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**For the Lord your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them.**

De 4:31



**BOTLEY, CURDRIDGE and DURLEY:** Worshippers have been giving hand-knitted bears to each child that is baptised, along with a baptism candle, for the past year.

Each bear has a cross embroidered onto its tummy, and the idea is that the bear reminds the family that Jesus is always there for them.

The bears are made by two members of the church, Maurice and Iris Combes, and have been a huge success with children.

Worshippers decided to go a step further and hold a picnic for the baptism bears. Each family received an individual invitation and gathered on Botley Recreation Ground with picnics, children and bears. There was a singalong with a teddy bear theme, led by Maraca Jacks, and it ended with a piece of baptism bear cake.

They are also trying a system of baptism links. Their job is to keep baptism families informed for a year of church events and activities that families will enjoy, and to encourage them to come. This could be Messy Church, Crib Services, or Easter Egg hunts.

**LANGRISH:** St John the Evangelist Church, Langrish, resounded with the sound of its new organ after a major renovation.

After 100 years of maintaining the organ in situ, Henry Willis Sons of Liverpool took the organ away for a significant renovation over the summer.

So, in September, more than 70 visitors came to hear an organ recital by Tim Parsons, an organ scholar from Winchester Cathedral, alongside singer Chloe Allison.

The growling sounds of the bass and the wonderful range of notes and tunes reverberated around the building.

It was a beautiful evening which included a selection of hymns and organ recitals from



**L to r: Capt John Day (verger), Canon Karina Green (Havant joint area dean), the Rev Sandra Edwards (vicar), Peter Mitchell (Reader), the Rev Sandie Osborne, the Ven Joanne Grenfell (Archdeacon of Portsdown), and Tina Cottam (churchwarden) at the licensing service**



**The Rev Paul Armstead blesses the hassocks at St James Church**

## news from the pews

composers such as Bach, Vaughan Williams, Purcell and Mathias, and a final tribute to the Battle of Britain.

The total of £1,150 was raised and the PCC continues to fundraise for the renovation of the organ.

**DENMEAD:** The congregation at All Saints Church, Denmead, enjoyed an evening of worship and celebration to welcome their new associate priest.

The Rev Sandie Osborne was licensed to her new role after three years in the parish as assistant curate.

She will continue to serve in the parish part-time, juggling the role with her work as senior chaplain at Winchester Prison.

She was licensed by the Archdeacon of Portsdown, the Ven Joanne Grenfell, who was assisted by the area dean of Havant, the vicar, and the Reader from the parish.

Afterwards there was food, cake and wine, as the congregation celebrated together.

**EMSWORTH:** Retired priest the Rev Barbara Hammond will lead an exploration of the Scriptures during 10 sessions either side of Christmas.

She will lead a course entitled *The Story of the Scriptures* at 7.30pm on Tuesdays in St James Church, Emsworth.

It tells the story of the Bible, from the earliest Hebrew writings 11 centuries before

Christ, to the early Christian writings, the translations of the Bible from Latin to English, right up to the newest translations of the 20th century.

It starts on November 3, and continues each Tuesday until December 1. Then the course will re-start on January 12 and take place every fortnight until March 8.

For more details, contact Barbara on 01243-370531 or [barbarawh@virginmedia.com](mailto:barbarawh@virginmedia.com).

**MILTON:** It was a centenary project for St James Church, Milton, to create new kneelers in 2013.

However, they were still a few short, so another 20 kneelers have now been created to complete the project.

The vicar, the Rev Paul Armstead, blessed them at the church's Harvest Festival, as they were brought forward to the Communion rail.