

**Arthur Moore, 14, saxophone**  
Home church: St Wilfrid's, Cowplain  
"It's amazing to see how much talent everyone else here has."

**Chris Tait, 16, guitar and lead vocals**  
Home church: St James, Clanfield  
"I find I can worship better when I'm playing guitar or piano - I feel I have something definite to do!"

**Matt Whitney, 15, lead guitar**  
Home church: Westbrook Church  
"Seeing people's reaction to the music makes me happy. I enjoy the more charismatic style of this band"

**Matt Everett, 13, trumpet**  
Home church: All Saints, Catherington  
"I have played with brass bands and wind bands, but I enjoy playing with different instruments in this band."

**David King, 16, bass**  
Home church: Westbrook Church  
"I really enjoy playing with the group, and it's nice to know we're helping other people to worship in different ways."



**David Harrington, 16, keyboard**  
Home church: Westbrook Church  
"I find it easier to worship when I'm playing. I feel I can really contribute, using the talents I have."

**Lucy Tait, 14, violin**  
Home church: St James, Clanfield  
"I like being in a band with other young people. I don't play at St James, so this was my first time."

**Amie Bowker, 15, vocals**  
Home church: Hart Plain Church  
"We're all very close friends and get on so well. It's brilliant to come together and do this - and it's fun!"

**Holly Riddle, 15, vocals**  
Home church: All Saints, Catherington  
"It's more relaxed to worship in a band like this. You can be yourself and get into it."

**Carri Cotton, 13, flute**  
Home church: St James, Clanfield  
"I don't really play my flute at St James, so it's great to be part of a group where I can."

**Andy Mullineaux, 14, drums**  
Home church: Hart Plain Church  
"I play at Hart Plain Church once a month in their normal services. Seeing people raising their hands and worshipping gives me a buzz."

# The band that echoes Kairos ethos

**THESE are the young people whose worship band is a powerful symbol of Kairos-style co-operation.**

The 11 musicians and singers come from five different Anglican churches in Clanfield, Catherington, Hart Plain, Cowplain and Waterloooville. But they got together to play at the first joint youth event run by those parishes.

'Live Wire' is the name given to the youth work being done by these churches, working together as part of their Kairos partnership. So the group has called itself the Live Wire band.

And it was the teenagers - all aged between 13 and 16 - who led worship at the 'Live Wire Connect' event at St Wilfrid's Church, Cowplain last month. Around 150 people enjoyed drama, prayers and a talk by diocesan youth and children's adviser Ben Mizen.

But it was the Live Wire band's first public appearance that caught the imagination. Some lead worship at their home churches, some are part of a secular band - Definite Article - and some have sung or played as part of more classical groups. Many of them go to Oaklands RC School in Waterloooville.

Getting together in one band reflects the ethos of Bishop Kenneth's diocesan-wide Kairos initiative, which



encouraged churches to pool resources and work together in mission.

Lead vocalist Chris Tait, 16, from St James' Church, Clanfield, said: "It's good to play with people from other churches, partly because there often aren't enough people in individual churches to make up a band. But it's also good because you can play in each of the different churches in turn. The whole process of being in a band can also develop people's faith."

Keyboard player David Harrington, 16, who goes to Westbrook Church - a church plant from St Wilfrid's, Cowplain - said: "I think the Live Wire band shows there is a real sense of unity among those who go to these different churches. It's also more interesting to play with a wider range of instruments, as it gives the worship more colour."

Singer Amie Bowker, 15, from Hart Plain Church, said: "Getting together as a band helps to get young people involved in worship. If we just sat and listened to others, I don't think we'd feel as involved."

And Jenny Tait, who has co-ordinated the band's get-togethers, said the group showed a real maturity as they led their first event together.



"What the band achieved was awesome," she said. "They knew when to crank it up and when to bring it down, even within a single song. They reflected the prayerful atmosphere in the middle of the service really powerfully and filled the church with loud praise at the beginning and end."

"Chris showed that he knew the difference between performing in a rock band and leading worship by dropping in little things between songs to keep us focussed on the Lord. I thought that was quite something for a 16-year-old."

Leading contemporary worship songs is about more than just turning up and playing the instruments. Musicians and singers are usually encouraged to commit themselves to rehearsals where they can pray and worship together - developing their spiritual lives alongside improving their musical skills.

one person playing an organ. Contemporary worship is also more open-ended - you might sing a song a second time, you might want the congregation to listen to the instruments, or have a time of silence or pray while the music is playing.

"It's vital that the worship group are also worshipping themselves, and that they are aware of where God's Spirit might be leading them. It means you have to work closely with the person leading the rest of the service, and it's also quite scary, as it's less predictable how the service might go from there."

"It's perhaps also less important for people to be expert musicians before they start playing in a group. It helps the less confident if there are more confident people within the group, but you can 'learn on the job' and become quite accomplished by playing regularly."

"But, of course, the reality in many smaller churches is that key members sometimes move away or might not be available any more, and you might not be able to provide the same range of instruments. You often end up encouraging other people from the congregation to get involved. My advice would be to try - you might enjoy it!"

At Holy Rood Church, Stubbington, there is a pool of around 40 people who play as part of worship bands for both its 9.30am and 6.30pm

services. One of the worship leaders, the Rev Colin Prestidge, said: "We are only there to facilitate worship, so we need to be engaging in worship ourselves. There should be no sense of performance about what we do."

"There also has to be a sense of spiritual unity about what you do as a group. You all need to be in tune with God to work out where the worship might be going next."

"I started as a guitarist in a group a couple of months after I became a Christian. That led on to leading worship and that experience led onto ordained ministry. So worship has been part of my ongoing journey."

"The 'hymn sandwich' model was one way of joining different parts of the service together, but in this model, worship is an integrated part of a flowing journey through the service. So you may have a time of praise, then a quieter time of worship leading into a time of confession, then some prayers, and so on."

At Holy Rood, those who operate the PA system or who display the words of songs via an audio-visual system are also included in the worship team.

"Whether it's checking you've got the right balance of sound, or choosing which background to use with the song words, it's all part of the worship experience," said Colin.



(Top left): Colin Prestidge leads a worship group in our cathedral; (above): contemporary songs often trigger a more emotional reaction to God in worship

## Training is available for fledgling worship bands

AS leading worship is such an important part of many of our church services, it's important for those involved to be given appropriate training.

The main focus of diocesan music adviser Marcus Wibberley's work is on organ and choral music, but he is also available to advise worship bands in how to develop their skills.

"I can refer people to other guitarists in the diocese to help them develop their musical skills," he said. "Although I could help with some of the general principles of leading worship, a lot of it is quite specific to the instrument being played."

The diocese is also holding a day conference on worship in our cathedral.

'Sounding God's Praise' on November 10 will feature Bishop Stephen Platten, chairman of the Liturgical Commission, Andrew Maries, Exeter diocesan music adviser and worship leader in a guitar band, and Noel Tredinnick, director of music at All Souls, Langham Place, who conducted 'Prom Praise' in Portsmouth's Guildhall last year.

Holy Trinity Brompton in London, the home of the Alpha course, also holds regular training for worship leaders and musicians. The next 'Worship Central Saturday' is on May 19 and is hosted by Tim Hughes.

It costs £10 (£8 concessions) and happens from 11am-8.30pm. See [www.worshipcentral.org.uk](http://www.worshipcentral.org.uk) for details.

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