

Your generosity will help those in need

GENEROUS worshippers raised more than £9,000 to help those suffering in the Middle East and those relying on Foodbanks here.

The cash was raised via the Bishop's Lent Appeal, which involves the bishop selecting one local and one global charity as recipients. This year the two charities were the Tearfund Middle East Appeal and Foodbanks run by the Trussell Trust.

Worshippers held fundraising events and made donations during Lent amounting to £9,070. Half went to help those affected by conflict in the Middle East and supported by the charity Tearfund. The other half was split between Foodbanks in Portsmouth, Fareham and the Isle of Wight, each of which received £1,511.

The Archdeacon of the Isle of Wight, the Ven Steve Daugherty, presented a cheque to the island's Foodbank, and was given a tour of its Cowes headquarters. That's one of its five locations on the island, where last year they fed over 7,000 people.

"The Foodbank here was started around 13 years ago by a community church in Cowes, and a number of our current Foodbanks are in churches and many of our volunteers are Christians," said manager Kay Lewis.

"After receiving a referral voucher, everyone is welcome to come to our Foodbanks in Newport, Sandown, Freshwater, Ryde or Cowes. We probably see 500 people each month, and about 85 per cent of them only come once or twice because they have a specific crisis.



Foodbank manager Kay Lewis with Archdeacon the Ven Steve Daugherty

"We receive donations from the public, with drop offs at churches and supermarkets. We can then offer each client a nutritionally-balanced package of food that will last them for three days. This may include items such as pasta, rice, bread, fresh fruit and vegetables.

"We are incredibly grateful to those who go to churches across the Portsmouth diocese, who will help to make things easier for those in real need across the island."

The Cowes headquarters includes a warehouse, a Foodbank café where clients can get their food and support, an outdoor space where vegetables are grown, and a clothing room. Find out more on www.isleofwight.foodbank.org.uk

Another £1,511 raised by worshippers was given to Foodbanks in Portsmouth. Their main base is at King's Church in Southsea with

subsidiary Foodbanks at Paulsgrove Baptist and All Saints, Commercial Road. Between them, they feed around 250 people each week. And a similar amount – £1,511 – was also given to the Foodbank serving Fareham and Gosport, which is based in Titchfield Common.

Meanwhile, the other half of the Bishop's Lent Appeal funds is helping those affected by the current conflict in Gaza, Israel and Lebanon. It has been given via the Christian charity Tearfund, who have relaunched their Middle East Emergency Appeal to offer humanitarian aid.

It was relaunched in the wake of the recent bombing of Gaza and the ground invasion of Lebanon. Tearfund is working through local churches to provide shelter and assistance to people forced from their homes by the fighting. Find out more on www.tearfund.org.