



Food and Fuel - Helping Wales Tackle the Cost-of-Living Crisis



The Church in Wales has launched a campaign to help tackle the cost-of-living crisis this winter. The Food and Fuel Campaign was announced by the Archbishop of Wales, Andrew John, at the end of October. It will address the causes of food and fuel poverty by putting pressure on the Government to tackle the spiralling costs which are forcing families to choose between heating or eating. Teulu Asaph is supporting the campaign by highlighting how you and your church can get involved and reporting on some of the projects taking place across the diocese.

An Open Letter to Supermarkets

The archbishop is calling on supermarkets to do more to stop families and vulnerable people having to choose between food and fuel. There is an open letter to supermarkets you can sign which calls for:

- The most basic and essential goods (food, baby range and toiletries) to be further reduced in price to enable customers to eat healthily, avoid reliance on food banks and being forced to make unacceptable choices between heating and eating.
- A reduction in food waste, with as much food as possible being donated to food banks and other food distribution organisations who work with you.
- A review of the cost of minimum delivery orders and delivery charges which are often prohibitive to low-income households.
- An increase in employee salaries.

You can add your signature to the Open Letter at <https://www.churchinwales.org.uk/en/about-us/our-campaigns/food-fuel/sign-our-open-letter-to-supermarkets/>

A Gift for Christmas

Alongside The Food and Fuel Campaign is an initiative to show that church congregations are practitioners of generosity. The archbishop is asking all churches to create A gift for Christmas. These will be boxes full of toiletries which can be distributed in your community, perhaps in partnership with your local Food Bank or Food Share or another network. You may wish to check with local groups to see if toiletries are appropriate or if other gifts would better meet local need.

You can find out more at <https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/>

Warm Hubs

A number of churches across the diocese have registered to offer a Warm Welcome Space this winter and more are planning to do the same.

St Peter's in Holywell is open every Monday from 11am – 2pm – a time which includes The Bread of Life Service and The Table.

St David's in Penrhyn Bay is opening its church hall every Wednesday from 9.30 to 12noon and has teamed up with Asda which has provided some free hot drinks, cake and biscuits (photo, top left).

Churches in the Valle Crucis Mission Area are looking at ways of opening their doors in Bala, Llangollen and Glyn Ceiriog.

Two churches in Borderlands Mission Area will be running a warm hub pilot project (see page 6).

Could your church be a Warm Welcome Space too? You can find out more at www.warmwelcome.uk

You can find all the information about The Food and Fuel Campaign at <https://www.churchinwales.org.uk/en/about-us/our-campaigns/food-fuel/>



Come to Church for your Weekly Shop

A church in Wrexham has become the latest in the diocese to open a foodclub. St Mark's in Caia Park is following the example of St Peter's in Holywell and running a weekly social supermarket. *Teulu Asaph* went along to find out more.

The £3 foodclub at St Mark's is open every Thursday from 11am. It was launched at the end of September with only three people coming to shop on the opening day. Within a month, the foodclub was helping more than 55 people and shoppers are increasing in number each week. So much so, that organisers often have to re-stock the shelves mid-session to cater for demand.

Revd Luke Bristowe is the curate at St Mark's and part of the organising team. "We're seeing people queuing outside the church from 10.30am to shop at the foodclub. It maybe that they have other places to go or it could be to ensure they get the pick of the shelves but we're certainly meeting a need in the area.

"For a suggested donation of £3, people can shop for at least 10 items. Sometimes we have to restrict the high value foods such as tins of meat but for other things like baked beans, two tins count as one item. We're making up stew packs which contain fresh vegetables and a stock cube. Combined with a tin of meat this can make several very tasty meals."

On arrival at St Mark's, shoppers pay their £3 and receive a raffle ticket. When their number is called, they can do their shopping. The ten items not only include food and drinks, but also hygiene and cleaning products such as shower gel, deodorant and bleach.

"Sometimes we have donated items," said Luke. "Today, we had apples from a local garden so people can help themselves to those in addition to the 10 items."

Alongside the food store, St Mark's also offers hot drinks and biscuits as people wait. "For the first few weeks, people didn't stop for refreshments but now as numbers increase and people must wait their turn, they're taking their time over a cuppa. For some people, coming to the foodclub is coming back to the church they went to as children. And of course, as people wait and get to know us, they're beginning to trust us with their stories and life experiences."

St Mark's has put together a rota of 10-12 volunteers to ensure the foodclub is well staffed and can offer pastoral support. It is using its existing networks and partnerships to ensure local people know it's open to all and there are no barriers to coming along. All are welcome.

You can find out more at <https://stmarks.wrexhamparish.org.uk/index.php/caia-food-club/>





The Archbishop of Wales meeting Robbie Davison the Director of Well-Fed

An exciting project to help change how we think about food and ensure everyone can eat well will be launched in Deeside this Advent. Two churches in Borderlands Mission Area are set to pilot a scheme with a Shotton based social enterprise, Well-Fed – Can Cook. [Revd Alex Mayes, the vicar of St Mark's in Connah Quay](#) explains.

Many of you will have seen Well-Fed featured on the BBC Wales news recently talking about the impact of the cost-of-living crisis in Wales. Well-Fed was set up in 2019 and is now based in Shotton with a team headed up by managing director Robbie Davison and Faith Lightfoot who deals with social action. In addition, they have a fabulous chef and team of helpers. The aims of Well-Fed are to help everyone eat well regardless of their income and to change how food poverty is addressed nationwide.

This winter, St Asaph Diocese will fund meal provision from Well-Fed in two churches: St Mark's in Connah's Quay and St Ethelwold in Shotton. That means we'll be opening as a warm hub and offering a good quality, nutritionally

balanced meal to people in our communities. Plus, those coming along will also get a home-made ready meal to take home. We're finalising the details but will be promoting this widely soon.

In the Autumn, I had the opportunity to find out more about the work of Well-Fed at a conference in Llandudno. The experience totally changed the way I think about food. Like many people, I have always had the attitude that I can't/won't cook but Well-Fed not only teaches people a new way to care for their families at mealtimes, it also ensures everyone eats well, with both healthy and delicious meals. Even I can do it!

I'm really excited about this pilot project with Well-Fed. With funding from the Diocese not only will we be able to provide hot meals during the winter but it will also re-educate us on the best way to eat long-term.

By signing up to receive meal boxes or ready meals from Well-Fed you will be helping others to eat well too. To find out more visit www.cancook.co.uk/well-fed-at-home



More Food Banks than Branches of McDonald's

The 2023 diocesan offering will be going to support the work of the Trussell Trust which campaigns to end reliance on its network of food banks. Research by the charity, which runs eight food banks across the Diocese of St Asaph, revealed there are now more food banks across the UK, than there are branches of McDonald's. The Church Engagement Manager for the Trussell Trust, Rachael Anderson, told the 2022 Diocesan Conference that the demand for food banks

had grown in recent years, while donations have gone down. She said: "We are seeing more people than ever before having to turn to the Trussell Trust and food banks for help. Interestingly we are seeing more and more working people whose incomes just aren't enough to meet their basic needs." **You can find out more about food banks and how to make a donation to the Diocesan Offering at <https://dioceseofstasaph.org.uk/diocesan-conference/diocesan-offering/>**