

# @CryptLeeds

AUTUMN EDITION 2023

## LOAVES AND FISHES



St.  
George's  
Crypt

"I was a stranger and you took me in" Matthew 25:35



# Welcome

## to our Harvest newsletter

Chris Fields  
Chief Executive Officer



**Hello everyone and welcome to our latest newsletter, lots going on, but I will leave that for you to read.**

Harvest time is somewhat fading into a memory as we can access food from all over the world at any time.

There are questions around carbon footprints etc but also the crops are often from countries who need to sell abroad to succeed. After all "I know it's December but I want strawberries". As always; six of one and half a dozen of the other.

We always look forward to the cupboards being replenished during Harvest, school kids dressing up their boxes, churches blessing the gifts and we in turn, happily handing over a food parcel or making our lunches for 80 people all with love and grace.

It's like the magic £5 note some churches give to the congregation to invest creatively in order to bring back £10 or £20 to the collection.

We get a thousand tins and packets, and every day becomes *Ready Steady Cook* for the chefs, or a loaves and fishes day! We really do have some "interesting" menu items (the recent haggis lasagne comes to mind).

Harvest isn't just about food, we see the harvesting of people into the safety of our dry warm barn just as important. We don't always go for the ripe juicy low hanging fruit either, we choose to get the fruit highest and most difficult

on the tree, needing teamwork, ingenuity and a strong resolve to react to.

But once we have that fruit in our barn and we get chance to talk, calm down and attend to their needs, oh boy! that's the sweetest and most fulfilling item on the menu.

It is written that "my house has many mansions" and we can fill any house that is offered to us, our client base is growing constantly, our need to access more flats and houses grows by the day.

Our desire to be a great landlord by buying or building more properties drives us forward in faith that we will be provided for as long as our intentions are good, not for profit and honourable in the eyes of the Lord.

Our vision around 15 years ago was to have 150 bed spaces across the city. We are now at 158. Not all owned by us but managed and supported by a fantastic raft of teams who - 24 hours a day - support, encourage and care for each person as an individual.

Those we do own are thanks to you, our loyal and respected supporters.

If we continue to grow as we are, not rushing and falling into the boom-and-bust mentality like so many others do, we will be reaping the rewards in lives saved, lives changed and lives re-discovered for a long time hence.

We are working with local communities, prisons, NHS, mental health agencies, adult social care and Leeds City Council to prepare the land, tend to it carefully, plant the seeds of faith and new life, encourage and feed the tender shoots of recovery to witness the harvest.

"The Lord will indeed give what is good, and our land will yield its harvest" Psalm 85:12

We must remember however that a lot of hard work goes into the crop before it can be harvested, we ask that you continue to pray for the staff ploughing their way through red tape, calming angry people, picking up the yoke and leading from the front.

We ask that you continue with your support, your prayers, your sharing this newsletter with others and your kind and valued donations.

But most importantly we ask that you remember in your prayers the seed which is lost to poor ground, which struggles to thrive in the shade and shadows and is harvested by dealers, people of violence and discarded by a cruel society as weeds. These are the fruits of the future; we just have to be good farmers.

With all blessings, Chris



# Growth and Harvest

**'Hi, I'm Ady. I was living up at Regent Lodge for 20 months and now I'm living independently.'**

What an amazing sentence. What an affirmation of the work that we do, the ongoing support we provide to ensure our clients' needs are met and they can grow and thrive.

We recently had a conversation with a former client, Ady, who is still accessing our mental health provision, having left the service.

Coming from a history of alcoholism and

homelessness, it is amazing to see the changes he has put in place to gain freedom from his addiction.

It is humbling for us to have had a hand in this journey, and to have worked with such amazing partners across the city, without whom we would not be able to offer our service.

Harvest is a time for reflection; to look back over the season and pick the fruits of our labour, and what a satisfying Harvest Ady, and many of our clients, have achieved.



# Development and Renewal

**The partnership with Wetherby Young Offenders (WYO) started after our Health and Wellbeing Coordinator, Lisa, and her brother, who is a prison officer at WYO, had a conversation about how they could link together and help Crypt clients and the trainee barbers. This seemed like the perfect way to do that.**

Gareth and Lisa visited Wetherby and met the lads and staff who were to be involved and it grew from there. We now have a monthly pop-up barbershop here at St. George's Crypt which is in very high demand. Our clients fed back that they were happy to get their hair cut, and also able to support young offenders trying to develop and grow.

So far we have been cutting about 15 people's hair at each session; a different kind of harvest entirely!







# Journey To Recovery

We have expanded our drug and alcohol residential rehabilitation project. For the first time, we are now offering rehabilitation services to our female clients named Growing Rooms Ladies.

Modelled after our successful men's programme, this initiative has already achieved remarkable successes since its inception.

Last month alone, we proudly witnessed three ladies successfully completing the programme, and we have another client on track to finish within the next two months.

Currently, we have four ladies in residence, and we have acquired a second house, which is set to be ready in the next few months. This expansion will enable us to accommodate a total of eight residents at once, offering them the best possible care and support on their path to recovery.

As part of our commitment to enhancing the rehabilitation experience, we have decided to focus solely on residential services once the second house is operational. By discontinuing the day programme, we can create a more intensive and immersive environment, increasing the likelihood of success for our clients.

One of our former clients, who

completed our programme, now volunteers on the programme, assisting others. Her lived experience is invaluable as she can relate to the challenges our women face and can provide effective support in their journey to recovery.

Our clients are not only benefiting from the programme, but they are also giving back to the charity. All the ladies are actively volunteering around the Crypt. This sense of purpose and fulfillment is essential in building a sustainable substance-free life for our clients.

The ladies are settled and happy to be on the programme as evidenced by some of their comments below:

"It's very humbling all the effort that has gone in to creating a space for us, where we can work on our recoveries and get well, which is so beautiful and clearly there has been so much attention to the details. It is going to make a huge difference to me having a safe space where I feel relaxed, at home and peaceful to work on my recovery" – R

Another client said:

"The house has everything we need and would want, it's so homely it's the first place I've called home in about 10 years.

It also gives me hope to try and achieve more so I can have a nice home like this one day and makes me feel worthy of nice things. I like the cameras outside as they make me feel safe. Overall, I'm very happy and feel so lucky for this opportunity." - S

Growing Rooms Ladies is Leeds' only female residential abstinence-based drug and alcohol recovery programme. We are dedicated to working with each individual through our class-based theory modules and structured volunteering programme. These combined efforts empower our clients to lead a life free from the shackles of addiction, promoting independence, strong work ethics, and a structured framework to thrive in the future.

At St. George's Crypt, our ultimate goal is to sow seeds of love, care, compassion, and hope among homeless, vulnerable individuals, and those living with substance dependence. With your generous support and the dedication of our team, we aspire to see these individuals blossom into contributing citizens later in life.

Thank you for your continued support. Together, we are sowing seeds on good soil so that we can harvest a brighter future for those on their path to recovery.



# Renewal and transformation



**The path to recovery can be challenging and demanding, both mentally and emotionally.**

**At *Growing Rooms*, our drug and alcohol residential rehabilitation project, we support our guys to confront underlying issues through cognitive behaviour group therapy and the 12-step recovery model.**

This can be an intense journey, therefore as part of this transformative process, taking a break from the conventional therapy setting and enjoying tranquillity in the countryside, can prove to be an invaluable experience for individuals on the road to healing.

Our guys in recovery enjoyed a trip to the countryside, thanks to one of our volunteers who has a property in Arncliffe that he kindly lets us use for therapeutic trips.

On a recent visit, participants in the rehabilitation programme experienced a refreshing break from their everyday routines.

Connecting with nature has an incredible way of promoting relaxation, reducing stress, and

fostering emotional wellbeing.

The trips create an environment that encourages a sense of fellowship among like-minded people focused on changing their lives.

Clients are able to form deeper connections with one another, sharing their stories, challenges, and triumphs.

The peer support gained from these connections can be a pivotal aspect of the recovery process as they reinforce the principles of the 12-step recovery model and strengthen the clients' commitment to their healing journey.

Everyone enjoyed their time at Arncliffe as is evident in their comments:

*We had such a laugh and team building and it was a memory I will never forget. Thanks again to everybody involved, I am truly grateful.* - Colin

*I normally struggle to connect and bond with others but the guys in recovery with me helped me to connect and build relationships with others as I felt at peace and safe.* - Neil

*Beautiful experience, opened my eyes to my spiritual side. The views were amazing truly blessed. Opened my eyes to God and my inner self. Was a wonderful experience.* - Peter

*We went and visited caves and saw all the wildlife in the hills and went to a waterhole where we had a swim and it was a good experience and I learnt that there was more to life than being in addiction.* - Jamie

Harvest, like rehabilitation, is a time for spiritual renewal and transformation.

On our part it represents the patient support we offer our clients, sowing the seeds and nurturing them for a successful harvest.

We are forever grateful to our supporters for the harvest you present to us that helps us keep our programmes running. We wouldn't be able to do it without you.



# Fundraising 2023



## Angels of the Crypt

Thank you to North Bar for hosting our most recent Angels event.

Guests were met with a welcome drink, fabulous food by BAO BOY and three speakers including our CEO Chris Fields, provided the inspiration!

The next event is at Sedulo, Park Square on 16th November. Contact

[amanda.bennett@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk](mailto:amanda.bennett@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk) to book your place now



## Thank You

On 1st July our brave warriors undertook the gruelling course at Bramham Park to raise vital funds to combat homelessness in Leeds.

Not for the faint-hearted, we congratulate them for staying the course and supporting St. George's Crypt.

If you are interested in upcoming challenge events, contact [amanda.bennett@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk](mailto:amanda.bennett@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk)

7th Sept FREE Corporate	<b>BREAKFAST AT THE CRYPT</b> Contact <a href="mailto:amanda.bennett@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk">amanda.bennett@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk</a> to book Come and enjoy a hearty breakfast (provided by Nurture) and find out more about the Crypt. This event is open to corporate supporters and businesses across the city.
7th Oct £30 Open to All	<b>CEILIDH</b> Book at: <a href="https://bit.ly/3Exwrzl">https://bit.ly/3Exwrzl</a> Come and join us for an evening of fun and music with our Ceilidh. This year it will be held at St Chad's Church Hall, Headingley This ever-popular event is likely to sell out quickly so book your tickets now to join the fun.
9th – 13th Oct SAVE THE DATE Open to All	<b>WORLD HOMELESS WEEK</b> To volunteer: <a href="mailto:amanda.bennett@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk">amanda.bennett@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk</a> We have LOTS in the pipeline as part of this international week of awareness and 10th October will see us collecting across the city. If you would like to help with the street collections please get in touch.
12th Oct SAVE THE DATE Corporate	<b>RESIDENCE NETWORKING EVENT</b> Join us at our inaugural event hosted by Residence restaurant, Headingley. After work 5:30pm - 8:00pm Contact <a href="mailto:amanda.bennett@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk">amanda.bennett@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk</a> to book
16th Nov FREE Open to All	<b>ANGELS OF THE CRYPT – EVENING EVENT</b> Venue: Sedulo, St. Paul's House. The evening is open to members and guests who are interested in tackling homelessness in Leeds. Refreshments will be provided. Contact <a href="mailto:amanda.bennett@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk">amanda.bennett@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk</a>
23rd Nov Over 18's only	<b>LEEDS BIG SLEEP</b> Visit: <a href="https://bit.ly/3sMKU8l">https://bit.ly/3sMKU8l</a> for more information The Leeds Big Sleep is back for a seventh year and will once again see supporters of Leeds Rhinos Foundation, St. George's Crypt and St. Gemma's Hospice team up for a night under the stars at Headingley Stadium.

## Volunteer Spotlight

I enjoy **volunteering for St. George's Crypt** because of the Crypt's great reputation. Every time I meet the public at least one person says to me that the Crypt has transformed their life for the better. The public and our excellent supporters are so helpful and kind. Volunteering is important because we have such a beneficial impact for the clients and spread the goodwill of the Crypt throughout the Leeds area and beyond. Also, volunteering is a great way to use one's time for the common good. I became involved with St. George's Crypt via the wonderful Tony Beswick. I knew Tony due to his fantastic work with a charity in Headingley and then Tony started to work for St. George's Crypt. I was deeply impressed with the super team (and still am) at the Crypt and it was, and still is, a pleasure and a privilege to be a volunteer: **David Metcalfe – Volunteer.**

To find out more about volunteering for us please contact: [amanda.bennett@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk](mailto:amanda.bennett@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk)





**Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' And I said, 'Here am I; send me!'**

That Bible verse sits on my desk, and it was read out when I was ordained.

So here I am looking forward to 'being sent' and coming back to the Crypt at the beginning of August.

Someone said to me recently the Crypt 'gets under your skin' and it is true, the experience of walking alongside our sisters and brothers is a very visible way that God speaks directly into your soul.

That in a nutshell is why I am coming back! About eight years ago, I spent a month at the Crypt with Roger Quick and Jon Swales as part of my ordination training and in the following years as curate and vicar, that time and those experiences have become part of me and my ministry.

The Crypt has popped up in sermons (probably far too often, oops!) and its practical compassion and care has been behind many of the outreach projects I have started over the years.

The Crypt got under my skin, and so I did feel God's (not so subtle) kick when I saw the Chaplain's job

posted on Facebook (thank you Jon!).

Leaving my parish here north of Bournemouth won't be easy, because they are a lovely, compassionate, and faithful group of people, but I know where God is calling me, and it is 'home' – back to the Crypt and to all those who work and shelter within and without its walls.

Because it does feel like coming home, that is what I am looking forward to the most, the privilege of being one small part of a family where God's compassion and kindness knows no bounds, asks no questions but can make all the difference to someone's day.

Bless you all for giving me the opportunity to return and be part of this wonderful family.

**Become a Trustee:** St. George's Crypt is actively recruiting Trustees to support the charity as it continues to develop. If you have senior executive or Board level experience, especially in marketing and supported housing, are an active, practising Christian and have an interest to support homeless and vulnerable people in Leeds, then please get in touch with [martin.barry@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk](mailto:martin.barry@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk) on 0113 245 9061.

## 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 £.....

### 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

### 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)

- Yes by post  
 Yes by email  
 No





**Charlie and Diane are a dedicated couple who have been volunteering for the Crypt for over 13 years.**

Diane, a former community worker at HSBC, developed an interest in the organisation through her interactions with Crypt volunteers. When they retired, Charlie and Diane decided to volunteer for the charity.

They approached the Crypt and expressed their desire to contribute, and we gladly welcomed them as volunteers. Initially, they worked in the kitchen for the Monday evening service, but due to changes in meal timings, they had to discontinue this role. However, undeterred, they continued to support the organisation in various other areas, including organising and participating in fundraising events.

One significant project over the last decade has been the Toy Appeal. Charlie and Diane took on the responsibility of running this initiative, which has significantly

grown under their leadership. They collect and distribute toys to approximately 2,000 children each year, ensuring that these young people experience the joy of Christmas.

Beyond the children they serve, Charlie and Diane's impact is felt by the community. People approach them during fundraising with heartfelt stories of their own childhood memories of receiving toys from the Crypt. These encounters remind them of the significance their work holds. Without the Toy Appeal, countless children in Leeds would miss out on the joy of receiving gifts during Christmas.

In addition to the Toy Appeal, Charlie and Diane collect and distribute clothes and household items throughout the year to those in need. They understand that their work is made possible through the generosity of the people of Leeds, who selflessly donate to support the cause. They appreciate the contributions of supporters such as

Big Yellow Self Storage Co. Leeds, who provide free storage all year round, and LC Vehicle Hire, who offer a van for one month each year to enable toy distribution.

When asked about their motivation, Charlie and Diane state that they have both the time and willingness to give back to their community. They enjoy working behind the scenes, knowing that their efforts directly benefit those who require assistance. Although they may not personally know the children who receive the toys they distribute, the couple firmly believes that the smiles on their faces on Christmas day are a testament to the impact they make.

Charlie and Diane's commitment makes them true beacons of light.

Thank you, Charlie and Diane, for being shining examples of kindness. Your efforts have undoubtedly planted the seeds of hope in the lives of those in need.

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: [martyn.croft@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk](mailto:martyn.croft@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk)

For more information, please contact  
The Fundraising Team  
Email: [john.child@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk](mailto:john.child@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk)  
Post: Great George Street, Leeds, LS1 3BR  
Tel: 0113 245 9061

Registered charity: 1144474, Company Number: 07780402

