



Diocese of Portsmouth

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Parish news from north of Petersfield to the Isle of Wight

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Training day aims to help us develop parish groups to offer healing prayer

HELP OTHERS KNOW THAT GOD CAN HEAL

FIND out more about our God who heals, and how to pray for others, at a day-long conference.

Our diocese is holding a Healing Day at Portsmouth Cathedral for all those interested in Christian healing.

It's designed to offer us inspiration, encouragement and spiritual renewal to help us to pray for others in our parishes who need physical, emotional or spiritual healing.

The Diocesan Healing Day, on Saturday 18 November, includes a keynote address, a series of five seminars to choose from, and will end with a healing service led by Bishop Christopher. It happens from 9.30am to 3.30pm, and delegates can choose to attend two of the five hour-long seminars.



The opening talk is by the Rev John Ryeland, director of the Christian Healing Mission in London (pictured above). He'll follow this up in a seminar offering a different approach to prayer ministry, emphasising encounter with Jesus as an important aspect of healing.

The Rev Russ Parker, former director of the Acorn Christian Healing Foundation, will lead a seminar looking at how internal church conflict can damage us, and what we can do about it.

Acorn's chaplain, the Rev Elizabeth Knifton, who is also healing adviser for Guildford diocese, will lead a seminar on deeper healing of past hurts and emotions.

Diana Dow, a Reader from Alverstoke and a member of the diocesan healing team, will lead a seminar on how to develop a prayer ministry team in your parish.

And our diocese's healing adviser, retired GP Dr David Pearson, will lead a seminar looking at how Christian healing and medicine relate to each other.

He said: "Although we know that God does heal people, many of our churches don't have regular opportunities to offer prayer for healing. We hope the day inspires parishes to consider setting up teams who can offer that kind of regular prayer during or after Sunday services.

"My hope is that many will want to engage with the training we're offering in prayer ministry, especially the diocesan 'Growing a Healing Ministry' course due to start in January.

"As there can be apprehension about praying for healing, how it relates to medical cures, and how exactly someone should be prayed for, we want to explore those issues.

"Those already engaged in prayer ministry can be refreshed, inspired and encouraged, as well as learning something new. Those in the medical and allied professions should also benefit from the day.

"There's also a chance to receive prayer ministry for any kind of need during our healing service."

Book your place on www.portsmouth.anglican.org/healing. It costs £12 (£10 before October 27).



Members of the prayer ministry team praying for healing at St Mary's, Alverstoke

Parish teams can pray for you

IF you need healing prayer at the end of Sunday services in St Mary's Church, Alverstoke, someone will be there to help.

At least two fully-trained people from the prayer ministry team are always on hand to talk and pray through any problems, and are happy to pray for God's healing.

Reader Diana Dow, who leads the 12-strong team, said: "People can share their physical problems, family difficulties or whatever, and we'll help them to encounter God.

"We've all been on a six-week Growing Healing

Ministry course, approved by the rector for this, and are accountable to the clergy."

Anyone who is in pain would be made comfortable and asked to explain the problem. Those praying would then wait for the Holy Spirit to speak, which might reveal some insight into the condition.

Then they might gently stretch out their hands towards the person being prayed for and ask God to intervene. Sometimes some other emotional or spiritual need might come to light as a result.

Prayer ministry team member Liz Sykes-Little said: "I had toothache, Mandy prayed for me and the pain from the infection went away until the tooth came out. Other people have been healed of aches and pains.

"My own spiritual growth has been exponential. I didn't even know how to pray before taking the course."

And Sarah Savery said: "It's part of our natural reserve not to want to be prayed for, but we need to learn to minister to each other. It's so natural - it's just talking to God."