

January 2022 Prayer Letter

Genesis Chapter 41

Joseph was thirty years old when he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from Pharaoh's presence and travelled throughout Egypt. During the seven years of abundance the land produced plentifully. Joseph collected all the food produced in those seven years of abundance in Egypt and stored it in the cities. In each city he put the food grown in the fields surrounding it. Joseph stored up huge quantities of grain, like the sand of the sea; it was so much that he stopped keeping records because it was beyond measure.

The seven years of abundance in Egypt came to an end, and the seven years of famine began, just as Joseph had said. There was famine in all the other lands, but in the whole land of Egypt there was food. When all Egypt began to feel the famine, the people cried to Pharaoh for food. Then Pharaoh told all the Egyptians, 'Go to Joseph and do what he tells you.'

When the famine had spread over the whole country, Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold grain to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe throughout Egypt. And all the world came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, because the famine was severe everywhere.

There are some clear differences between what Joseph did and the work of a foodbank – not least because he charged people for the grain that they received. But at the same time we cannot help but notice some resonances, as a hungry nation finds relief through a programme of which God and his people are at the heart. What Joseph had arranged was a re-distribution of the surplus from a situation of plenty to make provision for those in need. Joseph took these simple principles of sharing and stewardship and developed them into a national network of organised centres, particularly based in major cities.

As we take time to consider and celebrate all the good that the Norwich foodbank does to support those that are in need, let us give praise and thanks to God for:

1. The continued generosity of our donors as they give money and food to our cause
2. All those who have worked so hard to collect, sort and distribute food, gifts and Energy Bank payments this Christmas
3. Our volunteers in all their different roles as we once again wrestle with the complications that the new variety of COVID-19 brings
4. Our Trustees, Hannah, Keith, Iain and Rachel as they continue to work with energy and passion to make our foodbank thrive
5. The ongoing work of the Trussell Trust as it campaigns for justice and equality across our nation
6. Those working for the NHS and within the care services who are having so much asked of them when they have already given so much
7. All those who have prayed for us that we might be given the strength and courage to face whatever the future may hold during this time of uncertainty
8. All those working in charities who have made, and continue to make, such a difference to the lives of others
9. Jo, our Citizen's Advice Worker and Eve loaned to us from Shelter as they give advice and support to those who visit our centres or get in touch asking for help

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Norwich Foodbank is a limited company incorporated in England and Wales (Co. No 7051996).

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Patrons: The Right Revd Graham Usher, Bishop of Norwich, Delia Smith CBE and Susan Hill CBE.

Psalm 104

You make springs gush forth in the valleys; they flow between the hills, giving drink to every wild animal; the wild asses quench their thirst. By the streams the birds of the air have their habitation; they sing among the branches. From Your lofty abode You water the mountains; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of Your work. You cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for people to use, to bring forth food from the earth, and wine to gladden the human heart, oil to make the face shine, and bread to strengthen the human heart.

We pray for:

1. All those suffering from poor health. Especially we pray for those with Coronavirus. Bring them a return to health and wellness
2. Those in positions of leadership both nationally and locally, that they will use their influence to further the health and wellbeing of those who rely upon them for help
3. The continued success of the vaccination programme as it continues to bring hope and safety to our nation
4. All those in our community who dedicate their lives to the service of others. Give them the strength and courage to continue to provide hope and strength to those around them
5. The continued 'success' of our food bank as we continue to provide food for those in crisis and campaign for a fairer distribution of resources in our city and surrounding area
6. The new Administrator we hope to employ in the coming weeks. We pray for them as an individual and for us a charity and team as we grow together

Foodbank Prayer

For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you took me in. Matthew 25:35

God of faithfulness, Your generous love supplies us with all that we need. We know that all we have is yours.

We celebrate the work that you have done in Norwich and Norfolk through foodbank by means of the generous support of many people.

Through foodbank we are able to offer food to the hungry, a drink to the thirsty and compassion to the strangers in our city and county.

Accept our offering of worship and service. May your Spirit empower us to be your hands and feet in our community as we continue to serve those in crisis.

We pray that you bless all those who give and receive. Increase the capacity of foodbank; help the food to get to those who need it most.

Amen

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