

THIS MONTH'S PRAYER FOCUS

SUNDAY

Thank the Lord today for all the volunteers of BCM. They are so faithful and work so hard to enable us to help many needy people in our city. A number of them are from non-faith backgrounds. Pray that they will be challenged by the example of our staff and that some will come to faith in the Lord Jesus.

MONDAY

Pray for all the young people who attended our recent 'Fulfil' event. It was a great evening with singer-songwriter Philippa Hanna. We often have 30 church youth groups represented. Pray for the youth of the churches across the city that they will grow in their faith and go on to serve in their fellowships.

TUESDAY

Thank the Lord for so many fundraising supporters holding cake sales and barn dancing this summer.



This year's BCM Barn Dance was packed with enthusiastic jiggers, auction bidders, band members and washers-uppers, raising £1,200 for the Mission.



All through June BCM supporters baked wonderful cakes and held Big Brum Cake Sales around the city and beyond, so far raising a total of £2,800.



Thank you to the Bromsgrove Society of Model Engineers. They put on an afternoon tea and train rides for 22 parents and children who received Christmas gifts through BCM's ToyLink project. The club committee had seen ToyLink featured on the BBC news in December and wanted to do something to help the families involved. The committee said, 'We all really enjoyed it and would be very happy to have them back again next year.' What a great idea!

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

WEDNESDAY

Pray for the BCM camp that will take place at the beginning of August. Once again 35 young people will be enjoying the Christian Mountain Centre in Wales. Pray for the safety of the staff and the young people. Pray for John Platt and the Youth Team as they plan all the logistics of the event and prepare for all the spiritual input during the week. These times can be life-changing for the young people!

THURSDAY

In an increasingly ageing population the ministry of ElderLink is ever more important. Each week over 100 attend lunch clubs and many are visited at home. Pray for staff, volunteers and their elderly friends.

Bag a bargain at ElderLink's SECOND HAND BOOK SALE at the Eric Holt Centre, 126 Arden Rd, B27 6AG on Sat 4th August, 10am to 3pm.

FRIDAY

Pray for our City Missionaries. They are at the 'coal face' of our evangelistic work and are often being challenged by irate and angry people who are hurting. Pray for their safety and that their personal spiritual lives will be kept fresh and vibrant.

You could join BCM's SUMMER OUTREACH for 1 or 2 weeks. Tues 24th July to Sat 4th August. Visit birminghamcitymission.co.uk or call 0121 766 6603 for more information.

SATURDAY

The summer months are often the quietest as regards financial support for charities. Please pray that the Lord will meet BCM's financial needs in whatever way that he chooses.

Pray for Sue Fearon today. Ask the Lord to sustain her with the challenges she faces with her health and give her wisdom as she leads the Children's Team.



BCM Junior Camp at Peck Wood was a weekend camp enjoyed by children from church outreach groups. The theme this year was 'true friendship'. We had fun! Fun 'in the sun'; at the swimming pool; round the campfire; and in crafts, games and activities. More than that, the children were given a glimpse of what 'life in all its fullness' is like, as we taught about Jesus and his friend Peter and modelled love in action.

birminghamcitymission.co.uk
Telephone: 0121 766 6603
Email: office@birminghamcitymission.co.uk

BCM MONTHLY



Love one another

// Excuse me, mate – do you work here?" The man was in his middle 20s, tall, well-built and a little scruffily dressed. This was a couple of weeks ago and I had just locked up The Clock Tower building and was closing our car park gates. "Yes, how can I help you?" I replied. He proceeded to explain that he had been given a referral letter that morning to come to our Basics Bank project to request a food parcel, but he had been 'delayed'. I explained that our project closed almost two hours ago but if he came first thing in the morning our staff would be pleased to help him. He looked a little disappointed but resigned himself to the fact that he should have arrived earlier.

As he turned away I did something that we tell our staff never to do. (I hope none of them read this!) The thought of my evening meal that I was going to enjoy and all the benefits of having a home flashed across my mind, and I felt for this man as he walked away. "Here," I said. I pulled out a £5 note and gave it to him. He gratefully received it, thanking me as he went. "Make sure you use it for food, won't you?" I shouted across the road. "Yes, I promise I will," was his reply.

A week before the above incident I had parked my car in the car park opposite Carrs Lane Church in the city centre. Going to the parking meter I couldn't help but notice a homeless man sitting on the floor right underneath the meter. He was no doubt positioned strategically to plead for money, with his sullen eyes, to everyone who bought a ticket. Like any city, we have many people begging on our streets, and as I proceeded to feed the meter with pound coins I ignored the soft dulcet tones asking for spare change.

When I put in my fourth pound coin the meter spat it out. I tried again and again as I didn't have another but without success. Suddenly, I heard a voice saying, 'Here'. I looked down and the homeless man, with his hand in the air, was giving me a pound coin. He didn't even say, "Swap yours for this one." He just gave it to me! I thanked him but did replace his pound coin with mine. I then told him about our Care Centre,

where for the next three evenings he could receive a meal. As I turned to go I felt moved in my heart and took a £5 note out my pocket and gave it to him. He gratefully received it.

Of course, I am not relating these incidents to show you how generous I have been during this past month! To give away £10 is nothing at all. I have been once more challenged about how we respond to the needy that we come across in all kinds of circumstances, not just homeless people. We are so privileged to belong to the 'people of God' and to worship and live amongst fellowships where to love and to care for one another is second nature.

The summer weeks are busy for us all and we will all no doubt come across people who would benefit from some kind of act of love from both you and me. As the Lord Jesus said, 'They will know that you are my disciples if you love one another.'

May God give us the ability to love those we come into contact with during the coming weeks, and also the wisdom to know how to respond.

Wesley

Wes Erpen, Chief Executive

Birmingham City Mission's

ANNUAL celebration

SATURDAY 13th OCTOBER

2.00 - 3.30PM • WITH SPEAKER ALAN BLACK
Deputy CEO of London City Mission

at Carrs Lane Church Centre, Birmingham B4 7SX

SHOWCASE

AN INTERACTIVE EXHIBITION SHOWCASING THE MISSION'S PROJECTS

from 12 noon

- Find out what's happening
- Chat with the team
- See, hear, taste, discover
- Get involved & volunteer

HOMELESS ELDERLY SCHOOLS CHRISTMAS OUTREACH

JULY/AUGUST 2018

Misión en dos ciudades

(Mission in two cities)

In June the BCM Interns, along with City Missionaries Francis and Jonathan, spent a week on the Med with Misión Evangélica Urbana de Valencia. Here, the interns share their experiences of their time in Spain, their year with our (perhaps) less exotic City Mission here in Birmingham, and their plans as they move on.



IT WAS A REAL TREAT to go to Valencia. Though the language barrier was a challenge at times, it did not hinder us working with the City Mission there. My highlight of the week was when we went out into the street one evening to speak to and serve the homeless. It was truly amazing to see how God moves in all situations.

The internship has been a real eye-opening experience. Evangelising and working with different parts of the Mission has helped me grow spiritually as well as in confidence in faith and sharing it. Even though at times I faced challenges and difficulties, it's all been part of the experience. I'm still looking and waiting to see where I will go and what I will do next.

Tanatswa

INTERNSHIP

- A one-year hands-on training opportunity
- No fees required
- Accommodation, food & bus pass provided
- Wide choice of experience, including:

City centre & estates evangelism

Youth & children's work

Supporting the homeless & elderly

Church ministry

Overseas mission trip

One of the best all-round Christian training experiences you will find

For more information call 0121 766 6603 or visit birminghamcitymission.co.uk



AT VALENCIA CITY MISSION we experienced another way of approaching homeless people. The expressive loving kindness of the Spanish culture had a great positive impact on the team dynamic. We enjoyed the weather, the food and especially the work. I had the opportunity to speak to a group of street women with whom I shared my testimony. That was very edifying.

My time as an intern at BCM has been stretching and has flown by. The bible teaching was very good, and all the different tasks and situations we found ourselves in were challenging and helped me grow a lot. Next year I'm staying on at BCM as a City Missionary.

Anna Maria

OUR RECENT TRIP TO VALENCIA is something I will cherish for a long time. It was such a breathtaking experience. Not only is Valencia a beautiful city, the diversity and culture was incredible. I had the chance to speak to people from all over the world, from Bolivia to Lithuania, and share the gospel with them. We were involved in so much, practical work such as painting, evangelism and homeless outreach on Saturday night. I got the chance to lead a devotion to the Spanish volunteers at the Mission and have it translated, something I'd never thought would involve me. I was inspired by God's ability to bring together his people from all over the world for his glory.

The mission trip linked to the whole internship programme as it allowed us to get involved in such a broad range of projects. This year I know my faith has grown, but also I feel I've grown as a person spiritually. While it has been a real challenge at times, the internship has contributed significantly to building up my character, something I hope will benefit me in whatever the Lord has planned for me next. I feel like he is confirming youth work to me in my heart and also through other people.

Terrell

Please pray for Tanatswa, Anna Maria and Terrell as their year as BCM Interns comes to an end and they seek to take their experiences and serve God in the years ahead.



Volunteers are unpaid because they are priceless

1966 – a famous year, something about football but another famous event was about to unfold. The commencement of Birmingham City Mission.

John and I were 'partakers' in the beginning of the Mission. John was a DIY person who helped at the first BCM premises in Bromsgrove Street but he was also the first Treasurer (for a time) and we, as a family, took part in many events already recorded in the annals of the Mission.

I began to volunteer each Wednesday, when I retired, firstly marking goods donated for the foodbank with the appropriate date. This was over sixteen years ago. I graduated to sorting out the kitchenware and bric-à-brac at the former Resource Centre – a 'promotion' indeed!

Some incidents stand out, and one was whilst sorting mugs donated I found someone's false teeth - a whole set! Overhearing conversations, not intentionally of course, is memorable too. One customer wanted to know who had slept on a good, clean mattress, and as the staff member did not know, the man refused to buy it unless he found out! On another occasion a lady was interested in purchasing a radio marked at £5. She proceeded to eat the small price label and then asked, "How much?" She was told that despite eating



Jean with another happy customer

the label, it was still £5. Another time, when I had priced a number of goods, the lady customer took them off the shelf and removed all the labels. Like the other lady, she said, "How much?" Remembering all the priced items, I said, "Despite you removing the labels, the prices are still the same!" There are many more unusual meetings with customers but they would take too much time in the telling. Pricing the goods honours the donors and helps give dignity to people buying to feel they are contributing to the work of the Mission. Prices are always very reasonable.

If YOU are thinking of volunteering at the Mission, you will have a GREAT time. To meet people from other lands and to help, to laugh with them and to witness quietly by our manner and showing our concern is very rewarding. I could 'go on', of course, but I hope in reading this



THE BCM YOUTH TEAM have been out and about in the city this summer with the GSUS Live interactive classroom trailer. Students have looked at themes of fear, rejection and forgiveness, exploring Jesus' teachings on the issues and their own responses to them, followed by a time of discussion. They have engaged well with the programme

which benefits them socially and pastorally as well as contributing to their RE and PSHE education. Thanks to our Youth Team volunteer, Terry Wilbanks (pictured), who has been heavily involved in delivering GSUS Live this summer.

Students said:

'I learnt that Christians believe you can pray to God at any time and it will give you strength when life is tough.'

'GSUS Live made me feel safe. I didn't feel judged.'

'I learnt that Jesus died to forgive people's sins.'

A teacher said:

'I'm already looking forward to the next visit of GSUS Live to school!'



little snippet YOU might come and see what YOU can do.

Jean Orton

Everything beautifully understated by Jean, as usual, but for once it must be said how much we are still indebted to the vision, time and effort of Edwin & Dorothy Orton, John & Jean Orton, David & Phyllis Torpey and many others like them, put into the founding and grounding of BCM, while planting a church in Kingshurst in East Birmingham through the same period.

A Pilgrim's Progress

Thank the Lord for George and for the more than £4,000 that he raised for the work of BCM as he walked 70km in one day around Birmingham's outer and inner circles to celebrate his 70th birthday. He is an amazing man!

'I have always had a great love of walking and this seemed a natural way for me to mark the 70th birthday landmark in my life's progress.

I did not grow up in a church-going family and became a Christian in the mid-sixties, going forward at a Billy Graham meeting at Earls Court having recognised my need of a saviour and accepting Jesus Christ as my Lord.

I came to Birmingham as a post-grad student in 1970 and was allocated lodgings in Kings Heath. My interest in BCM began in 1985 when my late wife, Eleanor, and I joined Kings Heath Evangelical Church where BCM staff member Pat attended. Eleanor and I were both very enthused by the gospel work of BCM and its wide range of social enterprises on behalf of needy people in our city. Since then we always prayed regularly for BCM's work and sought to support it in any way we were able.'

George O'Sullivan

