

Pilgrim people take step into unknown

WORK is now starting on an ambitious project to transform a Portsmouth church – while churchgoers worship in a local school.

The innovative £3.3m scheme at St Cuthbert's Church, Copnor, will see its vast interior split into a GPs' surgery, community rooms, and a new worship space for 200 people. The building will then be used by local residents seven days a week.

Although the planning for this project happened before the launch of the Kairos process, it echoes many of the principles behind it. That includes working in partnership with other agencies, transforming buildings from high-maintenance burdens to mission opportunities, and providing much-needed facilities for the community.

Building contractors started work once the final service had been held in the original 1915 building. The service began in the church, and involved the congregation leaving halfway through and the keys being handed over to the scheme's architect, Nick Lee Evans.

The congregation then processed to Langstone Junior School in Lakeside Avenue, which will be their base while building work continues. Headteacher Ilza Rudgley greeted the congregation and the



Communion service continued in the school hall.

The vicar, the Rev David Power, told the congregation in his sermon: "In a time of great uncertainty, the future will be created by those who are willing to be insecure. It isn't easy, but in the Kingdom of God it is those who take risks for God who receive his commendation and his blessing.

"Today we step out to begin our uncertain journey. We move from a place where we have felt secure into a place of insecurity.

"Like Abraham, like the people of Israel, and like the disciples of Jesus, we cannot be sure what lies ahead. But of one thing we can be sure. God is already in our future, and he will sustain and provide for his pilgrim people as we travel with him."

The first phase of the building

work will see the Hayling Avenue end of the building converted into the surgery, with a new parish hall above it.

The second phase, which will start this December, will be to sell the existing parish hall to Portsmouth Housing Association. The land will then be used to create nine flats for the over-55s.

And the third phase, starting in January next year, will be to complete the community rooms in the central section of the building and to create the new place of worship at the vicarage end of the church.

During the building work, weekday Communion services and funerals will take place in St Joseph's RC Church in Tangier Road, and weddings will happen at St Alban's Church in Copnor Road.



(Above): Churchwarden Barry Day (right) hands over the keys of St Cuthbert's to architect Nick Stuart-Lee as the congregation vacates the original building halfway through a service; (top left): the design for the church's new worship area within the transformed building

Community garden created

IT'S an oasis of peace and quiet close to Portsmouth city centre.

Visitors have started using a new community garden outside All Saints' Church in Commercial Road for reflection and prayer.

And residents have commented on how much they enjoy the view of the garden from their windows.

It includes a water feature, a large lime tree which is lit at night, and an array of bamboos, grasses and shade-loving plants. Shining stars were added to the tree at Christmas time.

Gates were added

to provide easy access from Church Road and an area was paved off as part of extensive works to this piece of land.

The garden was made possible through a grant from Onyx Environmental via the landfill tax credit scheme, added to funds from the church and community, and a grant from the lottery fund.

Project organiser Rose Fox said: "The is a large project for our church community to undertake and has opened up a much-needed piece of land to the people in the neighbourhood."



Shining stars are added to the tree for Christmas



Unlocking people...
...releasing potential



Gilead Foundations is a Christian rehabilitation centre based on a 320-acre dairy farm in West Devon. It is committed to helping people with life-controlling addictions to live successful and fruitful lives, providing care, support and rehabilitation services based on Biblical principles for up to 40 students of all ages and backgrounds. Gilead Foundations receives significant funding for its work and is now embarking on a major expansion programme. As a result it has a number of important vacancies:

Catering & Domestic Supervisor

This position is a full time post involving the management and oversight of provision of meals for the community and upkeep of the dayroom facilities and foodstores. The successful candidate will be experienced or qualified in cooking a varied menu for up to 80 people for 3 meals a day.

Also able to supervise and train students working in catering and domestic duties. The selected candidate will ideally live in as a member of the community.

Salary negotiable depending on experience but likely to be in the region of £15,000 per annum.

Maintenance and Workshop Supervisors

These positions are full time posts involving the management and oversight of the maintenance department and the workshop department respectively. The maintenance supervisor must be skilled in a wide range of general building activities while the workshop supervisor will be a mechanic/engineer ideally with experience of repairing, servicing and maintaining agricultural and commercial vehicles. The selected candidates will ideally live in as a member of the community.

Salary in each case negotiable depending on experience but likely to be in the region of £15,000 per annum.

Please apply, enclosing CV, to: Chris Girdler, Cornerstone Vision, 28 Old Park Road, Peverell, Plymouth, Devon PL3 4PY.