

# EASTERN BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

## ESSEX PRAYER DIARY

JANUARY TO MARCH 2008

### *General Secretary – Baptist Union of Great Britain- Rev. Jonathan Edwards*

Please pray for the Baptist Union at this exciting time in its life. At the Council meeting in November 2007 Jonathan Edwards, General Secretary, presented the new Baptist Union Strategy which was warmly received. The strap line for the Strategy is ENCOURAGING MISSIONARY DISCIPLES. Jonathan comments, " We all need to be absolutely clear about our priority as the people of God. We mustn't allow anything to distract us from the fact that we are called to be followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our churches need to be communities which encourage people in their discipleship, and encourage the recruitment of more disciples. Please pray for the 50 or so Baptist Union staff who work at Baptist House in Didcot. Pray that their work will be effective in supporting all 2,000 local churches in their work for God."

### *Regional Ministry Team – Rev. Paul Hills*

Although nights are long the days will begin to draw out as the promise of spring grows. Easter will be early this year. The promise of new life and hope in the future is there!

Please give thanks for:

- those recently come to faith and growing in discipleship
- those in churches giving their time and energy to new initiatives
- those faithfully serving as leaders of churches, house groups, youth 7 children's work and all mission ventures.

Please pray for:

- the twenty or so churches in the EBA seeking pastors
- candidates coming to the ministerial recognition committee
- the EBA Council considering how best the Association can be structured to support the churches & ministers in their work
- the Regional Team as it seeks to fulfil its ministry of care and encouragement.

### *Regional Ministry Team – Rev. Sheila Martin*

Many of us make resolutions at the start of a new year that we will get fit and be more healthy. We feel better and we are more effective when we are healthy.

The Association is distributing two resources to the churches that we believe could help to make churches more healthy and effective. One is the "Fit 4 Life" material. The other is the "Toolbox for Small Churches". Please pray that these resources will be placed into the hands of the right person, that they will be used and that they will contribute to the health and effectiveness of our Gospel mission

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**January 6<sup>th</sup>**

### **Ardleigh Green Baptist Church**

**Lay Pastor:** Mrs Barbara Challis

The new initiative at Ardleigh Green is making slow progress.

A lot of work has been done in the building and the new glass doors have made a great difference.

As a result of a questionnaire/survey undertaken during July we are endeavouring to start some activities in the New Year for the over 50's and also for the students from the College opposite.

Also on January 7th a 'More to Life' Evangelistic Training Course will be starting.

We give thanks to God for the financial support we have received and ask for prayer:

- for the opportunities to continue networking with the residents of Ardleigh Green
- For continual support from other Churches and the building of a team to get the work underway.

**January 6<sup>th</sup>**

**Ashdon Baptist Church**

**Minister:** Rev. David W. Doonan

We move into 2008 with a vision for serving the community in the name of Christ. Though our numbers are small there are several opportunities for mission in our village and beyond.

We thank God for the Chapel Choir which sings on special occasions and attracts villagers because of its quality singing.

We thank God for the cluster to which we belong and for the T-services once a month which stimulate fellowship.

Our village Senior Citizens Lunch Club once a month brings around 15 to 17 people to the Chapel and some stay afterwards for our Wednesday Fellowship.

The Toddler Club serves many families and provides a forum for building friendships and sharing our faith.

We have access to the village school and the minister's wife is now a governor.

Pray for these opportunities and our plans for a refurbishment of the kitchen and toilet facilities in preparation for our bi-centenary in 2009.

**January 13<sup>th</sup>**

**Basildon – Kingswood**

**Minister:** Rev. Stuart Woodward

Thank God for the many encouragements in another successful Alpha Course, new people in worship and many people growing in maturity.

We continue to consider how to enable further growth numerically and spiritually. In this regard pray for our newly revamped Friday Youth Club, for the ongoing need for more leaders in many areas for church life and for the major choices to be made regarding the future of our buildings.

Pray as we seek to live more authentically as Kingdom people.

**January 13<sup>th</sup>**

**Basildon – Laindon**

**Student minister:** Chris Simpkins

We as a church would like to give thanks for the baptisms that we had in our church in 2007.

We also thank God for the success of Noah's Ark Parent / carer group that runs on a Friday morning.

For the success of the Girls Brigade we give thanks.

For the growing numbers in the church and the new people coming to know the Lord we give thanks.

We would ask you to pray for the forth coming Alpha course and the people leading it.

Pray also for the Sunday school and the leaders.

**January 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Benfleet**

**Minister:** Rev. David Keeble

We thank God for His continuing abundant provision.

We are pleased to be able to report that work continues with the Mothers and Toddlers Group, the Women's Meeting, our Sunday Services, Saturday coffee mornings, a monthly Art-Day and with the distribution of the Challenge newspaper. Each month we have a fellowship lunch after the Sunday morning service which also gives contact with visitors. Please pray with us as we seek to continue our witness to Benfleet.

We are an aging fellowship and we thank Him for His enabling although many in the fellowship are finding difficulties with the advancing years. We would love to have younger Christian families and children in our fellowship and would value your prayers in this matter as well as your prayers as we seek to bring the Good News of Salvation to those around us.

**January 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Billericay**

**Ministers:** Rev Andy Drake, Gary Bott, Gerry Stanton

Give thanks with us for God's goodness and faithfulness to us as a fellowship during a somewhat difficult year and for those who continue to serve the Lord, His church and the community steadfastly, despite

the lack of a Senior Pastor. Praise God particularly for the ongoing growth of our work with young people and for those who've committed their lives to Him & been baptised in recent months.

Please pray with us for guidance and wisdom as we seek out the man God has already chosen as our next Senior Pastor and also for our Oversight team, that they may know the direction and empowering of the Holy Spirit in leading the church forward & reaching the lost for Jesus.

**January 27<sup>th</sup>**

**Bishop's Stortford**

**Ministers:** John Walford & Patrick Croash

We are encouraged by so much that God is doing in our midst. We give thanks for new opportunities and new people coming into the fellowship. We still do not have a site for a building and continue to worship in a local school.

We would value prayer for new initiatives with unchurched young people; continued growth for those who are already members, especially in the area of evangelism; our International Community Worker Tracy Moreton and her work with the Portuguese speaking community; and energy and passion for us all as we seek to serve and honour Christ.

**January 27<sup>th</sup>**

**Blackmore**

**Minister:** Rev. Derek Cook

We at Blackmore are in a time of change, our Pastor Derek Cook is retiring in April and we are seeking a person to take over the work.

- We pray that God will keep adding to our numbers and families with young children will be drawn in.
- We ask that the seeds that have been sown through the distribution of the Jesus DVD and contacts made through Christian Art will bear fruit.
- We pray for a mighty move of the Spirit in the churches at Blackmore.

**February 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**Braintree**

**Minister:** Rev. Vilma Broadhurst

One year after the calling of the new minister we give thanks to God for witnessing four baptisms, two dedications and the welcoming of three new members. The year has been packed with studies focusing on church and purpose. Please pray for continued focus and vision on the church's prayer life, evangelistic outreach, worship challenges and social action opportunities. As a community venture the Braintree District Churches Together, of which we are a part of, is conducting a community audit. Please pray for this work as we seek to learn as much as we can about the community we serve in order to proclaim the gospel of Christ in relevant ways.

**February 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**Brentwood**

**Minister:** Rev. Peter Thomas

We give thanks to God for His many blessings to us as a church and ask for continued prayer for 3 church members serving as missionaries in Uganda.

We are seeking ways of sharing God's love with members of our community who wouldn't normally attend church. In particular, outreach in the nearby Clements Park area. Please remember us in prayer as we consider this. We are also at the beginning of a process of looking into a 'café' style of church and would very much value your prayers as we contemplate this.

Hope 2008 is a town wide mission which takes place in a few months time. Please pray that God will guide and bless the mission events and draw all the churches involved closer together during the time of preparation.

**February 10<sup>th</sup>**

**Brentwood – Pilgrim's Hatch**

**Minister:** Rev. James Pate; Community worker: Netty Packham

Please pray for us as we continue to serve God in this area. We are delighted to have baptised three people from this area last year – two ladies in their early 20s and an 89 year old man. What an amazing God we worship.

We had a great church weekend at High Leigh in October and we are grateful for the financial support we received that made it possible.

Our church is a wonderful mixture of people from different backgrounds and together we are trying to follow our Lord. Please pray for us as, from the most experienced Christian to the baby in Christ, we work out what it means to follow him.

Netty's original contract with us ended at the end of 2007. We are delighted that the church meeting decided to extend this so she will still be working with us in 2008.

As I write this some of us have been working very hard and we are tired. I don't know whether this will be an issue by the time you read this, but please do pray for us that we will do his work to his glory, and be wise in all we do.

## **February 10<sup>th</sup>**

### **Brightlingsea**

**Senior Leader:** Peter Puttock

We are a small church at present without a minister or moderator. We have no premises of our own but meet in the local YMCA Hall where we have good relationships with the trustees and other users of the Hall.

Please pray for:

- Those who come and preach at our Sunday morning services
- Our fellowship in our search of a pastor or moderator that we may discern the Lord's will in this matter

## **February 17<sup>th</sup>**

### **Burnham-on-Crouch**

**Minister:** Rev. Tony Jones

During most of January and February the Church will be engaged in "40 Days of Community." Please pray that this will achieve its twofold aim: to strengthen "community" WITHIN the Church, and to reach out more effectively to the community AROUND the Church.

The minister has also been offered the opportunity to co-ordinate a weekly religious programme on the new community radio station, "Saint FM" (which is based at SAINT Peter's School).

## **February 17<sup>th</sup>**

### **Canvey Island – Leigh Beck**

**Minister:** Jane Guest

Praise God for the full year that has past, we are a growing church. Alpha has been fruitful, Children's holiday club successful, we now have 10-13 regular children coming to Sunday Klub. Baptisms have taken place and with another waiting to be planned. Assembly work in Leigh Beck primary is going well. Door to Door work has been really beneficial but undermined by sickness of helper - please pray for next year's summer door to door – there are always so many great conversations and blessings. Praise God for answered prayer regarding a worship leader, which we now have.

Pray for:

- The Fit4Life sermon blocks to be well received.
- Marriage course to be built up
- Jane as she goes forward in 2008 for min. rec. and as she completes her final semester of studies.
- Holiday club 2008

## **February 24<sup>th</sup>**

### **Canvey Island – Winter Gardens**

**Moderator:** - Mr Adrian Tinning

We praise God that over the year the congregation has increased and at a recent outreach event with Tough Talk, a number of decisions were made.

We are also thankful that the New Year will mark a new phase in the life of the church as Kingswood assists us in outreach to the area. This involves the setting up of a ministry team bringing structure to the preaching.

Please pray that this new cooperation will bear fruit for the kingdom and that God will lead us on as we seek to be an effective witness to the area.

**February 24<sup>th</sup>**

**Chelmsford – Central**

**Ministers:** Paul Beasley-Murray, Martin Hills (youth), Bridget Jenkinson (seniors & nurture), David Marson (young adults & evangelism). Also Sue Parrotte (children's worker) and Emma Maggs (intern)

Our primary focus between now and the end of July is the Chelmsford Christian Festival (Saturday 12 – Sunday 20 July). With RE:FRESH as its strap line, the Festival sets out to encourage people to take a fresh look at Jesus, as well as offering a re-fresher on Christian faith today. For the first time ever, almost without exception all the churches of Chelmsford have agreed to come together to 'showcase the joy of Christ'. (The exceptions alas are a few evangelical churches who disapprove of the invitation to Steve Chalke to speak at the final four large-scale events!) We want to show the people of Chelmsford that although we may 'do' church in different ways, we are one in our common faith in Christ Crucified and Risen.

As a church we are deeply involved in preparations for the Festival. Paul Beasley-Murray chairs the programme committee, and both David Marson and Emma Maggs are members of the same committee. Please pray for imagination as they put together a multi-faceted programme which will attract people of all ages and all backgrounds. Pray too for our church as indeed for all the churches of the town that they might rise to the vision of reaching all of Chelmsford for Christ.

**March 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**Chelmsford – North Springfield**

**Minister:** Rev. David Gardner

We praise God for continued blessings. During the year we have seen growth in numbers attending Sunday worship and an increase in membership. People in the neighbourhood have responded to cards inviting them to share prayer requests, something we began in 2007. Recently (November) we saw several visiting adults and children swell the congregation at our Christmas Shoebox Service with 164 decorated boxes at the front of the church (a 50% increase on last year). At the time of writing we're planning the delivery of 5000 Christmas Cards and anticipate a "full house" again for our Carols by Candlelight. Looking ahead, we continue to pray for families to join us, while being grateful for those who have; and plans are being made for full-time ministry to begin again some time in the future. "We praise Him for all that is past and trust Him for all that's to come."

**March 9<sup>th</sup>**

**Chelmsford – Springfield Park**

**Minister:** Rev. Roger Stark

Praise:

In September we celebrated ten years of ministry by our pastor Roger Stark. We thank God for his pastoral concern for us all, and for all that has been achieved through his leadership, in the local community, and in the wider community too.

In October, we baptised a young married couple who had recently come to faith.

Prayer:

- For the ongoing work of our church
- Lively Sunday worship, S-Club, youth group and weeknight house groups.
- Community outreach, through;
- Pre-School, Toddler group, Wet Your Whistle fortnightly drop-in, and regular bridge-building events.

**March 9<sup>th</sup>**

**Church from Scratch – Southend-on-Sea**

**Minister:** Rev. Peter Dominey

We praise God for the new 'Partners' who joined us recently. This includes several people who were 'seconded' from other local Baptist churches to help give us a stronger core, for which we are grateful. We

thank God that our work on the Kursaal (or Wood-grange) estate has continued, despite the unexpected deaths of a couple of the leading figures this year. We are thankful that our giving has increased this year ahead of inflation.

We are looking to grow as a community and our mid-week cell meetings also meet as larger clusters now on an occasional basis. We are asking for God's guidance around whether we should look to appoint a pastoral worker on a full or part time basis. We also want to explore the idea of running a charity shop, which could double as a drop-in base for the unemployed.

### **March 16<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Clacton-on-Sea – Pier Avenue**

**Minister:** Sean Fountain

We give thanks for:

- Our new Minister and his family.
- Our new church hall, 'The Welcome Centre' is now fully functioning and Community work is building up. Grants have been received to upgrade the stage area of one of our church halls
- Continuing work and witness of our 'Open doors'.

Please pray for:

- New zeal and vision as a new Ministry begins
- Our continuing desire for community involvement

### **March 16<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Coggeshall & The Church in Great Notley**

**Minister:** Rev. Michael Shrubsole

***Christ Church, Coggeshall (Ecumenical - Baptist, Methodist, United Reformed)***

- Pray for lives that may be changed as we finish a Freedom in Christ course.
- Pray for the development of our new Mother and Toddler group and the connections being made between church and new families.
- Pray for the redevelopment of our upstairs hall and the new community groups and school which will be using it and the links between these groups and the church.

***The Church in Great Notley (Ecumenical - Anglican, Baptist, Methodist, United Reformed)***

Our church is almost ten years old - 10th Anniversary, 13th January 2008. Pray for this church plant as it continues to grow in membership and continues to fundraise for a purpose-built church building for the new village. We are almost there. Pray that building work might be able to commence soon.

### **March 23<sup>rd</sup>**

#### **Colchester – Eld Lane**

**Associate Minister:** Rev. Lynsey Heslegrave

Give thanks for encouragement in our work with our young people; increasingly, they are bonding together in deepening friendship. Three committed to the Lord at a recent weekend at Letton Hall.

Please pray for us as we begin in earnest the search for a new Senior Minister following the retirement of Rev. Rod Sawtell. The Church Profile was adopted at a recent Church Meeting: pray for those who read it and that the right person be lead to make further enquiries!

### **March 23<sup>rd</sup>**

#### **Colchester – Orchard**

**Minister:** Rev. Paul Green

We are very thankful and praise God for continued growth in many areas of church life. On the first Sunday in the new year we will be celebrating 2 baptisms, we begin a new Alpha Course in January and in February half term we will be running our 3rd consecutive children's Holiday Club. However, the teenager youth group 'Rootz' and the Parent and Toddler group 'Little Pips' are showing signs of tiredness and numbers attending in recent months have dropped significantly. Please pray for these as we seek God's direction for the future.

March 30<sup>th</sup>

Colchester – Wycliffe

**Minister in Training:** Steve Rudge

Dr Steve Rudge has been our Minister in Training now for a year.

The first six months were spent "finding his feet" and getting to know the area and fellowship.

He and his wife Laurinda are now working with us to build on that which has already been started and to bring in new ideas and ways of thinking.

The Lord is blessing us in bringing new folk along almost weekly and we can see a pattern emerging where we believe the Lord may want our ministry to lay.

Give thanks with us for....

- The new folk attending, that we may meet their needs...That God is speaking to us through the regular prayer brunches and breakfasts.
- That Steve has passed his first year exams with flying colours.

Pray also that....

- Steve and Laurinda may soon find accommodation closer to the church.
- The new multiple home groups would be established and grow in fellowship.
- That we may make a connection with the local community.

*It would be helpful to receive contributions from the following churches, ready for inclusion in the April - June edition, by Monday 3 March so that we can issue it before Easter. Thank you.*

Corringham	Dagenham, Becontree Avenue	Dagenham, Chaplin Road	Dagenham, Oxlow Lane
Dagenham, Wood Lane	Earls Colne	Eastwood	Elm Park
Frinton	Grays Baptist	Grays, Socketts Heath	Great Leighs Free
Great Sampford	Hadleigh	The Baptist Church in Halstead	Harlow, Fore Street
Harlow, Potter Street	Hawkwell	Heddingham	

You may also download a copy of this Prayer Diary from the Eastern Baptist Association web-site at:

<http://www.easternbaptist.org.uk/>

This might not be the complete address, but it should get you to the web-site! Scroll down to Prayer Diaries.

There is one for each part of the EBA area

Editor:

Rev. Michael Bell 01702 528902

[Revmhbbrooklands@aol.com](mailto:Revmhbbrooklands@aol.com);

[bell193@btinternet.com](mailto:bell193@btinternet.com)

Please note that the email address given in the 2007 – 2008 handbook under the heading Prayer Letter Editor is at least a year out of date!

Please send contributions to either of the above email addresses.