

Church of Scotland makes significant contribution to Sarwar Foundation

The Church of Scotland joins a number of organisations in making generous donations to a campaign providing Christmas presents for those children who are living in poverty.

The church has made a £5,000 donation to the [Scottish Toybank Appeal](#) run by the Sarwar Foundation Charity. This is an annual appeal which aims to support 330 children in Edinburgh and the donation will mean that the nationwide total for this year's appeal rises to over £18,000.

The Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) Scotland has also made a substantial donation to the appeal. Dozens of smaller donations have been received from individuals, meaning that hundreds of children who would otherwise receive nothing at Christmas will be able to open a present and enjoy a festive meal.

The appeal is now in its eighth year and the Sarwar Foundation charity works with Children 1st and Scottish Women's Aid to identify families in need of help.

The aim is to reach at least 2,000 children across Scotland, including families who will spend Christmas in refuge accommodation having left their homes following domestic

abuse.

Previous appeals have enabled a mother living in refuge to give her three children Christmas gifts after being forced to leave their home, a teenager supported by Scottish Women's Aid was able to use their gift voucher to buy an outfit for their school party, and a family supported by Children 1st enjoyed their first chance to visit Santa.

Anyone can donate directly to the Sarwar Foundation Christmas Toybank Appeal at www.justgiving.com/campaign/christmastoybank2020 All funds go towards new toys or gift vouchers.

Reverend Michael Mair, of St David's Broomhouse Parish in Edinburgh, said: "The Church of Scotland in Edinburgh is delighted to be participating in this project and supporting the most vulnerable in our community at Christmastime.

"For Christians, Christmas is a celebration which marks the birth of Jesus and is central to our core beliefs. We recognise the birth of Jesus to be a wonderful gift, and so it is natural that we want to make sure that children who will wake up in a refuge or crisis centre will receive a present on Christmas morning.

"While the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic means there will likely be restrictions on large family gatherings, we are delighted that this project will provide a Christmas meal to those who find themselves in difficult circumstances.

"A Christmas meal for every family in a refuge or crisis centre and a toy for each child is a small act, but one that brings a sense of normalcy and the deep awareness that every family in Scotland is valued and treasured.

"The Church of Scotland in Edinburgh is proud to contribute towards this noble aim and assures each recipient of our prayers and love in addition to our donation. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas."

Anas Sarwar MSP, president of the Sarwar Foundation, said: "Thank you to the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh for this

generous donation, which will help us to deliver Christmas for hundreds of children across Scotland.

“We are hugely grateful for all donations received so far, including from PFA Scotland and the dozens of people who have contributed what they can.

“The coronavirus pandemic is causing hardship and having a disproportionate impact on those already struggling to get by, so we want this year’s appeal to be larger than ever.

“Please consider donating to the campaign because every child deserves a Christmas.”



Photo of Anas Sarwar (or is it Santa?) by Wattie Cheung