



Churches Together in King's Lynn newsletter January 2023.

We are mourning, remembering and giving thanks for the life of **Revd Heather Berry** who died suddenly in December. Heather was flying to Australia before Christmas 2022 to visit her sister when she died suddenly at the airport. The family are arranging to repatriate Heather's body to the UK but this will take time because a death certificate is awaited. Heather's sister will accompany the body and there will be a funeral and burial in Somerset. St Faiths are planning a memorial service. Heather worked for many years, since the 1980s, in ministry at St Faiths after teaching at Springwood School. In her retirement Heather worked as a member of the Churches Together executive promoting and co-ordinating our Christian Aid work and visiting schools with the 'Open the Book' team. May she rest in peace and rise in glory.

The Food Hub: Andrew Frere-Smith is co-ordinating the development of a Food Hub which is a social supermarket on the North Lynn Estate and will be housed at 4 Walpole Rd, King's Lynn, PE30 2DZ. The building is being prepared by Freebridge and Andrew is hoping that it will be opened in March. The project is being funded by the Norfolk Community Foundation. The building will also have a signposting area for clients to be directed to the appropriate social support. The project will be registered as a charity and run by trustees. Andrew is currently looking for volunteers to help with the day to day running of the project. If anyone is interested in volunteering, they should ring 07949 964932 or email andrew.frere-smith@dioceseofnorwich.org

Foodbank: The Foodbank has been busy all year and at the time of writing (29.12.22) we've averaged feeding 493 people per month - our highest average to date. December has been exceptionally busy. The sudden cold snap made an incredible difference to people's bills and we saw our busiest two days ever (even busier than the panic of early Covid in April 2020!):

Dec 15th - 121 fed

Dec 16th - 81 fed

It truly is a miracle that we had enough food on the 15th - feeding 121 is double the number we'd feed on a 'normal' very busy day. The shelves were mostly empty by the end of the session, but everyone who needed food was given a full parcel.

Fortunately, the temperature has increased and the numbers we're feeding have returned to more normal levels, showing more starkly than ever the link between energy prices and people being driven to food banks.

Despite the continued generosity of people (especially generous as costs have risen for everyone), the high numbers of people needing help are hitting our food stocks hard and we will need to purchase food during 2023. We have financial reserves set aside in preparation for this purpose - God is good.

On a more positive note, we've received grant funding from the Trussell Trust in order to add another member of paid staff to the team. This will enable me to get out into the community more and raise awareness of the work of the Foodbank and drivers of poverty in our area. If any of the churches in King's Lynn or the surrounding area would like me to come and talk about the Foodbank to a church group, please let me know! God Bless you in your work for CTKL. Helen Gilbert Project Manager helen@kingslynn.foodbank.org.uk Tel: 07582558143.

Debt Centre: Laura Joslin sent the following email:

Happy New Year. The King's Lynn Debt Centre would like to extend a Happy New Year to everyone at Churches Together.

Since November, we have had an influx of referrals from a variety of referral agents, and appointments are fully booked until March. As a debt coach, I currently have a caseload of 15 households from across King's Lynn. December has been a difficult month for our clients due to the cost-of-living crisis. Thanks to the King's Centre hamper appeal, we were able to provide all of our households with a hamper this Christmas. The challenge for our clients remains staying out of debt with an unsustainable budget. The route out of debt is often insolvency with a debt relief order. Even if all the debts are cleared through the order, the likelihood of falling back into debt remains high. Therefore, we are keen to work closely with other organisations and charities to support our clients. We also want to promote a strong presence in the community. As of the 18th of January, we will be holding a drop-in service at the new Mind Rest Hub in King's Lynn High Street. The Job Centre is also willing to host a CAP drop-in service.

Volunteers from the churches that partner with CAP support the Debt Centre. Although we have an excellent team, there is a shortage of male volunteers. In the last two months, I have had more male clients than female, and I depend on volunteers to attend the appointments.

If anyone is interested in volunteering, please contact us using the email address laurajoslin@capuk.org

Thank you for your prayers, Laura Joslin, Debt Coach-King's Lynn, Christians Against Poverty. Tel: 07984962625.

Current working hours: Tuesdays & Wednesdays 9 am-2 pm.

Night Shelter: The Night Shelter bedrooms have been fully occupied and the shelter has been busy with the number of homeless people coming to the door equal to 3 times the bed capacity of the shelter. Architectural plans have been drawn up to extend the number of beds from 8 to 12 and planning permission has now been granted. Lucy McKitterick, the co-ordinator, is looking for a builder

A lot of homeless people are coming to the night shelter door throughout the day and night for hot food, hot drinks, sleeping bags, clothing and other necessities.

These include rough sleepers, homeless people in pods or bed and breakfast funded by the Council. Lucy is asking the Council workers to share information about these people so that they can be signposted and helped correctly. Problems arise when a rough sleeper is not verified by the Council because then their access to services is restricted.

Lucy is looking for more volunteers to man the 3 shifts per day at the shelter. This Thursday and next, 12th and 19th January, Lucy is running two information and training evenings for new and potential volunteers at 7pm at St John's Church in the Walks (next to the Night Shelter).

Last year the government supported the night shelter with £100,000 for the season but this money is not available for 2023 and this is equal to one third of the budget for the season. Lucy continues to talk to the Council and apply to trust funds for support. The trustees had a meeting with the leader of the Council, Cllr Stuart Dark, prior to Christmas but no progress on funding has been seen to date. Lucy asks for your prayers, support and donations. The night shelter can be contacted by email at nightshelter.steering@gmail.com or by telephone 01553 776109. The bank account details are: Sort code: 30-99-08. Account number: 23417260, A/c name: King's Lynn Night Shelter. Bank is Lloyds Bank.

Celebrate King's Lynn: Olivia O'Neill, who is co-ordinating the Celebrate event this year, is planning to host this free family fun day on the Walks in King's Lynn in July so as to avoid the Coronation and other events which are held on the Walks. This will be the 6th year of Celebrate. Olivia has been offered £5000 to stage a Passion Play in Lynn following the very successful play in Norwich in 2022. However, Norwich spent £30,000 on their play. Olivia hopes to be able to stage this in 2024 and will need 100 volunteers and the support of local dramatic societies. Please contact Olivia oliviakingslynn@gmail.com if you want more information.

The Spirit Level – Why Equality is Better for Everyone is a book by epidemiologists Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett. This book graphs all our various social problems in Western societies against the levels of financial inequality and argues that societies which are more equal have less physical, mental and social diseases, (e.g., violence, heart disease, obesity, mental illness, drug and alcohol addiction and imprisonment). Interestingly, these disease levels damage rich and poor in unequal societies because all members of an unequal society are subjected to the stresses of inequality. The graphs in the book show that, for Western societies, the improved well being produced in poor countries by economic growth has plateaued and so economic growth without improved equality will not lead to improved well-being in the UK.

From the point of view of Churches Together we should remember that, in the parable of the landowner who hires workers through the day, Jesus proposes generosity so that all the workers are paid equally, (Matthew 20: 1-16). Although people are not equal in their natural talents and their ability to thrive, equality of pay for workers leads to the peace which is required for talents to be expressed. George Bernard Shaw puts it like this: 'Only where there is pecuniary equality can the distinction of merit stand out'.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: Wednesday 18th to Wednesday 25rd January 2023.

The theme for January 2023 is ‘Be-Longing: Praying for Unity amidst Injustice.’

For this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity we are guided by the churches of Minneapolis as we seek to explore how the work of Christian unity can contribute to the promotion of racial justice across all levels of society.

<https://ctbi.org.uk/week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2023/>

Day 1: Wednesday 18th January: St John the Evangelist, Blackfriars Rd., King’s Lynn PE30 1NT. Nigel Singleterry. **12.30-1300hrs.**

Day 2: Thursday 19th January: The Church of the King’s Glory, 27 Bryggen Rd, North Lynn Industrial Estate, King’s Lynn, PE30 2HZ. Pastor Oladapo Adegoke **12.30-13.00hrs**

Day 3: Friday 20th January: Cornerstone King’s Lynn Baptist Church, Wisbech Rd., South Lynn, PE30 5JS. Joella Nash **12.30-1300hrs.**

Day 4: Saturday 21st January: London Rd Methodist Church, London Rd, King’s Lynn, PE30 5PU. Revd Robert Roberts. **12.30-1300hrs** followed by refreshments.

<p>Day 5: Sunday 22nd January: St Faith’s Church, Gayton Rd, King’s Lynn PE30 4DZ. Preacher: Revd Karlene Kerr 1700-1800hrs.</p>

Day 6: Monday 23th January: Queen Elizabeth Hospital Sacred Space, Gayton Rd, King’s Lynn, PE30 4ET. Revd Lee Gilbert **12.30-1300hrs**

Day 7: Tuesday 24th January: King’s Lynn Minster, St Margaret’s Place, King’s Lynn, PE30 5DL. Revd. Canon Dr Mark Dimond. **12.00-12.30hrs.**

Day 8: Wednesday 25th January: Church of Our Lady of the Annunciation, London Rd., King’s Lynn, PE30 5HQ. Very Revd. Canon Peter Rollings. **12.00-12.30.**

Daphne Sampson from Klimate Concern sent the following email on 13/01/23:

I am contacting Churches Together on behalf of our local **Friends of the Earth group, (Fenland and West Norfolk)**, in the hope that King’s Lynn Churches Together will want to join with us to help raise a community-wide voice to try to ensure that people across our area have warm, insulated homes and access to affordable energy, not simply for this winter but for winters to come.

The benefit of well insulated homes would mean both lower energy bills for consumers, (plus comfort and health benefits) and also lower carbon emissions.

The figures for home insulation in our borough are poor, with only 35% of homes ranking as well insulated (grade C or above as recommended in government guidelines). Currently 65% do not have adequate loft insulation – one of the simplest things to rectify.

These sorts of needs are so great they can only effectively be addressed with input from central government.

The 'United for Warm Homes' campaign has been initiated by Friends of the Earth (Friends of the Earth is an international community dedicated to the protection of the natural world and the wellbeing of everyone in it.). United for Warm Homes has one clear goal: warm homes that don't 'cost the earth'.
<https://unitedforwarmhomes.uk/>

We are planning a launch event at the Gaywood library in the first half of February.

At this meeting a range of local groups and organisation will have an opportunity to hear more about this campaign, talk about the provision they are themselves making and ask questions. It is hoped that the Borough Council will present their Norfolk 'Warm Homes' scheme, along with the County Council.

As soon as we have finalised the arrangements for this meeting we will be in contact with details and an invitation to join us.

It would be wonderful to think that together we could make a difference to some of the neediest families in West Norfolk as well as helping to cut the borough's carbon emissions.

Warmest good wishes, Daphne.

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Peter Coates 13/01/23.