

# PRAYER FOCUS

Autumn 2018



UNION OF  
EVANGELICAL  
CHURCHES

sharing God's love and truth where we are

# WELCOME FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Eric Blowes

It is said “An army marches on its stomach”. This saying has been attributed to Napoleon and it has a measure of truth to it. If an army is not fed then they become weak and vulnerable.

The same can be said of Christians (Christ’s Soldiers) and the Church, not that we march on our stomach, but rather - and more importantly - that **“The Church marches on Prayer”**. Without it we are weak, vulnerable and ineffective. For we are in a battle, a battle not fought (as Scripture says) like the world; also Scripture shows us



very clearly what we do fight against and what we do fight with; “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Ephesians 6:12). “For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world” (2 Corinthians 10:3-4).

The best weapon at our disposal is of course prayer and, linked in with the Armour of God, the Church is able to stand strong in fulfilling its mission. A mission not given to us by any human government; no of course not, but given to us by the Son of Man Himself. Indeed there are any number of ways we can support and help one another, but without a doubt the very best we can do is to pray for each other. *Prayer Focus* better enables us to do just that. My hope is that as we read of individual Churches and their fellowships it will encourage and motivate us to pray for each other.

This magazine is not intended to be a “use once and then discard”, or even put to one side; no it is there to help us daily and weekly to pray for each other. The UEC may not be “An army that marches on its stomach” but we must be and are **“An Army that marches on Prayer”**.



# CAMBERWELL

Fred Hintze, Camberwell Evangelical Church

This article comes with the prayerful good wishes and support from friends here at Camberwell.

At this time, though, we would covet your prayerful support as south London seems to be under pressure from violent crime in a way that hasn't been seen for many years.



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But first, we can tell you that life goes on as normal, with Sunday worship being uplifting times. We have new people arrive and some stay. Our youth work continues but there is an understandable reluctance for young people to come to church in the evenings; still we have 30 regularly attend on Monday evening.

We recently joined with the local police march against knife crime, an important part of our witness to the local community: we are here to stay. This is particularly important at this time, as two young people were murdered close by our church.

Special aspects to pray for:

- Our Christmas celebrations, that many will join us and be challenged by the message of the Messiah: Emmanuel, God with us;
- Plans for our Holiday Club next April, that it may go well;
- Protection for our young people who attend our church;
- Wisdom for the local police who are the "front line" in the battle against knife crime;
- Peace of heart and mind for all our members at this time.

# CANNING TOWN

Trevor Matthews, Cliff Walk Church

We are continuing with our challenge for 2018, which is to follow the example of the early Church that we read about in Acts 2: 42-47. We long for Cliff Walk Church to be marked by worship, maturity, fellowship, service and witness, and that the people of Canning Town are in awe of our God.



As usual the summer has been a busy time with increased opportunities for sharing the Gospel and serving our community. The good weather has helped increase the numbers attending our BBQ and Fun Day and our coffee outreach has at times been overwhelmed by customers stopping for a drink/biscuit/fruit. We seek wisdom about what next for all these people we are contacting so that we may introduce them to our Saviour.



On 21 October we were thrilled to hold our second baptismal service of the year – the first time we've done that for many years. On 27 October we held a triple celebration: 145th Anniversary of the church starting in 1873, 60th anniversary of the opening of our current building in 1958 and Leandro's Ordination as a UEC Minister.

We are looking forward to a number of key events during the autumn:

- Light Party for children on 31 October;
- Hot dogs and fireworks for the community on 5 November;
- Walk Thru the Bible on Saturday 2 December. We are hosting this interactive day learning the story of the Old Testament. If you'd like to come contact Trevor Matthews on 020 7474 2802, for details.

Please pray for:

- The coffee outreach which continues each Saturday on four busy street corners where we offer drinks, food and literature to passers-by;
- The housing and other practical needs of many who come to the Church;
- People to help with the children's and youth work in the Church;
- Pastor Leandro as he continues his studies at the London School of Theology;
- The reality of God's presence each time we meet together.

Here are two photos of the baptismal service: the congregation listening to our information time and Leandro praying with the three candidates.

## MEN'S BREAKFAST

### Steve Hensley

In June we had our Men's Breakfast event with speaker Peter Wilson from Restored. He gave an excellent explanation of what Restored is and does. Restored looks at abuse to women both within and outside the Church, and what he explained was how as Christian men, we are to treat women the way Jesus treated women. 26 men attended this event (it was an eye opener!).

Our next event on Saturday 10th November stays with our normal-style Men's Breakfast starting at 8.30am. The speaker is Rob Santer from Christian Vision for Men. Rob is the Regional Director for the London area and his theme is "Men on a Mission".

This breakfast on the 10th November marks two years of the UEC Men's Breakfasts. Praise God!

We have had some inspiring and encouraging speakers over that period. The purpose of these Men's Breakfasts is for men to commit or recommit their walk with Jesus.

A big thank you for everyone who covers these events in prayer and also for everyone that attends and or helps out at these events.

Keep praying for these events. To God be the Glory.

# CHELMSFORD

## Paul Adams, Grove Road Evangelical Church

This article comes with prayerful good wishes from the friends here at Grove Road Evangelical Church.

Our Pastor, Mark Parrott, has been on sabbatical these past three months, although he has continued his outreach ministry to Muslims. Therefore, in a very real way, we have had to “fend for ourselves”.

And with some good co-ordinating we discovered we have gifts that we are now exercising—of preparing services, taking speaking parts, preaching, as well as “behind the scenes” activities. Attendance at our Sunday service number about 22 to 25, and weeknight Prayer Meetings, three to five. We were blessed with a well-attended Harvest Festival Service, with the chapel beautifully decorated. This included some unusual vegetables—and all the produced was destined for the local Foodbank, which we discovered also provide support to other people with different needs.

Looking ahead, we plan to build on what we have achieved recently, and welcome back Mark as our Pastor. We will appreciate his contribution to Church life all the more as we become a more people-orientated Church—getting more involved.

The picture we have is this: no one person can push a car uphill. But if everyone puts one hand on the car, it will move up the hill. We have found that everyone has something to offer. We look to the Holy Spirit to guide and energize us for future days.



# CORRINGHAM

## June White, Corringham Evangelical Church

We give thanks for:

- God's faithfulness to us as a fellowship;
- Our morning service which has seen an increase in numbers (an answer to prayer);
- The Summer Party held at the church in June which was well attended;
- Our second Church family picnic held in a local country park. The more energetic ones played games and went for a walk in the woods;
- Our Harvest Services led by Steve Dunn from the London City Mission who works in the Harold Hill area of east London. The food was taken back by him to be used in a Foodbank.

We would value your prayers for:

- Chris Mayers who has been appointed by the members of the Church as a Church Worker here at Corringham for two days per week. He has also started a Bible Course with Moorlands Bible College. Chris, Becky and family value your prayers as they look to God for His provision;
- A bowling and pizza night which took place at the end of September for the men of the Church;
- The Big Quiz Night, in aid of Tearfund in November;
- Christmas services during December;
- People who regularly attend Church but as yet not given their lives to Christ.



# CRESSING

## Wendy Tilbury, Cressing Evangelical Church

After more than three years, the total renovation of our buildings is nearing completion and is a resource that all UEC Churches can use. In August our friends from the Southend Church held their Summer BBQ in our garden.



The outreach work of the Church continues in two local schools and the

Chaplaincy at Freeport Shopping Centre in Braintree and Liberty Engineering in Witham. We continue to work with our Community Events group who provide a lunch for older folk every month. We have been holding regular social events not only to raise money but to encourage people into the Church who would otherwise steer clear of us. For our next event, we are trying an idea from the Rayleigh Church and are holding our first film night which will be a Black & White film *Top Hat*.

In December we plan to restart our annual Christmas Tree Festival; this year's theme is 'Superheroes'.

The first large-scale housing development has started about half a mile from the church. We are keeping a close eye on this so we can leaflet the houses as people move into them. This is the first of several new housing estates planned that will see the village almost double in size. We would value your prayers for Church growth through the new contacts we make there.

Early next year we are planning the rededication of the building and then we will hold another special event, the baptism of Neil who has been the main contractor for the building work and found the Lord in the midst of it all. It's made extra special because the baptismal pool was built by him.

We continue with our regular Bible Study and weekly prayer meetings, and have recently started our second *Christianity Explored* course.

Prayer requests:

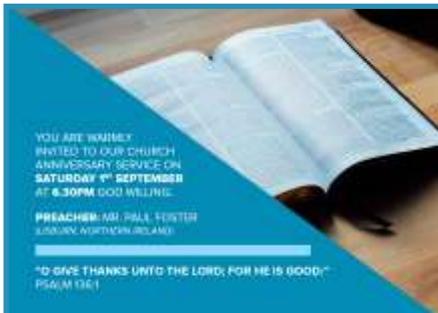
- For an increase in the Sunday Club numbers;
- That the Church will impact on the life of the surrounding area.

# DAWS HEATH

Chris Banks, Daws Heath Evangelical Church

We continue to give thanks to the Lord for His goodness to us as a fellowship.

The first weekend in September we celebrated the 42nd anniversary of the opening of our present building. Our preacher for the weekend was Paul Foster who is the Minister of Tyndale Memorial Free Presbyterian Church in Belfast and on the Saturday evening he encouraged us from Galatians 6:7 to continue sowing the good seed and to expect the Lord to grant a harvest in His time. The weekend was truly blessed by the Lord. We also heard a report of the Sunday School work and our Pastor was presented with a gift from the adults and children to mark the 25 years he has been leading the work at Daws Heath.



On Saturday 29 September we held our first youth meeting in the afternoon and it was a blessed time for those who came. We plan to hold this once every three months in the future.

We were saddened by the home call of our brother Norman Allen in August. He formerly was a member of the Church at Rayleigh but had been worshipping with us since it closed. Your prayers are requested for his three children. As far as we know, none of them are believers but they did attend the Sunday School at Rayleigh Evangelical Church in their childhood, and we pray that the seed sown even then many years ago may bring forth fruit.

A couple of our older ladies are frail, so we would appreciate prayer for them.

# EASTWOOD

## Simon Werrett, Eastwood Evangelical Church

'*Think different*' was an Apple Inc. advertising slogan from 90s, but it is still a challenge to the Church today. We need to deliver the gospel message in a different way to a 'non-Churched generation'. The message of Jesus was to 'go', but the Church has interpreted that as 'come'.

At Eastwood we have been 'going' out into our community with prayer walks in the area, praying effectively for our community but also seeing the issues that we chat to God about. On a regular basis we hold our prayer meeting in the 'local cafe'—an opportunity to share with the owner and customers about our faith. Over our Harvest weekend we offered soup and a roll outside the old Eastwood Police Station; although the weather was against us (it was warm!) we still had conversations, invited people to our meetings, were asked to pray for issues and we were visible.

During the summer Simon coached a 'Couch to 5k' running course with mums from our Toddler Group and local residents, identified through Facebook. For 10 weeks on a Monday morning, the group improved their running skills, and in the final week achieved the 10k distance. This was an opportunity to build relationships. Some of them have come to events at the church. When the course finished, the group wanted to continue, so a Monday morning run is now a fixed event on the Church calendar (feel free to join us).

During July and August we completed the *Talking Jesus* course and put that into practice with a Sunday evening BBQ in the baking sun. It was well attended and we were able to share Jesus (along with burgers and sausages) with our friends and neighbours. We also completed the Pete Greig *Prayer Course* during the summer and this has led to the



creation of our prayer ministry team, available to pray for all. Our sister Nola came and gave us some teaching on the practical aspects of a prayer ministry.

Our family parade services have been well attended too. The Harvest service was standing room only and it was great to be able to deliver gifts to both 57West and Off the Streets (both local homeless projects).

We attended Simon's commissioning as a Street Pastor and chair of the Southend initiative, hearing a great challenging sermon from Rev Les Isaacs about the need to go into the community. Through Street Pastors and Gideons we have become involved in events in our town like Community Engagement days, Students Freshers Fairs and visiting local schools, all different ways of engaging with our community and talking about Jesus.

We have seen the power of social media, as we have had a family come to our Toddler Group through Facebook posts. They then organised our record-breaking Macmillan day, and we have just dedicated their daughter Rose where again the church was full. We pray they may start to come on a more regular basis.

Like all Churches we have those in need of prayer for physical needs and we have had special prayer meetings for them. We would ask for prayer that we continue to *'think differently'* for the next few months, as we plan our Christmas activities and seek God about having a Children & Families Worker.



# GREAT WAKERING

Steve Farrow, Great Wakering Evangelical Church

Another summer has come and gone! We celebrated our 173rd Church Anniversary in June with a BBQ on the Saturday afternoon/evening and our anniversary services on the Sunday, with a strawberry cream tea in the afternoon. Two weeks later we combined our J.A.M. (Jesus And Me) prizegiving with the July Parade service and enjoyed hearing what the youngsters had been learning about over the past year.

In August we held another Holiday Club for primary school aged children in the village, with the theme “Under The Sea”. We saw about 20 children at the holiday club, and they enjoyed games, songs and craft while learning about Jonah, Jesus feeding the 5,000, and the miraculous catch of fish.

Sadly, despite the numbers at the holiday club and although Boys' Club and Girls' Brigade are still well attended during the week, the number of children we see on a Sunday morning is now very low, and we would value your prayers as we seek the Lord's guidance on how to draw children in on a Sunday.

Christmas will soon be upon us and we are expecting another concert by the village Community Choir held in the Church, which has brought a good number of folk through the doors. We also hope to see a full church for the ever-popular Carols by Candlelight service on 23 December—a great opportunity not only to retell the Christmas story but also to present the Gospel message.

Our building project to remodel the entrance to the church has been in the pipeline for many months, but building work is now scheduled to commence in January 2019. By the time the next *Prayer Focus* is published we hope that the work will be nearing completion, or might even be completed!

We do value your continued prayers—we are quite a small fellowship but there is a good spirit as we all work together and play our part in the life of our Church. All our sister Churches in the UEC continue to be in our prayers.



# LITTLE TOTHAM

## David Brewer, Little Totham Evangelical Church

Earlier this year In April we lost one of our members, Mrs Peggy Shelley, who will have been known to some. She, together with her late husband Lester, had been a valuable member of the Church. Peggy was extremely practical and “hands on” in all she did until she was affected by age and bad health. There are many in both the Church and in the village around who benefitted and were blessed by the work she did in preparing senior citizen meals and Coffee Mornings amongst other things.



We'd dearly love to see the Church grow and have been exploring ways to move forward and share our faith. Sometimes we need to try new things and we're planning "Craft & Cookies" evenings shortly which we hope will



be a means of getting to know some of the people around us. We'd also like to re-start something for younger age groups sometime soon.

In the meantime, we've continued with our Village Teas on occasional Sunday afternoons. We had our annual concert on the common (next to the church) back in July and more recently had a Polish evening with some Polish friends who prepared some food and gave an informative talk dressed in traditional Polish costume.

We continue meeting on Sunday mornings, sometimes we have our own members preach and sometimes we have visiting preachers. It was good to have Jason Content from Rayleigh Church recently and we're looking forward to having him with us again in November.

We need to pray particularly that at Little Totham we can move forward and do what God wants us to do and are not prevented by things around us.

**"I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it".**  
(Matthew 16:18)

# YOUTH CONNECT

Keith Britton

Since the previous report in the Spring *Prayer Focus*, two further events have taken place – the Summer Activities Day, with Archery and various games and, more recently, a Car Clue Hunt organised by our Great Woking Church.

The Activities Day proved popular and was well attended but, sadly, the Car Clue Hunt (where groups of young people are driven to a number of locations to hunt for clues) proved to be less so – attracting only nine youngsters. All the same, we were blessed with very good weather and it was enjoyed by those who turned up. I have included several photos of the event.

Please continue to pray for the youth work. Leading young people is not an easy task these days, but can be very rewarding all the same. With so many other calls on their time, we need enthusiasm and dedication, if we are to make the gospel attractive and relevant to their lives.



# RAYLEIGH

## Jason Content, Rayleigh Evangelical Church

Over the summer we did a few events, one being a film evening which was well-attended with up to 30 people attending. This success gave me the idea of starting a Film Ministry.

We also had the chance to show England's World Cup Football games and had a BBQ at the same time. This was well-attended by church members but we didn't get many from outside.



As people were beginning to go on holiday, we held another BBQ. For this BBQ friends from Stanford-le-Hope, Dennis from Cressing, and Steve from Wickford, all came over and helped us out and it turned into street evangelism. We had quite a few youth visit us for a free burger and we learnt where they hang out. We also had families pop by with young children and then an Australian family came by, who then came to the church for our Sunday Evening Service. We got to use this event to get the word out that the church is open; we will probably do more BBQs when the summer comes.

We have also been holding family film afternoons which have attracted quite a few families and children.

Finally, we have also held a few Friday Night Games Nights in the church; these have been well-attended.

We ask for your prayers:

- As we re-establish this Church, finding new and sustainable ways of reaching out to the local community;
- That the Leadership Team working with me deals with the management and pastoral issues well;
- As we undertake some structural work to make the building Health & Safety and access-compliant.

# SOUTHEND-ON-SEA

Bill & Nola Hoggard, Southend Evangelical Church

“Oh taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who trusts in Him.” Psalm 34:8

God continues to be gracious and merciful to us and is blessing us more and more with His presence in our meetings. We have enjoyed another season of small growth and again God is blessing us with more families from different nations and it is interesting for us to learn about different cultures; our times of fellowship lunch are interesting, and at our last Bring & Share we tasted flavours from India as well as our usual fayre. Our Sunday School is growing as we have a new family with three children, and we are greatly encouraged by this.

We had a wonderful BBQ and time of fellowship at our summer outing in August. We went to the church at Cressing and were blessed with another sunny day. We all had a good time with quizzes and fun. These times are so special to us and really do add to the sense of family that we have here in Southend.

Early in October we had a Harvest Thanksgiving service in which all the children participated and it was a very happy time. We collected six large boxes of produce and these were divided between Street Hub who feed homeless people in the town every week, and Off The Streets who provide a night shelter for homeless. We are very privileged to be able to partner with these two hard-working agencies.

We currently have two members in the Church who are enduring chemotherapy and another who is about to begin treatment. Please pray for them and their families for strength and peace and for us as a body as we stand with them to support them. Please also pray for us all as we continue to grow—that our cultural differences would not hinder the building of God’s Kingdom here in Southend.



# STANFORD-LE-HOPE

Graham Marshall, Fresh Hope Community Church

Sunday 7 October 2018 saw a packed chapel host a combined service with Fresh Hope Community Church and St Margaret's, Stanford-le-Hope, both in attendance, as well as representation from the UEC in the persons of Richard Partridge and Howard Gardner. On that day we were FINALLY and FULLY welcomed into the UEC fold. Praise God. Fresh Hope had been set up as a "Fresh Expression" plant of St Margaret's in September 2007, meeting in a local school, before moving into Victoria Road Chapel in September 2012. Those 11 years have flown by.



As is the case with all Churches, some folks have left us as they retired and moved away, whilst others have joined us and added to our number. We are probably about the same size, about 30 adults in total, but we are growing and developing in other ways.

Christine, Steve and I are all new to Church leadership. There have been some significant challenges, and we are sure that there will be more to come. Nevertheless, we feel encouraged and optimistic, and we look to God to help us all develop as individual believers, helping us to grow in the knowledge and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to add to our number over the course of time.

Every Friday we hold either a Prayer meeting, a film night, our Mannafest meal together, or a praise and worship evening. On Thursdays every week we have a Bible study and we have seen as many as 18 people in attendance which has been very encouraging. Some of these folk are from other Churches, demonstrating that there is a real hunger for the Word of God in the world (and the Church!).

We are a close-knit group of believers, which is good, but as a leadership, we still struggle to give to the fellowship the time that it needs to properly develop and grow. Sunday School also presents us with a sort of chicken and egg challenge. Without one, kids are unlikely to want to come to church and

stay, and so most of the time there are no children at our meetings. Yet if we want to attract younger families, we must have a Sunday School.

We also need a strategy and a vision that will help to propel us forward with real purpose. We have struggled in this area, and we will continue to work at it, but we do love one another and have a real heart to open our doors to the local community in various ways (thus making ourselves more accessible) so that is good too.

Two initiatives that we will be commencing soon are:

- Our Tea and Toast mornings, when we open up the church to local people and passers by, inviting them to come in for a cuppa and a chat;
- Our “Going Deeper into God” Workshops, following on from our recent Bible studies when we looked intently over six weeks at the person of the Holy Spirit and His work and ministry in our lives.

So at Fresh Hope Community Church:

- we rejoice in all that God is doing amongst us;
- we also seek a deeper relationship with Him;
- and we want to open up our hearts and our arms to our neighbours, seeking to get them over the threshold of the church, where they can feel for themselves the love that we have for them, in the precious name of Jesus.

We loved our life as part of St Margaret’s, but we are grateful to God that Fresh Hope can have this Fresh Start as part of the UEC.

## STANWAY

### Ray Pearce, Stanway Evangelical Church

We have had a busy time since the previous *Prayer Focus* and we can truly see God moving at SEC.

We held a Holiday Club in August which was well-attended. The first weekend in September saw eight of our congregation baptised, five on the Saturday, and three on the Sunday. At both of these events we enjoyed a time of fellowship together with a barbecue on Saturday and a bring-and-share lunch on Sunday. Also five people have come into membership.

We have been running a Discipleship course on Monday evenings and this has now finished, and next year we are looking to hold another *Alpha* course.

Our prayer meetings continue to be well-attended and are held on alternate Wednesdays. We also hold a Bible Study where we have just finished looking at the Book of James and are starting a study on Nehemiah.

We held a Light Party on 31 October for primary school age children with games, craft, music and food served.

It is our bi-annual trip to Sizewell in November and our theme for the weekend is Revival, being led by Stephen Walker from the Faith Mission. Over 70 people are due to attend.

The four Churches in Stanway, of which we are one, continue to work together under the title of "Love Stanway" and have monthly prayer walks around the village, also we have a joint community carol service coming up in December in the Village Hall.

We continue to seek God's guidance through prayer, and eagerly look forward to what He has in store for us at Stanway Evangelical Church.

## SHOEBURY

Howard Gardner

Since we last wrote about the progress at Shoebury, new arrangements have been put in place. I am now the main contact with MyTownSouthend, which continues to manage the programmes for Mondays to Saturdays. This is developing well, with more publicity planned for the New Year.

In addition, our colleague Mark Hobbs now leads Sunday morning services and the worshipping community is developing well. Mark is a Pastor accredited by the FIEC, and he brings a freshness and enthusiasm to the witness there; there are plans to start a mid-week Bible Study meeting in the New Year. Both organisations work well together, and both have been given 5-year licences to firmly establish their respective works.

In consultation with Southend Borough Council, there are plans to improve the building to make it H&S and access-compliant.



# WOMEN'S DAY CONFERENCE

Ruth Parrott

In June of this year 30 ladies from our UEC churches gathered at Mulberry House near Ongar for a 'Time out with God' and each other.

The sun shone and it was the perfect day to enjoy the beautiful surroundings and enjoy some well-deserved time away from all the pressures of life.

Carol Evans ministers alongside her husband at a Church in Harlow. She had a really gentle manner and made a great rapport with the ladies. She looked at strategies that we can build into our lives both practically and spiritually to live Godly lives. She also gave personal testimony of how she has endeavoured to work out these principles in her life through many difficulties and challenges.

We enjoyed a blessed time of worship and a time of praying with each other at the end which was very powerful. It was amazing to see people sharing and supporting each other and fostering fellowship—which hopefully will continue.

Another highlight was the delicious lunch provided for us by the chefs at Mulberry House which we all enjoyed!

The feedback was very positive with many appreciating the time away and also time to stop, think, pray and meditate on God's word, and how it applies to our lives and helps us to live the lives God intended for us.



# WICKFORD

## Keith Britton, Wickford Evangelical Church

Greetings from the Church at Wickford.

Our weekly services continue and we have been blessed to have a mature couple join us recently plus the expectation of another couple moving into the area soon.

We are also starting to see fruit from the fortnightly CommuniTea event that was mentioned in the Spring edition of *Prayer Focus*. Several people attend regularly and also accepted an invitation to our Harvest Thanksgiving service with a lunch to follow. The photo shows some 30+ people enjoying food and fellowship in our rear hall.

A monthly Youth After Church session is taking place, where several of the young people come to one of the member's houses for a questions and discussion time. This has also proved popular and may be held more often – at their request!

Our prayer needs are:

- For a younger couple to succeed Gwen and me as Youth Leaders, as our desire is for this to be our final year in this ministry;
- For an increase in all our departments generally, together with the resources to run them;
- For a continuing, successful outreach programme.



# WITHAM

## David Howson, Valley Church

It has been wonderful to see God at work in our fellowship at Witham.

We have recently had several contacts with people through the various groups that meet at the Church during the week. God has brought to our attention the need in people's lives. And we have been able to work alongside several who are lonely, have relationship or substance abuse problems, or who are simply seeking for a deeper meaning to life. We have found the *Christianity Explained* course to be very useful in introducing these people to Christ. We continue to pray that God will work in their hearts.

There are several secular organisations who use our premises and we organise a Sunday afternoon tea for them a couple of times a year. This is a subtle way of introducing people to Church and to God.

We recently had our Harvest Thanksgiving service and meal at the church. All Church users were invited to decorate a window sill in the main Church. The results were outstanding. The produce was divided between Mill Grove and Foodbank.

Prayer points:

- For guidance as we envisage ways of reaching into homes on the Humber Estate in Witham;
- For clear guidance regarding the future of Boys Brigade and CYO;
- For the work among the ladies in our fellowship;
- That God would work in the hearts of those He has sent our way and that we would be open to His prompting to speak out for Him;
- For an ever-closer walk with Jesus, that we may follow Him and Him only;
- We have been amazed at the lack of knowledge of the things of God. We need wisdom in speaking into people's lives about Jesus and what He has done for them.



God is good.

# UEC FAMILY DAY

Howard Gardner

Saturday 6 October saw another UEC Family Day take place. Members of the Promotion Committee have worked hard to make the day a success, and indeed it was!

About 60 friends from several UEC Churches attended, and went along to the various Workshops, which we understand were enjoyed by all who attended. We also had an excellent Children's Workshop led by Hannah Courtier, the Children's & Youth Leader at Stanway EC.

Keynote Speaker for the day was Alistair Hornal, who had recently been the Facilitator at the Ministers' Fraternal Vision Day. He brought God's word to us as a challenge to understand present-day society and how our Churches see themselves in who we are and what we do. He called us to consider Church planting, training, and sharing resources. He asked "what gives focus for what you are doing your Churches?", wanting us to ensure that all our activities are not needs-driven but grace-directed. "Mission," he suggested, "should be directed by vision (faith goals)".

The buffet lunch was the best so far – including cake! – and there was plenty of time to mingle and meet up with friends old and new. The Creative Prayer Space was open all day for those who wanted a quiet place to pray, offering new and different ways of intercessory prayers.

The closing worship was a great experience of coming together in worship of God. The songs were ably led by the Stanway EC Music Group, and Alistair gave us a closing address to send us on our way. Will there be another Family Day next year? Judging by the positive feedback, yes. Judging by the numbers attending, can't promise there will.



**If you are interested in supporting the Union of Evangelical Churches by getting involved in the promotion of events and the UEC please contact Dave Partridge via the UEC Office. We are particularly interested in expanding our use of Social Media, the UEC website and graphic design.**

**Forthcoming dates for 2019 will be announced in due course and circulated to individual churches and on our Social Media accounts.**

***Prayer Focus* magazine, Spring 2019**

The copy date for our next publication is 1 March 2019. Please enter this in your diary so that we receive your article and pictures in good time.



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