

## Vintage Garden Party

Saturday 9th June  
10am to 5pm

2 Welbeck Close,  
Halesowen B62 8PX

(Home of Jean & Alan Harborne)

Serving home made cream tea  
by Fatherless Barn Church youth  
group dressed in vintage style!

[birminghamcitymission.co.uk/  
big-brum-cake-sale](http://birminghamcitymission.co.uk/big-brum-cake-sale)

to find  
Jean's  
scone  
recipe



## PLANT & CAKE SALE

Saturday 16th June

12 noon to 4pm

at 3 Huntsman Close,  
Bilston WV14 8RU

(Home of Angela & Keith Webb)

Please park in Siddons Rd



You can join the  
**BIG BRUM CAKE SALE!**

Hold a cake sale or bake off or tea  
party... at home, work or school...  
And it doesn't have to be big!

[birminghamcitymission.co.uk/  
big-brum-cake-sale](http://birminghamcitymission.co.uk/big-brum-cake-sale) for tips & recipes

Hold a cake sale & help our city's most in need  
More info & recipes • [birminghamcitymission.co.uk](http://birminghamcitymission.co.uk)  
0121 766 6603 • [office@birminghamcitymission.co.uk](mailto:office@birminghamcitymission.co.uk)



# BCM MONTHLY



## Waiting on the Lord

Are you a patient person? Even if we are, we can be challenged as we live in an increasingly fast-paced world. Waiting does seem to be part of everyday life, but at times it can be quite stressful.

We stand on platforms straining our eyes down the line hoping to see a train, but when it does arrive, we often discover that there are no seats available. We hold on to the telephone, gripping it more tightly, and our teeth, as the recorded voice from the doctor's surgery informs us that, even after fifteen minutes, we are still only 7<sup>th</sup> in the queue!

Let's not talk about waiting for a car to let us into the busy city traffic; the anxiety we feel waiting for the new passport to arrive; the extended time sitting in the A&E department; the daily checking of our emails and post for a company to respond at least to our job applications; or for the contract on the property that we are buying at last to be exchanged. The list is endless....

As I write, we are approaching Pentecost Sunday. In churches around our land the story of the 'birth' of the New Testament Church will be recounted, when the Holy Spirit descended upon those early believers. In reading the Acts account this year I have been quite taken by the verse where, when they arrived at the upper room where they were staying, it says, 'They all joined together constantly in prayer...' For ten days between the Lord Jesus ascending to

his Father and the Holy Spirit descending upon the believers, they prayed.

For the next ten days that early group of Christians sought God. We don't know what their daily routine was or how they actually prayed. The Lord Jesus had told them not to leave Jerusalem and that in a 'few' days they would be baptised with the Holy Spirit. What did they understand by Jesus' words? We don't know, but it seems clear that they waited, and while they waited, they prayed, and eventually they received.

Towards the end of Jeremiah's ministry he was asked by those left in the land to pray for them. They were heading south towards Egypt, afraid that Nebuchadnezzar would send soldiers to kill them. We are not told why they suddenly stopped and decided to approach Jeremiah, but they did. They asked him to ask the Lord two of the most important questions that we can ever ask:

**'Where do you want us to go?  
What do you want us to do?'**

I am sure that the people would have preferred an immediate answer from Jeremiah. Day after day went by and they probably asked, 'Any answer yet?' For ten days Jeremiah prayed and then he brought the answer. The Lord said to them, effectively, 'Stay where you are! Do what you have been doing!' Sadly, the only answer the people wanted was, 'Go to Egypt. Live as you like.' They disobeyed the Lord and went to

Egypt, where they experienced famine and the sword.

Whether we wait upon the Lord individually or collectively, let us pray this month for those in our communities. In your street and mine there are people who don't know it, but they are 'waiting' to be told about Jesus. Let us all, this month, tell as many people as we can about the only Saviour of the world.

*Wes Erpen* **Wes Erpen,  
Chief Executive**

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](mailto:OFFICE@BIRMINGHAMCITYMISSION.CO.UK)  
★ A WARM WELCOME TO ALL! ★



*In last month's prayer letter Wes spoke about how over the years the Lord has sent many unexpected 'friends' to help BCM. This month Mark, a friend of Andy Morton's from the company Amey, arranged for all of our drains at the Clock Tower to be surveyed, repaired and cleared, free of charge! Thank you Mark and all your colleagues for your kindness.*

## THIS MONTH'S PRAYER FOCUS

### SUNDAY

Thank God for all the work the Amey company did at The Clock Tower, completely free of charge!

Thank the Lord for Derek Cleave's encouraging and challenging ministry at the Spring Convention and for all those who attended.

### MONDAY

Pray for our friends at Valencia City Mission, that they will experience much joy and see much spiritual fruit as they reach their city with the gospel.

Remember our Interns, Anna Maria, Tanatswa and Terrell, looking to the Lord for the next step in their lives. They have all grown in confidence and in their relationship with the Lord.

### TUESDAY

Pray for Matt & Hannah Cook and their children. Hannah will be starting radiotherapy and chemotherapy on 4th June. Ask God to give them the strength they need for each and every step.

This evening over 30 homeless people will be fed and will hear the gospel at our Care Centre. Pray for Jon Tiley, Steve Bagnall and their great team of volunteers as they provide this service. Ask the Lord to open hearts and keep our staff safe.

### WEDNESDAY

Pray for all our City Missionaries who will today be reaching people in their allocated areas of the city. Every week hundreds of spiritual conversations take place and much literature is distributed.

Today our Resource Centre will be a hive of activity as needy people call for help with food and clothing, with others requesting furniture starter packs. Pray

for Chris, Andy and Steve as they manage this busy Centre. Pray they will have patience and wisdom in dealing with so many different kinds of people.

### THURSDAY

Remember the work of ElderLink. Almost 100 elderly people attend the Lunch Clubs each week. A number have died in recent months. Pray that their places will be quickly filled. We thank the Lord for one or two new volunteers but we still require more, especially a Christian man to become part of our 'Visitation Team'.

Remember our Youth Team as they take assemblies and lessons in senior schools today. Pray that the next Fulfil event on 8th July will be a blessing to the church groups around the city. Pray for all the logistical preparations for GSUS Live visiting six schools in the coming weeks.

### FRIDAY

Two of our staff, Jon Tiley and Roger Flukes, have lost their moms in recent days. Pray that the Lord will be near to them and give them and their families his special grace at this time.

We thank God for faithfully meeting our financial needs through his people. We are constantly amazed at the goodness of God. Please pray that as we take on more staff in the coming months that the Lord will graciously honour our step of faith and supply the extra resources that we will require.

### SATURDAY

Any day that we walk in our city centre we can observe many different faith groups offering their literature. Please pray that as our City Missionaries and volunteers evangelise today they will be kept safe and have many 'God ordained' conversations.

### Birmingham City Mission

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

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

Telephone: 0121 766 6603

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# 'I will give you rest'

To watch Amanda's full interview, visit [birminghamcitymission.co.uk](http://birminghamcitymission.co.uk)

**My name's Amanda. I'm 37 years old. I've lived in Birmingham since July 2017. I have three children back in Redditch and this is me trying to build a new life for myself.**

I've been a drug addict since the age of thirteen. I started with weed and drinking alcohol on a weekend and then it progressed to taking ecstasy, cocaine and speed. By the time I was twenty I was a heroin and crack cocaine addict.

When I was on heroin and staying in a domestic violence refuge, that's when I first encountered God. I was on my own supporting my addiction, having to go out as soon as I woke up in the morning because I'd be ill from the withdrawal. I'd get my daughter ready, put her in her pushchair and go into town and shoplift as much as I could to raise up to £70 a day. I'd just had enough.

My daughter was asleep. I sat with her, stroking her hair and crying. I said, 'God, if you are out there, please, please help me'. And he responded instantly, audibly, the voice filled my room. I was so scared I ran to my bed, pulled the covers over me. It wasn't a scary voice, just loud. It said, 'Amanda, don't be afraid. Listen and follow me and I will give you rest.' I must've fallen into a deep sleep as I woke up the next day and remembered everything. I told everybody. They thought, 'Manda, you've had too much crack' or 'You're off your head' but I was like, 'No, it's real'.

Not long after that I was sentenced to 18 months in jail. There was a Bible in my cell and I came to Jesus again. I only served 7 months, because I got tagged, and I was allowed to go to the Victory Outreach rehab centre in Wales, straight from jail. It was amazing. I got to have Christians around me, helping me on my walk and my faith in God grew.

The time came when I was ready to go home. As soon as I left God, because of influences around me, my life went downhill again. It got to the point when I had my children taken off me and my only option was to say, 'OK Lord, I need you again'. I went back to Victory Outreach for 4 months and then Betel for 5. As soon as I left I was back down again. I said to God, 'OK, you've made it clear to me, I can't do this on my own. I'm going to fail every time.'

***It's like I've lost one family and gained another. That's what God promises to do, isn't it?***

That's when I went back to church and got some help, and now I'm here today. It's finally clicked that I can't live a life without God. Before, if I've ever made a mistake, I've always thought, 'I'm just not good enough for this,' whereas now I realise that if I make a mistake, like when I had a little relapse at the end of last year, God doesn't want me to beat myself up, he wants me to dust myself off and carry on. I'm just so thankful.

When I moved into this flat I had no furniture whatsoever. A friend suggested going to the BCM Resource Centre to get a starter pack. So I went down there and got to know the guys and loved how happy and kind everybody was. After that I went down to help them out with the food.

I love volunteering at the Care Centre and the guys that come in. Some of them have got stories to tell and it's nice to sit and listen and just serve God and help these vulnerable people that are so lovely. And do what we're put here to do and that's what Jesus did. It's given me a purpose. The guys that work there are so supportive of me. They're helping me through the process of getting my children back and they text me, checking up on me. They're like my family. It's like I've lost one family and gained another. That's what God promises to do, isn't it?

From Monday I'll be working at Scala House as a peer mentor. They've given me a chance to use my own story to help other addicts in recovery. It's a step in the direction I want to go. I'd love - it's a real passion of mine - to be able to run a Christian rehab one day. It would just be mind blowing, so that's something I'm praying for.

**Thank God for Amanda. Pray for her as she continues her walk with him.**

## CARE CENTRE UPDATE

The number of guests attending the Care Centre has increased steadily since January. In April we received 123 guests over 12 nights. Of these, 80 were new to us and included four rough sleepers whom we helped into emergency accommodation through the Birmingham Homeless Outreach. Two came back to say thank you.

As numbers have increased, we are encountering more people with chaotic lives. This has brought problems in ensuring people's safety and so there is a need for further specialised staff members used to dealing with conflicts and resolving difficult situations.

The rise in numbers has also led to more encouraging conversations about the Bible. Please pray for this to continue and for guests and volunteers to come to faith.

# Nine years, and counting...

**John Platt, BCM's Youth Work Co-ordinator, reveals how after the challenges of the early years his team is now making a significant contribution to Christian youth work in the city.**



**When I came to BCM 9 years ago, there had been no youth work for a year or two, so I was starting from scratch. It was an exciting opportunity, though. A strategy had to be developed, connections with churches and schools re-established, with much prayer needed.**

### Making a start

I was asked to (1) develop a schools ministry offering RE lessons, assemblies, extra-curricular clubs; (2) support local churches in youth ministry; (3) run BCM's annual camp; and (4) start a regular central event where church youth groups would hear the gospel. The whole remit excited me hugely and still does - there's nothing like sharing the best news in the world with people! I'd only worked with rural young people before, white, working/middle class teenagers. I had to learn quickly about urban young people from diverse backgrounds!

After spending time in prayer seeking God, consulting others, reading youth work books, I put together a plan and strategy; produced publicity; and contacted schools and churches with a view to making bookings and creating opportunities to share the gospel.

***We want to pursue relentlessly the mission God has given us: sharing and showing Jesus to the young people of our city.***

Mostly, things opened up naturally and smoothly. Several schools were keen to make bookings; others contacted me before I contacted them! Relationships with churches developed through visits to youth groups; and my knowledge of urban Christian youth work grew quickly over coffees with youth workers and through visits to various organisations. Before long the diary was filling up: lessons, assemblies, clubs, speaking at youth groups. I did my first camp the summer I joined, and in my second full term we launched a youth event called 'Fulfil'.

### A new team

Within two or three years I was becoming quite stretched, having to limit bookings and work at recruiting more volunteers. Before long it was clear that we needed prayerfully to look at recruiting paid people to form a 'youth team'.

Laura Williams (a 'BCM Intern' in the 1980s!) contacted Wes to offer voluntary support. She began volunteering with the

youth work in May 2013. From October she was paid part-time, with Matthew Loader coming on board five months later. Matt and Laura's teaching/youth work training and experience enhanced our relational and discipleship work, tightened up admin and provided a wider skills set to offer schools and churches. When Laura and Matt joined, we were in about 20 schools; now it is nearly 50. 'Fulfil' has grown from 100 young people attending to 250. Clearly God led Laura and Matt to BCM at just the right time.

### Unforgettable moments

There have been many unforgettable moments! A girl writing: "I'll never forget the things I learned at club." Before moving away (into care), another girl said, "The thing I'll miss most about Brum is youth camp." Leading young people to Christ at camp; having the privilege of supporting others in prayer. Seeing 'Fulfil' encourage smaller church youth groups in their faith; partnering with churches in local schools work; pupils gaining insight and support through GSUS Live; students who now pray and read the Bible; Muslim students realising what the Bible says about who Jesus is. It's not just about the big numbers; it's also about the ones and twos.

### Looking forward

And the future? We want to pursue relentlessly the mission God has given us: sharing and showing Jesus to the young people of our city. 95% of UK young people have no contact with church. We need constant reviews in order to keep in step with God's leading and engage effectively with today's urban youth. We are prayerfully considering starting exciting new initiatives and we are looking forward to sharing the good news and bringing hope to many more young people over coming years. We will see what God does!

**Pray this summer for the GSUS Live trailer in Birmingham visiting six secondary schools.**

<b>4-8 June</b>	The Streetly Academy
<b>11-15 June</b>	Arena Academy
<b>18-22 June</b>	Grace Academy, Solihull
<b>25-29 June</b>	Stockland Green School
<b>2-6 July</b>	Selly Park Technology College
<b>9-13 July</b>	Park Hall Academy

**FOR 11-18s**  
**FRIDAY 6 JULY**  
**7.30 - 9.30pm**  
 with singer songwriter  
**PHILIPPA HANNA**  
 &  
 creative performer  
**SARAH AMANKWAH**  
 Info & consent forms:  
[birminghamcitymission.co.uk](http://birminghamcitymission.co.uk)  
[JohnP@birminghamcitymission.co.uk](mailto:JohnP@birminghamcitymission.co.uk)  
 0121 766 6603