



The new cast of *Luv Esther* includes (above) Danel Arbon as bad guy Haman, and (right) Ikay Agu as the king and Hannah Franklin as Esther



# Biblical musical back in the city

**A WEST-END style musical depicting the life of Esther will return to Portsmouth next year.**

*Luv Esther*, which combines a Biblical story with infectious music, impressive technology and thrilling dance moves will be staged at the Kings Theatre in Southsea on February 9 next year.

It will be the second time that the musical extravaganza has visited the city. Audiences flocked to the previous performance, at the Mountbatten Centre in North End in March 2006. This latest production has a brand new cast.

The show raises money for HIV/Aids projects in Africa, and

also gives local youngsters a chance in the spotlight. Organisers train 20 or so local teenagers in singing and dancing, so they can join the cast on stage for the show's final number.

Julian Ellis, from St Nicholas Church, Bedhampton, booked *Luv Esther* after seeing a preview at the Christian event Spring Harvest this Easter. He's already started contacting churches to see if they can bring large groups to help fill the 1,600-seater venue.

"When I saw it at Spring Harvest, I thought it was really professional," he said. "The whole package – of helping those who have Aids in Africa, translating a book of the Bible into a West End-

style show, and sharing the gospel – is breathtaking. This is definitely something that people can bring their non-Christian friends to."

The show was originally premiered two years ago in Bristol, but has since toured the UK and abroad, raising £40,000 for the victims of HIV/Aids. It was originally written by Murray Watts, who was the screenwriter for the film *The Miracle Maker*, and the songwriters, set designer and producer have West End pedigrees.

It tells the Biblical story of Esther, from her beginnings as a refugee who was chosen to be queen, to her bold actions that save her entire race. It challenges audiences to make a difference in

their own local communities, just as Esther did in hers.

Youngsters aged between 13 and 17 who would like to be trained to join the cast on stage should contact Gemma Pearce on 023-9248 2521.

More information is available on [www.luvesther.com](http://www.luvesther.com) or [www.myspace.com/luvesther](http://www.myspace.com/luvesther), where you can watch videos, see photos and see all the latest tour news.

Anyone who would like to organise a group from church can contact Julian Ellis for tickets on 023-9261 1296. Tickets, priced at £10 each, are also now available from the Kings Theatre box office on 023-9282 8282.

## Kenneth speaks on Lord's Prayer

BISHOP Kenneth has recorded his thoughts about the Lord's Prayer for a teaching course next year.

It's part of the 2008 Lent course put together by York Courses, which also includes teaching by Margaret Sentamu, the Rev Dr David Wilkinson and Dr Elaine Storkey. The course includes both a CD or audio tape of their reflections introduced by the former Archbishop of York, Dr David Hope, and a course booklet.

Bishop Kenneth has written extensively about the Lord's Prayer, including books entitled *Abba Father* and *The Lord's Prayer: A Text in Tradition*. He recorded these reflections before his second bone marrow transplant this summer.

Course organiser John Young said: "We were particularly impressed by his willingness to talk about his illness. Many of the people who use this course will find his comments inspiring and encouraging."

The course is split into five sessions entitled Our Father..., Thy Will Be Done, Our Daily Bread, ...As We Forgive, and In Heaven. For more information or to order the material, see [www.yorkcourses.co.uk](http://www.yorkcourses.co.uk) or ring 01904-466516.

## Service to mark 10th anniversary

IT'S been 10 years since our diocese's link with Stockholm was launched - and we're celebrating this month.

A special service in our cathedral at 11am on October 6 will be followed by a light lunch. Then participants will go to St John's Church, Shedfield, for a seminar from 2pm on how young people in both dioceses can learn from each other, led by youth and children's work adviser Ben Mizen. The day concludes with Evensong.

Organiser Shirley Henderson would like to receive photos illustrating the Stockholm link to display them. Contact her on 01489-896637 or [rev\\_shirley@hotmail.com](mailto:rev_shirley@hotmail.com) if you can help – or if you want to attend on the day.

## Volunteers sought for Kairos youth projects

ARE you interested in helping with youth projects in Portsmouth?

Kairos youth project development worker Adam Court (pictured right) is looking for Christians who can help give some of the city's young people real hope and aspiration.

His job involves looking at what the Church has done in the past for young people in Portsmouth, and examining how we can work with other

churches, local government and secular agencies to improve their lives now and in future. It's part of our diocese's Kairos process, which aims to identify community needs and meet them.

One of his tasks is identifying opportunities for volunteers to work with new and existing projects in the city. Among those are courses in



motorcycle maintenance and an 'open mike' night.

"The biggest resource we have to offer young people in Portsmouth is our time," he said. "We have buildings they could meet in, but it's

relationships that young people need more than anything else – people who actually take an interest in them.

"If we have enough volunteers from local churches, we could make a real impact on the city. We could offer one-to-one mentoring for example in partnership with the city council youth service or link volunteers with youth centres."

Any volunteers can receive full training, and could come from across the diocese. Anyone interested can contact Adam on 023-9289 9682 or [adam.court@portsmouth.anglican.org](mailto:adam.court@portsmouth.anglican.org)