

**DOREEN Wren has a beautiful garden – and she would like to share it with you.**

The 87-year-old has spent years creating water features, crazy paving and flower beds so that her garden can be a spiritual place. Visitors feel the Holy Spirit is present there.

Now she is opening it up to anyone who would like to spend time there in quiet – or to receive prayer ministry in her summer house.

It's all in memory of her son Peter, who died when he was just 14. He was killed as he cycled to a Christmas Eve service.

"Creating the garden has been a real labour of love for me," she said. "It has been my form of relaxation for years. Peter was always the one who helped me with the garden – he always came out and gave me a hand.

"I really felt that God was calling me to use the lovely garden I had to help others. People can come and spend time here in quiet, praying or reflecting or just watching the birds. They often find that God speaks to them when they are surrounded by nature."

Doreen, who goes to St Paul's Church, Sarisbury Green, has been living since 1959 in a house in Swanwick designed by her husband John. They had to demolish the cottage it replaced, and it took two and a half years to build their new home.

The garden was designed by Doreen, who organised for lorryloads of stones to create crazy paving and steps, dug out a sunken garden and created a water feature.

She was also working as a teacher, and was at Sarisbury Junior School for 15 years until she retired in 1984. She was particularly keen on helping children learn to read, and used to help those who were lagging behind in literacy.

Her faith blossomed when the Rev Roger Moseley came to St Paul's Church and started talking about the Holy Spirit and having a personal relationship with God. Her prayer life became richer, and she became part of the prayer ministry team at St Paul's.

In 1981, her son Chris ended up in a Portuguese jail for four months. He was skipping a yacht which was chartered by a group from Wolverhampton, who turned out to be drug smugglers. The group drugged Chris as they were off the coast of Tripoli, and his girlfriend discovered him, sweating, eyes rolling and dehydrating.

Later he was held at gunpoint by the group, who were then arrested by the authorities and thrown into jail. It was while he

# I created garden in memory of my son



## Peter was 'loving kindness'

**IT was Christmas Eve 1978 when Peter Wren decided to cycle to St Paul's Church, Sarisbury Green.**

**The 14-year-old chorister was supposed to be reading a lesson at the midnight service. But he never made it.**

**He was knocked off his bike by one car, and then hit by a second car, which killed him.**

**His mum Doreen said: "The thing that springs to mind when I think about Peter is**

**'loving kindness', and it's not just because he died that we think he was special.**

**"His brothers think the same too. I think it's because God knew he wasn't going to be with us for very long."**

**The family have erected a memorial to Peter at Cocking Sawmills on the South Downs, along with a tap to give fresh water for walkers and animals. They also created a freshwater pond at Farlington Marshes.**

was imprisoned that he started to read some Bible reading notes that Doreen had given to him during a visit. Those *Every Day With Jesus* readings led to him becoming a Christian. He now organises sailing trips for the disadvantaged with the Christian charity Youth with a Mission.

"We wrote so many letters to all sorts of people, to try to get Chris released," she said. "There were people from St Paul's writing to Chris every week, although they didn't know him. And we went out to see him every month, and people from church helped us to pay for those trips.

"There was one time when I'd just had enough and was sitting here in tears. I said to God: 'I don't know who else to write to. Over to you, Lord'. Just then the phone rang and there was an assistant to a European MP who said 'The Lord has told me to ring you'. She then explained what she would do. For me, that was a real miracle. I'd never had a response

to prayer as quickly as that before. It was God showing me that he had all this in hand.

"Meanwhile, Chris was in jail feeling very bitter about what had happened. He said to God that he didn't want to feel it any more. He felt that bitterness drain out of him, and he was filled with something that made him feel invincible. I told him later that



**Top: Doreen Wren in her garden; (below): the Rev Roger Moseley blessing the garden and those who spend time there**

of a persistent depression that had bothered her at various stages of her life. A couple from church promised to pray for her every day for a month.

"A while later, I was actually walking across the motorway bridge and I felt a big cloud lifting off my head," she said. "It felt like I was walking in green pastures, and I've been laughing ever since!

started talking to people in the street and offering them coffee and a chat.

During the past few months, she has been preparing her garden for visitors to use. Friends from church have already spent time there and remarked on how peaceful it is. She bought a summer house, which she uses for prayer ministry, and has had leaflets printed to publicise the existence of 'Peter's Garden'.

The semi-wild garden is frequented by many wild birds. There's also a pond with running water where dragonflies and tadpoles can be seen.

Last month, her former vicar Roger Moseley blessed the garden for God's work, with 30 people from church attending. The garden is also affiliated to a national charity, the Quiet Garden Trust.

It is available for individuals and groups to spend time in prayer, reflection or quiet. Just ring 01489-584334 to arrange a visit for your sole use.

## my faith

**Doreen Wren has been through the death of one son, the imprisonment of another, and faced the challenges of cancer and depression. Now God has inspired her in a new venture**

that was the Holy Spirit!"

Doreen was able to depend on God and the kindness of friends at church when she was diagnosed with cancer six years ago. She had chemotherapy and radiotherapy, losing her hair and wearing a wig for a while.

More recently, she was healed

A lot of people have noticed the difference."

It was about five years ago that Doreen felt inspired by God to knock on people's doors and give them flowers. Every Saturday for three years, she gave two bunches of flowers to villagers – as a way of showing God's love. Then she