

Give thanks for the Harvest

After a fairly quiet summer, September arrived, and our shelves were becoming a little bare, as client numbers started to increase. For a few weeks we held our breath and prayed... Then the first phone call came in, wondering if we would like to receive Harvest donations.... we breathe again, learning once again the virtue of patience, and the role of prayer in our work.

God is good, the sun has been shining, the farmers have brought their harvest in, and we give thanks for the schools, churches and businesses who mark the celebration, and for all willing to share with us in the fruits of the harvest. This could be a crate in the office, a display in the church, an assembly at school, a fair in the village. We are overwhelmed with joy for the many offers of help and donations which we receive that keep the hungry, troubled, cold and lonely fed and supported.

If you too can help this Harvest, either by holding a collection at your place of work, or volunteering with us, please do make contact, we'd love to hear from you

Welcome Matthew George



We recently put out a call for a much needed regular van driver for our Ely operations. We are delighted to give a big welcome to Matthew

George, who kindly responded and has recently joined the team. Matthew comes to us full of energy, enthusiasm and gifts to further assist in our work, and is doing a great job making it all seem effortless. Matthew's role is essential to ensure that we can move stock around from our food stores to where we can

provide food for our clients, and also ensure our Centre volunteers can better focus on their roles.

Once again we are grateful for willing volunteers coming forward just when we needed them most. Thank you Matthew for joining Ely Foodbank and all of the Partnership extend a welcome to you.

Daleks to the Rescue!

We are delighted that one of our volunteers Frank Danes raised £ 150 for Foodbank last Saturday by taking his collection of Daleks along to Cherry Hinton Festival. We just had to get the photo of Frank's Daleks in the newsletter!



Uniform Bank

For the first time this year, the Foodbank has been able to help dozens of families who would otherwise struggle with the cost of school uniform. We have provided individual items of blouses, trousers, blazers and skirts, as well as being able to provide three families with a complete uniform set.

There are still items available, and if you know anyone that needs help then please do visit the Foodbank and ask to see the uniform range. Thank you to everyone who gave to this project and we ask that you continue to save your good quality items.

Thank you for gifting via our Facebook page

A kind High Street shop owner wanted to support us, and found an easy way to do it. Knowing that our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/ElyFoodbank) has a 'Donate' button, they found that they could add our donate button to their own Facebook post. The result was that friends had clicked on it and donated £ 300 (via Facebook) in just a couple of weeks!

Thank you Ellgia Recycling



A massive thank you to Ellgia Recycling of Lancaster Way, Witchford and their staff who donated £150 to the Foodbank through their Community Fund.

Compassion

Recently there was further warning of the new Universal Credit system being brought to breaking point as the rollout across the nation pushes ahead. Problems with IT systems, transferring recipients onto the new benefits, and ongoing teething troubles were aspects cited by a key monitoring group. It is poignant for us as we expect the Ely Job Centre to start insisting new or changed claims move to the new system imminently. We wait with baited breath for what it might mean for the poorest among us, and for how it might drive demand through our centres.

Most agree that many of the concepts of Universal Credit are a good idea – the previous system of many overlapping benefits was well overdue for reform. It is the combination of the rollout plus details of how it works (or doesn't work!) for people that creates the issues, with real risks of leaving the most vulnerable in acute difficulty.

Whilst benefit systems quickly become complex, we strive to keep things simple: to see people in front of us and to have compassion. There was an occasion where Jesus landed at a lakeside to an already waiting crowd. Jesus saw people in the crowd in need in various ways, and immediately set about the practical task of meeting them with compassion. Perhaps some in the crowd took advantage? Sure – I guess that could well have happened - but Jesus wasn't fazed by this. He had the resources of the Kingdom of God to share, God-given credits which would help build individuals up towards their own wholeness and fullness of life. To see people receive this was His universal desire. *Karl Relton*

Plugging the Shortage Gaps

Our current shortages are:

Long Life Juice

Coffee

Pasta Sauce

Soup

Deodorants

Long life Milk

Tinned Tomatoes

Rice

Laundry products

Please leave Baked Beans on the shelf and when you need some, ask Foodbank to gift you a few tins: we have plenty of the lovely orange gems! Please also check our Facebook page and website for updates to our current needs.

Welcome to our newest Trustees



We'd like to introduce you to our two newest trustees – Jenny Gage and Jenny Webb.

Jenny Gage is an ordained minister in the Church of England, and a keen volunteer at our distribution centre in Haddenham. Social

justice has always been a very important aspect of Jenny's worship and ministry. As a child she helped her mother with Christian Aid week collections, and has had a long involvement with Christian Aid ever since. She has been a committed advocate for the charity Shelter, and as a founding member of Ely Social Responsibility Forum, had a role in the formation of the Foodbank.

Jenny Webb is Team Vicar in the March Team Ministry. She also coordinates the work of Christian Aid locally, and chairs Churches Together in March. Jenny has been involved with our March operation since its inception, working both in distribution and in the warehouse. Jenny is born and raised in the Fens, and after a career in social care which took her to Stevenage, SE and SW London, returned to live in March in 2005.

