

# THIS MONTH'S PRAYER FOCUS

## SUNDAY

Thank God that Chris Fisher, our Resource Centre Manager, has returned to work on a light-duty basis, building up hopefully to full-time in the New Year. His wife Helen continues to recover but still has trouble with her hands.

Sadly, a former member of our Children's Team, Millicent Stone, has died. Please pray for the Lord's comfort for her family and for her friends at Mount Zion Christian Church.

## MONDAY

Praise the Lord for the strategic training delivered by our Children's Team and Open the Book staff; pray for the new OTB Teams starting to visit primary schools in Birmingham, with more teams preparing.

Pray for Kathryn Hindley, back part-time with the Children's Team after maternity leave.

## TUESDAY

Give thanks for the inspiring teaching at the British Association of City Missions Conference last month, attended by a good number of our staff and interns.

Pray for our Interns – Tanatswa, Caitlin-Jayne ('CJ'), Anna Maria and Terrell – as they now give support to different BCM departments.

## WEDNESDAY

Pray for Jon, Steve and their volunteers in the Care Centre, providing homeless with food and friendship and sharing the gospel message.

Pray for Rachel, Linda, Sue, Stan and the ElderLink volunteers who staff the lunch clubs each week and share the gospel with vulnerable elderly people at the clubs or in their homes and in hospital.

## THURSDAY

Pray for Kevin Williams, our newest City Missionary, dividing his time between evangelism in Marston Green and BCM city centre outreach.

Pray for our Missionaries today as they visit homes or set up book tables on their own 'patches'. Pray especially for Jonathan Hackett on his new patch in

Bearwood, and for the Lord's protection, inspiration, boldness and wisdom as they proclaim his truth.

## FRIDAY

Praise God for the Fulfil youth event on 17th Nov and for those who responded to the challenge to become followers of Jesus; pray for the youth leaders as they disciple these young people turning to Christ.

Please pray for the Christmas 'ToyLink' project in its new location (in the 'Annexe' at the Clock Tower). Each family parcel will contain Christian literature; pray that this will be read and that people will be open to the gospel when Missionaries or people from local churches visit them in the New Year.

## SATURDAY

Derek Cotterill has been contacting churches, booking meetings and making BCM's work known. On 23rd November an 'awareness lunch' for leaders of churches and other agencies took place, to give them up-to-date information about BCM activities and to strengthen relationships. Pray for new 'prayer partners'.

We are grateful to the Lord for meeting our financial needs; however, we pray on, to see an increase in people giving through regular standing orders.

## CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES

Nov 27 to Dec 22: **Christmas lessons & assemblies by the Youth Team in 25 secondary schools**

Dec 1 to 24: **ToyLink project** - wrapping, safety on the roads & families receiving

Dec 1 to 24: **Open door at Resource Centre** distributing food & furniture to those in need

Dec 4 to 13: **'Christmas Specials'** (extended assemblies) by Children's Team in 8 primary schools

Dec 19 to 21: **ElderLink Christmas Lunches** at Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday clubs

Dec 19: **Care Centre Christmas Meal** evening event, including talk, for regulars

Through Dec: **Carol Services** in the community & Missionaries' churches



We had a memorable Fulfil event in November. For the first time young people ministered to young people through dance and testimony from Eloquent Praise & Dance Company. They enjoyed song and testimony from Monique Thomas and an engaging gospel talk from Prince Laryea. Again we welcomed new churches to the event, which was well attended by 26 churches from across Birmingham and beyond.



Raise funds for BCM's work with the homeless & find out what it's really like to sleep rough

**Friday 16th Feb**

Details & registration form at [birminghamcitymission.co.uk](http://birminghamcitymission.co.uk)  
0121 766 6603

office@birminghamcitymission.co.uk

**REGISTER NOW**

### Birmingham City Mission

The Clock Tower, 2 Langdon St, Birmingham B9 4BP

[birminghamcitymission.co.uk](http://birminghamcitymission.co.uk)

Telephone: 0121 766 6603

Email: office@birminghamcitymission.co.uk

# BCM MONTHLY



## 'May the God of hope fill you with joy and peace as you trust in him'

A few weeks ago Jackie and I celebrated our 40th wedding anniversary. We had a lovely weekend as family and friends from many eras of our lives joined us at our church for food, pictures and fun as we gave thanks to God for His goodness to us. We chuckled as we saw pictures of ourselves in our earlier years, some of which reminded me that I used to have hair.... One of the highlights was to spend a little time with friends whom we don't see very regularly.

As part of marking 40 years together we had booked a holiday to Fuerteventura, a place we had never been to before. We were looking forward to a relaxing week and hoping to enjoy some sun. Our hopes were dashed as an email arrived one morning explaining that our holiday had been cancelled. We were flying with Monarch Airlines! Of course, our disappointment was nothing compared to those who had lost their jobs right before Christmas.

The word 'hope' is probably used by all of us every week; if not every day. We hope the bus will arrive on time. We hope the traffic on the M5 will be better today. We hope Aston Villa will win... oops... we hope our football team will win! We hope we will receive a valentine's card. We hope our health will improve... so on and so on! Very often the emotion that we describe as hope is based upon circumstances that we have very little control over and therefore hope can rise and fall.

In the verse above Paul is writing to the believers at Rome whom he had never visited. He is coming towards the end of his letter and he encourages them to trust in God. He explains that as they trust God, in whatever life throws at them, they will experience peace and joy. The verse goes on to say, **'...so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.'** Elsewhere Paul makes clear that the gospel that we preach is a gospel of hope and that as believers 'Christ in us is the hope of glory!' We should be the 'People of Hope' to the communities where we serve because our God is a 'God of Hope'.

This Christmas we will all have opportunities to engage people, many of whom are hope-less, and to present them with the gospel. May the Lord help us all to share faithfully the wonderful message that the Prince of Peace entered our world at Bethlehem to bring us all joy and hope by making us right with God. This is a message of hope because our God is a 'God of hope'...

On behalf of everyone at Birmingham City Mission may I wish you a blessed and joyful Christmas.

Wes Erpen, Chief Executive

### BCM CHRISTMAS CARDS



£3 (+P&P) for a pack of 8 cards

Exclusive new designs for 2017 in full colour with gold and silver

Available at BCM HQ and BCM's Kingstanding shop or call 0121 766 6603 for mail order

View at [birminghamcitymission.co.uk](http://birminghamcitymission.co.uk)

### Christmas booklets



**NEW FOR 2017: A Shepherd's Tale** with intricate colouring-in pages

BCM's range of booklets are for children of all ages and priced from 12p to 20p.

To order, call 0121 766 6603.

To view inside the booklets or download the accompanying presentations, visit [birminghamcitymission.co.uk](http://birminghamcitymission.co.uk)

### BCM PRAYER DAY

TUES 9th JAN, 10am to 4pm

at The Clock Tower, 2 Langdon St, B9 4BP

Come & pray for BCM

DECEMBER 2017



A big, big thank you to all who donated food in response to our harvest appeal. All this food is now sorted and marked, thanks especially to DWP, RBS, Cadbury's World, Victoria, Shirley Baptist Church and our own David & Grace.

Andy Morton, Warehouse Assistant Manager, is 'over the moon' that this stage has been reached in record time and comments: **"The people we are in touch with and who receive food parcels every month (averaging nearly 170) are among the most needy in the city. We need to put the message out clearly: even all this food cramming the shelves will not see us through the year, so please keep the tins and packets coming in regularly. Thank you again."**



Volunteers at the Resource Centre from RBS, one of the many teams who helped bring in the harvest!

*Fundraising Stamps*

Help us raise funds by sending your used stamps in to BCM. We will receive £11 for every kilo. Cut UK or foreign stamps from your post, leaving no more than 1cm of envelope around the stamp, but not trimming too close. To send them in, order FREE pre-paid envelopes at [fundraisingstamps.com](http://fundraisingstamps.com) (find Birmingham City Mission under the 'Charity Partners' tab) or you can call 07599 830966.

# Taking hope to our communities

**I've been at BCM since May 2015. I'm one of the City Missionaries, spending 2 days a week in city centre outreach evangelism and 2.5 days in community work.**

A number of us attended the British Association of City Missions Conference last week. It was a great opportunity to meet people doing similar work in other major UK cities and to get some insights and ideas from them that could help us in Birmingham.



The church I used to work alongside closed at Easter and for a few months I had no district to work in. However, I'm now settling in to life at Bearwood Chapel and hope to establish a regular pattern of evangelism in this large suburb. I spend a considerable amount of time on the busy Bearwood Road handing out tracts and talking to passers-by, as well as visiting nearby streets, seeking opportunities to share the gospel with those who answer.

The open-air work used to be the most daunting prospect but it's now my favourite part of the week! It's a great blessing to work in a committed team, and my passion for the open proclamation of God's truth has intensified. Our aim when people pass by is that they will leave having heard the Gospel and been compelled to come to Christ. Please pray for God to give us his wisdom in every conversation we have.

*Jonathan Hackett*

## Taking hope to Marston Green

**I'm the newest of BCM's missionaries, having started in September 2017.**

Prior to that I did a variety of work and was self-employed for a while. It ranged from engineering work as a 'coded welder' to IT support. I was



a deacon in my local church for 10 years and a Sunday school teacher for 20 years.

I spend half of my week with BCM's evangelism team

and the other half at Marston Green Baptist Free Church as their outreach worker in the community. It's a joint project between BCM & MGBFC.

It's a special joy to work alongside my fellow BCM missionaries doing evangelism on the estates. I feel so privileged.

*Kevin Williams*

**Welcome to the Mission, Kevin. We hope to hear from you again soon.**

**Over the last month, every Thursday BCM interns with City Missionary Francis and Elisabeth (BCM intern last year) have been visiting homes on the Masefield Estate in Kings Norton. The interns spoke about their first experience of estate evangelism.**

*"I have met lots of people at different stages of life. Mostly people are indifferent about spiritual issues, so it's good we go as it makes them think about these things.*

*A respectful young Muslim woman opened the door and we started sharing our faith with her. She was very resistant but yet willing to listen to the Gospel. She also shared her faith. It was a good conversation and to me this just consistently reminds me that it is only God who changes the heart of people."*

*Tanatswa*

*"I am very encouraged because I thought there would not be so many responding but the more we go and meet people the more they open up.*



*Apart from estate evangelism, the interns have had a busy schedule. In October they suited up and took the Bible Exhibition into St George's Academy Newtown.*

## INTERNSHIP

- A one-year hands-on training opportunity
- No fees; accommodation, food & bus pass provided
- Wide choice of modules, including:
  - City centre & estate evangelism
  - Youth & Children's work
  - Reaching the homeless
  - Supporting the elderly
  - Church ministry
  - Overseas mission experience

**Probably one of the best all-round Christian training experiences out there**

*For more information call 0121 766 6603 or visit [birminghamcitymission.co.uk](http://birminghamcitymission.co.uk)*

*We met a lady who said, 'Oh, I saw the chapel a few days ago and have been thinking about it.' It was coincidence. We talked about how she is longing for a church family. So through meeting us and God answering our prayer for doors to be open, she said she will attend Kings Norton Baptist Church this Sunday. It's amazing!"*

*Anna Maria*

*"I was aware of a lot of alcohol use, especially in the tower blocks. It's challenging when rejected but we had some good conversations.*

*Yesterday I spoke with a young girl. She has been going through a tough time most of her life as she suffers with mental health issues and that affects her social life. She mentioned to me she struggles to leave the house on her own and it really touched me because I've experienced these situations in my past. Part of being with BCM this year is to encourage and lift people, so it was a blessing to try and persuade her to come to KNBC youth days, but only when she is ready. I pray that she can seek the Lord as only He deals with our anxieties and his love gives peace."*

*Terrell*

**Please pray as they deliver Christmas leaflets to the estate in December.**

**BCM'S TOYLINK IS UNDERWAY!** Over the next 5 weeks toys will be sorted, wrapped and delivered to some 3,000 children from 1,300 families across the city. Thanks to companies, churches and volunteers who make this happen.

If you would like to get involved, either by donating new toys or helping with delivering...

...visit [birminghamcitymission.co.uk](http://birminghamcitymission.co.uk) for more information plus find out how and what to give;

...call 0121 766 6603 to deliver toys in your area.



**Birmingham Churches Winter Night Shelter will be at the BCM Care Centre on Thursday nights from 22nd Feb to 22nd March WE NEED VOLUNTEERS to befriend, serve, clean & stay over If you can help, call 0121 766 6603**

## Bibles for Schools scheme

**IN SEPTEMBER WE TOLD YOU ABOUT** the need in Birmingham schools for class sets of bibles. Not just any bibles - the two versions specified by the RE syllabus. We are pleased to announce that two generous BCM supporters have made it possible for us to present Wyndcliffe Primary School in Bordesley with 60 Lion First Bibles for their infant pupils.



**If you feel moved to enable a child in this city to have a copy of the bible in their hands as they study RE, visit [birminghamcitymission.co.uk](http://birminghamcitymission.co.uk) for the Bibles for primary schools leaflet.**



## Open the Book is catching on in Birmingham!

**OPEN THE BOOK, WHICH EQUIPS** church groups to lead effective and popular bible story assemblies in primary schools, launched an Urban Pilot Scheme in Birmingham earlier this year.

The scheme has got off to a good start. So far, upwards of 60 people have been trained at BCM HQ, and two teams are registered with a further six or seven teams on the brink of speaking to their prospective schools and registering their teams. One of the most exciting developments is the way that in some areas it is individuals from a number of churches who are coming together to form first one team, but with a view to growing and dividing into two teams.

We are now beginning to talk to schools about Open the Book and there is considerable interest.

**We just need teams and individuals in various areas to meet that need. Could it be you?**

**Information sessions:** Tues 16th Jan, Mon 29th Jan & Tues 6th March, 6.30pm - 7.45pm

**Full training:** Tues 16th Jan, Mon 29th Jan & Tues 6th March, 9.15am - 3.15pm

**Please reserve your place by contacting [childrensteam@birminghamcitymission.co.uk](mailto:childrensteam@birminghamcitymission.co.uk)**

*The training is free. Where no bookings are made for a particular session the course will be cancelled.*

**'Open the Book is a great project and pairing it with BCM's vast knowledge about working in Birmingham's diverse schools is incredibly valuable. After attending the training, I feel a lot more confident and excited about being a part of this new initiative.'**

*Lynn Braden, Pavilion Christian Community*