



Thank you to all the local businesses that have supported the Mission over the last financial year, including Dave and Nigel of AutoScan who visited last month with a very large cheque!

**At the end of another financial year we can give thanks to the Lord for the way he has provided. We also want to thank everyone who has supported us for their generosity.**

If you haven't reviewed your standing order recently we would ask you to prayerfully consider increasing your gift, and if you don't support us this way please consider doing so.

**BEFORE THE EASTER HOLIDAYS** the Children's and Youth Teams reached thousands in schools with the story of Jesus' death and resurrection and its message of forgiveness and eternal life for all.

**School staff said:**

*'The assembly was clear, helpful and succinct. It was directly relevant to our students and situations they are facing.'*

*'The children were captivated.'*

*'What a treat! Two puppet shows and a quiz. But most importantly a story with a strong message.'*

**The children said:**

*'Rachel was respectful. We were allowed not to agree.'*

*'It was life-changing' & 'I want to know more.'*



**AT EASTER THE BCM MISSIONARIES** & interns headed to the Masefield Estate in Kings Norton. They worked alongside Kings Norton Baptist Church with Margrit and Katie who came over from Germany for the week. Taking place was outreach, local visitation, a book table and a children's club at St Thomas Aquinas School. Children heard the message of Christ through parables such as *The Good Samaritan* and *The Prodigal Son* while parents watched on. Easter Sunday saw some respond to the invitation and gospel leaflets distributed.



**Birmingham City Mission**

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

**PRAYER FOCUS**

**SUNDAY**

Give thanks: Chris Fisher is back full-time in the Resource Centre; pray for his wife Helen, still unable to return to the Charity Shop. Pray for David Clark, not back to full strength; his wife Grace has had two procedures done – pray for clear diagnosis.

**MONDAY**

George McIntyre had another operation in mid-April following his heart by-pass; he is improving. Hannah Cook (wife of Matt in Children's Team) had an operation on 18th April. Please pray for a good prognosis.

**TUESDAY**

Pray that the preaching and testimony of the open-air team today will be clear and winsome and that good, worthwhile conversations will ensue. Pray for Francis as he follows up individuals and families contacted in the mission week on the Masefield Estate. Remember him in his regular visitation in Kings Norton; also, the district work of our other Missionaries: Alasdair in Quinton; Bernd in Ladywood; Jonathan in Bearwood; and Kevin in Marston Green.

**WEDNESDAY**

Continue to pray for Sue Fearon as she manages her Parkinson's Disease and the busy Children's Team. Pray for wisdom as applicants for the Children's Worker post are shortlisted and interviewed. Thank God for all the Easter special assemblies and lessons in both primary and secondary schools.

**THURSDAY**

Give thanks that Rachel Khan is back at ElderLink following her second cataract operation. Pray for all the staff and volunteers there as they minister practically and spiritually at the lunch clubs and on home visits. Pray for more volunteers at ElderLink and in the Care Centre.

**FRIDAY**

Join with us in thanking God for his provision in the past year. We want to lay foundations for BCM's future as well as resourcing current ministries. Pray that we will humbly trust the Lord in this new financial year. Thank God for Rob's and Roger's faithful work in the finance office. Pray that Roger, who lost his mom recently, having lost his dad not so long before, will know the Lord's comfort and strengthening.

**SATURDAY**

Thank God for Tony's conversion and cheerful service; pray that he will continue to grow as a Christian. Pray for our present 'Interns' (Anna Maria, Tanatswa and Terrell). Pray that young people considering full-time Christian service or planning a 'gap year' will apply to come as BCM 'Interns' in September.

**BCM MONTHLY**



**Ebed Melech**

// Hey, you there. That's a lot of old 'bleep, bleep' rubbish!" I was preaching in the old Bull Ring, outside St Martin's, in front of the spiral staircase (long since demolished). It was the late 1980s. There was probably a crowd of 50 people listening. Suddenly, three inebriated gentlemen pushed their way through the crowd, not completely steady on their feet. It was one of these men who hurled the insult above.

Within minutes the men were shouting unintelligible words at me and gesticulating. It caused quite a stir and the crowd began to swell. Not satisfied with words, they grabbed the preaching stand I was on and began to rock it, side to side, forwards and backwards. It felt like being in a boat in a storm! Unable to dislodge me completely, they got hold of me, dragged me off the box and shouted that they were going to alter my face!

All of a sudden I saw a big man of about 6' 4" coming through the crowd. He quickly removed the men's hold. It was a young man called Jimmy, one of the market stallholders, about 15 years younger than me, and he was a boxer. We had talked together many times in the market. With his large frame and enormous hands he firmly but gently 'shepherded' our three unwanted guests to the side of the gathering. I got back up on the box and found myself preaching the gospel to some 150 people. The Lord does send some unexpected people to intervene and to deliver ...

Jeremiah was faithfully preaching what God had told him to say to the people, to Zedekiah (the last king of Judah) and to the false prophets. His message was simple. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, was going to take Jerusalem and they needed to surrender or die! Four court officials told Zedekiah that Jeremiah was preaching sedition. The weak king gave in to the pressure and Jeremiah was lowered into a dark cistern and left to sink into the mud and die.

I wonder, as Jeremiah no doubt prayed, whom he thought God might send to deliver him. Maybe a faithful prophet, a priest or a God-fearing Israelite? The person God used was a man from Cush (probably modern-day Egypt), no doubt a man of colour. Ebed Melech (which means 'servant of the king') approached the king at the Benjamin gate. He told the king that the four officials had acted wickedly and that Jeremiah would starve to death if left in the cistern. The king gave him permission to rescue him, so Ebed

Melech sought out old rags and worn-out clothes to make Jeremiah's lift from the mud more comfortable. Along with the men the king gave him, he rescued and delivered the prophet.

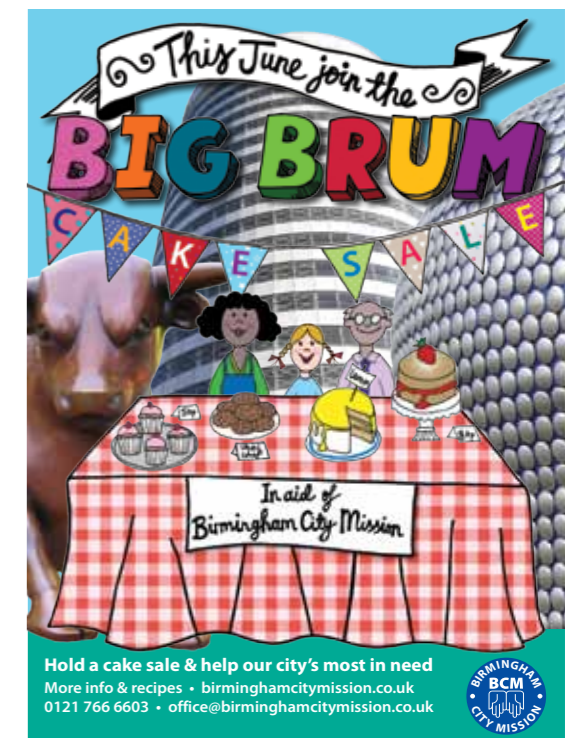
We only read of Ebed Melech again in chapter 39, where God instructs Jeremiah to tell him that he didn't have to fear the fierce Babylonians: he would be saved because he trusted in the Lord. What an example of courage, faith, compassion and cross-cultural love in action this man, whose real name we don't know, brings to us today. We may not know his name, but he truly was a servant of the Lord.

Throughout BCM's history the Lord has sent some unexpected and unusual people to provide for, deliver and rescue us from difficult and challenging situations. Pray that our workers may be used by the Lord this month to be that 'unexpected person' to intervene in someone's life, whether through practical help or through sharing the life-changing gospel.

Thank you for your prayers and support.

*Wes Erpen* Wes Erpen,  
Chief Executive

**APRIL/MAY 2018**



Hold a cake sale & help our city's most in need  
More info & recipes • birminghamcitymission.co.uk  
0121 766 6603 • office@birminghamcitymission.co.uk



**birminghamcitymission.co.uk**

**Telephone:** 0121 766 6603

**Email:** office@birminghamcitymission.co.uk

# The old has gone, the new is here!

On 25th March BCM staff member and volunteer, Tony, was baptised. This is his testimony.

'My name is Anton Dumitrescu, but I am usually called Tony. I was born in 1967 to a Romanian army general and his wife in the capital city of Bucarest - one of four (I have three sisters), though I was reared by my maternal grandmother.

When I was old enough (fourteen) I joined the navy college but was expelled in my third year for bad behaviour and therefore did not complete my training. I spent a short term in a young offenders' prison. At this time my life seemed like a kind of jungle, ruled by forces I could not understand.

As time went on I began to read books on philosophy and the lives

of great figures in history. I wanted to become an artist, but found I had little talent.

Around about my mid-twenties I began to live a pointless life, drinking heavily, and was convinced that the answer to life, the secret of happiness, was money! The quickest way to get money was crime, so I planned a robbery but ended up spending nine years and eight months in prison.

After leaving prison I won a literature competition, which was a high point in my life, though my life was anything but settled, and I had many broken relationships. I went on to become the leader of a Nazi gang, but I was full of anger, anxiety and frustration. I seriously considered suicide. A good friend, a

nun, advised me to seek solace in a monastery, so for a full year I became a monk. This was a difficult, even brutal, time intellectually.

*'I opened my heart to Jesus Christ... and became a new person.'*

Upon leaving the monastery I got married but eventually that too broke up and I began to wander around the continent of Europe. I finally ended up in Birmingham, living rough on the streets. It was here, at an extremely low point in my life, after crying out to God, that I met 'God's angel', Richard Mansell, who worked for BCM. I met him on New Street and later I opened my heart to Jesus Christ, received his forgiveness and became a **new person** (2 Corinthians 5:17).

I have now found my true family in my church and at BCM, where I work as the cleaning man. I also do voluntary work at the Care Centre. I live in Halesowen with a Christian family. From now on I only want to serve God and bring him pleasure and glory. Hallelujah!



FRIDAY JUNE 8, 7PM  
BIRMINGHAM CITY MISSION

## BARN DANCE

LIVE BAND & CALLER  
**PLOUGHMAN'S SUPPER**  
HOME BAKED CAKES  
★ CHARITY AUCTION ★

AT ROWHEATH PAVILION  
HEATH ROAD, BOURNVILLE B30 1HH

TICKETS: ADULTS £10, CHILDREN £5  
FAMILY (UP TO 2 CHILDREN) £25  
FOR TICKETS CALL 0121 766 6603 OR EMAIL  
OFFICE@BIRMINGHAMCITYMISSION.CO.UK

★ A WARM WELCOME TO ALL! ★

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AT ELDERLINK

**Kitchen staff**, to assist the cook in preparing, cooking, serving and clearing up in the kitchen for 25 to 30 elderly people on Wednesday 9.30am to 2.30pm each week.

**Bus courier**, to assist on our mini bus, collecting and returning the clients to and from their homes, on Wednesday 9.30am to 4.00pm each week.

**Male visitors**, to visit elderly men in their homes, to befriend, assist and encourage them. Must be a practising Christian. Days and hours to suit.



Eric Bafende, our latest missionary recruit, shares something of his story and his hopes for the future at the Mission.

## A page turned, good to be here

Born in Belgium into a Christian family, when I was six years old, my family settled in the Democratic Republic of Congo. We attended the local Baptist church; I and my siblings went to Sunday school. 25% of me is Congolese, 25% Belgian, 25% British (my father married a white British citizen 34 years ago and I married a British citizen 9 years ago), and 25% open to other cultures such as Guinean, Swedish, Israeli (where I spent some time in my life).

*'I was amazed that she was calm and knew where she would be after death.'*

When I was studying for the equivalent of A-Level exams, my mother informed us that she had liver cancer. I was amazed that she was calm and knew where she would be after death. I was afraid to die and I realised I was a sinner and not sure of my salvation. A missionary from Uganda rescued me, leading me to accept Jesus as my Saviour at the age of 18.

I received the call to become a missionary in a Muslim country in 1993 during a Health Care Christian Fellowship conference for French-speaking countries in Brazzaville. Twelve years later I became a missionary with BMS World Mission in Guinea, West Africa, and ministered there for 10 years. As team leader in Labe, Guinea Conakry, I was responsible for setting up a new mission team in Middle Guinea.

As a Medical Director of the national referral hospital for leprosy, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and other tropical diseases, I managed and

motivated a 55-strong team of health care workers. I attended meetings with WHO in Geneva on Buruli Ulcer. I worked to reduce transmission of the Ebola virus by establishing good hygiene practices. I organised medical and financial training. I also set up the Health Care Christian Fellowship, Guinea and organised national conferences in Conakry in 2008 and in the forest region of Guinea in 2010. I encouraged the group in the hospital and organised evangelism with the chaplain and a team of Christian Healthcare workers. An average of 48 people per year made their commitment to the Lord, half of them with a Muslim background.

Outside of work, I encouraged the youth group to join the church, participate in devotions and Bible study and get involved in retreats, sport, music and drama and do door-to-door evangelism in the villages. I was also a lay preacher with a small village church plant.

I am here in the UK to settle, as my children needed further education, but also for the purpose of having one nationality as a family (my wife and two children are British citizens). I have enjoyed rising to a challenge throughout my working life and hope to be able to do so with BCM. I am on the induction programme, shadowing other city missionaries, gaining experience from them and from my line manager. My heart is in Small Heath. I hope that I will have the Lord's confirmation soon.

**Please pray:**

- for a better adjustment for my family
- that the Lord will clearly show my 'mission field'
- that I will be able to learn about mission in the UK



fulfill

with singer-songwriter  
**PHILIPPA HANNA**

& creative performer **SARAH AMANKWAH**

**FRIDAY JULY 6 - FOR 11-18s**  
0121 766 6603 - BIRMINGHAMCITYMISSION.CO.UK  
JOHNP@BIRMINGHAMCITYMISSION.CO.UK

## JESUS SAID

# AM

TUESDAY 1ST, WEDNESDAY 2ND & THURSDAY 3RD MAY  
EVENINGS AT 7.30PM  
CARRS LANE CHURCH CENTRE  
SPEAKER  
DEREK CLEAVE

BIRMINGHAM SPRING CONVENTION 2018