

## Synod to hear our response to strategy

EACH parish and deanery will be asked for their response to our diocese's 'live pray serve' strategy.

Our Diocesan Synod agreed that our parishes and deaneries would be asked formally for their contributions towards our plans for church growth.

Their responses will help our central diocesan team to work out what support each parish and deanery will need for those things to happen.

Measures to evaluate what has happened will also be identified – how will we know that we are on the right track, and what do we do if we're not?

Synod members spent two hours last month thinking about our 'live pray serve' strategy, which aims to inspire church growth and deepening discipleship. They heard four concrete examples of how the four elements of our strategy were making a difference on the ground.

The Rev Mike Pye talked about a project to promote cooking among older men at All Saints Church, Portsmouth, which was helping them with key skills and social opportunities, as an example of 'Transforming Society'. The Ven Peter Sutton highlighted how the creation of a team ministry between the six parishes in the Bay was already encouraging 'Growing Churches'.

The Rev Max Cross, from Sheet, spoke about how his church was 'Making Disciples' and the Rev Paul Gully addressed 'Learning for Life' in the context of projects in Farlington parish.

For details, see [www.portsmouth.anglican.org/liveprayserve](http://www.portsmouth.anglican.org/liveprayserve).

# Royal tribute to our Navy women

## A PACKED cathedral paid tribute to 100 years of women in the Royal Navy.

HRH Princess Anne was the guest of honour at a thanksgiving service in Portsmouth Cathedral to mark the centenary of the Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS).

She also unveiled a commemorative stone outside the cathedral's west door, which will become a permanent feature of the cathedral landscape. It marks both 100 years since the formation of the WRNS and celebrates women's service in the Royal Navy.

Former members of the WRNS – known as Wrens – and serving naval personnel packed the cathedral for the service, which included a reading from the gospel of Matthew by HRH Princess Anne.

Stories about and quotes by former members of the WRNS were read during the service. A Book of Remembrance, listing the names of women who died serving their country, was presented. And prayers were also led by former members of the WRNS, interspersed with sung liturgy created by the Iona Community.

The Chaplain of the Fleet, the Ven Ian Wheatley, preached the sermon, talking about how women have enriched and enhanced the work of the Royal Navy, using the Biblical metaphor of salt enhancing the flavour of food.

"I can't help but be struck by the resonance of the Biblical image," he said. "All the reports say how women have been as



Top: HRH Princess Anne examines the commemorative stone with the First Sea Lord; below: meeting cathedral clergy

good as their male counterparts, and not infrequently better. You have been salt and light in so many different ways and we want to give thanks for your service and the positive effect you have had on the Naval Service."

After the service, HRH Princess Anne was led outside to the commemorative stone by the dean, the Very Rev David Brindley.

She removed the white ensign to reveal the single block of Purbeck stone, which had been engraved to mark the centenary. It was then dedicated by the Chaplain of the Fleet, and the Bishop to HM Forces, the Rt Rev Tim Thornton.

The commemorative stone had been created by stonemason Robyn Golden-Hann in her studio in rural Hampshire. It also features carvings of caps and hats worn by former Wrens and serving naval

officers over the years.

The WRNS was originally created in 1917, when the Royal Navy decided to employ women to fulfil shore-based jobs to "free a man for the sea". When peace was declared in 1919, the service was disbanded.

However, with war imminent in 1938, the service was reformed and the role of women in the Royal Navy was expanded. In 1949, because of their outstanding service, the WRNS became permanently established. By 1993, the WRNS was becoming increasingly integrated with the Royal Navy. The service was therefore disbanded and all the women transferred into the Royal Navy.

HRH the Princess Royal is Chief Commandant for Women in the Royal Navy, and patron of the Association of Wrens.

## EX-WRENS INSPIRED

"It was a great privilege to be asked to lead some of the prayers at the Wrens 100 service in Portsmouth Cathedral, where I was ordained in 2008.

"I attended this wonderful service not only carrying my own memories but also those of my late mother, Gwen, who served as a Wren during the Second World War.

"I found the readings that were included in the service very moving, and the music was glorious - it was such a joy to hear so many voices lifted in praise and worship. It was a special service that I will remember for a long time."

**The Rev Alison Bennett (WRNS 1984-2006, former curate at Liphook & Bramshott)**

"THE mix of readings and memories from the century brought laughter and smiles throughout whilst the choir excelled with their singing of Psalm 46 and Chaplain of the Fleet Ian Wheatley gave a thought provoking sermon. To be introduced and to talk with HRH afterwards was a delight.

"The commemorative stone is an imposing and beautifully carved memorial. Our Cathedral of the Sea is certainly the right location for it. I was there on the Monday following the service and several groups of women were still there taking photos."

**Canon Sue Rodgers (WRNS 1971-79, Cathedral Lay Canon)**

## Coming soon...

Our new quarterly magazine will be available in parishes and some church schools from early 2018. It will combine some of the best features from the *Pompey Chimes* with more reflective writing. You'll find more topical news, details of forthcoming events and the best photos on our diocesan website - [www.portsmouth.anglican.org](http://www.portsmouth.anglican.org)

