

Make Lunch Boxes of Hope food parcels

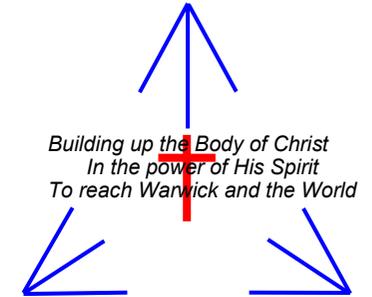
Following our very successful Make Lunch Boxes of Hope food parcels during lockdown, we recognise a need to continue to support the families in some way and in particular we are looking towards Christmas. On Friday December 18, we plan to delivery a parcel to 20 of our families. Each one will contain food with a Christmas theme, things like mince pies, Christmas pudding, chocolates, stuffing, sausage rolls and more, along with our usual meat and veg. We also want to include gifts for all ages from two years old through to adulthood, family treats, toiletries, games, books and this is where YOU can get involved. We are looking for donations, rather like we used to do for shoeboxes, of either food with a Christmas theme or gifts. The gifts could be small or large (often several small things can be better than one large item). Maybe you have an unwanted item in your cupboard, maybe you would like

a trip to the shops and select an item or two. There'll be a box by the welcome table, in which you can put your Donations. Guidelines of how to stay safe will also be included, just put your donation in, don't rummage around! Should you not want to go shopping, Sheila or Audrey will receive financial contributions - anything you would like to give. For example, what about a Penny or Pound jar? Find a jar or other type of container (we may be able to provide some) and save those odd pennies, 10p's, 50p's or even £1 coins, then donate them to our Christmas Boxes of Hope project. Just like with shoeboxes, it always amazed us how everything just came together. This has been a challenging year for us all, let's join together to bring hope and a smile to those less fortunate than ourselves. Many thanks, Audrey.

Our Bible verse for the year

Never doubt God's mighty power to work in you and accomplish all this. He will achieve infinitely more than your greatest request, our most unbelievable dream, and exceed your wildest imagination! He will outdo them all, for his miraculous power constantly energises you. Ephesians 3: v20.

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St Paul's Church, Warwick

**October 11, 2020
Trinity 18**

Rev Jonathan Hearn

Today's 10am Service - Holy Communion

If you are a newcomer to our Church, or a visitor to the area, please introduce yourself to one of the welcomers, or to the clergy.

There will be a Sunday club today.

This week - October 11	Next Week - October 18
10am Harvest Worship	10am Short service and APCM

Readings	
October 11	October 18
Genesis 41: 46-49 & 53-57 1 Corinthians 13	Exodus 33: 12-end

Praying for the Persecuted Church

This year, our lives have been substantially altered by the impact of Covid-19. Routines have changed, everyday pleasures cut back, church reimaged. But in many parts of the world, the shaking up of these things happened long before the pandemic hit.

This is certainly the case in Syria where, alongside the impact of Covid-19, the ongoing impact of conflict continues. Someone who has experienced first-hand the effects of conflict is Falit*, a Christian in Qamishli who has survived not just one attack by so-called Islamic State, but two.

The first was in 2015. He was outside his mobile phone shop with his friends when two terrorists arrived on the street and opened fire. Nine of Falit's close friends were injured and three other friends died.

He said: "I felt as if I was part of an action movie. It was very difficult. All the time I only thought I was going to die. There wasn't place in my mind to think of those at home waiting for me. And I prayed, I prayed. I prayed in tears, asking Jesus to give me a new life, a life as His servant."

The mobile phone shop was badly damaged – Falit never reopened it at that place. For several months he worked for the church, helping in the relief work serving people affected by the Syrian crisis.

Last autumn, Falit was caught up in another attack when several bombs exploded in Qamishli just outside his home and church. Later, so-called Islamic State claimed responsibility.

Falit's pregnant wife was at home so he ran back to find her shivering with fear and crying. She was in their bedroom when the bomb went off - the only room in the house undamaged. The rest of their house was destroyed. The next day, Falit and his friend repaired the doors and windows. Two days later, his wife gave birth to a baby girl.

It's nearly 10 years since the conflict in Syria began. Progress has been made during this time, but ongoing threats remain. Falit's story illustrates this – as does the bombing of northern Syria, including Qamishli, in October 2019 by Turkish armed forces, causing more death and destruction.

This came at a time when your support, through our seven-year Hope for the Middle East campaign, meant believers could begin returning to their homes in Syria to rebuild their lives. The attacks have hindered efforts to help Christians return to a semblance of normality.

Then there is the devastating impact of Covid-19. Food prices have risen and healthcare is insufficiently resourced to cope with the increased and unique demands of the virus. Meanwhile, hygiene in internally displaced people (IDP) camps is poor and people are forced to live very close to each other, leading to increased risk of being infected with Covid-19.

Your faithful prayers and support have been instrumental in bringing hope to Syria. The impact cannot be underestimated. However the continuing threat and long-term effects of conflict and Covid-19, and other issues including the ongoing risk of persecution facing many Christians because of their faith – means your help is as important as it has ever been in Syria.

**Names changed for security reasons. Source, Open Doors UK.*



Thought for the Week - harvest

This is the first of the autumn/winter celebrations happening under very different circumstances to that which we are used to.

It feels strange not to have harvest supper and some form of social gathering, as harvest celebrations are times of coming together, to give thanks for all God has done – possibly less of the latter in recent years than many of us might have been used to in our own childhoods.

There was a time when the church was decorated with fresh produce and bales of hay or straw and the local community really did come together. But that's not where we are now even without the coronavirus restrictions. However we can still give thanks for God's provision, and for all involved in the distribution of food.

It was one of the things early on in lockdown that there seemed to be an appreciation of the many people who

were forgotten about under normal circumstances but were crucial to us being able to maintain the basis of life.

We clapped for the NHS and care workers, and then for many, that broadened to take in all involved in keeping food on the shelves, getting food to those in need and those who kept our streets clean.

With fewer restrictions now, I wonder if we have begun to forget these people and also those for whom the difficult times have not ended and for some will probably get worse.

As we give thanks may we remember those in need: In giving our offerings of food for the Make Lunch team to bless the families we continue to help; and our offerings of money to Embrace the Middle East to help towards the needs of others in that region, may God in his mercy multiply these little acts of kindness in ways beyond our imagining.

APCM

The APCM is next Sunday. We need to appoint a churchwarden alongside Hazel. There is a new Deanery Synod

which runs until 2023 with two vacant posts for lay representatives. We also have vacancies for PCC members. Please pray God might fill these posts.

Foodbank

Please put any toiletries and/or dry, non-perishable food in the collection box for the Warwick Foodbank. If you need a voucher please collect one from the office between 9am and 12 noon Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. The Foodbank is open between 1pm and 3pm each Friday at Saltisford Church in Albert Street.

Coffee morning

As we are still unable to offer tea and coffee at Church, I am hosting a meet up in Coffee #1 every Thursday morning between 10am and 12noon. Please do let me know if you would like to join me.

Please pick a hour - 10 to 11 or 11 to 12 - so we can keep to the rule of six. It would be great to see you there. Jo