

launched after Easter at **Holy Trinity Church, Bembridge**.

‘Breathe’ is the name they are giving to this regular evening meeting in the Cloisters. It will be open to all - wherever they are, or aren’t, with God. There’s space for the broken and hurting as well as the clean and tidy, and those turning to spiritualism, tarot and similar systems because they know there is a spiritual side to life but don’t see it in the Church.

It will be set up as a safe place, a sanctuary from everything else in our busy lives - a time out to breathe and receive from God. A few tables and chairs, big bean bags, cushions and candles will be scattered around, plus soft drinks, good coffee, good cake and snacks.

The evening will be introduced and closed in Christian prayer, and spent in the presence of God. There will be gentle, carefully curated worship videos and music, with an openness to the Holy Spirit moving and ministering among people.

There will be no preaching, no pressure to do anything - just space to be. Prayer ministry will be available throughout.

There will also be opportunities for creativity, reflecting our Creator God - with artist friends, believers and not, listening and painting prophetically what they’re seeing and hearing.

‘Breathe’ is being organised by worshippers Nick Callaghan and Margaret Jones and follows on from the Alpha course they are currently running at Holy Trinity, which 40 people signed up for alongside 20 helpers.

Nick said: “We hope Breathe will help many to engage spiritually - with the Holy Spirit - and to

Bacon butties prompt our families to come

MANY Fresh Expressions involve people eating some kind of food - as a shared meal is often a good basis for creating a community.

That’s certainly the case at St James Church, Emsworth, where a monthly Breakfast Church has been running for a number of years.

Offering people free bacon sandwiches is also a way of showing newcomers generous hospitality.

Around 80 people regularly attend Breakfast Church, which happens from 10am on the second Sunday of each month, in St James’ church hall.

Bacon butties, toast and great coffee are all available, and families sit around tables in a cafe church-style format.

There’s a worship band who will lead some lively songs, which anyone can join in. And then there’s a short, all-age talk which leads on to questions for discussion at each table.

For some of the time, there are some interactive activities for smaller children in another room.

The rector, the Rev Andrew Sheard, said: “Breakfast Church is going from strength to strength. The age range is

from zero to those over 90, so it is genuinely inter-generational.

“We do get some regulars who don’t go to any other service, so it is reaching out to those who are otherwise unchurched. Some of those who attend also come to more traditional church services on other Sundays too.”

Breakfast Church started just over four years ago. It’s now led by the parish’s new pioneer minister Jo Northey, who aims to attract more families to attend.

Like other Fresh Expressions, there is no expectation that those who attend will ‘graduate’ to other services - this is their worship.



Breakfast Church in full swing at St James church hall



Fresh Expressions often encourage creative approaches to spirituality

meet Jesus, maybe with some tears and laughter, as lives are changed.”

There will be no preaching, no pressure, just space to be

Nick and Margaret have been running another Fresh Expression at Holy Trinity for two years now. ‘Church on Tuesday’ is an evening meeting seeking to address a perceived need for an alternative approach to being and doing church locally. Its flexible format

includes worship, prayer, Scripture, teaching and the chance to share stories of what God has been doing during the week.

It’s likely that Breathe will meet twice a month, alternating with regular Church on Tuesday. If you’re interested, please contact Nick on 01983 213006 or nick@callaghanproperty.com

For details of Fresh Expressions throughout our diocese, see www.portsmouth.anglican.org/freshexpressions. For help in setting up a Fresh Expression in your church, see www.freshexpressions.org.uk

Learning can be easier if we talk together

ONE thing that unites many active Fresh Expressions these days is the lack of a sermon.

The Moot in Shorwell is one example of a regular worship activity that takes a more active approach to learning. The monthly get-together usually involves 30 minutes of refreshments and chat, followed by 30 minutes of informal worship.

Adults and children sit together around tables in the middle of Shorwell Village Hall. That makes it easier for the speaker to ask people to discuss issues around their table and say what they think.

The Moot - which is an old English word for a chat - also features informal worship, using keyboard, flute, clarinet and guitar, and some prayers.

It began four years ago, as a way of engaging with Shorwell villagers on Sundays when there wasn’t a service at St Peter’s Church. It now attracts between 20 and 40 people of all ages every third Sunday of the month.

Reader Peter Johnson, who currently leads the gatherings, said: “I’m a teacher, so although I like lectures, I know that if you



It’s often easier to discuss issues properly when you’re sat around tables

want to engage people, sermons aren’t always the best way to do it. We might introduce a topic and then ask people to say what they think, or to chat in groups.

“People appear to be far more comfortable with that way of engaging, and they’ll often say that they’ve learnt more through discussion and reflection than by just listening. They’ve got more ownership of what they are learning.

“Several people from Brighstone help with the music, and we now project the words

onto a screen. Not everyone who normally goes to church in Shorwell is there, but several people who wouldn’t normally go to church do come.

“It has become a separate congregation, and we’ve had three baptisms from within that group. It’s also the case that adults and children are learning together - the children don’t get sent out elsewhere. I think that’s healthy.”

The Moot will next meet on March 17 in Shorwell Village Hall from 10.30am-11.30am.