

“Dads Army” Vicar’s voice 19th November 2017

One of my all time favorite BBC Comedy is “Dads Army”, I’ve fond memories of watching it with my Grandfather and loved everybody laughing! I didn’t always understand every joke but now I often chuckle as I listen. For me it is a classic British sitcom, well crafted characters get put into silly situations and then the fun really starts! ‘Dads Army’ fondly recalls the actual World War two “Home Guard” with the fictional adventures of the “Walmington on Sea” Platoon. Amidst the joking there is the deeper reflection of a time when as a nation we were so stretched that retired men and teens were called up to defend locals from a German Parachute invasion. ‘Dads Army’ affectionately laughs along with volunteers as they play their part in one of the greatest tests in our nations history.

I have always held volunteering in high regard as I have been privileged to work with so many capable and talented people through the church and at Foodbank. What left me open mouthed was when we had to move our Foodbank warehouse, all 40+ tons of food and shelves worth! Forgive me Lord but when I turned up a few years ago I remembered how efficiently the Army had shifted it all in a matter of hours and thought that with a bunch of volunteers a morning start might mean a midnight finish. I couldn’t have been more wrong – folks came from all directions, all churches and young and old they picked up bags, boxes and shelves and the actual

move was done in an even quicker time than the Great British army had managed! It is said that the backbone of 70% of the nations charities are made up of Christian volunteers – without the church and its Christian volunteers, so many organizations would implode. In a society that says “What’s in it for me” the idea of giving up spare time to help others, even simple jobs is a wonderful hallmark of the Christian witness.

On Saturday we will offer a very unique experience of Gods grace in the midst of the shopping frenzy of Christmas. To those burdened down with the pressures of Christmas we will take them back to the tradition where St Nicholas gave simple gifts to some children in need and the eternal story that inspired such generosity. We give, because God first gave his Son. Thank you for you’re volunteering whether it’s at Church, school, a uniform organization or helping a neighbor. As simple as the actions are – they over time point to the same grace of the babe born in Bethlehem. The babe born as Gods free gift to humanity, the babe at the heart of all that we remember this Christmas, the babe that lights the fire to bring the light of life to all, the babe who calls us to be born again as a people of hope!

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Picture Credit: Alisdair Wood

