

Resurrection musical staged in revamped theatre

A CHRISTIAN musical based on the story of Jesus's resurrection will be performed by a professional cast in Portsmouth next month.

Risen! The Musical was first performed two years ago in Holy Rood Church, Stubbington, using songs written by congregation member Ken Shearsmith.

It has now been completely revamped and the new version will be premiered by a 15-strong cast from the London College of Music, alongside the award-winning Portsmouth University Gospel Choir.

It will be one of the first

productions in the recently-revamped New Theatre Royal in Guildhall Walk, and will be staged at 7.30pm on November 6 and both 2.30pm and 7.30pm on November 7.

The production may be heading for the USA, with interest from churches in Kentucky, Washington and Alabama.

Ken Shearsmith said: "The person who mastered the CD of songs is a lecturer at the London College of Music. He spoke to the head of performing arts there and recruited postgraduates with degrees in musical theatre. It

means our production will have a real West End feel.

"It includes two new songs and a deeper storyline than before. The experience at Holy Rood led to two years more work and now we have the finished article."

Bishop Christopher said: "*Risen! The Musical* presents dramatically and powerfully the central story of the Christian faith. Having heard the songs, I can't wait to see the show."

Tickets, priced at £16.50 and £14.50 (£10 for the matinee) are available on 023-9264 9000 or www.newtheatroyal.com.



The new cast in rehearsals for *Risen! - The Musical*

Service to remember war nurses

A SOUTHSEA church will host a service to remember nurses from Portsmouth who served in the First World War.

Church of the Holy Spirit in Fawcett Road will hold the memorial service at 2pm on October 17.

It is being organised by the Rev Emma D'Aeth, who is a deacon serving at the church and a nurse herself.

She has been tracking down the families of those nurses who went to serve in field hospitals on the battlefield during the war 100 years ago.

The weekend has been chosen as it is the feast day of St Luke. The service will be followed by tea and cakes.

For more details, contact Emma on emmadaeth@paucho.co.uk or 023-9286 2108.

Champion offers care to elderly

A CHAMPION for older people in Portsmouth aims to offer the Church's care and support to elderly people and their families.

Jill Phipps took up her post as Older Person's Advocate, working with the inner city cluster churches in June. Currently training to be

a Reader in her home parish of Swanmore, she previously worked as a physiotherapist with older people and was attracted to her current role because of the opportunity to work in a different context.

"As a physiotherapist, your time with patients is limited," she said. "But now I have more time to listen and to offer help, and my training and role as a Reader complements this work too."

Based at All Saints, Jill works with the clergy, Readers and congregations of St Mary's, St Faith's, St George's, St Wilfrid's, St Luke's, All Saints and the cathedral to identify older people who are lonely and isolated and needing help or support.

There are a lot of organisations already providing care and support for older people in Portsmouth, Jill is making links with them and working in partnership to provide information and direct people to the services that are available. She will also see where the gaps are and how our churches might fill them.

Jill also visits the care homes, day centres and sheltered housing schemes in the area, to offer activities such as Harvest and Christmas services and carol

Jill Phipps, older person's advocate in inner-city Portsmouth



singing.

She uses TableTalk 'for Third Agers' – question cards on different themes such as childhood memories, world issues, health and relationships, to encourage discussion on life. As well as giving opportunity for reflection, this brings out a lot of humour and laughter.

One important area to support is in raising awareness of dementia. Jill has linked up with Nicky Bellinger who is a Dementia Friends trainer. Together they are offering one-hour awareness raising sessions, with the aim of getting all the inner city churches 'Dementia Friendly'.

Nicky became a trainer after undertaking the training when her grandmother was diagnosed with dementia and she wanted to find out more about it.

"It's about injecting positivity into a situation that has a lot of fear around it," Nicky said. "Finding positives in a tricky situation makes things easier to deal with. Raising awareness about dementia, even at

a basic level, can take away some of the fear."

If you are interested in hosting a Dementia Friends session in your church or area, please contact Jill on 07710 394 351 or email: jill.phipps@portsmouthcathedral.org.uk.

- There's a new initiative to help carers, relatives and friends of people living with dementia on the Isle of Wight.

Dementia Pathfinders and St James Church in East Cowes are offering the chance for conversations about dementia and end-of-life care.

The first session has been held on September 16. The second and third are on October 22 and November 26, both at St James Church in Well Road, from 6.30pm-8.30pm.

The idea is to share past and present experiences of dementia, gain knowledge and explore issues to challenge our beliefs and attitudes.

For more details, contact the Rev Veronica Brown on 07921-514906.

Pompey Chimes

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