

# Our pioneers will forge new paths

**THESE are our new pioneer ministers who will be forging new ways of being 'church' in three areas of our diocese.**

The new ministers will help to build new worshipping communities in parts of Portsmouth, Havant and Gosport as part of our commitment to pioneer ministry. They aim to reach those with no Christian background, or who struggle with traditional forms of church.

Nicky Pybus will be serving in Cosham and Wymering. Her role will be focused especially on the Highbury Estate, working with young children and families.

She is currently the social responsibility co-ordinator for our diocese's Council for Social Responsibility, which supports churches in social change and community engagement.

The Revs Barney and Sara Barron will jointly serve the PO9 postcode area north of Havant, which includes Leigh Park, Warren Park and West Leigh. They already live and work in the Leigh Park area and are ordained Baptist church ministers.

And the Rev Tim Watson will be serving the Leesland area of Gosport. Tim currently works as a pioneer minister in Crewe.

Nicky, Barney, Sara and Tim will join a growing team of pioneer ministers which is led



**Pioneer ministers the Revs Sara and Barney Barron (top), the Rev Tim Watson and Nicky Pybus**

by the Dean of Pioneer Ministry, Canon Peter Hall, who is also priest-in-charge of Church of the Good Shepherd in Crookhorn.

The new ministers will join others yet to be appointed as part of our £2.4m strategy to

develop new styles of ministry. The idea is that new worshipping communities might be different from our standard, geographical parish model.

Around £750,000 of the funding for our pioneer ministry

project should come from money set aside by the Church Commissioners for mission.

They'll join others such as the Rev Connie Sherman, who has just been licensed as pioneer minister for the Berewood development, west of Waterlooville – while still remaining priest-in-charge at St John's, Purbrook – and the Rev Philippa Mills, who is pioneering as part of her role as vicar of Whiteley Church. Connie was licensed last month at Berewood School.

The Ven Joanne Grenfell, Archdeacon of Portsdown, said: "It's exciting for the diocese to appoint such creative and committed pioneer ministers, who bring a wealth of experience to these newly created roles.

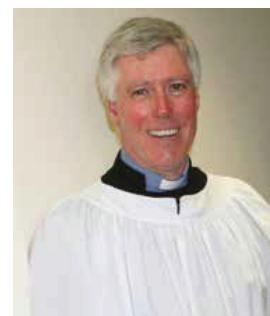
"We know that the Church needs to be more relevant and accessible, to meet people in their daily lives, and help them to develop a life of faith.

"By investing in these paid posts, as well as encouraging ordinary people in the pews to get out, serve the community, and share their faith, we hope that we can grow and change."

Another pioneer minister is expected to be appointed to serve in the parish of St James, Milton.

These are the first new pioneer ministers to be appointed in our diocese since the Rev Mark Rodel's stint as city centre pioneer minister between 2008-12.

For details, see [www.portsmouth.anglican.org/pioneer](http://www.portsmouth.anglican.org/pioneer).



**Canon David Power**

## Honour for vicar who led project

THE vicar who led the 12-year project to transform St Cuthbert's Church has been honoured by the Queen.

Canon David Power was awarded the British Empire Medal in the New Year's Honours list, for his services to the Portsmouth community.

He will be presented with the award by the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire in Winchester, and will then attend a royal garden party at Buckingham Palace.

The £4.5m project split the cavernous building into three – a GPs' surgery, community rooms, and a worship area. It was completed in 2012 and the building now throngs with life seven days a week.

David said: "This is so humbling and totally unexpected. The cliché that I'm receiving this award on behalf of so many others is, in this case, absolutely true.

"The small but amazing team who made the St Cuthbert's development project possible, together with the wonderful congregations, are those who truly deserve recognition."

## Guides helped us encounter God in special week

IT was a week of genuine encounters with God that transformed the prayer lives of those who took part.

Worshippers from Fareham deanery took part in a Week of Accompanied Prayer, which involved spending half an hour in prayer each day and another half-hour with a trained prayer guide.

It gave them a chance to talk about the spiritual issues they struggle with, and to use alternative suggestions for prayer. It was based at St John's Church, Locks Heath, and was facilitated by our diocesan spirituality adviser, the Rev Ruth Tuschling, and

her team of prayer guides.

The 23 participants were each matched with a guide, who met them individually each day for a week, before a final service at St John's.

Rachel Abbey, from St Columba, Fareham, said: "This wasn't about being instructed in 'how you should pray'; more about having someone to really listen to how you engage with God in life and guide you in exploring new, helpful and perhaps unexpected ways of 'praying'. Some of the exercises weren't even recognisable as prayer in its traditional sense, but that was the point – prayer is about enjoying our

relationship with God rather than abiding by a set of rules.

"So I've been deliberately quiet, I've painted, I've reflected on words that moved me deeply and written my own short responses. I've come away feeling that God has been doing some long-overdue gardening in me, clearing away the dead 'stuff' of life, and restoring some breathing space."

Barbara Le Sueur, from St Peter's, Titchfield, said: "I had not realised that keeping 30 minutes each day to pray to our Lord and to study the Scriptures could have such a life-changing effect on me.

"I now know that I am

loved and cherished by God.

It is wonderful to know that he walks with me every step of the way. I will never feel lost or alone again."

And Steve Alcock, from St John's, Locks Heath, said: "My guide seemed to have a sixth sense of where I was in my struggle with faith, and without any judgement knew just what to say.

"Incredibly I found myself opening up to her and baring my vulnerabilities to this stranger. It was undeniable that God was at work.

"I have had a long and difficult walk with my faith and many times fallen by the

wayside. The one week of half-hour sessions has done more for me than anything else has ever managed before. The final service was emotional and the process has been nothing short of cathartic. It's not just me, but it appeared that all the pilgrims on this course have been surprised, shocked and incredibly moved by the awareness of God."

If you would like to run a Week of Accompanied Prayer, please contact the Rev Ruth Tuschling on [ruth.tuschling@portsmouth.anglican.org](mailto:ruth.tuschling@portsmouth.anglican.org) or 023-9289 9686. Please bear in mind these weeks take six months in advance to organise.