

## Being there

*Victoria Jones explains how the first tranche of the diocese's Evangelism Fund Grant is being used to the benefit of one Carmarthenshire community.*

In 2018 God gave me a vision for Cross Hands, which was to establish a children, youth and families centre with a church plant for the unchurched, a soft play area, cafe and drop in youth centre . At the end of January 2020 Bishop Joanna released me from my parish duties to put the vision into action and make it a reality within the Archdeaconry for New Christian Communities and Evangelism.'

We settled on the name *Impact 242* as we wanted to have an impact on our local community, furthermore the last 3 letters, 'act', and the numbers '242', are a link to the book of Acts 2:42, "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship; to the breaking of bread and to prayer." This created the DNA for the new church community which has been brought to life.



After receiving the Evangelism grant, and with the help of the diocesan Evangelism Development Fund Committee, we entered into an agreement with the Cross Hands Cinema Trust, leasing the back hall of the cinema, and opened our doors in the latter part of March 2020. This coincided with lockdown, highlighting the great needs in our community and leading us to start a Covid-19 crisis food response centre.



A typical day is from 9.30am to 10pm. The foodbank is open 10am-12.30pm. Shopping for fruit and veg stock-up tins and unpacking is 2pm-5pm, with evening pick-ups and unpacking from 8.30-10pm. We are helping so many in partnership with local volunteers, who are mostly non-churchgoers, local statutory bodies and community leaders.

For us this has launched *Impact 242* in a way that has been so unexpected - people in our community now know who we are and what we do. We have been a place where people can turn to in their most vulnerable and most desperate times. We have been able to help so many and point them in the right direction for extra support and a listening ear, especially the elderly who are lonely.

Our dream is to continue, not to get stuck doing the same thing, to keep asking the question 'what's next God?' Our prayers are that we will always be ready and available to serve our community whatever its need, that we remain Jesus-focused and always have a willingness to be bold and step out in faith with servant hearts.