

## Vicar's Letter for September 2018

Dear Friends

This morning I dropped into the Stretford Foodbank, housed at Trafford Christian Life Centre, to see how the wonderful volunteers were doing as well as meet some of those who benefit from the generosity of those who donate food and support them. Stretford Foodbank is run under the auspices of the Trussell Trust, and has been set up and is staffed by local Churches and members of the local community over the past years.

When I dropped in it was busy and I was told it had become much busier over the last 6 months.

In the financial year 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018 the Foodbank fed 1069 children and 1471 adults.

So far in this financial year, between 1st April 2018 and 8th August 2018, 433 children and 604 adults have been fed. Compared with the same period (1st April 2017 to 8th August 2017) in which 280 children and 449 adults were fed, this shows that there has been an increase of 55% more children and 35% more adults.

I wondered if school holidays affected the numbers of people who need to use the Food bank? Yes, because those families whose children who are eligible for free school meals suddenly have 6 weeks of summer holidays where they need to find food for their children.

I met one man who found he needed to use the Foodbank because he'd recently moved into a new place in sheltered accommodation and needed new carpets. He didn't have the money for carpets and food....

Going into the storage area where all the food is sorted and distributed for clients I noticed a pile of brand new plastic carrier bags. I was told one lady goes every week to her local supermarket and buys a dozen of these bags for the Foodbank. Such carrier bags enable those who use the Foodbank to 'shop' with dignity - no-one would know that the food they take home is from the Foodbank.

Then I received an email about an invitation to a series of 'Ban the Waste' Harvest Suppers next month, as part of our Diocese of Manchester being an Eco-Diocese.

At the Harvest Suppers all the food will be vegetarian, not least because the global livestock industry produces more greenhouse gas emissions than all cars, planes, trains and ships combined. Most of the food will be sourced from FareShare, an organization that tries to distribute some of the 1.9 million tonnes of food that would otherwise be destined for landfill. Qualified chef and Church Community Worker, Duane Kenneally, will make the food delicious.

These hearty harvest meals will be served with a side order of information about Eco Church and a comedy quiz, in an atmosphere of thanksgiving and sharing. Why not join one of the suppers from 6-9pm at:

8<sup>th</sup> September      St Bride, Old Trafford  
16<sup>th</sup> September     St Barnabas, Clarksfield  
23<sup>rd</sup> September     Holy Rood, Swinton  
29<sup>th</sup> September     St Stephen and All Martyrs, Oldham

For full details and to sign up, visit [www.manchester.anglican.org/eco-diocese](http://www.manchester.anglican.org/eco-diocese)

I am reminded as we approach the season of Harvest of Ghandi's famous saying: **'there is enough on Earth for everybody's need, but not enough for everybody's greed'**.

We will be celebrating our own Harvest Festival on Sunday October 7th. Tinned and packaged goods will be shared between Stretford Foodbank, the Booth Centre (for the homeless) and the Refugee and Asylum project in Old Trafford. If you would like to donate such goods (or financial donations) then these are what are particularly appreciated:

- Coffee, sugar, biscuits and squash
- Jam and porridge oats
- Tinned meat, fish, potatoes, veg and beans
- Tinned fruit, custard and rice pudding
- Cook in sauces for pasta and curry
- Pasta and rice

With every blessing and thanks  
Kate