work also took centre stage in a unique collaboration with the Tanenbaum Peacemakers, to host BBC Radio 4's Sunday Worship on the first anniversary of the October 7th attacks in Southern Israel. The programme, entitled 'Impossible Friendship', was broadcast from Rose Castle and highlighted the extraordinary stories of Peacemakers who have been inspired by their faith to pursue peace in settings of violent conflict.




SUNDAY WORSHIP

Impossible Friendship

Canon Sarah Snyder, director of an international centre for reconciliation based at Rose Castle in Cumbria, leads this act of worship which focuses on peacebuilding. The centre invites strangers and even adversaries to meet and work with one another. In recent months it has welcomed US Republicans and Democrats - as well as Israelis and Palestinians, Russians and Ukrainians.

⌚ 38 minutes

Canon Snyder is joined in the castle by peacemakers who have been engaged in some of the world's most protracted struggles, and reflects on how their faith inspires them in their work. She hears from Professor Ephraim Isaac, a Jew from Ethiopia, James Lual Atak, a Christian from South Sudan and Dr Sarah Ahmed, a Muslim from Iraq.



In the wake of the US election, Sarah brought Rose Castle's message to Calvin University, speaking to faculty, staff, and students at the invitation of John Witvliet, founding director of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship. This timely conversation centered on reconciliation in moments of division, offering both inspiration and practical wisdom. Sarah invited the Calvin community to consider how they might engage in bridge-building within their own contexts, embodying the habits and practices that lead to reconciliation.

These moments of sharing have been more than events: they've been opportunities to witness reconciliation in action, to inspire hope, and to equip communities with the tools to pursue peace. As 2024 draws to a close, we are grateful for the doors that have opened to tell this story and for the growing network of individuals and organisations committed to the work of reconciliation and peacebuilding.

A Christian Wisdom of Reconciliation

Rose Castle Foundation's Biblical Research Project on the 12 Habits of Reconcilers.

With the generous sponsorship of the McDonald Agape Foundation, we have convened more than 50 Christian scholars from the universities of Aberdeen, Oxford, Cambridge, and Durham—representing a range of ecclesial traditions and academic disciplines—to explore our 12 Habits. The project team, led by Professor David Ford (University of Cambridge), Dr Greg Ryan (Centre for Catholic Studies, Durham University) and RCF's Dr Robbie Leigh, has guided researchers in rhythms of prayer, scriptural study, fellowship, and rich discussion.

This intensive, year-long period of conversation and collaboration has laid the foundations for the publication of an academic volume (in 2025) engaging deeply with each of the 12 habits, the practice of Christian Biblical Reasoning, and Christian ministries of reconciliation. We hope the volume will be instructive for Christian leaders, seminarians, peace experts, practitioners and theologians alike.

In 2025 RCF will commence a programme of coordinated outreach activities, translating project findings into fresh opportunities for institutional partnerships, programmatic trials, and multi-media resources for the formation of Christian reconcilers.

“These were materially rich, but spiritually and existentially even richer, conversations.”

Prof Tom Greggs,





Two Tested Reconciling Practices

By Professor David Ford, Co-Chair of Rose Castle Foundation

We in Rose Castle have long been involved in forming reconcilers who work across divisions and conflicts among Jews, Christians, and Muslims, and one of our tested, core practices has been Scriptural Reasoning. That has been the practice that, in my experience, is best at initiating and sustaining long term, in-depth engagement across religion differences, and in addition has had the capacity to generate cooperation, friendship, and even collaborative organisations and institutions. Scriptural Reasoning has been in the Rose DNA since we began.

But there are also deep divisions and bitter conflicts among the world's two billion or so Christians, and they seem to be getting worse. As this report highlights, our Rose team is increasingly having to engage with them. Yet it seems astonishing that so far there has been no widely accessible, flexible, tested practice available to Christians who want to read the Bible together across their divisions. We have been neglecting an activity that is foundational for virtually all Christians: reading the Bible. Christian Biblical Reasoning is our attempt to develop such a practice, drawing on our experience of its companion practice of Scriptural Reasoning.

I myself emerged from twenty years writing a commentary on the Gospel of John with a renewed passion for Christian unity. I was inspired above all by the final prayer of Jesus, in John Chapter 17, that his followers might be utterly united in love with himself and his Father, and with each other, for the sake of the world God loves. It became clearer than ever: if we Christians are to serve with others as reconcilers in the world's conflicts, then it is absolutely essential that we urgently pursue reconciliation among ourselves. Do we desire what Jesus desires?

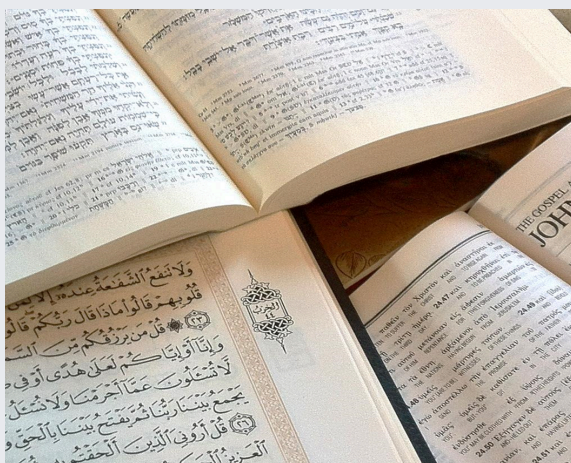
Templeton Religion Trust



We are delighted to have received a generous grant from the Templeton Religion Trust for an 18 month planning project to engage researchers and partners who will help us prepare for a three year research project investigating the efficacy and impact of our faith-informed reconciliation pedagogy, the Rose Way.

During the project we will work with researchers with expertise in psychology, social anthropology and monitoring and evaluation in order to build an evaluation framework that will help us understand how the Rose Way can help to foster the enabling conditions for 'covenantal pluralism': respectful engagement across deep differences for the sake of peace.

Scriptural Reasoning International



Under David Ford's leadership, RCF is playing a founding role in the creation of Scriptural Reasoning International (SRI), an international community of practitioners, scholars and teachers of Scriptural Reasoning (SR) who collaboratively develop, share and monitor best practice. Together, members of SRI will help to energise and resource the growing, global network of practitioners using SR as a conflict transformation and peacebuilding tool, and those doing SR 'L'shma,' as our Jewish friends say: 'for the sake of the Name!'



SR is a core pillar of our 'deep to deep' approach to faith-informed reconciliation. Shared leadership of the SRI network (with institutions including the Journal of Scriptural Reasoning and the SR unit in the American Academy of Religion) represents an exciting opportunity for RCF to play a leading role in the ongoing global growth of the SR movement, and to understand its impact for faith-informed conflict transformation in contexts of complex social division.

Rose Community

New roots at our home in Cumbria



Growing a legacy of peace at Rose Castle

With Rose Castle Foundation turning 10 years old and our international work continuing to deepen and expand in exciting ways, it was time for a new bud to blossom at our home in Cumbria. The Rose Community is our very own community of practice, embedding the pedagogy we teach on programmes into the everyday context of Rose Castle in Cumbria.

The conflicted history of Rose Castle's 800 years and her relationship to the disputed 'debatable lands' has shaped the way people locally engage with one another, with God and with the natural world. While our Cumbrian context differs from many we work with, it is the process of contextualising reconciliation into sustainable models of community life that is so crucial for nurturing cultures of peace in our own localities for generations to come. This is the journey that the Rose Community has embarked upon, which we trust will enrich both the experiences of those who visit Rose Castle as well as deepen the living practices that shape our work.

The agricultural landscape that Rose Castle sits within has inspired the Rose Community to have a particular focus on reconciliation with the land. This is a less developed dimension within our current pedagogy so we look forward to deepening this foundational aspect of peacebuilding in our content design. Rose Castle is an ideal setting for this, not only with beautiful gardens now growing where battles were once fought, but also a farm, woodland and grazing land in need of regeneration.

The Rose Community is almost entirely volunteer run. We are deeply grateful to all who help shape this work. Since launching in September 2024 we have hosted a number of local events and set up:

- **Creative Education Groups:** building on the habits of Curiosity and Creativity we run two weekly groups that respectively engage young families and women in craft-based learning experiences that help them reconnect with nature and one another in wisdom-seeking ways. As we set up sites more officially across Rose Castle grounds we will be able to expand this rapidly growing area of our work by >50% in 2025-6.
- **Regenerative projects across Rose Castle Estate:** we are exploring a partnership with A Rocha UK to become a Partner in Action committed to stewarding Rose Castle land in ways that benefit people and planet through faith-formed practices.



- **Community Garden & Horticultural sites:** In partnership with Rose Castle Company, we are identifying the best sites across the Estate gardens and farm to grow food, medicinal herbs and unusual varieties of plants that offer unique educational opportunities for our groups. Growing food together is a restorative way to grow community while addressing urgent global issues, such as food, health and economic systems that fuel social injustices and global conflicts.
- **Restoring Rose Castle Farm:** community farm days have enabled us to start stripping back the overgrown layers of the historic farm at Rose Castle in preparation for the future of a thriving farm vision, which has always included plans for a care farm.
- **Rhythms of prayer, hospitality and liturgy:** through prayer rhythms and monthly shabbat meals, we have started writing our own liturgies that express and support journeys of faith formation through community life. We hope these will enrich the programmatic experiences of our partners and participants with these rhythms starting to make their way into the shape of residencies at Rose Castle and beyond. It has been particularly special welcoming resident members of faculty to our shared meal table, including Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge and Jeremy Routledge from the Tanenbaum Peacemakers Network in South Africa who engaged in community life at Rose between teaching on programmes.



Rose Community hosts Mitzvah Day at Rose Castle



Jonny Gios Photography

Mitzvah Day is a Jewish led interfaith day of social action. On 24th November, volunteers from Rose Community and local organisations across Cumbria joined 55,000 other volunteers worldwide, who donated their time to strengthen relationships between faith and non-faith communities.

Following guided walks in the Lake District, Rose Community welcomed 100 guests to Rose Castle for afternoon tea, including refugees from Afghanistan, Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, South Sudan and Ukraine. The event attracted the attention of national press, being broadcast on ITV news the following day with a positive message of collaboration between faith communities during divided times.

The significance of the gathering was reflected by Stuart Diamond, the CEO of Mitzvah Day, travelling from London just to be at the tea, on what is the busiest day of the year for him! Stuart Diamond, along with Julie Minns MP and local dignitaries and faith leaders met the refugee families and it was a unique opportunity for everyone to not only forge closer friendships with each other, but to embrace the potential that comes from collaborating across difference.

Speeches from local dignitaries and faith communities declared their support for the welcome of all, compelling everyone to work together to build strong foundations for the future of our increasingly diverse county. It was a great event for Rose Community to build relationships with other Cumbrian organisations as we seek to grow a local ecosystem of partnerships.



"Mitzvah Day brings together so much we all care about, our beautiful world and the urgent need to appreciate and protect it, our different faiths and the importance of working together, and refugees who need our support and from whose humbling journeys and struggles we have much to learn."

Rabbi Jonathan Wittenburg OBE

"I'm grateful to be part of a grass roots initiative that brings common folk from all walks of life together on the grounds of humanity. We all stand equal before God regardless of race, colour or class. Today is a clear demonstration of how faith and religion can and will unite us for joint causes regardless of differences."

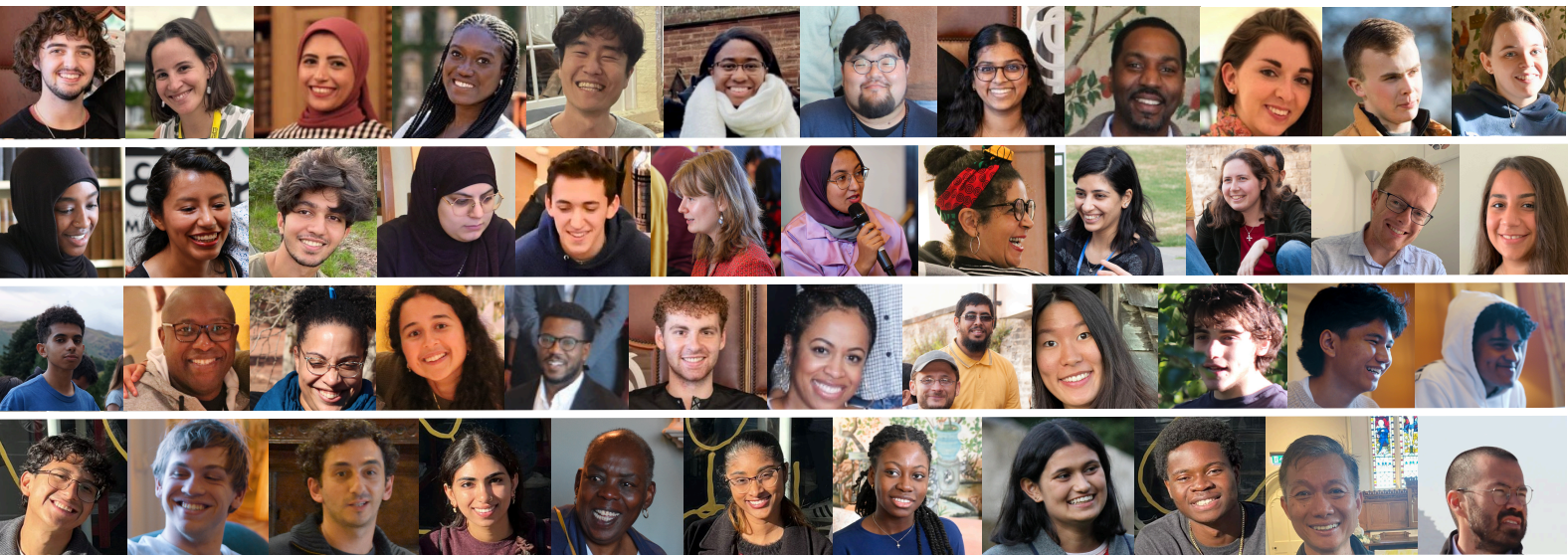
Imam Rashid, Carlisle Muslim Community

In 10 years,
we have trained



1725

bridge building
reconciling
divide crossing
generous
leaders.



10 years and counting!

2024 marks our 10 year anniversary



Marking a decade of peace and reconciliation

It was very special to gather as team and trustees, and later as a wider community, to celebrate turning 10 this year. Our trustees, who include the former Bishop of Carlisle who was due to have lived at Rose Castle had it remained in the church's hands, shared stories of the original vision and dream of transforming Rose Castle into an international landmark of peace and reconciliation. While the dream felt far off during the two years it took between registering Rose Castle Foundation and securing access to the Castle in 2016, it has been an extraordinary year to reflect on how far we have come. We have welcomed to Rose Castle peacemakers from conflict zones around the world, emerging leaders living and working in challenging contexts, and partners from world-renowned institutions, all to experience reconciling training in the Rose Way.

Our deepest gratitude goes to all those who have believed in, and supported, our journey so far: from local neighbours to international partners. Here's to the next decade!



ROSE CASTLE
FOUNDATION