



Two amazing pieces of news from “Together for Fromeside Churches”* supporting Christian Aid!

Christian Aid Week 2020

This year was certainly a Christian Aid Week with a difference! ‘Together for Fromeside Churches’ always support this amazing charity, but with ‘lockdown’ we couldn’t hold our usual community events- the Big Brekkie, soup lunches, plant sale, coffee mornings, cream teas & train rides. However, we did hold a virtual quiz, there were daily puzzles on the local Facebook blogs, plants were sold to friends, virtual church services were held, & there was even a lockdown version on YouTube of ‘Ain’t Misbehavin’ by one of our musical supporters!

I’m delighted to report that we have raised in excess of £3809 -£3544 via Just Giving (incl Gift Aid), plus some cheques sent direct to Christian Aid. A big thank you to everybody for their support & generosity.

“Love never fails. Coronavirus impacts all of us. But love unites us all”

Christian Aid Community Partnership Lebanon & Iraq

Last December ‘Together for Fromeside Churches’ launched a Community Partnership with Christian Aid to help Syrian refugees in Lebanon & Iraq. We committed to raise £5K by the end of 2020 & this would be matched 6x by the charity Bread for the World.

Incredibly by the end of April we exceeded our target! So far, despite some of our planned fundraisers being cancelled, we have raised £6766. This is amazing! Thanks to everyone for their support to date, particularly those involved with the production & distribution of the Jig Word puzzle book, which has raised over £4K.

We are currently waiting to hear from Christian Aid on how we take the Partnership forward from here.

Changes to Christian Aid:

For those of you who may not be aware, even before ‘lockdown’ Christian Aid had initiated a restructuring programme to make the charity fit for the future. Whilst its overall income has never been higher, unrestricted income has been steadily declining. Christian Aid’s decision making is based on its global strategy calling the charity to focus its work so that every programme reflects its commitment to the very poorest, speaking truth to power and working, as it always has, with and through local organisations.

As a result, Christian Aid is going to focus its work and deepen its engagement with 15 countries – these are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, India, Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territories, Myanmar, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and Zimbabwe. Sadly, this means it is in the process of exiting our programmes in Angola, Egypt, Zambia, Mali, South Africa, Ghana, the Philippines, Nepal, Bolivia, Guatemala and El Salvador. Work in Latin America will be managed as a regional programme and our work in the Middle East will be run as a regional programme from London.

Christian Aid’s structure in the UK is changing too. Five regional teams will become one All England Team. All regional offices are closing, the London office continues and there will be a Central Supporter Engagement Team based in a new office in Warrington. The Regional Co-ordinator role has been replaced by fewer Church Engagement and Fund-raising Officers (CEFOs), who will cover a larger area. Our CEFO for Gloucestershire, Bristol Wiltshire and North Somerset is now Yvonne Penn.

At the time of writing this, many of Christian Aid’s staff have been furloughed & are waiting, like so many others, to see what the new future brings.

Christian Aid needs our support now more than ever. Please contact me if you have any questions or would like to help in any way- Alison Bray (c/o Zion Church Office 01454 776618)

**(Coalpit Heath- St Saviour’s; Frampton Cotterell- St Peter’s & Zion United; Iron Acton- St James the Less; Winterbourne- Salem Methodist & St Michael the Archangel; Winterbourne Down- All Saints & Bethesda Methodist)*