

AN URGENT PROJECT FOR THE WINTER!
CULMINATING IN A WEEKEND OF ACTION
JANUARY 20th & 21st 2018



Those of you that attended the benefice Remembrance Sunday service will remember that it focussed on three themes - service, leadership and sacrifice. During the service we had the opportunity to consider what we ourselves already do, or could do, under each of those headings. There was one challenging word that was mentioned that I particularly remember - 'inconvenient'. We were reminded that sacrifice involves us doing things we would prefer not to do, which can be inconvenient and upset our usual comfortable routine.

For sometime we have been thinking about organising another collection for Samara's Aid. (We have been collecting for them since 2015.) You will remember that in January this year together we managed to collect and sort enough items to fill 301 banana boxes, which were then delivered to displaced people in Syria and Iraq. We also raised more than the target £5 per box to ship them to those in need. It was a huge effort by many people. It wasn't easy, but it was a wonderful, sacrificial and heartfelt response to a critical situation.

All Samara's Aid staff are volunteers and fit their work into their lives, families and commitments. They rely completely on the goodwill of others to also give time, resources and services. It is a project where people make sacrifices and it happens only because people like us are willing to give and make it happen.

So thinking about it, we cannot find a reason for not having another collection! It would probably be an excuse no more profound than it was 'inconvenient' that would stop us. Considering the need, and our calling to sacrifice, that surely is no reason at all!

So we have committed our Benefice to collect items for the latest appeal.
We will be opening up Norton Church on Saturday and Sunday 20th and 21st January to receive, sort and pack items.

(We will load and deliver to Samara's Aid on 24th & 25th January.)

Currently the focus of Samara's Aid is Syria, Lebanon and Iraq where there are more than 26.8 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. This is where our gifts will go.

Thank you to the anonymous donor who funded this flier!



Please remember that, rightly, Samara's Aid have high standards and ask us to uphold them.

Everything we send must be what both you and I feel are good enough to give as a gift.

Sending items that are in immaculate condition and spotlessly clean, shows that we value these people as much as ourselves, and sends a message of love, encouragement, and hope. The families Samara's Aid are helping have been through horrific ordeals. Many have family members who have been killed, tortured, raped, or injured. They have dignity. Many have had lives like ours but have lost everything, most of all, hope. There is a huge amount of depression and psychological and physical traumas among them. These people have no choice about what they are given, but we have a choice about what we send. So we must commit ourselves to give of our best and uphold Samara's standards.

To help us, Samara has produced some training videos to make things easier for those doing sorting and packing. I have promised that a team of our people will watch these videos before we start work! So we will be organising a couple of gatherings (with food!) to watch the videos together and to get ready.

PLEASE GET IN TOUCH TO EXPRESS AN INTEREST IN HELPING AND WE WILL THEN CONTACT YOU TO KEEP YOU INFORMED OF OUR PLANS.

Whether or not you can give practical help (YOU decide how much help you give), we trust everyone will want to contribute some items, or funds to assist with the shipping.

This is what is needed in IMMACULATE CONDITION:

- **WINTER AND MID SEASON CLOTHES**, new and used – adult, child and baby
- **COATS, HATS AND SNOW WEAR**, new and used – adult, child and baby
- **NEW UNDERWEAR** only (no used), with tags and/or packaging
- **NEW SOCKS** only (no used), with tags and/or packaging
- **SHOES (polished)** new and used (no summer shoes please)
- **BOOTS AND WELLY BOOTS** new and CLEAN used
- **BLANKETS, DUVETS, SLEEPING BAGS** only new or like new with no marks, holes or stains and with working zips and clips
- **HAND KNITTED** blankets and adult, child and baby clothes
- **CRUTCHES** new and used
- **BABY BUGGIES** new and as good as new used
- **MOSES BASKETS and BABY BEDDING** new and used
- **HYGIENE & toiletries:** soap, toothpaste, washing powder, toothbrushes (no aerosols)
- **NAPPIES, SANITARY TOWELS** and incontinence pads (unopened packets only)
- **STATIONARY**, new only: paper, pens, colouring books. (no printed texts)
- **TOWELS** new and used
- **PILLOWS AND CUSHIONS** new and used
- **DIGNITY BAGS for women** www.samarasaidappeal.org/dignity-bags
- **CARE PACKS for mothers and babies** www.samarasaidappeal.org/care-packs

This is our world, and our global community. We all share the responsibility for looking after our brothers and sisters in need, wherever they are, and by helping these people, we are also supporting and encouraging the Syrian and Iraqi refugees in Gloucester who understand better than any of us just what a difference this support will make.

Thank you for your support !!

TO REGISTER AN INTEREST OR FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

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More details will appear on the benefice website during December: www.seventowers.org.uk