

Your chance to star on TV show

UP to 1,000 worshippers will pack Portsmouth Cathedral for two nights of recording for the BBC's *Songs of Praise*.

Two separate programmes will be filmed at the cathedral in the same week - one to be broadcast on Remembrance Sunday and the other some time next year.

The first recording, between 7.30pm and 10.30pm on Wednesday 22 October, will be an ecumenical occasion when the cathedral will welcome Christians from more than 50 churches of all denominations around the city.

Producers want to capture the vibrancy and diversity of worship in our churches and will record the congregation singing three modern worship songs as well as three traditional hymns. Professional musicians will form an accomplished band for the event and worship leader Noel Tredinnick will conduct the music.

The BBC team is encouraging people of all ages to attend. Those who do so also need to be at a full rehearsal of the record-

Songs of Praise

ing between 7.30pm and 10.30pm on Tuesday 21 October.

Anyone who loves singing can join a choir that will be created specially for the occasion. It will rehearse on Monday 13 October from 7pm-10pm at St George's Church, Portsea.

The edition of *Songs of Praise* to be broadcast on Remembrance Day will be filmed on Thursday 23 October. The congregation will include representatives from the army, navy, air force and marines, as well as veterans' organisations and civilians with military links. It will be presented by Pam Rhodes and include music from the Royal Marines Band.

Both programmes will also include interviews with committed Christians who have interesting stories to tell about how

their faith is affecting their lives.

Assistant producer Joanna Malton said: "We want to fill the cathedral for both recordings. And we're looking for Christians with good personalities and communication skills who can talk about the relevance of their Christian faith.

"*Songs of Praise* is a terrific opportunity for Christians to communicate the reality of their faith to a largely unchurched TV audience of around four million people."

Churches of all denominations around Portsmouth should have received letters from the BBC inviting them to take part. Each should also have lists available at the back of church on which people can sign up to reserve tickets for the recordings or to volunteer for the choir.

Those who would like to be interviewed about their faith can write to: *Songs of Praise*, Room 5012, New Broadcasting House, PO Box 27, Oxford Road, Manchester, M60 1SJ.

Bishop joins calls for time of reflection

BISHOP Kenneth joined calls for a period of calm in the Church after the withdrawal of Canon Jeffrey John from his appointment as the Bishop of Reading.

He praised the honesty and integrity of Jeffrey John, who decided not to take up his appointment amid controversy over his homosexual lifestyle.

"His decision to withdraw from the appointment reveals deep moral courage and reflects his consistent regard for the well-being of the wider Church," he said. "We must now pray that he be given strength and encouragement to continue his much-valued min-

istry in Southwark and opportunity to use his considerable gifts in the service of the gospel.

"This raises questions about how the Church handles senior appointments, and we need time and space to reflect and learn lessons for the future. I fully support the Archbishop's determination to nurture a sincere respect for difference within a common search for unity and truth.

"Most importantly, the Church must not allow questions about sex to distract it from the crucial task of reaching out to those who are vulnerable and marginalised in our society."

Girls' groups help out

A SANDOWN guides and brownies group have donated proceeds from the sale of their hall to help re-develop an Isle of Wight church.

When their meeting hall was deemed unsafe and had to be demolished, the 4th Sandown Brownies and Guides re-located to an annexe in St John's Church and promised £35,000 from the sale of the land towards a new extension.

It meant returning to the church where they were founded 82 years ago!

The extension at St John's, Sandown, is part of a £115,000 project, which will include a new hall, toilets and disabled facilities.

The hall will also be used by a pre-school nursery, for social gatherings and local community groups - and, hopefully, children's



The Rev Howard Cunnington makes a start on the extension work

Sunday groups. Work started in July.

The church received £70,000 in lottery cash from the Community Fund, and donations from the community mean that less than £7,000 is still required.

The former Archdeacon of the Isle of Wight, the Ven

Mervyn Banting, said: "The church has a problem, but it is a 'good' problem! So many people want to use their buildings that there isn't room. That is very good news."

The Rev Howard Cunnington, vicar of Christ Church and St John's, said: "Thanks

to the guides and the close partnership with others in the community, we expect this work to be completed by the end of September."

Anyone who would like to make a donation to the scheme should contact John Rowe on 01983-402319.

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