

# Artwork is in memory of faithful pair

**ARTIST Mel Howse has designed a stunning piece of art in memory of two faithful worshippers.**

The reredos she has created was installed in St Cuthbert's Church in Copnor in memory of Bob and Mary Hankers. It fills the aperture where the old main doors used to be, which is now behind the altar.

It's the third piece of artwork designed by Mel in the Portsmouth church. She also created the font and the mosaic on which the font stands. It was unveiled by the family of Bob and Mary Hankers on Easter Sunday.

The vicar, the Rev David Power, said: "Mel has gained

considerable stature in the art world, having recently won a competition to install a very large stained glass window in Durham Cathedral. To have three pieces of art designed by her in a urban parish church is really quite exceptional, and we feel greatly privileged to have them.

"Bob was a long-serving churchwarden, an even longer-serving altar server, and did huge amounts in connection with all parish events, including countless fundraising occasions. He died in 2010.

"Mary was also deeply involved in parish events, producing vast quantities of jam, marmalade and pickles over several decades. She passed away in 2014.

"They were faithful

worshippers here and supportive of the major changes which have taken place at St Cuthbert's. They were both people of firm faith and great grace, and made a massive contribution to the worship and ministry of the parish throughout their lives.

"In former years, Bob served in the Royal Navy, and then joined Mary in the teaching profession. We are glad to have this major piece of art in their memory, and thank Bob and Mary's family for generously supporting the project."

St Cuthbert's is open from 8am-4pm every weekday, and on Sunday mornings, so that visitors can see the artwork. Its £4.5m redevelopment, which created a GPs' surgery and community rooms inside the 1915 building, meant its new worship area faces the church's original west doors.



**Above: Artist Mel Howse with the Rev David Power and the reredos in St Cuthbert's Church; right: Mary and Bob Hankers**



## Pray for God's kingdom

IN his ministry, Jesus went about, it says in the gospels, preaching the Kingdom.

"The kingdom of heaven is at hand," he said – meaning, within reach, graspable. He taught his followers to pray "thy kingdom come" and talked about "the good news of the kingdom".

He told stories about mustard seeds, lost sheep and coins and prodigal sons, all to help his hearers – and us – grasp the idea of what it might be like to live in a godly way and bring in the godly society we call the Kingdom.

He encourages them and us to help to establish it in the here and now.

And that's still what he's calling us to do. As we all know, being specific about what that means in the day to day of our lives can prove a challenge.

That's why I'm delighted that the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have



## the last word

**by Bishop Christopher**

encouraged us again this year to pray a part of their 'Thy Kingdom Come' movement of prayer.

Last year, this involved 100,000 people: this year it aims to be a worldwide ecumenical movement to prompt even more people to pray for others to know the love of Jesus through the building of more just, compassionate and godly communities.

That's why I'll be in our cathedral on Saturday 20 May from 11am-4pm as part

of a day-long vigil at the start of this year's wave of prayer between Ascension and Pentecost.

I'm inviting parishes and individuals to call in for a few minutes during the day, to let me know personally what your plans are for 'Thy Kingdom Come'.

Please join me in prayer for the coming of God's kingdom for our friends, our families and our neighbours – anyone who doesn't yet know the difference Jesus can make to our lives and our world.