

# We'll be serving our local families

**WORSHIPPERS** have opened a new pre-school to help cope with demand for nursery places in Liphook.

The Ark Pre-School has been created within Liphook Church Centre to cater for 24 children aged between two and four.

The church responded to the needs of the local community after it was approached by council officials concerned about a shortage of nursery places within the village.

Worshippers helped to convert spare office and storage space into a fully-functioning pre-school, and bought new furniture, toys, books and play equipment. Space outside the pre-school has been landscaped so children can play there too.

Mum-of-four Helen Jackson, who used to be the church's children's worker and before that was a primary school teacher, was appointed as its manager. She is now leading an eight-strong team who will work with the children, initially between 9am and 3.45pm each weekday.

"The church has been amazing, because it was their vision to start this up," she said. "Although there are already two good nurseries in the village, the government's new policy of 30 free hours a week for pre-school children meant that more places were needed.

"At a vision day, a couple of people had the idea of us creating a pre-school, and then East Hampshire District Council approached us to see if we could provide one on our premises.

"One of our churchwardens, Paul Arnold, reconfigured the space, knocking together offices and storage space to create one large area.

"The church also bought this new furniture which has helped us to divide the space into a quiet area, a role-playing area, a reading area and so on.

"All the staff team here are highly-qualified, with backgrounds in teaching or early-years education. And it will have an openly Christian ethos – exploring the themes in the curriculum from a Christian point of view. So the theme 'I am special' will become 'I am uniquely created by God'.

"It has been a really exciting



**Helen Jackson in the Ark Pre-School at Liphook Church Centre**

journey for everyone involved, and it's a real privilege to be able to serve the community and build up new relationships with families."

On occasions, the pre-school will be able to use the neighbouring church and chapel areas, and families can be invited to church events. The children may even be able to mix with those of different generations who attend the regular Tea and Company events.

For more details, see: [www.thearkliphook.co.uk](http://www.thearkliphook.co.uk)



## Event will help you to explore praying

HAVE you been praying for years, but are looking for new ways to pray? Or perhaps you've never tried it before?

You might enjoy Cre8tive Prayer, which is being launched at Church of the Resurrection in Drayton this month.

Cre8tive Prayer is a space to explore different ways of praying to God. Each session is based on a Biblical theme. It all starts on October 15, from 4pm-6pm, and continues on the third Sunday of each month, except August and December.

Each session begins with soup and bread and drinks. The theme is then introduced – the theme for the first session is 'Love'.

There'll be different ways to explore the theme through prayer, including Lego, adult colouring, candles, silence, discussion, arts and crafts, imaginative prayer and Lectio Divina – a traditional Benedictine way of meditating on Scripture, updated here by using an MP3 player.

Student minister Julie Minter said: "Come and go as you please and take part in as many or as few activities as you like.

"Prayer can seem quite scary. We can worry that we're not saying the right words, adopting the right body position etc, but praying in its most basic form is spending time with God.

"The hope is that Cre8ive Prayer will enable people to explore different ways of praying. Some may work for them and others may not."

## Sunday afternoon services to be launched

**WORSHIPPERS** are to relaunch Sunday worship in a Portsmouth parish with services in the afternoons.

A team from St Jude's Church in Southsea have been holding midweek meetings in St Margaret's church hall in Eastney for several months.

And on October 8, they will offer their first Sunday service at 4pm, aiming to attract those who live nearby.

The informal services will take place in the church hall, meeting as 'St Margaret's Community Church' as they try to serve the community



**The team at St Margaret's Community Church, Eastney around their Highland Road location.**

It will be the first time the hall has hosted Sunday worship since December 2015, and the Archdeacon of

Portsdown, the Ven Joanne Grenfell, will be there.

Fran Carabott, who is leading the team on behalf of St Jude's, said: "This will be an exciting moment for us. We

have been praying for those who live nearby and looking for ways to serve them.

"We've had a couple of open days which has given us a chance to meet people. We've chatted to people as we've done gardening outside the hall, and we've knocked on some doors.

"Lots of people said they were delighted that we would be opening the building again and offering them the chance to worship locally. We've chosen Sunday afternoons because we hope it will be more convenient for people."