

PRESS RELEASE

6th November 2021

Immediate Use

Thanksgiving/Illuminate 2021 – ‘Can-dles of hope’

St Swithun’s Church, Retford – 12noon to 9.00pm, 18th November 2021

Help us to gather 4800 (or more!) cans for Bassetlaw Foodbank on Thursday 18th November 2021 – that is one can for every month since the first Thanksgiving in America, 400 years ago. We have over 400 cans already and are looking forward to receiving many more on the day.

From 12noon on Thursday 18th November at St Swithun’s Church Retford, there will be a programme of performances and talks where everyone is invited to call in with their donations of cans for Bassetlaw Foodbank. Here is the programme:

- 12 noon - 12.15pm John Coates and the bellringers will ring the church bells
- 12.30pm - 1.30pm Stephen Carey will play five organ pieces specially composed for the Mayflower Pilgrims commemorations, with an introduction and supporting narratives by Isabelle Richards, Heritage Engagement Officer, Pilgrims Gallery, Bassetlaw Museum.
- 1.30pm - 2.30pm The Elizabethan Academy Choir
- 2.30pm - 3.00pm Doncaster Waites (popular music at the time of the Pilgrims)
- 3.00pm - 3.45pm U3A Recorder Consort
- 4.00pm - 4.30pm Doncaster Waites (return)
- 4.30pm - 5.30pm Pilgrim Churches + Videos on screen – sit back and take a tour around local historic locations linked to the Separatists
- 5.30pm - 6.30pm Interval
- 6.30pm - 7.30pm Adrian Gray, historian & author - 'Thanksgiving and other meals' (talk)
- 7.30pm - 8.30pm Emma Spencer & David Warren (singers)
- 8.30pm - 9.00pm Jessica Mary Brett (singer)
- 9.00pm Thanks and Close

Donors are welcome to stay throughout or pop in for a few minutes – whatever works for them – refreshments will be available. Let’s make this a great event for Bassetlaw Foodbank and the people it serves – no-one should go hungry in Bassetlaw!

Everyone who brings a donation for the Foodbank at St Swithun’s on 18th November will be given the opportunity to write a message of hope which will be given out by Bassetlaw Foodbank. To receive a positive message like this, especially in the run up to Christmas, can make a big difference.

This will be a fantastic way for people to give thanks for their own lives whilst helping others to survive in modern hardship - a brilliant way to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the first Thanksgiving Meal held in North America.

The first 400 donors will be given an LED tealight, which they can display in their windows on Thursday 25th November (Thanksgiving Day) to remind them, and others, about giving thanks. We will be inviting people to take photographs of these tealights to reflect the theme of Illuminate and share them on social media with the hashtag #OneSmallCandle, or send by email to info@pilgrimroots.org.

The Illuminate activity is inspired by a quote from William Bradford, one of the Mayflower Pilgrim leaders who became the second and long-serving Governor of Plymouth Colony:

'As one small candle may light a thousand, so the light here kindled hath shone unto many.'

Chair of BCH, Rick Brand said: 'This is a wonderful opportunity for us to make a real difference to people locally by supporting Bassetlaw Foodbank, and to be able to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the first Thanksgiving.'

Notes for Editors

Background

November 25th 2021 will be the 400th anniversary of the first Thanksgiving meal which was shared between the newly arrived settlers to North America – the Mayflower Pilgrims - and the local population who had formed an alliance with them – the Mashpee Wampanoag.

In the first year, half of the passengers from the Mayflower had died, having arrived at the start of winter, ill-prepared for what was to come. Members of the native population showed them which crops to grow, and how to go about it. A year on from their arrival a celebration meal took place with the settlers and the leader of the local Wampanoag people and one hundred of his warriors.

However the anniversary is not celebrated by the Wampanoag people today. The successful establishment of the Separatists was followed by large scale incursion by Europeans across the continent. Thanksgiving has been marked, since 1970, among many Native Americans as a National Day of Mourning.

Millions of Americans today mark Thanksgiving as a celebration of family and an opportunity to give thanks for what they have. People travel across the country to enjoy a meal together, usually featuring turkey. The original meal would probably have consisted of venison, shellfish and cereals.

For further information please contact:

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Rick Brand at rckbrand@hotmail.com or 01427 891376

Or see websites:

www.pilgrimroots.co.uk

www.bassetlawchristianheritage.com

The Thanksgiving/Illuminate activity in Bassetlaw, North Nottinghamshire has been organised by Bassetlaw District Council Pilgrims Gallery at Bassetlaw Museum, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and BCH (Bassetlaw Christian Heritage).

Pilgrim Roots is a regional partnership including Bassetlaw District Council, West Lindsey District Council, Bassetlaw Christian Heritage and other organisations in the Lincolnshire, Bassetlaw, North Nottinghamshire and South Yorkshire area.

Photograph – attached are photographs of interpretations of 'candles of hope'