

Fill the Guildhall with our worship

IT will be another chance to fill Portsmouth's largest music venue with worshippers praising God.

'Prom Praise', which combines music from a professional orchestra of Christians and a choir of local singers, returns to the city's 2,000-seater Guildhall on May 24 next year.

Conductor Noel Tredinnick will also return to conduct the All Souls Orchestra in a selection of classical pieces with religious themes, traditional hymns and modern worship songs.

The event will also feature soprano Joanne Lunn, an award-winning recording and concert artiste, as guest soloist. The evening will be hosted by Hugh Palmer, the rector of All Souls, Langham Place in London.

It is described as a unique blend of sacred and secular music, performance and worship, that combines the best elements of *Songs of Praise* and Last Night of the Proms. Prom Praise last came to Portsmouth's Guildhall in April 2006, when Noel Tredinnick also conducted.

The event is being organised by the Portsmouth branch of the Royal School of Church Music (RSCM), who will also gather together a choir from our parishes. The young choristers of Portsmouth Cathedral Choir will also be involved.

Michael Stoddart, chairman

Music on agenda at conference

WORSHIP leaders, musicians and clergy learnt more about using music to praise God at a diocesan conference.

Sixty delegates heard from the chairman of the Liturgical Commission, the Rt Rev Stephen Platten, and from Noel Tredinnick, from All Souls, Langham Place, during the day-long conference in the newly-refurbished Cathedral House.

Bishop Stephen led them in singing some familiar hymns to new tunes as he talked about how to use hymns within services. And Noel was one of three workshop leaders, who tackled issues such as using the



Noel Tredinnick (front) leads a singing workshop with Liz Cleaver, from All Saints, Denmead, and Leslie Snow, from St James Church, East Cowes, and St Mildred's Church, Whippingham

voice effectively in singing, engaging congregations in worship and the restoration or building of pipe organs.

"People have been very responsive and really taken things on board," said Noel.

The day was jointly organised by diocesan music adviser

Marcus Wibberley and the Portsmouth branch of the Royal School of Church Music.

of the mainland district of the RSCM, said: "Our experience of Prom Praise last time was that it was a chance for people to worship God, led by professional musicians who also believe that music is a gift from God.

"And it's also an evening of top-quality entertainment, that worshippers can invite their

friends to. And to experience 2,000 people worshipping God in this way is quite special."

Some of the professional musicians will join Sunday morning worship in churches around our diocese.

Tickets for the event are now on sale at Portsmouth's Guildhall, priced between £7.50

and £19.50 – the cost includes a souvenir programme. They are available on 023-9282 4355 or www.portsmouthguildhall.co.uk

Anyone who wants to join the choir should contact Sophie Lederer at our cathedral's music office on 023-9234 9430 or sophie.lederer@portsmouthcathedral.org.uk

Strategy for IT to link four dioceses

A NEW regional head of IT is helping to link Portsmouth together with its three neighbouring dioceses.

Ian Gapp (pictured below) started to work for Portsmouth, Guildford, Winchester and Chichester dioceses in September with a brief to implement the IT strategy developed by his predecessor in the job, Richard King.

Among other things, that involves creating a Wide Area Network so that diocesan staff can access files and e-mails from any office or from home.



He is based in the Portsmouth diocesan offices, and has already supervised the installation of a new server room in Peninsular House. He has also installed a new property management system to be rolled out across all four dioceses.

"I'm enjoying the work," he said. "Hopefully the major benefit will be shared resources – services that are too expensive for one diocese become affordable when they are shared."

Work starts on landmark church tower

WORK has started to restore a historic church tower in the centre of Portsmouth.

Scaffolding has gone up around St Mary's Church in Fratton Road as workers repair the erosion caused by 120 years of exposure to city pollution and sea air. The work will concentrate on the upper parts of the tower and the whole of the east face. There will also be work to improve access and provide disabled toilets at the base of the tower.

The project will cost around £500,000. Funds have come from a variety of sources, including English Heritage and the Veolia Environmental Trust, which donated a £100,000 grant.

The vicar, Canon Bob White, said: "The restoration will protect a historic building and ensure the church continues to serve the city."

Prizes on offer for parish magazines

PARISH magazine editors from around the diocese have put the finishing touches to what they hope will be award-winning December editions.

The diocese's Most Improved Parish Magazine competition, which happens every two years, comes to a climax this month.

Judges will be comparing this month's editions to those published in December 2005 to find out which magazine has made the greatest strides in its content, design, production and distribution.

Editors will be invited to a

special Evensong in our cathedral, at 6pm on February 3, to celebrate the work they do. Worshippers will be able to see a display of parish magazines from around the diocese.

And afterwards, Bishop Kenneth hopes to be able to congratulate editors at the prize-giving ceremony. The reward for the winner of the competition is £200 to spend on the further development of the magazine. The second prize is £100 and the third prize is £50.

The previous two competitions have been won by magazines on the Isle of Wight. The

top prize for 2001-03 went to Carisbrooke Parish News, while the 2003-05 winner was Village News, which is distributed in the parishes of Calbourne, Newtown and Shalfleet.

Communications adviser Neil Pugmire, who organises the contest, said: "It is, of course, a friendly competition. The aim is simply to acknowledge the hard work that so many editors put into their magazines, and to reward those magazines that are improving.

"And the aim of the

Evensong is to thank God for that work, and for editors to re-dedicate themselves to serving him in this way.

"In many communities, the parish magazine is the shop window of what the church does. It's also a way in which the Church puts itself at the heart of the local community, as many other groups contribute to it too. So it's important that it reads well and looks attractive."

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