

Flexible ministry is key in Gosport

GOSPORT'S deanery plan took a step forward when the Rev Karen Mitchell was licensed as priest-in-charge of two parishes that have committed to work together.

Bishop Christopher was at St Thomas the Apostle, Elson, to licence her to serve there and at St Matthew's Church, Bridgemary.

The post also comes with the chaplaincy of Bridgemary School, which is affiliated to our diocese.

Elson and Bridgemary will try to work together with the assistance of one of the deanery priests. The main focus for the new priest will be in children and young people's ministry. Already there is a bustling youth club, 'Fridays' at St Thomas's, and Messy Church is growing at St Matthew's.

Karen and her husband Tony come with a wealth of experience in that field. She served in the Cheshunt team ministry as a curate, with experience in North London before that.

Two more vacancies in the deanery at Alverstoke – now filled with the appointment of the Rev Andrew Norris – and at Lee-on-the-Solent have given the deanery a real chance to develop cross-parish working. All vacant livings are now given a priest-in-charge to allow for greater flexibility.

'A caring priest with a fine mind'

TRIBUTES have been paid to a former archdeacon and cathedral canon who devoted himself to the Church.

The Ven Norman Crowder died in February, aged 86. His funeral was held in Salisbury Cathedral and the former Bishop of Salisbury, the Rt Rev David Stancliffe, a former provost of our cathedral, preached.

After a curacy in Southwell diocese, Norman was chaplain to the Bishop of Portsmouth, serving the Rt Rev Launcelot Fleming between 1955-59. Then, as chaplain at Canford School in Dorset, he was not only able to exercise a valuable pastoral ministry, but also indulge his love of cricket.

He spent three years as a parish priest at St John's, Ryde, from 1972-75, and then became director of education for our diocese and a residentiary canon of our cathedral from 1975-85. He was then Archdeacon of Portsmouth, serving the whole of the mainland part of our diocese until his retirement in 1993. He then moved to Salisbury with his wife, Pauleen.

Canon Howard Barker, one of Norman's successors as bishop's chaplain, said: "The words printed just inside the order of service for Norman's funeral were: 'Have always therefore printed in your remembrance how great a treasure is committed to your charge.'

"They remind us that, in a lifetime of devoted service to the



The Ven Norman Crowder, a former archdeacon and cathedral canon in our diocese

Church, the essence of Norman's ministry was a priestly one.

"Throughout his time in our diocese he was held in the highest esteem. Behind the highly efficient and hard-working archdeacon was a person of real depth, whose mind was fed by the ancient classics, William Golding and biographies and whose spirit was nourished by T S Eliot's *Four Quartets* and the music of Gustav Mahler.

"Beneath the formality of

his role was a person of great compassion, warmth and kindness which had a practical outworking in his care and concern for his clergy and parishes and in his wider support for the Church Urban Fund and Faith in the City.

"Norman had a fine mind and the ability to offer clear and well-balanced advice. He was a wonderful colleague who put so much commitment into all that he did for the diocese, ably supported

by his wife, Pauleen. But, above all, it was his kindness that people remember with such affection. He knew all his clergy particularly well, and was the first to respond with help to those who were going through difficult times. We give thanks for the rich fulfilment of his ordination vows."

Donations given at Norman's funeral were passed to the Church Urban Fund. His ashes will be interred in Portsmouth Cathedral.

Friends write books for children

AN Isle of Wight author has created a series of four books teaching social behaviour to young children from an early age.

Eira Reeves, from St Paul's Church, Barton, and her friend Shirley Pope, from Lyminster in West Sussex, created the books, which are aimed at children aged between three and six. The pair jointly wrote the books and Eira illustrated them.

The 'Tom, Katie and friends' series has been created for schools to read at circle time or reading time. Parents can also buy them once they are published this month.

Each book features a story with colourful illustrations from everyday life. They are designed to help children learn how to cope with daily social problems. In each book, the six characters learn how to treat each other with respect and honour each



Eira Reeves and one of her books



She has had more than 85 titles published as either author and illustrator or just as illustrator, mostly educational activity books and Bible stories. One book, entitled *Would you like to know Jesus?*, which introduces a child to Jesus, has been published in more than 30 languages.

Shirley Pope was a parent-helper at her son's infant school before working for 19 years as a midday meals supervisor. The idea for the stories came to Shirley as she observed children coping with diverse problems and dealing with social skills.

The books are published by LDA Findel Education and can be bought by contacting them on 0845 120 4476 or orders@LDAlearning.com.

They are also available from Amazon at £4.95 per book. See www.amazon.co.uk and search for Eira Reeves for details.

Pompey Chimes

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