

# @Crypt Leeds



St. George's  
Crypt

Easter Issue 2022





# Welcome

## to our Easter newsletter

**Hello everyone and welcome to our Spring Newsletter which follows on from a really busy Christmas period (more of that inside).**

We now look to a full and, hopefully, open new year of fewer (if no) covid restrictions and the freedom to live as we want.

That's made me think. "Living as I want," how selfish, shallow and self-centred is that?

We should not be "wanting" to live as we see fit but how we NEED to live to fulfil our gifted potential and contribute positively to the lives of others in order to share our good fortune, circumstance and faith.

As we approach Lent we will hear all the usual "what are you giving up?". It is an age old tradition which goes back to times of self-denial and struggle in order to share somewhat in the trials that Jesus experienced and in bodily denial, show a level of worship beyond church attendance.

I would suggest, and I am sure some will disagree with me, that in these modern times of plenty there's very little that will make me suffer as in days gone by. If I stop drinking coffee, I can drink tea. If I give up chocolate, I can replace it with chewing gum and the list goes on.

What I personally need to do is look to increasing my devotion in doing more or something new, which helps someone somewhere. If I give

up a daily barista coffee every other day, I can donate £5.40 to charity. If I give up a late rise morning on a weekend, I can help a neighbour tidy their garden. It's still giving up but also giving back.

Imagine if you were in a situation such as many of our clients and residents who have so little they are able to give up. They can't afford a pair of shoes, let alone a double macchiato with sprinkles.

We are seeing more people for lunches as fuel costs increase (we have heating). We are seeing more families at our foodbank as parents struggle to keep a family together and this year, we gave a record 1,900 toys to children across the city, so mum and dad didn't have to explain why Santa didn't visit them.

We are blessed, rich beyond the wildest dreams of our great grandparents, yet still we crave more.

I crave for a world where hunger and homelessness are ended (let's start with Leeds).

I crave for a city where all children grow up healthily and with the love and care I experienced as a child.

I crave for a population free from the demands of illicit drugs and alcohol misuse. I crave for equality and respect and finally, I crave for health, well-being and peace in everyone I meet.

I am now asking you read that again and substitute the word "crave" for pray.



**Chris Fields**  
Chief Executive Officer

We SO value your prayers, and we also value the thoughts and kindness of those with little or no faith. It all goes into the Crypt mix, nothing is wasted – good thoughts are welcome too (to us it's a prayer).

So for this Lent, crave or pray for change, try to be a part of that change, enjoy it (it doesn't have to hurt). Love shouldn't be conditional, sacrificial or hurt, it's a gift from God and together let's make 2022 a year so different and wonderful it will become a memory to keep.

There's an old song I learned at school:

*'Love is something if you give it away,*

*it's just like a magic penny, hold it tight and you won't have any,*

*lend it, spend it, and you'll have so many they'll roll all over the floor!'*

You can tell it wasn't a public school but that's stuck with me for over 50 years, here's to all our floors being knee deep!

With all blessings and a joyful new year, Chris



## Christmas Round up

**This Christmas we worked round the clock to ensure that everyone who used our service had an enjoyable, joy-filled, and special time. From bingo to dancing to a lovely Carol Concert by the LS26 choir, we made sure that everyone we serve was able to take part, join in and have fun.**

Sadly, Christmas can be a very difficult time for many of our clients. Family breakdown is one of the main reasons why people become homeless. There is a high incidence of historic abuse, broken homes, and drink and drug addiction in any

homeless population. Christmas, a time when we see many happy images of loving families, roaring fires, and the festive season in full flow, could not be further from the experiences of our guys.

So, to be able to serve and support is potentially more vital at Christmas than at any other time of the year. Without your support, we would not be able to provide the service we do. A massive thanks to everyone in Leeds and beyond for the generosity that makes Christmas possible for some very vulnerable and marginalised people.

# mental health

**Homelessness and mental health often go hand in hand. Having a mental health problem can create circumstances that can cause a person to become homeless. Homelessness can also increase the chances of developing poor mental health or exacerbate an existing condition.**

Our vulnerable clients frequently face considerable barriers in accessing the mental health services that could support them.

At St George's Crypt, we have a Mental Health Support Worker, Hilary Brooks, who provides clients with one-to-one support to manage their mental

health, maintaining well-being and social inclusion.

Hilary has been working with one client for about two years. He had experienced childhood trauma which led to mental health, alcohol and substance dependence. His engagement was sporadic as he seemed to hurtle from one negative thought to another, punishing and harming himself for his drug use. Sometimes that would be visible self-harm, and other times it would be a barrage of negative thoughts.

After his mother's passing away, our client joined *Growing Rooms*, our abstinence-based drug and alcohol

recovery programme. However, after losing his brother as well, he relapsed. We continued supporting him, with Hilary engaging him in positive activities such as budgeting, knitting, walks by the canal and swimming.

He decided to give up smoking, benefits and drugs and alcohol. He has since moved into a Christian rehab. He has been there for a few months and is doing well.

Hilary says: I see this as a miracle – a guy who sold his shoes in the Britannia car park to buy drugs is going straight and starting to enjoy life and be part of life.



# Change: Not Giving Up



**When we think of Lent, we think of what we can give up. Jesus' sacrifice in the wilderness, 40 days fasting and praying, is an example to us all; do the right thing for the right reason. For our clients in our alcohol and drug rehabilitation project, *Growing Rooms*, giving up takes on a much more serious meaning. Potentially a life-changing meaning. They are aiming to give up drink and drugs forever, very difficult if you have a long history of relying on substances.**

But when you start to take the steps, start to see the changes in yourself, start to gain a little clarity, you see that there is light at the end of the tunnel. We talked with people at different stages of their journey through our 15-month *Growing Rooms* project, and with it, people who have completed and are now in work, to find out their feelings around abstinence, recovery, and giving up drugs and alcohol forever.

*'I don't want to be the person I used to be before addiction. That person ended up using. His whole world compass was wrong. Ultimately, I want contentment; I want to give to people, not to take. What I'm striving for is something that is so*

*huge to me, it's hard to put into words.*

*Anyone can give something up, but I want much more than that. I want to change inside, to take advantage of what life has to offer. You don't have to alter your mind to enjoy life.'*

Another client, who is now working part-time as our Weekend Warden, related addiction, and abstinence to the Lenten practice of giving something up.

*'It's brilliant to be away from that environment. I was getting bullied, taken advantage of, having my money taken. People came into my house, people I didn't want there, and I was made homeless.*

*Surrendering is very hard. People find it hard to give up tea and coffee but it's 100 times harder to give up drugs. Imagine taking something away that you felt helped fix you? I had no self-esteem, no confidence, didn't believe in myself, no love, and drugs replaced that. I was hiding, pretending to be the big man. I've had to go back to the beginning and start rebuilding; it's hard.*

*Giving up drugs was the best thing I've ever done. It's something I can be proud of.'*

Finally, we had a chat with a client who has now moved on. He is drink and drugs-free, has a part-time job, has reconnected with family and friends and his own flat.

*'I couldn't stop drugs on my own. I remember the first time I tried recovery; I couldn't understand it. I relapsed again and again and again. All I ever wanted to do was let go but wasn't able to. I have a talent for building things but I'm equally good at knocking them back down!*

*I joined Growing Rooms and everything seemed to fall into place. There was lots of education into what my addiction was, and I'm not sure really why, but I found peace. The job and the flat are just material things but it's the peace I've found in myself that's really important – I feel blessed!'*

So whatever you are thinking about giving up over Lent, remember that we work with people who are giving up something that has, sadly, formed a major part of their lives, not just for Lent, but hopefully for the rest of their lives. This is a very positive change, but also a very difficult one, and we will walk beside them on that journey, supporting them all the way.



# A Light in the Darkness



**Don Robins House, our newest development of supported accommodation for people with a history of homelessness or at risk of homelessness, has been eye-opening for us as an organisation.**

Even with 90 years experience, seeing the range of people who are accessing the service is giving us a new perspective on what it is we do, and who these homeless people we serve, are.

One such gentleman came to Leeds fleeing torture and persecution in Sudan. He was working in security, had to have an operation on his knee, lost his job, and found himself with us.

With the stability we have been able to provide, he has now got a new job and plans to move on into his own home.

*'I am from a small village in North Darfur, Sudan. I have four brothers and four sisters. My father passed away in 2005 and my mother was left to care for us on her own.*

*She did everything she could to keep us in education and provided food and accommodation for us.*

*Unfortunately, I had to flee the country in 2013 because my life was in danger.*

*I had been working with one family member, bringing supplies from the capital city to our village but the government officials accused us of supplying food and medication to insurgents.*

*We were incarcerated for close to three months and severely tortured, leaving me with a very damaged knee.*

*We were released on condition that we were to report to the station every week and provide intelligence on the insurgents, information that we did not have.*

*So, every week they would torture us and order us to come back with information at the next sign in and they threatened to hurt our families as well if we didn't have any information. The weekly tortures got worse and, in the end, I had to flee.'*

He had to endure a harrowing journey fleeing from violence. When he arrived in Leeds, he applied and was granted asylum.

*'I went through the asylum system and managed to get a job but my health was not good due to the torture.*

*I had to have two major surgeries on my knee and lost my job, couldn't pay rent, and ended up homeless.*

*I got support from refugee organisations; they got me registered for English classes and when my English improved, they supported me to get my security badges.*

*I was referred to Don Robins house as I was homeless. I now work as a security guard and have managed to reunite with my wife.*

*We now have a beautiful daughter and really appreciate all the support St George's Crypt is giving us here.*

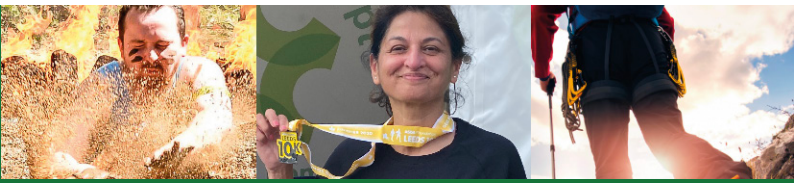
*My plan is to get my own house and raise my family and hopefully I can travel to see my family back in Sudan; it has been over nine years since I last saw them.'*

St George's Crypt has always met the need of vulnerable and marginalised homeless people as they have come to our doors.

We try to be a light in the darkness for anyone who is in need. Like the Good Samaritan, we will not leave the battered and bruised lying by the side of the road. It's great to see people succeed, flourish and thrive.



# The Fun in Fundraising



## St George's Crypt Events

25th June Total Warrior: £50 Registration Fee,  
£200 Fundraising Target

3rd July Leeds 10K: £25 Registration Fee,  
£100 Fundraising Target

30th July Yorkshire 3 Peaks: £35 Registration Fee,  
£200 Fundraising Target

## Charity of the Year



## Partnership

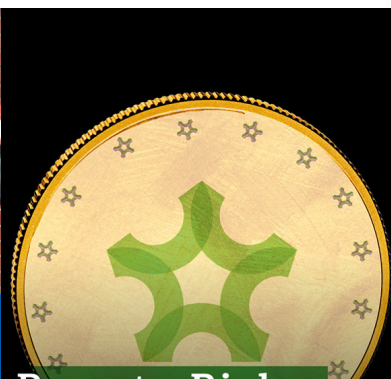
Choose us as your  
company's

**Charity of the Year**  
and help us make a  
huge difference  
here in Leeds!



## Volunteer at our events

Volunteers are a crucial part of everything we do within fundraising. It is the passion, dedication and enthusiasm our volunteers bring that help take our events and collections from great to epic!



## Rags to Riches

The Crypt's  
Corporate Challenge

## From Rags to Riches

Test your  
entrepreneurial skills  
and out of the box  
thinking with our  
apprentice style  
fundraising challenge!



## Create your own Fundraising Event

Create your own unique fundraising event and support us to help transform lives.

Our fundraising team will provide you with all the support and equipment necessary to make your event a huge success.



## £1 on the Bill

Are you a restaurant or a bar in Leeds? If so, we're launching a new campaign and we would love you to be a part of it!

To volunteer, sign up or create your own event, please contact our Community & Events Fundraiser Andy Sharpe. Mobile: 07568 226799 or email [andy.sharpe@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk](mailto:andy.sharpe@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk)

For all our Corporate events, please contact our Senior Fundraiser Zoe Bray  
Mobile: 07554 019039 or email [zoe.bray@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk](mailto:zoe.bray@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk)



# Chaplain's Corner

with Reverend Roger

*"For the foolishness of God is wiser than Man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than Man's strength." 1 Corinthians 1:25*

Like many of my colleagues, I recently contracted Covid. This reminded me that there is a big difference between talking about something and experiencing it.

There is all the difference in the world between talking about God, and experiencing the love of God.

In the Crypt, by your generosity, we try to show that love in practical action, providing good food, a

safe place to stay, and everything necessary.

Not only that; we try to provide those things lovingly. To let everyone who comes to us for help know that they matter infinitely to God. That they are loved. Nothing matters more.

**Thank God with us for all who give prayer, time, goods or money to the Crypt: may it be a blessing to them also.**

**Pray with us, that we may use well the resources of people, time, and money; generously given, thankfully received.**

**Pray for those who come to us in the grip of addiction; may they find strength and courage.**

**Pray for those in all our houses. May they be places of hope, of healed memories, of shared laughter.**

**Gifts in Wills** For 90 years St. George's Crypt has helped homeless and vulnerable people. 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.

## Donation form

### 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:.....

### 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.

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)

### 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





# Awarding Excellence

When COVID hit, we had to look at how we offered all our services and change. We knew we had to continue our service, or some of the most in-need people in Leeds would potentially endure hardship during these unprecedented times.

We developed and built upon partnerships with agencies across the city to ensure we did not miss those most in need. Our emergency accommodation service had to change due to the risk of COVID infection in communal spaces. We moved shared

bed spaces out of the main Crypt site into individual rooms dispersed across the city.

This changed how we managed our service and led to some great partnerships springing up, and on the back of this, our team's role has been recognised with three partnership awards.

We received the Tilley Awards 2020 – 21 for our exemplary problem solving and a Certificate of Recognition from Safer Leeds, acknowledging and commending

our team for outstanding work during the COVID pandemic and transition phase, supporting people in need. Our third award was for the partner of the year Golden Owl Award for multi-agency partnership working to support rough sleepers during the COVID pandemic.

This is a tribute to the hard work of everyone at St George's Crypt for continuously supporting the needs of our vulnerable clients and making sure no-one is left behind.

**Data Protection** - Our Privacy Policy can be found at [www.stgeorgescrypt.org.uk/privacy](http://www.stgeorgescrypt.org.uk/privacy)

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: [martin.barry@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk](mailto:martin.barry@stgeorgescrypt.org.uk)  
Post: Great George Street, Leeds, LS1 3BR  
Tel: 0113 245 9061

Registered charity: 1144474, Company Number: 07780402



St. George's  
Crypt



Registered with  
**FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR**