

Bible musical to raise vital funds

WORSHIPPERS have teamed up with a local theatre company to present a Biblical musical.

St Peter's Church, Shorwell, are working with theatre group the Wight Strollers to stage a full-scale production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* this month.

The musical, which features the iconic tunes *Close Ev'ry Door* and *Any Dream Will Do*, will be performed at the Medina Theatre on the Isle of Wight on July 9 and 10.

Among the cast will be lay minister Steve Sutcliffe, who will play one of Joseph's brothers. Other churchgoers from the island are also involved.

And the proceeds from ticket sales will be split between St Peter's and another good cause that has yet to be identified. St Peter's will use the proceeds to help pay for the creation of a new kitchen and toilet in the church.

Steve said: "We're really fortunate to be working alongside such a great team of actors. They are a fantastic team to work with, and really supportive of my lack of acting ability!"

"Although people might feel the story of Joseph is quite familiar, it actually has a lot to say to us about the possibility of redemption for us all. God offers



Above: the Joseph choir in rehearsal; right: Steve Sutcliffe as Asher with Ches Checkley-Hill as Benjamin

a new start to Joseph, despite his favouritism; to Jacob, despite his favouritism; and to his brothers, despite their awful betrayal of the family."

Director Sarah Scotcher said: "Joseph is great fun and a real feel-good show – we're having a lot of fun with it at rehearsals and the wonderful atmosphere is something we will definitely be passing on to our audiences."

"As always, we're offering professional quality at amateur prices and we're thrilled that the production will be raising money for my local church, St Peter's. It's going to be a very special show."

Renowned for their annual pantomimes, the Wight Strollers have given over £145,000 to local charities and good causes since their foundation in 1981.

This production will star Nick Weightman as Joseph and Emily Scotcher as the narrator. It will also feature a 10-piece band led by Kim Ball. The show can be seen at 2.30pm or 7.30pm on July 9, and at 2.30pm on July 10.

Tickets are on sale now, at £12 for adults and £9 for under-14s, available from Medina Theatre Box Office either by phoning 01983 823884 or by visiting www.medinatheatre.co.uk



Mothers' Union to mark 140 years

MEMBERS of the Mothers' Union from our diocese will mark its 140th birthday in July.

It will be marked at the annual festival service at Holy Trinity Church, Gosport, from 1pm on July 16. Former archdeacon the Ven Trevor Reader will lead the service, and provincial president Nikki Sweetman will preach.

The service will be followed by a party in nearby Walpole Park from 2.30pm, weather permitting. It will involve refreshments and displays of the work of the Mothers' Union – from our diocese and worldwide.

The Mothers' Union organisation was originally created in 1876 in the vicarage at Old Alresford. There are now branches of the Mothers' Union in 83 countries.

Diocesan president the Rev Liz Groves said: "Right from the beginning, it was recognised that strong relationships and the role of the family, however defined, are crucial in building healthy communities. Today it is still our aim to support families of whatever shape or form."

Mothers' Union members from our diocese are involved in a variety of projects, including making gowns for babies in the neo-natal unit of the Queen Alexandra Hospital. They also create toiletry bags for those taken to the hospital in an emergency who have no washing kit.

Some members help at The Roberts Centre in Portsmouth, and others promote church weddings at commercial wedding fairs. Items from these projects will be on display on July 16.

Church hosts pet service

ANIMALS will be welcome at Warblington Church on July 2.

The church is hosting a pet service as part of its regular afternoons of tea and music.

Churchwarden Christopher Morrison said: "Animals and pets form a large part of a number of people's lives. It is right that we should commemorate them and what they do for us."

The tea and music is from 2pm-4.30pm, with the pet service from 3pm-3.30pm. All are welcome, with or without pets.

Cathedral displays interns' Brazil photos



Left: Beth John; above: one of her Brazil photos

OUR cathedral hosted an exhibition of powerful photos taken by Christian Aid interns in Brazil.

The images were taken by 16 interns who are each spending a year working with the charity. Among them was Beth John, 22, who is volunteering in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

They spent two weeks visiting Christian Aid partners to see the work they are doing to combat poverty in Brazil.

"It was amazing," she said. "One of my favourite things was visiting a tower block in Sao Paulo which was in a state of damp

and disrepair, with no lifts working. But that community had come together with a Christian Aid partner to petition for their right to decent housing, and the Mayor had agreed it should be redeveloped."

The group travelled all the way to the Amazon as part of their trip. The exhibition of their photos is now on tour, and is visiting Bristol, Newcastle, Chichester and London.

Beth is available to talk to churches about her experiences in Brazil and as an intern. Contact her on bjohn@christian-aid.org or 023-8070 6969.