

LENT 2020

Dear friends,

The Lenten period is traditionally a time when many parishes/Mission Communities turn their minds to specific projects for giving to charities both at home and abroad. Many arrange Lent lunches and other fundraising events. Many have longstanding links with projects and places. However if this is not the case, can we please ask you to consider making Transforming Plymouth Together (TPT) a focus for Lent Giving this year?

Child poverty is a growing issue in Plymouth

Despite being a city of economic and cultural development, Plymouth is experiencing a rise in poverty levels. As I'm sure you know, a consequence for those in poverty is that holidays can be a difficult time for families especially for those who rely on free school meals during term time. Out of a total 23,271 school children in Plymouth, 12,682 students are eligible to receive free school meals, which is significantly higher than the national average.

Transforming Plymouth Together is serving the city

TPT deals with a broad sweep of issues that affect so many people in and around Plymouth and their work helps shed the light of Christ into some of the most troubled parts of our locality. For example, in 2019 through Feast of Fun, 18 churches across Plymouth provided almost 2,500 meals for children to help combat holiday hunger. If you are a family that rely on free school meals to help feed the children, then holidays are not a good time! In 2020, TPT hopes to expand this work to even more families. Also over this year, TPT will collaborate with more churches and the City Council to help set up community hubs to combat social isolation and loneliness. This is already happening in some Plymouth churches very successfully. For a number of years TPT has been involved with a Dementia friendly carol service in St Paul's Stonehouse, which has proved to be very popular. TPT is also involved with issues such as modern slavery and debt advice.



Help from your congregations could make all the difference

When it was set up a few years ago TPT was promised funding through the Church Urban Fund (CUF). We knew that the CUF funding would gradually decrease year on year. However, unexpectedly this year CUF announced the level of support was reducing by £10,000 more than anticipated. This has left a huge hole in the budget and our plans for the future development of the work

You and your church may already be responding to food poverty locally. We are writing to you today to ask if you and your congregation would please consider getting involved in some other ways too. Could your church communities partner with TPT in **prayer, action or financial giving** to support their crucial work?

Support the work of TPT through giving this Lent

Money raised will support TPT in responding to not only the problems of food poverty in Plymouth, but also our other themes such as Social Isolation and Modern Slavery. This will enable them to increase their provision for projects such as Feast of Fun and Community Hubs.

Financial support could take various forms, such as:

- Taking a collection at one or more services during Lent for TPT
- Holding a church event (such as a Lent lunch) in aid of TPT
- Deciding as a PCC to make a donation from your church to TPT

A gift from your church this Lent could resource Feast of Fun for another summer of feeding hungry families.

Support the work of TPT through action this year

As we have said, the need for holiday hunger programmes is increasing. Eighteen amazing churches in Plymouth hosted Feast of Fun events last summer but to grow provision TPT needs more churches that are willing to take part. Planning is already taking place; contact Chris or Hannah if you are interested in getting involved in the Feast of Fun programme.

Please do consider if your church community might be able to support TPT and their work in any of these ways. It is essential ministry which needs all our support in whatever way we are able to offer it.


If you are willing or able to help please get in touch with Chris Forster on Mobile 07710096210 or email chris@transformingplymouthtogether.org.uk for more details on how to give.

Also visit the TPT website to find out more transformingplymouthtogether.org.uk/donate

With every blessing to you and your congregation as you journey through Lent.



Bishop of Plymouth
The Rt Rev'd Nick McKinnel



Ven Nick Shutt LLM
Archdeacon of Plymouth