

WINTER FUEL CRISIS

As a matter of fact as of Saturday both gas and electricity charges are double what they were 12 months ago, some food costs have increased and further increases are thought to be likely. There are those within our fellowship and parish who will be in need this winter.



As we enter this winter period St Matthias are thinking ahead...liaising with other groups and charities seeing what others are proposing to help those who will be struggling.

Clearly we as a parish church have connections not only with those who attend St Matts but also with our pre school, Messy Church, the two junior schools in the parish as well as the food bank in town. We've already been approached to provide a 'warm space'.

We don't want to duplicate work being done well by others but obviously we don't want to overlook a significant need. There may be great work being done by others and we will give to that rather than start something of our own.

We've set up a working party who are already investigating all of the above but this is where you come in.

Firstly, we can't think of all the best ways of helping ourselves, as I say we are looking around at other churches and organisations but we need your input. You may well have an idea that no one else has thought of.... please contact Sylvia Barratt, Mike or Susie Higgins, Sue Newman, David Hodson or Keith Yelland. All ideas are worthy of exploration!

Secondly a critical factor in providing any help here has to be finance.

Help for all of us is coming from the government both national and local. Most of which isn't being provided on a needs basis. Therefore some of us will receive monies that although we may certainly be glad of isn't desperately needed.

Within the next 6-8 weeks many here will receive their Winter Fuel Allowance which can be anything from £250-£600. There will be an additional £400 spread over six months from your electric provider and of course those with a home banded between A and D we will receive £200 from Torbay Council.

Friends, this winter many around us including those in our own congregation will be facing real hardship, we as God's people need to respond. But who is our neighbour? What are their needs? We are thinking ahead endeavouring to be Christ to all those we meet and certainly for those we have a relationship with. This time of hardship for some will be a golden opportunity for us to show the love of Christ to those around us.

The information given here now is really just a heads up...what do we want you to do now? Pray, think carefully about what our individual response could be. We want you to think now about what you can personally do when that money arrives, not ask you for it weeks later. Might it be possible for you to set aside some or all of these monies for these needs?

We will come contact you again in a month or so with details of what we aim to do in some detail and then will give further details of practical ways you can help and how and where monies can be given.

Grace and Peace