

PRAYER FOCUS

Autumn 2014



Information from Member Churches
of the Union of Evangelical Churches
with suggested items for prayer



UNION OF
EVANGELICAL
CHURCHES

sharing God's love and truth where we are

WELCOME FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Brian Wood

The secular world at a personal level frequently uses the end of one calendar year and the beginning of the next to focus, often frivolously, on past achievements and future aspirations.

Many believing communities use Church Anniversaries as an opportunity to review the previous year, celebrate the Lord's goodness and look forward to another twelve months, should the Lord tarry, of cultivating our particular corner of the vineyard in watchful anticipation of our Lord's promised return.



At a personal level the summer break is often spent in different surroundings using the time it affords away from the usual hustle and bustle to relax and reflect. For the believer in Jesus Christ it gives the opportunity to review our own spiritual journey thus far and look forward to the challenges an autumn session will bring before that precious commodity time is invaded and held hostage by responsibilities of one kind or another.

On the one hand David the Old Testament king enjoyed much success and adulation yet on the other caused so much pain and distress that some might question his being referred to by the Lord as 'a man after his own heart.' The Psalms attributed to him provide us with insight into his reflections on his own personal spiritual journey. For example in Psalm 34 he confronts his fears and finds reassurance, in Psalm 51 he finds peace of heart and mind through confession and repentance, in Psalm 139 he is overcome by the awesome breadth and depth of the knowledge of God yet is able to submit to His gracious scrutiny. And all capped by Psalm 23 that echoes the experience of the shepherd as he finds expression for his faith through his everyday and often repetitive tasks that could so easily be dismissed as boring.

By the time you read this article the ministers of the UEC would have met in Fraternal with the help of Alistair Hornal to share their experiences and pray together in anticipation of another year of service for the Lord who 'never breaks a bruised reed.' I invite you through the contents of this Prayer Focus to associate yourself with sister churches in the UEC and support each other at the throne of grace.

CAMBERWELL

Fred Hintze (as told to Howard Gardner)

Camberwell Church life and activities took a moderate break over the summer holiday, and we are now getting under way for the autumn and winter. Our Children's Holiday Special held last Easter was a blessed time and will we trust bear fruit in the future. Over the summer, there have been several weddings here; it has been a joy to be involved in these, and we trust a blessing for the newly-married couples. We have much to thank God for.

The young people's work starts again—five midweek clubs as well as the Sunday School for children and young people. The door-to-door work begins again, and we continue our visits to a local school.

In October some 30 to 40 young people from a Christian college in Holland visit us. They will be here to improve their spoken English and take part in our Church life, including attending our Sunday services.

We continue to uphold other UEC Churches in our prayers.

Next UEC Training Day

We are running a series of training days, as in previous years, to equip local Church members and ensure that they have good quality and relevant Bible teaching from experts in their fields, using interactive presentation styles. There is a suggested donation of £6 to cover expenses and refreshments.



Saturday 4th October (9.45am-1.00pm)

Dr Dan Strange lectures in culture, religion and public theology at Oak Hill College and will be talking about the meaning and value of apologetics, which attempts to give a rational defence of the Christian faith.

CANNING TOWN

Jonathan Findlay

Praise

- The Holiday Bible Club in July was successful. The numbers were small, yet the messages were well received and we believe will bear fruit;
- We have been seeing new families coming on Sunday mornings. We seem to be attracting a number of African Portuguese speakers on Sunday Mornings. The Family Services held during the summer went well. The Evening Service is still well attended.

Prayer

- Pray that those who come will continue to come;
- Pray for our Coffee Morning Monthly Outreach to continue to impact our community;
- Pray for the Youth Work and Children's Bible Club as they begin the new term;
- Pray for our Women's Conference to be held on 18th-20th September here at the church;
- Pray for our Missions Conference to be held on 10th-12th October here at the church;
- Pray for salvation, commitment and renewal and refreshment in the life of the Church;
- Thank you for joining us in Praying and honouring the Lord.



CHELMSFORD

Mark Parrott

We would value your prayers, that following an encouraging start to the year, we have had a number of set-backs since our last report. These relate to the loss of two key families that had begun to take on tasks such as starting up a youth work within the Church and organising and hosting an evangelistic film evening. Also, another couple who were married in the Church last year are in the process of moving to Gloucester. Brian was our administrator and helped me for a time with Church administration. Please pray that the Lord would rebuild His Church here in Grove Road and keep us from any undue discouragement.

On a personal level, I am grateful to the Church for allowing me to spend a week preaching in the Churches in Moldova over Easter, under the auspices of The Slavic Gospel Association, who we support financially. It was a busy schedule, but a blessed time. I also have the privilege of going to the U.S. in October for two weeks, linking in with a Church in Grand Rapids. A number of us in Chelmsford hosted their Pastor, Daniel Schutte, when he came over with a small team to evangelise at the 2012 Olympic Games so this is a return invitation. Please pray that the visit would be fruitful.

Pray for the launch at the end of September of our second series of *Contenders* (an apologetics course designed to better equip Christians to both contend for and defend their faith). This is now a joint venture with our Wickford Church, and our friend Jagjit Johal will be sharing with me in delivering the course. Programmes will be sent out in due course and all would be welcome to attend.

2015 Week of Prayer
16th to 23rd March

CORRINGHAM

June White

‘For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him.’ Psalm 103:11

We praise the Lord for:

- Faithful teaching of God’s word each week;
- New people coming along to Sunday services and the Bible Study & Prayer Meeting;
- New life—congratulations to Chris & Becky on the birth of Seth in March and to Jon & Rosie on the birth of Isaac in July;
- Outreach work—Quiz in March, Easter Egg hunt, and our annual Church Summer Party in June, all of which were well attended;
- For all the youth work—Club 7/12, Fuse, TJC and Crèche.

Please pray for:

- The re-commencement of Coffee Break and Youth work after the summer break, and for the leaders to feel refreshed and ready to take up the work again;
- Our Harvest weekend in September, with a visiting speaker from the London City Mission who will take the food back to be used in London;
- Our 100th Church Anniversary (17-19th October). We have meetings planned all weekend and the details are on the inside back cover of this Prayer Focus;
- Outreach over the Christmas period.



Coffee Break meal out

CRESSING

Dennis Ivey

Even though it's four months to go before Christmas, we have started to plan our Christmas outreach. This will include once again our Christmas Tree Festival and we hope to restart a Carol Service in one of the local pubs.

The Church continues to be involved with the Cressing Events Volunteers in putting on regular lunch time meals for village folk—this attracts about 50 people at each event. By popular demand we have held further Beetle Drives and suppers all of which draw in many local people. Our monthly Café Church is still the most well-attended service. Please pray that souls will be fed as well as stomachs!

This summer we held a joint youth archery event with Wickford. This turned out to be a great day, enjoyed not only by the youth but by some of us older but young-at-heart participants. We hope it will become a regular fixture.

Our weekly Bible study and Saturday prayer meetings are still ongoing. We also visit two primary schools on a regular basis with the prospect of being invited to another. We are still involved with the Work Place Chaplaincy at Freeport and are now having discussions with the HR department of a very large local factory about starting a Chaplaincy there.

Please pray for the above, for the health of some of the older folk and that the slow increase in the Sunday Club will continue. Please also pray for those from our Church, who have left to live nearer their families, that they will find a Church that will meet their need. Lastly, pray that all the events put on by the Church will impact on the lives of those who attend.



DAWS HEATH

Chris Banks

We are thankful to the Lord for His goodness to us as a fellowship week by week and would value your prayers for the following:

- A number of us have loved ones who do not know the Lord and we long for them to be saved.
- The neighbourhood in Daws Heath. During some door-to-door visitation earlier in the year a number of people in one road in particular were very open in talking about the Gospel.
- We have an open door to go into the home of an older lady in the village who has an interest in talking about the Scriptures. She has been influenced by the JW's in the past.
- The unconverted husband of one of our members came to a service for the first time recently for which we praise God.
- The young children who come along to the Sunday School each week.
- A couple of our older ladies, Grace Blake and Irene Potter, are not well at times and need the Lord's help.

EASTWOOD

Malcolm Richards

As mentioned in our report in the Spring edition of *Prayer Focus* our Leighfields Ladies Fellowship was going to celebrate their 50th Anniversary in March. This took place and the celebrations were led by Michael and Cecilia Bell, and an enjoyable time was had by all those present.

We are still, with God's help, maintaining our witness in the community and enjoying some good responses to the activities that have taken place. The Rainbows, Mums & Tots Group and Kids on Monday Club attended our Mothers' Day service in March and we are pleased to report the total present was again over 60. We give God our thanks for that but long to see this on a regular basis.

The work with the younger ladies, namely the Mums & Tots Group and The Ladies Contact Group, is also well supported and Pastor Graham takes every opportunity to share the gospel.

Simon Werrett has been leading a Bible Study on the early chapters of John. Our Ministry Team has served us well with the majority of the ministry on the other Sundays in this half year. Our "Prayer and Share" time on some Sunday evenings continues to be well attended. We have maintained our published Prayer Line which includes items for praise and thanksgiving and specific prayer for those of our fellowship that are in need, as well as for the world and country matters, in these troubled times both in the Middle East, and for the persecuted Church worldwide.

Our short-term plans include Harvest and the Samaritan's Purse Shoebox Appeal.



GREAT WAKERING

Brian Wood

We greet you our brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, and thank you for your prayers since our last contribution and assure you that we will continue to uphold you before the throne of grace.

The past six months has seemed for us, who are a Small church in a village situation where many choose to worship at the larger churches in the nearby town, as something of struggle.

Our midweek Boys Club and Girls Brigade continue to thrive but it is proving increasingly difficult to translate that into attendance on Sundays. Previously we invited you to pray with us for the under 11 group in Junior Church which had been depleted by many moving up to the older group. I am pleased to report that there are now six children on the books for which we praise the Lord. Sadly we are finding it difficult to retain teenagers, and we invite your prayers as the leaders seek to address the challenge.

Below is a composite photograph of day out at Maldon which began life as a Junior Church outing and became a very enjoyable and worthwhile experience for all ages.

Work with the older folk continues with our Ladies Night on the second Monday evening of each month and Coffee Hour on alternate Thursday mornings. We invite prayer for our Harvest Supper and Celebration on Saturday 27th September and the Sunday services at 11.00am and 6.30pm.



LITTLE TOTHAM

David Brewer

We value your prayers for us at this time. We are a small congregation faithfully meeting Sunday by Sunday.

We were disappointed that a couple who had joined us have now moved away (although they have indicated they would be willing to attend for preaching if invited). Meanwhile, our Afternoon Tea in July was radically changed into an Afternoon Tea with a Concert! This was a united event organised jointly with All Saints Parish Church, and was a very enjoyable time. In addition, the surplus monies were given to Hand in Hand. This is a charity working in several countries, notably Brazil, Kenya and Tanzania.

For the future, we ask for your prayers, especially that God would bring into the village one or two couples prepared to attend and get involved in the life of our Church. Several houses are up for sale, so, who knows what God has in store for us?

Also, we ask for your prayers for the health and wellbeing of several members and their families. Some are getting on in years.

For us, we also remember all the UEC Churches in our prayers. May God bless you and your walk with the Lord in future days.



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RAYLEIGH

Chris Banks (Moderator)

The friends at Rayleigh were saddened by the passing of Harold Fossey on 26th July following some months of illness. We thank God for Harold's faithfulness and commitment to this small fellowship over recent years and for all that he has done there. He will be sorely missed.

It was the desire of his heart that the witness there might continue and we look to the Lord that his prayers might be answered even though he is no longer in this world. At his funeral service the gospel was faithfully preached by James Mansfield of Billingham. A number of unbelievers were present and we trust that the Lord might take what they heard and apply it to their hearts so that they will see their need of a Saviour.

Please pray for Brenda in her loss that she might know the comfort and strength of the Lord. Brenda and Harold had been married for 61 years.



SHOEBURY

Bob Werrett

We continue to hold services each Sunday evening when possible, but holiday periods have made this difficult at times. We have held a morning service, at least once a month to celebrate Easter and our Anniversary. The afternoon service with Chris & Sue Govus, when the pupils from Richmond Avenue Primary School joined us was really well attended and made a memorable anniversary afternoon; perhaps the strawberry tea was an added attraction! We are planning our Harvest Weekend, when we will have Andrew Gordon, LCM, with us for the weekend.

Sadly the local Café closed at the end of July. This was a very useful focal point and enabled us to meet and chat with people from the local community. With very grateful help from Billy Young, a retired FIEC Minister who lives in Burnham, we have been visiting houses in the area and talking with people. We have had some good conversations, but as yet, not seen any people coming to any of the events or services. But we are keeping open! A decision that was confirmed at a recent Church meeting. We must continue to pray for the blessing and increase that is promised to the faithful.

Please pray for Ruby Dunn as she is back in hospital again, sadly a regular pattern of the last twelve months. On discharge she will go to at Kathryn Court Care Home.



SOUTHEND-ON-SEA

Bill and Nola Hoggard

We are coming to the end of our first year here at SEC, and it has been a busy and exciting one.

We have really enjoyed getting to know our lovely congregation and those from further afield within the UEC. We are also enjoying working in partnership with other Churches in the area and Bill has become a regular member of the Street Pastors' team. This involves reaching out to people in the town centre late at night and also provides a good opportunity to draw alongside some of Southend's many homeless people. Unfortunately it also means getting very wet at times as it seems to rain whenever Bill goes out!

Our new Mums'n'Tots group is going extremely well with numbers ranging from 6 to 17 little ones, plus, of course, their mums! We are getting to know our regular families very well and it is a real privilege watching these little ones grow.

The Prayer and Bible study evenings have been re-established, shared with Shoeburyness and we are having a good time exploring God's Word and praying together.

We have seen a wonderful growth in our Sunday School, with one family bringing Mum and Gran every week. One week we had 12 children, which was a blessing.

We have held two experimental Praise & Worship evenings, and both were very well attended with much interest from outside. We will certainly be doing this again in the future.

Once a month after Church we have coffee and cake and enjoy a wonderful time of fellowship; once every three months this is extended to include lunch, and like most people we enjoy sharing a good meal.



STANWAY

Barbara Ratcliffe

Warmest greetings to our fellow UEC Churches from Stanway Evangelical Church.

Since the previous edition of *Prayer Focus* we have continued to experience much of the Lord's blessing.

In July we co-hosted a Civic Service to commemorate the World War 1 centenary, a very poignant Service for many.

At present the leaders of most of our activities are enjoying the summer break, but we would ask for your prayer support for the following forthcoming events:

1. For our continued involvement with the local schools, the little ones who will be starting school, those moving on to senior school and others going off to college and university – all major steps in a young person's life. We have a Holiday Club planned for the October half term for primary school age children, which will conclude with a "Light Party" (an alternative to Halloween).
2. The plans for The Dell (our piece of land) are coming to fruition and work will be commencing in the near future.
3. Next will be our Harvest Thanksgiving which we pray will bring new people into the church.
4. We have a Church away weekend organised for November, we trust that it will be an amazing time for everyone and much blessing received.

Please also remember those who are sick, receiving hospital treatment, caring for others and those who have served their Church for a great number of years in many capacities, but now find themselves either housebound, in need of care and seeking or in residential care (we owe these people a great debt of gratitude). We pray that all our Churches will continue to be effective in our localities, meeting the needs of our communities.

'Give thanks to the Lord, call on His name; make known among the nations what He has done.' 2 Chronicles 2: 8

WICKFORD

Keith Britton

We seek your prayers for the seed which has been sown through the running of a Holiday Bible School at the end of the Summer holidays. The photo shows the 'Mega Machine' (an amazing invention that increases the size of any object placed in it!)—which was built by one of our newest Church members—together with 'Boffin' our mad scientist and his apprentice 'Brainwave' (aka Steve and William), who showed the children how long and broad, and high and deep is God's love for them (Ephesians 3:18).

We would also request prayer for a second evangelistic outreach, in the form of the monthly distribution of the Good News paper to homes in the immediate locality. It has been running for six months now and we have just completed the first follow-up visits, which showed a high proportion of interest and the request for continued deliveries from a good number of those we spoke to. We find this very encouraging, especially as the normal response to door-to-door work is generally apathetic.

We, in return, will be lifting your prayer requests before the throne of Grace, and seeking that we may all experience the opening of the windows of heaven – and seeing God's blessing descend on all we ask.



WITHAM

Will Abbott

Hello again from Witham. We thank God that after a difficult time the Abbott family are now in the Manse and it is beginning to feel like home. The Manse refurbishment has run parallel with church building work, in preparation for the new day nursery – more of that below.

We rejoice that August saw our first new believer in Christ during this season of ministry, and in connection with ongoing, weekly outreach to a local housing estate, new families have attended some Sunday services.

Will is now Chaplain to Witham Town Football Club. Sadly, this included presiding at the funeral of the club Chairman following his sudden passing in July, although the club were pleased the Service was taken by someone they knew. Other new pastoral work includes a growing role at a second local residential care home. Also new this autumn, Fiona will be hosting Sewing Bee at the Valley, a weekly sewing club for all abilities.

Each week some 20-25 unchurched young people continue to attend fISHfAITH, and as a one-off we welcomed families to a screening of the first England World Cup match. Toybox continues monthly, and Will now takes monthly assemblies at three schools, whilst remaining on the board of governors of Maltings Academy. A pastoral presence continues to be maintained at Ladies Fellowship, Boys Brigade, Valley Tots, and homegroup meetings.

Valley Nursery

The refurbishment of a significant part of the Valley Church building is drawing to a close, with some areas having been completely transformed. Valley Church are now partners with the new Valley Nursery, and are already benefitting from



new and better storage and toilet facilities, amongst other things.

There have been problems, including considerable dust and clutter, but overall the disruption to term-time activities has been minimised due to most of the work occurring during August. Positives have included most aspects of communication, particularly the day-to-day liaison between the Church and the nursery committee and staff, parents, and the contractors. The unity of the Valley leadership team has been key, as has consultation with the Church membership, and all have dealt admirably with considerable upheaval this summer.

With regard to the working relationship between Valley Church and the wider UEC, the Nursery is a significant development for both parties, and has brought some unique challenges. Emerging themes include a need for effective and prompt communication, flexibility, for work to proceed at a reasonable pace with deadlines to be met, and the importance of maintaining an effective Christian witness whilst working closely with third parties.

There are of course numerous benefits. The initiative fits the overall vision for the Church to be an integral part of the local community. Ministry opportunities are many and varied, and include partnering with the staff, committee, parents and families, delivery of Bible-based teaching to the children, and opportunities to combine Church activities with those of the nursery. This is a unique, God-given opportunity, and we look forward to seeing how God will use it for his glory.





Corringham Evangelical Church

Corringham Evangelical Church is 100 years old this year! Our building was first opened in 1914, and with the recent building work taking place at the church we're still very much part of the community. We've got a series of events planned to celebrate our 100th birthday and we'd love for you to join us.

Tricks & Laughs

Friday 17th October—6.00pm

Comedy and magic with Steve Legg.

100th Anniversary Celebration

Saturday 18th October—6.00pm

Exhibition of the past 100 years, with refreshments and a talk from Brian Edwards, former President of the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches.

Family Service

Sunday 19th October—11.00am

A Family Service to celebrate 100 years of worship at Corringham Evangelical Church.

Peculiar People's Service

Sunday 19th October—6.30pm

A celebration service in the original style of the Peculiar People, preceded by a bring-and-share tea at 4.30pm.

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Corringham Evangelical Church is a member of the UEC
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2014 UEC PRAYER MEETINGS

Forthcoming meetings

Date	Time	Location
Tuesday 14th October	7.15pm	Corringham
Wednesday 12th November	8.00pm	Wickford
Thursday 18th December	7.30pm	Cressing

2015 UEC Week of Prayer—22nd to 29th March

UEC Family Day 2015

- Saturday 27th June -

Music, teaching, testimonies
and craft for the whole family.

Save the date!



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