

# ST GEORGE THE MARTYR CHARITY

## WINTER NEWSLETTER 2022



## CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

Times continue to be tough, and I just had another Covid and 'Flu jab to help protect me through the winter – I hope that you have had yours too?

With rising food prices and energy bills it has been good that the Council, the government and even the energy companies are doing something to help us get through these challenging times. The Charity is supporting initiatives to get welfare and eligibility advice out there – and remember that you may be entitled to forms of support you may not even know about.

Southwark Council's Local Support Team will even visit you in your own home to help ensure you are getting everything that's "Rightfully Yours". Call them on 020 7525 2434 or you can find them on the internet:

<https://www.southwark.gov.uk/benefits-and-support/other-welfare-benefits>.

In Spring 2023, our sister charities, United St Saviour's Charity and Southwark United Charities are opening a new, state-of-the-art, 60-unit almshouse for elderly people of limited means in Southwark Park Road near The Blue in Bermondsey.



It will be followed in a couple of years with another brand new 62-unit almshouse on Blackfriars Road to replace the aging "Edward Edwards" almshouse. So, if you're looking to move and downsize, the Council may be able to give you a grant to help you move. Our team can help signpost you if you're interested.

I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

***Alderman Tim McNally, Chairman of the Trustees***

## CLERK'S COMMENTS

Hello everyone!

As the nights draw in, we start to think of Christmas - at the time of writing it is only seven weeks away!

Over the past few years, we've given members the option of having a shopping voucher rather than the traditional hampers as their Christmas gift from the Charity. Requests for the latter have reduced considerably, as most people prefer to have the choice of what to have, rather than just take whatever comes in the hamper. This year we have decided to dispense with hampers altogether and will be sending a Marks & Spencer gift card to every member household.



We will no longer be printing Charity diaries. The costs have gone up considerably and it is also very time consuming to send them all out. I know some of you will be disappointed. However, you will be pleased to read that the Trustees have agreed to increase the amount of the gift cards by 20%, from £50 to £60. We expect to start sending these out during the week of 5<sup>th</sup> December.

In previous issues of the newsletter, we have raised concerns about members cancelling their places on trips at the last moment, or simply not showing up at all. Of course, this does not apply to the vast majority of members who do turn up or do give us plenty of notice if their circumstances have changed and they need to cancel. However, it still happens too many times and it costs the Charity money that could be spent on other things.

As an example, a significant number of members failed to turn up for the coach trip to Hastings in July, to the extent that the trip could almost have been done with a single coach, rather than the two that had been booked.

The Trustees have therefore agreed that, to discourage such behaviour in the future, we may decide to suspend or reduce a member's Discretionary Charitable Payment ('pension') if they fail to turn up or cancel at the last minute without a good reason.

***Andy Murphy, Clerk***

## VISITOR'S VIEWS

I hope you are all well and coping with what could be a very difficult winter. Fortunately, we have had a mild October but recently there has been a drop in temperature. Please make sure that you keep warm and ensure that you claim any additional monies that you are entitled to.

I have had quite a lot of members contact me regarding the 'nail care' service. I understand that members have been trying to contact Deborah and have been unable to do so. I can now confirm that Deborah is currently out of the country and due to return early December. She has said that she will see people straight away and rearrange appointments. Please note however, that Deborah has many clients, and it may take her some time to get to see everyone.

Should you be unable to wait, I have been given the contact details of a lady who works in Borough High Street on Fridays. Please contact me if you would like her details. She comes recommended however please note that I have had no

experience of her work or met her. Obviously, should you wish to arrange an appointment you will have to pay, as the service is not provided by the Charity.



Since last writing to you we have had a lovely weekend break in Eastbourne, two theatre trips to 'Grease: the Musical' and 'Jersey Boys', and a coach trip to Hastings.

Unfortunately getting to 'Grease' was difficult due to a protest in the capital which disrupted the buses and transport links. This was unforeseen however most made it, even if it involved a long walk!

We have three more theatre trips coming up in early 2023, including 'A Christmas Carol' at the Old Vic, which is back by popular demand. However, we only have 50 tickets and preference will be given to those who have not seen it before.

Should you have any suggestions for trips/places you would like to visit please do mention them to me and we will give them consideration. We are always looking out for new places to visit but please bear in mind access issues and the distance to be travelled.

I am looking forward to seeing you at Polhill!

*Philippa van Os, Visitor*



## KEEPING WELL THIS WINTER

Changes to our bodies as we get older mean that cold weather and winter bugs affect us more than they used to.

### What you can do

As we age, our immune system becomes weaker and less able to fight off viruses. We gradually lose the muscle mass that helps us keep warm and moving about. And the cold makes health conditions harder to manage – it can even affect our hearts and circulation.

The good news is that there's lots we can do to help keep ourselves well in winter.

#### Keep moving



Try not to sit still for more than an hour at a time. Even a little bit of activity now and then can help you maintain strength and mobility.

This can be easier said than done. You might well have found that you're not feeling as fit as you did before the coronavirus pandemic started – if so, you're not alone. Lots of us are finding things we used to do less easy, but even some gentle movement while sitting down can help.

*The most important thing is to do what you're comfortable with and build up slowly.*



#### Eat well

It can sometimes be difficult to keep up the motivation to prepare meals. But it's good to try and keep to a routine where you can.

Use the local food banks and food pantries if you need to.

*The main thing to remember is that it's better to eat a bit of what you fancy than to eat nothing – even if it's just a slice of cake.*

It's a good idea to keep your cupboards stocked with some basics just in case you can't get out to the shops – whether due to illness or bad weather.



#### Get your winter vaccinations – even if you're fighting fit

Respiratory viruses are more widespread in winter, so it's especially important to get your vaccinations. Vaccinations are particularly important this winter as flu and coronavirus levels are expected to rise due to an increase in social contact.

*Anyone aged 50 and over is eligible for a coronavirus booster jab and a free 'flu jab. And it's not too late to have your first jabs if you haven't yet.*

When you get your flu jab, check if you're also eligible for the pneumo vaccine, which helps protect you from pneumonia, and the shingles vaccine.



### **Make sure your home is warm enough**

Try to heat your home to a steady and comfortable temperature throughout the day in the rooms you use most, such as the living room and bedroom.

If there are rooms you don't use, like a spare bedroom, turn off the radiators there and close the doors. This will help you save on energy costs. Close all the curtains at dusk to help keep heat in.

*It's a good idea to keep your bedroom window closed at night when the weather is at its coldest.*

This winter there's additional support to help you with the rise in energy bills.



### **Stop the spread of germs**

As well as getting vaccinated, there are some other simple measures we can take to reduce the spread of illness.

Regularly washing your hands with soap and water is one of the best ways to stop germs from spreading.

*It's a good idea to keep some antibacterial gel with you when you're out and about too.*

You can also:

- catch coughs and sneezes in a tissue
- choose to wear a face covering in busy indoor spaces, like shops or buses
- leave windows ajar to let fresh air circulate when meeting people indoors
- avoid close contact with people who are unwell.



### **Wrap up well and stay stocked up**

Wearing plenty of layers is the best way to keep warm in winter. If you're heading out, make sure you take some extra layers – even if you don't need them immediately, it's a good idea to be prepared because the temperature can drop significantly when the sun goes in.

Wear a hat, keep active and keep warm in bed with a hot water bottle, an electric blanket (although don't go to sleep with it switched on!) and/or a good high tog rating quilt.

*It's important to keep your hands and feet warm:*

- *Wear gloves that are not too tight*
- *Pull your sleeves down*
- *Wiggle your hands and feet if cold*
- *Do not go in bare feet*
- *Wear socks in bed*
- *Keep your feet dry*
- *Put your feet up if you're sitting down for more than a few minutes*
- *Wear woolly insulating socks*

It's a good idea to stock up on cold and sore throat remedies, too. Your pharmacist can give you advice on what might help if you're feeling under the weather.



The cold puts more pressure on our hearts and circulation. The cold can increase the risk of a stroke or heart attack, as well as

hypothermia. If you suspect yourself, or someone else, is experiencing any of these, call 999 (or 112 from a mobile) immediately.

For a **stroke**, think **FAST**:

**F** – is the **face** drooping on one side?

**A** – can the person raise both **arms** and keep them there?

**S** – is **speech** slurred?

**T** – **time** to call 999 if you spot any one of these signs.

Many people experience severe chest pain during a heart attack – but the symptoms can be different for different people.

Hypothermia is a medical emergency, just like a stroke or a heart attack.





## SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

We have been able to arrange some more social opportunities over the next few months, which we hope you'll enjoy. Please use the form provided to request a place on any of these opportunities. Please bear in mind that trips may be over-subscribed, so we may not be able to meet every request.

All opportunities are **free-of-charge** for Full and Associate Members of the Charity (this is the vast majority of you), and anyone accompanying them as a carer. However, there may be a charge for Honorary Members and the charges are shown below (these are based on the actual cost to the Charity).



- **'A Christmas Carol' at the Old Vic Theatre, Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2023 (matinee performance).** Matthew Warchus' big-hearted, smash hit production of Charles Dickens' immortal classic returns to The Old Vic, joyously adapted for the stage by Jack Thorne. *A Christmas Carol* fills the auditorium to the brim with mince pies, music and merriment. A unique staging immerses the audience in this uplifting story. The maximum number of places is 49 (cost price for Honorary Members: £25)



- **Winter Party, Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023:** We have once again been able to book the Brick Lane Music Hall for our Winter Party. Guests will be taken to the music hall by coach. You will enjoy a three-course meal followed by a 'pantomime for grown ups', which this year is 'Goldilocks and the Bare Bears'. Those of you that have been before will know what to expect! (cost price for Honorary members: £55)

You have a choice of one or other of these two performances:

- **‘Wicked’ at the Apollo Victoria Theatre, Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 (matinee performance).** Flying into its landmark 17th Year at the Apollo Victoria Theatre, this devilishly clever spin on “The Wizard of Oz” imagines a beguiling backstory and future possibilities to the lives of L. Frank Baum’s beloved characters and reveals the decisions and events that shape the destinies of two unlikely university friends on their journey to becoming ‘Glinda the Good’ and the ‘Wicked Witch of the West’. The maximum number of places is 48 (cost price for Honorary Members: £30)



- **‘Guys & Dolls’ at the Bridge Theatre (near Tower Bridge), Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023 (matinee performance).** The Bridge transforms for one of the greatest musicals of all time. It has more hit songs, more laughs and more romance than any show ever written. The seating is wrapped around the action while the immersive tickets transport you to the streets of Manhattan and the bars of Havana in the unlikeliest of love stories. The maximum number of places is 48 (cost price for Honorary Members is £45).



# Christmas

Here's something to keep your brain working! The objective of this puzzle is to find and mark all the hidden words. The words may be placed horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. Good luck!

## WORD SEARCH

S O B C N C D J M D L I P T S  
Z T W F H V U Q E J J L R J U  
U Y N R H R Q G R A B A R U A  
Z Q B E T L I F R A D G L F L  
W O D M M S P S Y I O C H N C  
Q U R P M A Y L T M N J O L A  
C O O K I E N I O M B S L I T  
S C N L U F O R Y V A V I S N  
V U A O A N Y C O E E S D B A  
K Y R M P D Q D S Y T R A P S  
T G I P A L U F Y O J U Y R F  
Q L C H R I S T M A S D A Y R  
Y F E S T I V A L J W Y D C J  
T F I G H Y S N O I T A C A V  
J Z P P O O I E T L C R E L H

CHRISTMAS DAY  
SANTA CLAUS  
ORNAMENTS  
CHRISTMAS  
VACATION

CHRISTMAS  
TRADITION  
SURPRISE  
FESTIVAL  
HOLIDAY

SEASON  
COOKIE  
FAMILY  
MERRY  
PARTY

MERRY  
JOYFUL  
LOVE  
GIFT  
TOY



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Our usual working hours are:

Monday 11.00am to 6.30pm; Tuesday 9.30am to 5.30pm; Wednesday 10.00am to 6.30pm; Thursday 9.30am to 5.30pm. We do not usually work on Fridays

**Please do not call at the office without ringing first, as we may not be there!**