



St.
George's
Crypt



@CRYPTLEEDS



EASTER EDITION 2024

HOPE

Help and Opportunity, Practical and Eternal

Welcome

to our Easter newsletter

Chris Fields
Chief Executive Officer



Easter Greetings ! Welcome to our latest packed full newsletter...

We are now seeing all the signs of Spring and with that the promise of Summer! Not that I am wishing my life away but to have something to look forward to is precious.

As a charity we are constantly evolving and that means change. To some people that's a word which sends shivers of fear and dread down their spine. In some ways none of us like change; we find safety and solace in the known rather than the unknown. It generally boils down to how we are included and consulted about change.

We see this a lot with our residents and guests. The question people sometimes ask is "why wouldn't they want a flat and all that goes with it?" answer... because it's the unknown.

Quite simply without the learning and support in managing bills, cleaning, budgeting for food, cooking, keeping good relations with neighbours and the really big one, coping with solitude which easily becomes loneliness, the pitfalls become big enough for some to turn away from change and stick to what they know and can survive through a life of gained experience.

Spiritually, we could say we are the same, putting our faith in death and resurrection without any sort of scientific proof is a huge step and one

not to be taken lightly for us and many of our client group. To this end, we look to **HOPE**, hope for the world to be kind, hope for a better future and hope for each other in that we find peace, love and understanding.

How do we go about it? Very gently is the quick answer. We don't insist on bible classes or signing up to attend chapel every day, but we do ask that people look at

Help and be kind wherever you can and in any way you can.

Opportunity, grasp it, run with it and share the joy of immersing yourself in a new experience.

Practical, walk the gospels, work the gospels, share the meaning of the gospels.

Eternal, in knowing God's love and forgiveness is eternal, and will never leave you.

All of the above are within the Easter story and are reflected in the work we do and how we do it. Most people find this non-threatening and in time find themselves asking the questions and hopefully finding the answers.

We are an Easter people and that's something we will never change. It sometimes holds us back, especially

with funders who don't give to faith-based charities, but we dust ourselves down and continue in the knowledge that God will provide.

The Easter story is all about death and resurrection, forgiveness and hope for the future. That's exactly what we do daily, we try to get people to put their old ways to death, resurrect their lives with new aspirations, thoughts and deeds. Forgive themselves and others for the mistakes, hurt and mistrust and look to the future with hope and joy.

Just imagine if we could spread those actions across the city, into every home, office and shop. It looks like an insurmountable task but remember someone did it with just twelve trainees 2000 years ago. Not so insurmountable when you look at it like that.

Enjoy reading about the restoration, hope and joy we work towards in changing lives. Feel the compassion and desire to transform; by rebuilding confidence, self-belief and self-reliance.

So from a glass half full CEO, and with all blessings, may I wish you a joyous Easter. Chris



Pictured Left to Right: Gordon - Therapeutic Support Worker / John - Growing Rooms Manager / Ray - Housekeeper

Get Moving: Exercise as a Powerful Ally in the Road to Recovery

We spoke to three members of staff, Ray, Gordon and John about how exercise has helped in their recovery journey and how exercise contributes towards maintaining positive mental health.

John is a **Growing Rooms** Manager at our *Growing Rooms* programme, the only residential abstinence-based drug and alcohol recovery programme in Leeds.

He said that “since I came into recovery, I started doing a lot of walking and eventually marathons, I’ve entered four marathons in the last seven years. Running is a valuable tool where I can clear my mind of stresses, it frees me and it’s where I feel the closest to God.”

Gordon, Therapeutic Support Worker for *Growing Rooms*, touches upon the importance of exercise alongside pre-existing foundations of recovery. He says “it might be a bit of a stretch to think that exercise is the sole answer, but it does complement my recovery.

Exercise gives me peace and a way of feeling better internally as well – I’m the healthiest that I’ve ever been.”

In November 2020, Ray entered the *Growing Rooms* programme, and after completing the program eventually secured a position in housekeeping at the Crypt.

Ray says that “exercise improves my mental health because it helps me to get stronger in my mind. It definitely helps my recovery because when my mind is telling me other things, walking and running takes me away because I’m only concentrating on getting fit and staying healthy.”

Ray also plans to participate in the Leeds 10k this June and urges others to get involved, work on their fitness and help to raise money for worthy causes. He says, “I’m personally choosing to raise money for St. George’s Crypt because I think they need all the help they can get in supporting homeless and vulnerable people of Leeds.”

Participating in upcoming events such as the **Rob Burrow Leeds Marathon** and the **Leeds 10k** is an excellent way to contribute to our cause and help raise vital funds for St. George’s Crypt. If you’re interested in getting involved and supporting us, please get in contact with our fundraising team.



Ashlar House: A Beacon of Hope

Ashlar House is one of St. George's Crypt's projects, providing a beacon of hope and a testimony to transformation and resilience. The house has given shelter to residents like Jasper, Terry, and Simon, who have all shared their stories of overcoming adversity, finding help, seizing opportunities, embracing practical solutions, and discovering eternal hope for a brighter future.

Jasper, who was once engulfed in drug addiction, lost everything, and eventually found his way to Ashlar House after spending desperate nights on the streets.

"I just needed a place to rest, somewhere to build up from," he recalls.

Ashlar House not only provided him with shelter and food but also with supportive staff that brought warmth and positivity. Jasper is now on the path of recovery and acknowledges the immense help available, looking forward to re-entering the workforce and reclaiming his life.

Terry, who had once pursued education and love in China, found himself homeless due to unforeseen circumstances. Discovered by a Street Outreach Team, he eventually found solace at Ashlar House.

"For somebody who's lived on the streets a couple of times, this place is just amazing," Terry expresses, cherishing the exceptional staff and newfound companionship. His aspirations include returning to his flat once repairs are complete.

Simon, who was forced to sleep on the streets, found refuge through a kind stranger and was later referred to the Crypt. Accommodated at Ashlar House, he is currently bidding for his own property, supported by staff assisting with the application process.

Despite facing challenges, the mission of Ashlar House is to empower residents like Simon with essential lifeskills, fostering independence and ensuring a successful transition to fully independent living.

These stories echo the transformative power of hope, which is provided by Ashlar House through the Help, Opportunity, Practical solutions, and Eternal optimism that they offer.

As Jasper aptly puts it, "Wherever or whoever you are, you're only a few steps away from a few wrong choices, and then everything collapses. That is why it is important to have places like St. George's Crypt, to help you along your journey back to full citizenship."



Christmas Roundup

As we bid farewell to the festive season, St. George's Crypt extends its heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated staff, selfless volunteers, and generous donors who played an instrumental role in making this Christmas a season of warmth, compassion, and hope for homeless and vulnerable individuals we serve.

Throughout the year, St. George's Crypt tirelessly provides care and support, ensuring that no one is left alone in their struggle against homelessness and substance dependence. This Christmas, our community came together in an extraordinary display of unity and generosity, embodying the true spirit of the season.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to our incredible staff who work tirelessly 365 days a year, demonstrating unwavering dedication to the well-being of those in need. Your compassion and commitment create a safe haven for individuals facing adversity, offering not just shelter but also a glimmer of hope for a brighter future.

Our volunteers, the unsung heroes of St. George's Crypt, deserve special recognition for their selfless contributions. Your time, energy, and genuine care have a profound impact on the lives of our clients. From organising festive activities to providing a listening ear and wrapping gifts, your efforts brought joy and companionship to those who need it most.

To our generous donors, your support made the magic happen. Your contributions, whether big or small, translated into tangible warmth and comfort for our clients. From warm meals to essential supplies, your kindness created a Christmas filled with love and joy.

The gifts given, both material and intangible, symbolise the spirit of giving that defines the holiday season. Together, we created a truly special community where everyone, regardless of their circumstances, felt seen, valued, and cared for.

As we reflect on the success of this Christmas celebration, we extend our deepest gratitude to each and every person who played a part in making it possible. Your support has not only enriched the lives of those we serve but has also strengthened the bonds of compassion that define the essence of St. George's Crypt.

In total we served 250 Christmas Dinners across the city, gave out 1523 children's presents and another 250 presents to our clients.

In closing, thank you for being part of our extended family, for embodying the true meaning of community, and for making this holiday season a beacon of hope for all. May the spirit of generosity and kindness continue to guide us in the coming year.

FUNDRAISING 2024

Here at St. George's Crypt we provide hope and salvation to vulnerable and homeless people. Can you help us by supporting one of our 2024 events?

- **Team bonding with your colleagues at one of our planned events, for more information go to:** <https://www.stgeorgescrypt.org.uk/how-you-can-help/events>
- **Arrange your own challenges, need any help from us?**
Contact fundraising@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk
- **If you like running, why not run and fundraise for St. Georges Crypt?**
- **Watch out for our Easter challenge coming soon.**
- **Would you like to volunteer at any of our events? If so please get in touch, using one of the links above.**

We would not be able to offer 365 days of care without the fundraising efforts from the people of Leeds. Both new and longstanding supporters, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you all in this newsletter. Every penny you give means that we can change our client's lives for the better.

Whether it is a challenge event, supporting our *Angels* Club as a business, group or as individuals - we need you! Sending very best wishes from all of us here at the Fundraising team.

Lisa
Head of Fundraising

EVENTS 2024



Volunteer with Fundraising



Rob Burrow Marathon



Crypt Ceilidh



Big Christmas Gift Back



Leeds 10k



Angels



If you mention 'four candles' in the office here you will always be greeted back with...'handles for forks'! If you know, you know...

There is however another story about four candles, all of which were found burning steadily away. The first candle was the Candle of Peace. Sadly though, people were so anxious about what was going on in their lives that the Candle of Peace blew out. The second candle was the Candle of Love.

That candle burned brightly in the times people felt loved, but then as often happens, life changed and in the grip of loneliness and fear, that candle too was extinguished.

The third candle was the Candle of Joy. This candle burned strongly at first but without peace and love, it could do nothing but eventually wane and fizzle out leaving a melancholy trail of smoke drifting in the air.

So that left only the last solitary candle, which was the Candle of Hope. As it gazed at the other extinguished candles, it realised what its own purpose in life was and what it had been kindled to do.

That was to use itself to relight the other candles. You see with hope in the world, there could once again be Peace, Love and Joy.

That is the message of Easter,

that Christ, who is our hope, gave of himself on the cross to bring Peace, Love and Joy to each one of us.

Every day here at the Crypt we encounter those, who through no fault of their own, are anxious, lonely and deeply unhappy. What we try and offer and what Christ brings, is that small flame of hope, and through that hope, new life is kindled.

So thank you for everything you do to support our work of HOPE. HOPE that is Help and Opportunity, Practical and Eternal.

So may the God of hope, by whose love Christ was raised from the dead, bring you peace, love and joy, this Easter and evermore

Amen

Gifts in Wills St. George's Crypt has been helping homeless and vulnerable people since 1930. Gifts in wills can be arranged in minutes but the impact lasts a lifetime. The only information your will writer / professional adviser needs is the charity name and registered charity number: St. George's Crypt, Registered charity number 1144474. Every gift will help transform lives.

Please Donate

1a. For one-off donations, please complete this side.

Full name.....

Home address.....

City.....Postcode.....

Email.....

Telephone no.....

I enclose a cheque / postal order (made payable to 'St. George's Crypt') for £.....

Standing Order

1b. For regular donations by standing order, please complete both sides.

Bank / building society name:.....

Bank address:.....

.....Postcode:.....

Please pay St. George's Crypt (HSBC, PO Box 105, Leeds, LS1 1LD. Sort code 40-27-15, account number 54703537)

The sum of £.....
each month / quarter / year (please delete as applicable)

commencing on.....(date) and until further notice.

Name of account to be debited:.....

Account number:.....Sort code:.....

Signed:.....Date:.....

Signed:.....

Date of declaration:.....

Please let us know if your address or your tax circumstances change.
(Post your completed form to: St. George's Crypt, Great George Street, Leeds, LS1 3BR)

2. Gift Aid Declaration

Please claim Gift Aid on all donations I have made within the past four years of this date and all donations I make in the future. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and / or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give on or after the date signed below, or in the preceding 4 years.

3. GDPR Consent:

Do we have your consent to send you our quarterly Newsletter and other interesting updates about the Crypt? Tick all contact methods that apply; we are happy to send you our newsletter by post and by email if you wish

- Yes by post
- Yes by email
- No



Sowing Seeds of Hope:

As we enter 2024, St. George's Crypt is embarking on a new venture; a shop in Morley, a full refurb for our shop in Armley and a move for our Roundhay shop (it's only a couple of doors down in the same retail space!).

Our retail ambitions are rooted in our hope of bringing the Crypt, and all it stands for, to the doorstep of residents of Leeds; to offer good quality goods at fair prices whilst highlighting the work we do across the city supporting vulnerable people back into the community.

It doesn't end there! We actively work to support the people who use our services to volunteer in our shops, where they can start to build the skills they need to re-enter the workplace. Since our teams are built around our values of love,

compassion, hope and change, they actively support our clients, building self-confidence and self-esteem, whilst reducing isolation. It's a lonely place when you are struggling and vulnerable, and you would be amazed how important a smiling face, a caring hug or a kind word can be!

So, if you are in the area, then please pop in, find out more about what we do and grab a deal! We will have sites in Armley, Pudsey, Roundhay and Morley, all filled to the brim with great bargains.

Every penny you spend with us goes to supporting some of the hardest to reach in Leeds, so not only can you get yourself something nice, but you will also leave with a warm feeling that you are helping us change lives in Leeds!

If we send more than one copy of our newsletter to your address, please let us know and help us to reduce our mailing costs. If you would prefer to read it online, please provide your email address to: Lisa.Aldred@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk

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