

New service planned in Paulsgrove

THE appointment of a new children and families worker will pave the way for St Michael's Paulsgrove to reach out even further into the community.

The church wants to bring together new congregations worshipping in new ways, not least through a new all-age service.

Clare Hudson has taken on this role from September as part of a five-year strategic plan to revitalise St Michael's Church, with strategic funding to enhance its buildings and develop its work with young people and families.

Among the plans for the church is a new all-age service at St Michael's, to attract children, young people and families. Clare will be part of the ministry team organising these services.

She is married with two adult sons, and her late father, the Rev Chris Finch, was vicar at Holy Trinity Church, Fareham.



She said: "I was basically brought up in the Church, which has given me a sense of service alongside faith. At the moment I am a childminder, working with families and children from all over Portsmouth and Gosport.

"The experience I've got from childminding alongside the work

I do with children at All Saints, I think will help me in this new role."

Among the initiatives already well underway at St Michael's is Choir Church, which involves pupils from local schools meeting at the church each week to sing together, eat together, be together - and start to learn about what faith



Above: Clare Hudson; left: the Rev Hugo Deadman at St Michael's, Paulsgrove

might mean to them and how they might live it out.

This project is part of our diocese's rejuvenate strategy, which has been supported by strategic funding from the national Church of England.

That funding will pay for Clare to be part of a growing ministry team that includes the Rev Hugo Deadman as vicar, and the Rev Connie Sherman as a House for Duty associate priest. Connie will also remain as a hospital chaplain.

ministry development year. Over the past 12 months, four young adults from the USA have served the church in children and youth work, IT support and social justice.

Married couple Cody and Ashton Wood have led this group, and are looking forward to welcoming a second set of interns from this September until next July. One of last year's interns, 19-year-old Joseph Sosebee, was involved with the church's social justice programme, which includes its work to help women in refuges who have suffered from sex trafficking or domestic abuse.

"I've discovered that my passion is to help people who can't easily help themselves, and it's amazing to be involved in this kind of thing on the Isle of Wight," he said. "The more I'm involved, the more I realise that I feel called to do this."

The strategic approach to ministry in Ryde aims for the five C of E churches - All Saints, St John's

and St Michael's in Ryde itself, plus St Peter's, Havenstreet and Holy Cross, Binstead - to work together to provide a range of worshipping styles, as well as serving the local community more effectively.

Within five years, it's hoped that these churches would be able to plant new worshipping communities elsewhere on the island, to complement mission initiatives elsewhere. Find out more on www.ryde.church

Meanwhile, **Newport Minster** aims to pioneer a new contemporary congregation for young families between 9am and 10am each Sunday. It is also planning a new evening service to begin in the minster this October to build on the impetus of the building's refurbishment.

A brand new all-age contemporary service will also begin at **St Alban's Church in Copnor**, at 10am on September 14. Called 'The Ten', it restores a dedicated service to the

church after the appointment of the Rev Katherine Message as team vicar for Harbour Church based in Copnor.

"We used to have The Four, which was a service for families on Sunday afternoons, but we weren't able to continue that and we were asking families to go all the way to St George's, Portsea," she said. "This means we can build on that work with local families who will form the basis of this new congregation."

And the aim is to start a new congregation at **All Saints Church in Portsmouth** as well, after the appointment of the Rev Alex Coakley-Youngs (pictured above) as team vicar for Harbour Church



based there. It is likely to be fully launched in January 2026, once refurbishment work including new flooring, heating and plastering has been completed.

Before then, those who are interested will gather for prayer walks on Sunday mornings after the traditional service at 9.30am, while the existing monthly family services will continue.

Alex said: "Our strategy is to reach out to those who live and study near to the church. We've nearly reached the 200th anniversary of the church, so it would be good to re-commission ourselves to this new work, while honouring the past.

"I'd actually like those who create the new congregation to be part of our 9.30am traditional service first, so they know something of our heritage before we start a new 11am service."



The Rev Fran Carabott will move to Cosham and Wymering

Church-planter aims to grow new parish

HE has already led a church plant that developed into a thriving congregation - now he hopes to do the same elsewhere in the city.

Bishop Jonathan has appointed the Rev Fran Carabott as a vicar with experience of church-planting to enlarge the congregations in Cosham and Wymering.

He has led St Margaret's Church, Southsea, for the past eight years, first as a lay pioneer, then as an ordained minister. It was originally re-opened in 2017 with 12 worshippers from a nearby church - now more than 100 people worship there each week and it hosts many more during the week in its Pantry, community café and soft play area.

Fran will bring this experience of building new Christian communities to St Philip's Church in Cosham and St Peter and St Paul, Wymering. He'll also bring a handful of the St Margaret's congregation to launch a new worshipping community in St Philip's.

St Philip's, Cosham, and St Peter and St Paul, Wymering, have experience of reaching into their local communities via pioneer ministry, the Cosham Larder and monthly fireside gatherings, developed under

the previous vicar, the Rev Amy Webb, who has moved to Surrey.

Fran said: "I'm thrilled to be moving to a place where the congregation members have already had experience of doing things in a different way - they are already pioneers in their local communities, and that's what we want to do more of.

"We just want to share the good news about Jesus with those who live in this area, and it's so much easier to do that when the local church already has a good reputation for engaging with those who live there."

Bishop Jonathan will licence Fran as vicar at 6pm on September 24.

Meanwhile, the bishop has appointed the Rev Dan Greenfield, now associate vicar at Crofton parish, to be the next vicar at St Margaret's, Southsea. He will be licensed on October 23, and his wife Jude will also step down as rector of Rowner.

Dan said: "I am excited to step into this new season of ministry in a different context.

"Fran and the team at St Margaret's have done incredible work to pioneer a new congregation alongside refurbishing and developing the building to become a hub and safe space for the local community."