**Regular Activities**

**Sunday**
- 10.30am  Morning communion (third Sunday of every month)
- 11.00am  Morning worship
- 11.00am  TJC (The Junior Church) - younger persons’ groups
- 6.00pm   Evening communion (first Sunday of every month)
- 6.30pm   Evening worship

**Monday**
- 6.30pm  Club 7/12* - ages 7-12, school year 3-7

**Tuesday**
- 7.15pm  Bible Study & Prayer Meeting

**Wednesday**
- 10.00am  Tot Spot (parent and toddler group)*
- 11.00am  Open Church*
- 12.00pm  Women’s Bible Study (first and third Wednesday of every month)

**Thursday**
- 7.00pm  Fuse* - ages 11+

**Friday**
- 10.30am  Coffee Break*

* These activities do not run during the school holidays or on public holidays.

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**Gateway**

**Building work update**

You probably can’t fail to have noticed the building work that is well underway at Corringham Evangelical Church. Since July the front entrance to the building has been undergoing a transformation and the builders are making good progress.

Our main reasons and priorities for undertaking this project are:
- To improve access to the building;
- To open up usable space in the church by removing the existing porch;
- To create a wet storage area for prams, coats etc;
- To encourage a more visual presence within the local community;
- To create safer driveways and parking areas.

The church building is one hundred years old next year, and like all buildings (whether historical or not) it goes through an evolutionary process. You wouldn’t leave your house untouched for a century as it needs care and maintenance, as well as adaptation to suit your way of life.

We’re very much aware, however, that for some people it appears that we’re destroying an old historic building. To us as members of the church we see this as natural growth and development of a building that we love and cherish. This building is special to us, but not because of anything unique about the structure itself, but because it’s where we meet together as Christians to worship God and have fellowship with each other.

We hope and pray that this new entrance will provide a statement to ensure that the church remains part of the community for the next hundred years, and we look forward to welcoming you into the updated building, both now and in the coming months.
Dear Reader,

Welcome to the September edition of the Gateway!

It’s been a lovely sunny British summer and I hope you’ve had an opportunity to have a holiday or short break. Even if you didn’t get away I trust that you enjoyed the sun as it won’t be long and we’ll be complaining about the cold and dark evenings!

We all need a break from time to time, and Jesus was no exception. He often found time to withdraw and be with God in prayer and contemplation. Those times weren’t always easy (Jesus was tempted by the devil during one of his times away) but they did shape his ministry and allow him to understand God’s will for His life better.

As Christians we need to do the same thing too to ensure that we stay grounded in God. Sometimes getting away from the daily grind to be refreshed allows us the opportunity to serve others and God much more effectively.

I trust that you have a great autumn and that this issue is of interest to you. Please do get in touch with any thoughts or suggestions that you’ve got, and look us up on Facebook or Twitter too.

Best wishes,

Dave Partridge (Editor)

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Corringham Evangelical Church is part of the Union of Evangelical Churches, which is associated with the Fellowship of Independent Evangelical Churches (FIEC).

The Gateway magazine is published quarterly in March, June, September and December.

Weekly Clubs & Activities

Fuse is a youth group with a difference for those aged 11+. There are plenty of the fun and games of a normal youth group, but with an ethos of teamwork and friendship building. Fuse is a weekly club where you can come along and be yourself. There are no uniforms and not too many rules but we do expect everyone to have a good time.

The club is held on Thursday evenings from 7.00pm to 9.15pm.

Every night is different, combining indoor and outdoor games with team projects, creative space, learning new skills and relevant group discussions.

Coffee Break is held on a Friday morning, running from 10.30am to 12 noon. The morning is an opportunity to have a drink, some cake and a chat to the other people who attend.

This meeting is popular with older people although those of all ages are very much welcome, and do attend.

We sometimes have special events, such as a Macmillan Coffee Morning (on 27th September this year) and a Christmas meal.
Club 7/12 is our group for young people aged (predictably!) between 7 and 12. They meet weekly on a Monday between 6.30pm and 7.45pm for fun, games and activities.

Sometimes we have volunteers from the church who come along to show us a skill or hobby that they enjoy. During the summer we play outside team games including rounders and football. We end each evening with a short Bible-based epilogue followed by drinks and tuck.

Tot Spot is a free group for parents/carers and toddlers aged from 0 to 5 years running every Wednesday during term-time from 10.00am to 11.15am in the back hall.

Week by week we have the opportunity to meet local children and their Mums, Dads, Nans, Childminders, Aunts, Great Nannies... the list goes on! The children play with toys, participate in craft and simple cooking activities and enjoy a story and song time. Adults can look forward to a warm welcome and a cup of tea or coffee. We hope that the group will allow local parents and carers to meet each other as well as providing a morning out for the children.

Each week we finish the session with a healthy snack for the children while they listen to a story from the Bible, often told with puppets, props... or even a parachute! We end with familiar nursery rhymes, which always prove a favourite with the children.

**Monday**

**Wednesday**

We know it’s early to be thinking about Christmas but in a few weeks we’ll be busy getting ourselves into the festive swing.

The reason we’re mentioning Christmas so early in the year is because we’re helping to promote the Operation Christmas Child initiative.

Operation Christmas Child has delivered 100 million gift-filled shoeboxes to needy children in the last 23 years and it’s our privilege to be part of it again this year.

The mission of Operation Christmas Child is to demonstrate God’s love in a tangible way to needy children around the world, and together with the local church worldwide, to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Last year we at CEC managed to collect 50 boxes that were taken away to be checked, sorted, and distributed to those in need in Serbia.

We also had the privilege of watching a live shoebox-unpacking via a webcast from Belarus, a great experience as we saw the joy that these simple gifts bring.

Putting a shoebox together doesn’t need to take very long, and only needs to cost between £10 and £20, but it’s impact is priceless. You’re encouraged to write a letter or send a photo with your box so that the receiving child can know a bit about the donor who packed their box.

We'll be collecting shoeboxes through October and November, so please get in touch with us if you want to drop one off.

You can find out more about the Operation Christmas Child scheme by going to their website at www.operationchristmaschild.org.uk
Harvest Festival is a celebration of all the food grown on our land. Thanksgiving ceremonies for a flourishing harvest can not only be found across the world, but go back a long way.

In Britain, we have given thanks for successful harvests since pagan times. We celebrate this day by singing, praying and decorating our churches with baskets of fruit and food. This is what is commonly known as a ‘Harvest Festival’.

Harvest Festival reminds Christians of all the good things that God has given them. This can help them want to share with others who are not as privileged. In schools and churches people bring food from home to a Harvest Festival service. After the service, the food on display is made into parcels and given to those in need.

At Corringham Evangelical Church we celebrate harvest by inviting a missionary from the London City Mission to lead our services. This year Jean-Louis Kassis is coming to lead our services on 15th September. Jean-Louis is involved in the work at Webber Street. The team at Webber Street offer friendship and support to homeless people and also seek to address the spiritual needs of their guests.

It is estimated that 3,000 people sleep rough in London each year and these homeless people need the support of organisations like the London City Mission to simply survive.

The team need donations of long-life food suitable for breakfast including baked beans, spaghetti hoops, sugar, sauces, fruit squash, instant coffee, tinned fruit and fish, cooking oil, pepper, baking ingredients and biscuits. They’re also in need of non-food items including socks, underpants, T-shirts, trainers, jeans, tracksuit bottom, hoodies, sweatshirts, anoraks, razors, shower gel, blankets, sleeping bags and rucksacks.

If you’re able to help with any of these items please bring them along at 11.00am or 6.30pm on Sunday 15th September.

Thurrock Foodbank celebrated its first anniversary in July and in the first twelve months of operation they have been able to provide emergency food supplies to over 2,000 local people. Foodbank is filling a real need in our area but the team are constantly in need of more food donations and volunteers to help collect and distribute the food.

Positive developments over the last twelve months include:

Sainsbury’s Chafford Hundred have chosen Thurrock foodbank as their charity of the year. This means that there is now a permanent food collection point there and a permanent money donating point too. Then in August, Tesco Extra Lakeside put in place a permanent collection point for Thurrock foodbank too.

The team also now have a rent-free warehouse in South Ockendon where they can weigh, sort and store essential supplies to be distributed around the Borough.

There are seven distribution centres open every week in Corringham, Tilbury, Little Thurrock, Linford, South Ockendon, Purfleet and Grays.

Ongoing food donations are welcome and needed. Supermarket collections are a useful way of getting large amounts of food at one time, but it would be beneficial to have enough food coming in regularly to cover the ongoing needs of clients.

There is also a real need for lots more volunteers. Volunteers are the lifeblood of every charitable organisation, and Foodbank needs people to manage the growing requirements of those within the Borough.

You can find out more about Thurrock Foodbank by visiting their website at http://thurrock.foodbank.org.uk/