

## Fred helps launch appeal

WORSHIPPERS at a church near Bishop's Waltham are right behind their local school's re-development.

In fact, they think it's so important they have promised to add 10 per cent to all personal donations given to the school's appeal fund.

The PCC at St Barnabas' Church, Swanmore, made their offer as Swanmore C of E Primary School launched an appeal - entitled 'Building On Success' - for

£200,000 to help build an extension.

That £200,000 will be the school governors' contribution to a £2m development that includes five new classrooms, a new computer suite, a purpose-built music and drama room, changing rooms, a staff room and new school entrance.

The vicar, the Rev Peter Kelly, said: "We enjoy very close ties with the school and we are delighted to support the appeal. The governors are keen to involve the

whole community in this project and the PCC are determined to do their bit."

Meridian TV's Fred Dinenage turned up to help launch the appeal. He launched rockets made by the children into the air as part of the school's launch for 'SPACE' - Swanmore Primary Appeal for Classroom Extension - day last month.

Staff and pupils dressed as aliens and astronauts as the school embraced the space theme.



Meridian TV's Fred Dinenage launches rockets made by children at Swanmore Primary School as part of their launch for 'SPACE' day

## Pompey Churches

DEADLINE FOR FEBRUARY EDITION: Monday 5 January

AVAILABLE FOR PARISH REPRESENTATIVES TO COLLECT FROM DEANERY DEPOTS: Thursday 22 January

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CONTACTS: EDITORIAL: Neil Pugmire, Cathedral House, St Thomas's Street, Portsmouth, PO1 2HA. (023-9282 5731 or communications@portsmouth.anglican.org)

ADVERTISING: Les Walters, Cornerstone Vision, 28 Old Park Road, Pevensey, Plymouth, PL3 4PY (01752-225623)

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PHOTOGRAPHY: Pete Langdown David Lawrence

# Diocese responds to clergy shortage

## Reassurance over 'closure' claims

GOSPORT worshippers have been reassured over claims that three churches in the town could be closed.

The Ven Peter Hancock, the Archdeacon of the Meon, said no decision had yet been taken over whether Christ Church, St Faith's and St Francis' Churches should close, as reported in *The News*.

Although clergy had drawn up suggestions as to how church life within the deanery could be reorganised, those ideas had not been discussed by Gosport's deanery synod.

And any such plans would also be looked at as part of the strategic review of our diocese, which will be launched across the diocese next year. Lay involvement in that

process will be crucial.

Mr Hancock said: "At the moment, this is one idea that has been put forward. It's important that all are invited to say what they think about these issues.

"Churchgoers should also know that no decisions will be taken in isolation from the bishop's strategic review of the whole diocese, which will be taking place throughout 2004 and 2005.

"*The News* has suggested that the Rev Anne Gordon will leave Christ Church in August 2004, and at that point the church might close.

"We will only just have launched our strategic review in Gosport at that point, and it is too early to take any such decisions."

## OUR diocese has agreed to limit the number of clergy it will employ in future - because of a national shortage of ministers.

Diocesan synod has agreed to comply with national plans that could see 20 fewer clergy posts available around our diocese by 2015. But it welcomed suggestions that reducing the number of clergy could open the doors for new models of parish ministry.

The national Church has predicted the future shortage of stipendiary clergy by calculating the number of clergy being trained, those in service and those retiring.

It has told each diocese how many clergy it should employ. Our predicted figure for 2015 is 105.

Because our diocese can still afford to pay for all 133.5 clergy posts it now has available, it could ignore this allocation.

But synod members were told that

doing so would deprive the Church of ordained ministers elsewhere in the country.

Andrew Robinson, secretary to the Board of Ministry, said: "The reduction in our allocation is not for financial reasons. It is because not enough people are coming forward to be ordained as clergy.

"There is a moral decision for us here. We have no problem in recruiting people to come to the south coast. But if we do so, inner-city parishes in northern dioceses will find it much harder to find clergy. We therefore need to act responsibly in the context of the whole Church."

The synod agreed that the Board of Ministry and the strategic review group should work together to make best use of the clergy to be employed in future - alongside the valuable work already done by unpaid clergy, retired clergy and lay ministers.

There was applause from synod members when the outgoing chairman of the Board of Finance, Peter Lowater, said: "If there aren't those numbers coming forward to offer themselves for stipendiary ordained ministry, maybe God is telling us something about the future shape of the Church."

The Rev Matthew Holland, vicar of St Simon's Church, Southsea, said: "In some places we will be able to employ more youth workers, more evangelists and others who are not ordained, using the money that we would have spent on clergy."

And the diocese's vocations group chairman, the Rev Peter Kelly, agreed, saying: "It would be wrong to put all our eggs into the basket of stipendiary clergy. This gives us the chance to plan for the future about how we use all our ministry resources."

## Two dozen confirmed at Brading service

BISHOP Kenneth baptised and confirmed two dozen candidates at a service at St Mary's Church, Brading last month.

Ten of them were from Brading - Louise Barnard, Annie and Jacob Brooks, Jessica Hirst, Emma Price, Adele and Sherena Jackson, Alexandrina and Christine Roman, and Peter Wheeler.

Among the other candidates were Helena

Bartholomew, Aimee-Louise Kew, Laurence Knowlson and Katherine Littlewort from Holy Trinity, Bembridge; Derek and Zed Attridge and Andrea Holton from Freshwater; Christopher Cook, Angela Rackett, Lauren Sheaf and Sam Tilbury from St John's, Ryde; and Scarlett Bax from St John the Baptist, Yaverland. Four of them were also baptised.



Bishop Kenneth with baptism and confirmation candidates from across the Isle of Wight at St Mary's Church, Brading