



Left: Tim Daykin interviews High Sheriff Robin Courage; right: Jonathan Butcher conducts the Isle of Wight Symphony Orchestra

Island churches united in worship

HUNDREDS of worshippers from island churches gathered to celebrate God – and to mark Isle of Wight Day.

The Songs of Praise event was held at Cowes Enterprise College, with worshippers joining forces to sing much-loved hymns and worship songs with real gusto.

The event was led by BBC Radio Solent presenter the Rev Tim Daykin, and included contributions from Bishop Christopher and the Archdeacon of the Isle of Wight, the Ven Peter Sutton.

Musicians from the Isle of Wight Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Jonathan Butcher, helped to lead worship, alongside the Voices of the Isle of Wight Choir, conducted by Linda Filby-Borrett. And a worship band from St Paul's, Barton, also helped to lead some of the more contemporary songs.

Tim also interviewed the High Sheriff, Robin Courage, who originally had the idea to inaugurate a day to celebrate all the things that are good about the Isle of Wight.

The Ven Peter Sutton said: "It was a fabulous event, and we were really grateful to the High Sheriff for having the idea. We wanted to thank God for the Isle of Wight, and this was a great way to do it.

"I was bowled over by how quickly the 800 tickets were snapped up. And it was a real pleasure to hear hymns and songs played by such talented musicians, and sung by such a great choir. They helped to lift our spirits and inspired us to sing heartily.

"Bringing together Christians from different denominations across the Isle of Wight gives us



Worshippers from across the Isle of Wight joined forces for the Songs of Praise event

a real sense of unity – that what unites us is definitely stronger than what divides us. To sing hymns and songs together, and to pray together, reinforces that we are all part of God's mission to the one island."

Island churches were involved in Isle of Wight Day in other ways – St Mary's Church, Brighstone, held a classical music recital, St Helens Parish Church hosted a concert by Vectis Brass Band, and there was a Harvest Festival at St James, Yarmouth.

High Sheriff Robin Courage promised that the day would be repeated next year. He urged islanders to get out their bunting again for September 23, 2017.

"I have been absolutely overwhelmed by the response from the whole island community to this first Isle of Wight Day," he said. "There has been a noticeable buzz all over the island all weekend

and many thousands of islanders of every age group have really entered into the true spirit of the occasion.

"I am hugely grateful for the

generous support from island businesses, many of whom have joined together with all their staff to celebrate all that is great about this island."

Thank you for your generosity via appeal

GENEROUS worshippers helped to raise yet another amazing amount for the Bishop's Lent Appeal this year.

Fundraising that started in Lent and continued afterwards has raised £23,110 during 2016. The cash will be split between local and international charities.

The international recipient is the St Nicholas Theological Seminary in Cape Coast, Ghana, which we are linked to via our Inter-Diocesan West Africa Link (IDWAL). They will receive half the money, which will be spent on refurbishing the accommodation blocks for the ordinands training there.

The other half will be split between local charities that help people get over obstacles to learning. They include the Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association, which helps children with Down Syndrome and their carers; the Elizabeth Foundation, which supports pre-school children who are deaf; and the Beneficial Foundation, which supports adults with learning difficulties.

Other recipients include Park Families, which helps families in Leigh Park; Autism Hampshire; Storeroom2010, which recycles furniture and provides training opportunities; and the Isle of Wight Society for the Blind.

Representatives from these charities will be invited to a service at Portsmouth Cathedral on November 20 to receive their cheques.

The amount raised last year was £32,000 – a record for the Bishop's Lent Appeal.

Cathedral day on modern slavery

OUR cathedral is to host a day-long training event looking at what we can do to combat modern day slavery.

Delegates will be invited to think about what we can do to fight slavery and support victims of slavery on January 21 next year.

It comes in response to worrying statistics - human trafficking is the fastest growing crime globally, and 2014 saw a 34 per cent increase in the number of victims of slavery identified in the UK.

The speakers on the day

will include Jess Gealer, from Hampshire and the Isle of Wight Modern Slavery Partnership, Caroline Virgo, who leads the Caritas project for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth, and Kate Norman, from Barnardo's.

Other contributions will come from representatives of Hampshire Constabulary, Stop the Traffik Portsmouth, and the Church of England's new Clewer Initiative – which aims to develop the Church's mission among vulnerable and marginalised groups.

Our diocese is now a member of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Modern Slavery Partnership. It aims to implement the government's strategy, which identifies the important part that faith groups can play in supporting this initiative.

And the Rev Edwina Fennemore, from St Alban's Church, West Leigh, has been appointed as our liaison lead for modern slavery.

For more details and to book a place for the day, see: www.portsmouth.anglican.org/modernslavery.