

**St Stephen's, Canonbury**

# **Christmas Appeal 2020**

## **Supporting Manna and Urban Hope**

This year our Christmas appeal is a chance to support both Manna and Urban Hope in the work they do here in the heart of Islington with vulnerable adults and young people.

In a year when everything has changed and many support services across London were forced to close, our projects found themselves quickly adapting so they could continue to offer hope and care to some of the borough's most vulnerable people.

### **Urban Hope**

This year has been a challenging year for Urban Hope, we have had to look at how we continue to support young people during the pandemic. From April to July we personally delivered home baking packs, craft activities and things to help build positive mental health (this included colouring.) We also ran some zoom quizzes that young people also led. We have had some amazing volunteers help us out during this time and making the deliveries and zoom sessions possible.

In July and August we were able to offer face-to-face youth work again. We had a great summer reconnecting with young people and meeting new young people on the Marquess estate. We went paddle boarding, played foot golf, did a few Escape Rooms and ate out. Since September we have continued to work in Highbury Grove School, we are seeing the need to support young people grow within the school and we are currently in their 5 days a week. We are looking forward to celebrating Christmas with the young people with our end of year party.

In the next year we are looking forward to seeing how Toyin can work with the young women and develop that project further. We will continue to work in schools and support young people who have become increasingly anxious, some of which is a direct result of the pandemic. We are looking at how we can grow the schools work and work in more primary schools. We will continue to provide young people with a safe space outside of school where they can build positive relationships with adults. Our school holiday programmes will provide young people with the opportunity to take healthy risks, and grow as individuals and as a community as they challenge themselves and each other.

## The Manna

The Manna at St Stephens has never been needed more than this its 30th year. The Covid 19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown has seen the majority of London drop ins and day centre provision for homeless and vulnerable close its doors. Even Crisis will not be open this Christmas. None of the usual places to go to shelter and stay warm are open, the libraries, Southbank Centre, Barbican, Sports centres and cafes are all shut. The manna has kept going throughout providing showers, laundry, food, access to computers, wifi, phone charging and vital keywork and advocacy. We wondered how we were going to celebrate our 30th Anniversary this year and to give thanks for 30 years of helping those who are most vulnerable in our society, it seems that God had his own ideas! Thanks be to God for the Manna and all who help to make her sustainable, please do give generously to this Advent Appeal, your gift will be most appreciated and enable there always to be room in this Inn!

## Your gift

Whatever you give will be divided between Manna and Urban Hope. Because these are our projects, we know that every penny is spent wisely and benefits those who come to the Church seeking support and friendship. The projects are funded with grants and gifts and support from the PCC but get no local authority or government aid. Please give what you can.

## How to give

You can give to our Christmas appeal by:

- Making a bank transfer to the church account. Bank: Nat West; Account name: St Stephen's Church, Canonbury; Sort Code: 50-30-09; Account number: 04811151 Please reference the payment Christmas appeal and your surname.
- Or posting a cheque made to 'St Stephen's Church' to: The Church Office, St Stephen's Church, 17 Canonbury Road, London. N1 2DF. (Please include a note saying this is a donation to our Christmas appeal).
- Or placing a cash donation in a marked envelope in the offering at any service during Advent and Christmas.

## Gift Aid.

If you are a UK tax payer we can claim Gift Aid on your donation if we already hold a gift aid declaration for you. If you are not a regular giver to St Stephen's, and are eligible to Gift Aid your donation, please email your details to [administrator@ststephenscanonbury.org.uk](mailto:administrator@ststephenscanonbury.org.uk) and we will send you a form.

Thank you for your support.