



## Weekly Prayer Focus: 4<sup>th</sup> February 2024 Billericay Baptist Church

Billericay Baptist church are a family-friendly, welcoming church celebrating their diamond anniversary this year! They are a congregation of around 250 adults and 70 children and youth who meet in two locations in Billericay. Both locations are part of the same church family, but Thynne Road is a more intimate setting, whilst Perry Street also has children and youth groups.

For 2024 the church are focused on Jesus: The heart of everything. Their Church Pastor, Rev Wayne Dulson says that this means that Jesus is at the heart of everything in the church, but also everything in each of our lives – work, school and home.

Alongside Sunday services and youth groups, there are regular weekly online prayer meetings and monthly in-person meetings. This year they want to run Alpha, and continue wellbeing days for schools, and, at the invitation of the school, a wellbeing day just for staff. This is done in partnership with Schools Ministry Billericay. A new initiative is as a partner with Kintsugi Hope which trains churches to run wellbeing groups focused on mental health. One of the church's key focuses is on their local community. Rev Gary Bott is the Community Pastor. He has spent the last year getting to know the local community better and building relations with leaders and organisations. The church has realised that the community struggles with loneliness and is praying for ways to draw alongside people.

This is an exciting year for the church; whilst celebrating 60 years, they are looking to the past and seeking stories from some of their current members who were original members of the church! They want to celebrate this time with church family and the wider community. Alongside this, they are looking to the future and are passionate about the prospect of hiring a children and youth Pastor. This Pastor will be part of the leadership team as the children and youth are considered integral to the church's identity.

Throughout this year, they are asking the church and community, 'How would our lives be different if Jesus was truly at the heart of them?' The church's heart is to intentionally remove the things in life and in church life that squeeze Jesus out, so that Jesus takes His rightful place in the heart of our lives. When we do this, we believe we will see Jesus do so much more amongst us.

Please join Billericay in praying:

- With thanks for the last 60 years, but also the last year which has seen many changes.
- For the right person to become the new Children and Youth Pastor, and for the transition time when they arrive.
- For blessings on the church administrator who is retiring, and for discernment to know if God has plans for a new role instead of a direct replacement.
- For a more intentional focus on prayer, that the hunger and desire will stay strong and grow stronger.