A message from Bishop Michael

I am delighted to introduce the 2019 Bishop’s Lent Appeal in the Diocese of Lichfield. This year’s topic is one which I feel should be central to our life together and ministry as Christians: mental health and wellbeing. I have been impressed by many projects supported by our churches which work in this area; this is something that touches all of us. I also know that all our churches offer care and support, often very quietly, to people who are struggling with particular mental health problems or concerns.

In the season of Lent we prepare to celebrate the work of Christ, who took to the Cross all our suffering, our problems, our lack of wellbeing, and who brings us into the hope of a resurrection. The Revd Dr Rebecca Lloyd, Chaplain to the Bishop of Lichfield, and who brings us into the hope of a resurrection. I very much hope that this Lent you will open your hearts and wallets to support those suffering from the aftermaths of trauma and other serious mental health issues, particularly when caused by exposure to war and violence. I also invite you to pray with me for further good work that is happening in the Diocese in the area of mental health and wellbeing, as well as to consider ways that you might give of your time and energy to help.

For all those locally facing mental health problems. For those struggling with trauma caused by war, abuse or violence. For those supporting people suffering mental health issues.

I wish Gift Aid to apply to my donation. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay the difference.

How can you support the Appeal:

**GIVE**
by Gift Aid if you can to increase the value of your donation at no cost to yourself. You can donate through your local parish church, using the form below, online at lichfield.anglican.org/lentappeal_2019.

**PRAY**
For all those locally facing mental health problems. For those struggling with trauma caused by war, abuse or violence. For those supporting people suffering mental health issues.

**ACT**
Use the Bible Study resource in your church. Visit this website now, www.mentalfhealthpack.org.uk so that you’re ready to talk to these crucial areas. For example, the Bishop’s Lent Appeal includes a resource on Mental Health and Wellbeing.

For more information about what you can do, or to invite speakers to churches, house groups, or youth fellowships, contact: The Revd Dr Rebecca Lloyd, Chaplain to the Bishop of Lichfield

T: 01543 306002
E: rebecca.lloyd@lichfield.anglican.org

lichfield.anglican.org/lentappeal_2019

Please return this form with your donation to:
The Bishop’s Lent Appeal, Bishop’s House, 22 The Close, Lichfield, WS13 7LG.

**PRAY**

**ACT**
More-Give
Via cheque—Please make your cheque payable to ‘Bishop of Lichfield’s Lent Appeal’ and mail to the Bishop’s Lent Appeal, Bishop’s House, 22 The Close, Lichfield, WS13 7LG.

Via just giving—Online: www.justgiving.com/lentappeal2019

**GIVE**

More Give

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Via just giving—Online: www.justgiving.com/lentappeal2019

**MAKE YOUR GIFTS GO FURTHER...**

Gift Aid

I want the Diocese to treat the enclosed donation of... as Gift Aid.

Title:

Forename(s):

Surname:

Home Address:

Postcode:

Date of Birth:

I wish Gift Aid to apply to my donation. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Incom ec Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay the difference.

Signature:

Date:

Data Protection Act: We will not pass your details to any third party except for the purposes of processing your donation. For example, to HMRC for donor’s Gift Aid. We will not share your data with any third party unless required to do so by law. If you wish to amend any details that you have given us, please contact the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBOF) at the above address. The DBOF will hold your personal details securely and will only use it for the purposes of processing your donation. The DBOF is registered with the Information Commissioner’s Office under the Data Protection Act 1998 (registration number Z3190006). For more information about our data protection policy, please visit our website lichfield.anglican.org/lentappeal_2019

More information at lichfield.anglican.org/lentappeal_2019

...near to the broken-hearted... (Psalm 34: 18a)

Presents for the printed and digital edition of Time to Change 2019

The Bishop of Lichfield’s Lent Appeal 2019

Designed and produced by Connect Design Consultants 01543 304105

Architecture of Change
Museums and Galleries

The Bishop of Lichfield’s Lent Appeal 2019

...near to the broken-hearted... (Psalm 34: 18a)
Embrace the Middle East supports the Soteria project, which provides residential courses at Anafora, a retreat centre run by the Coptic Orthodox Diocese of El-Qusiya, for rural Egyptian women who are suffering from mental health problems, whether caused by exposure to the traumas of war, abuse, violence and displacement.

Sofia is a 26-year-old woman who participated in the Soteria programme last year. She lives in a large village in Upper (south) Egypt. It is home to around 16,000 Christians and 9,000 Muslims. “Everyone knows each other,” she says, “and most people have very good relationships with their neighbours.” Yet the community is not without its problems. Sofia did not want to go into detail about her personal experiences, but she described the inescapable environment of sexual harassment that begins when Egyptian girls are very young. Many women in Upper Egypt and they often don’t have words to describe the shame they feel. Even a girl’s home is open to neighbours and family and so they don’t have a safe space away from the advances of men.

Sofia heard about Soteria through a member of her church. Sahar, a trainer for Soteria, invited Sofia and other local young women to spend a week at Anafora. In this peaceful and healing environment, the women shared their experiences and realised they were not alone. “By helping these girls and women feel like they have a voice,” Sofia told us, “by helping them to discover who they are and how to love themselves, this project changes their lives.” Sofia now aims to establish a group in her village to bring women together so they can support and inspire each other. “Because most women are relegated to home life, they don’t feel a sense of deep purpose and belonging,” Sofia said. “I want to help change this by creating an association that will empower girls to lead better lives.”

more information at lichfield.anglican.org/len tappeal_2019

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Embrace the Middle East. This is a Christian organisation with over 140 years’ experience helping people of all faiths and races to free themselves from a life of poverty and injustice. In this year’s Appeal we are looking to support the charity Embrace the Middle East, which helps former servicemen and women deal with trauma-related mental health problems such as anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. Today, the charity provides life-changing treatment and support to help veterans tackle the past and take on the future.

In the last ten years, the number of veterans seeking the charity’s help has almost doubled. As a Diocese we also have many international links, and we are looking to support the charity in our Diocese. Embrace the Middle East is a Christian organisation with over 140 years’ experience helping people of all faiths and races to free themselves from a life of poverty and injustice. Together with local Christian communities they are bringing lasting change to the Middle East through healthcare, education and community development projects. We are particularly looking to raise money for their work in providing psychological support to soldiers who have experienced the traumas of war, abuse, violence and displacement.

But this year’s Lent Appeal is not only about raising money for these excellent causes. There are also other organisations within the Diocese who are working to support people who are suffering from mental health problems, whether caused by exposure to the traumas of war and violence or otherwise. We are also looking to support these causes with prayer and action.

Here are some case studies from some of the projects we will be supporting this year:

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Sahar Hanna Sofia and friends

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Craig served in the Army for 28 years, with tours to Berlin, Bosnia and Iraq. An incident in Bosnia affected Craig deeply. “It changed me completely. I felt like I was reliving it every day – I wasn’t me anymore. It wasn’t long before I was diagnosed with PTSD.”

After trying different talking therapies through the NHS, Craig was eventually referred to Combat Stress. Craig began attending the charity’s peer support group meetings in his local community, where veterans can meet to talk about their experiences. “What first struck me was how helpful it was to be with like-minded people. We gave each other great support and did occupational therapy workshops together. I learnt practical ways of taking better care of my mental health as well as how to use mindfulness to bypass bad thoughts. Things started to look up for me … I felt like I could start enjoying my life.”

Craig now volunteers to help run his local Combat Stress peer support groups. “It makes me feel good to know that I’m putting something back into a charity that’s done so much for me.”

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Craig

more information at lichfield.anglican.org/len tappeal_2019

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