

Young singers perform for parents in Choir Church showcase event

IT was a proud moment for parents as they watched their children singing in the cavernous nave of St Mary's Church in Fratton.

It was the latest performance by the singers in 'Finding My Voice' - a group which brings together 12 pupils from Pembridge Junior School and 12 from Arundel Court Primary in Portsmouth.

They sang songs with a Christian theme, including an original work based on Psalms by director of music Brian Moles, as well as secular songs - all on the theme of journeying and discovering.

There were also creative activities involving Lego and Post-It notes to help children pray and reflect.

This is just one of our examples of Choir Church, where we bring together groups of children from local schools and give them a chance to perform in church. This may ultimately form the basis of a new congregation.

The Rev Julie Jackson, assistant priest at St Luke's, Southsea, goes into each school with Brian Moles once a week to rehearse. It's an extra-curricular club that meets after the school day.

They sing songs around a different theme each term and round it off with an end-of-term performance with parents.

Julie said: "Some of the songs we sing communicate important truths about faith or about life. And we hope some children will consider being part of church choirs as a result. But even if they don't, we know they'll have had an exciting opportunity to learn what it's like to be centre stage."

Among the parents watching



Top: children from the 'Finding My Voice' choir singing within St Mary's Church, Fratton; below: director of music Brian Moles plays piano for the choir

their children performing was Nikki Coles, whose daughter Darcy, aged 8, goes to Pembridge Junior.

Nikki said: "She actually suffers from anxiety, so the singing and the activities they do are helping to build her confidence. She wouldn't have done anything like this a few years ago."

And Claire Peachey-Sigsworth,

whose son Oliver, aged 9, is part of the choir, said: "He enjoys it because if someone has had a bad day, it cheers them up, and they can talk about any issues they are going through."

"He has always enjoyed performing, and this will give him more confidence to perform."

For more details about Choir Church, see: www.portsmouth.anglican.org/choirchurch