

BCM UPDATE



Keep following Jesus

On the way home from visiting friends in Scotland, which we have done every August for over forty years, we made a detour. Instead of travelling down the A1 passing Newcastle Upon Tyne, we took the Tyne Tunnel and headed for South Shields. This was the town where my mother came from and where as a young boy she took me for many summer holidays.

A few months ago I'd had a dream of those days and so made the decision to return after some sixty years. Understandably, it brought back all kinds of memories. Staying at my aunt's small, terraced house with no bathroom and only an outside toilet. The sound of the horse pulling the cart along cobbled roads to deliver the milk. Buying fish and chips in newspaper and the salt being wrapped in small sheets of blue paper. Trying to protect the food from the sand blown by the wind as we ate on the beach.

The highlight of our detour was to revisit Marsden Bay where the magnificent Marsden Rock stands majestically. It is only ninety-one metres off the beach and is an important home for breeding seabirds. At low tide you can walk to the Rock. When I was a lad it had an arch that you could walk through, but in 1996 it collapsed in a storm.

As I walked along the cobbles my mind went to the story of the resurrected Lord Jesus cooking breakfast for some of the Disciples on the beach. They had worked all night and caught nothing, and so Jesus told them to throw the net on the other

side of the boat, resulting in a miraculous catch of 153 fish. The smell must have been inviting as they made their way to the small fire.

We have a God who is loving, compassionate, merciful, and forgiving.

A little later, John records in his gospel the narrative which is often called the re-instatement of Peter. The Lord had told Peter what would happen. As Jesus was arrested Peter denied the Lord three times. The scripture records that Peter broke down and wept. There on the beach Jesus asked Peter three times, "Do you love me?" Three times he replied, "Yes Lord," even getting frustrated that the Lord kept asking him. The Lord told him to feed and take care of his sheep and to keep following Him and, thankfully for the church, Peter did!

We have a God who is loving, compassionate, merciful, and forgiving. He is a God of second, third, fourth and so on chances. Pray that out of the hundreds of people our staff will meet this month, some might discover forgiveness and begin, like Peter, to follow Jesus.

Wes Erpen, Chief Executive

OCTOBER 2025



With the strength of my Saviour

Zoe Buttery is one of BCM's newest members of staff and responsible for a wide range of jobs across the Mission, from cleaning and decorating to supporting clients. Here she tells her testimony of how she came through traumatic experiences in her youth to marriage, having a family and faith in God.

I am the eldest of five children and grew up in a happy household with loving parents. I had very poor eyesight and started wearing glasses from the age of two, so when I started school things became difficult for me. Sitting at the back of the class I was unable to see the board and could not do my work. My teacher would keep me in at playtime and I remember looking out the window at the other children and feeling extremely left out and lonely.

It was a daily battle for my poor mum to get me to school. My self-esteem was incredibly low and academically I felt very behind. At the age of thirteen I tried cannabis and fell into the wrong crowd, hanging out with a gang of lads, drinking and smoking and vulnerable to abuse. I have never felt so used and low and didn't think much of myself at all. I think all I wanted was to be accepted and loved.

We began sleeping in cars and abandoned houses, under newspaper to try and stay warm.

I met my husband, Matt when I was fifteen. He had just come out of rehab and that summer he was clean. I got to know the real Matt, the man I fell in love with. Unfortunately, around six months later he started taking heroin again, and a few months after that I started taking it with him.

Our life became very difficult as we began sleeping in cars and abandoned houses, under newspaper to try and stay warm. We were doing crack, heroin and anything else we could get our hands on. I would wait for Matt to fall asleep, then take his gear and hide it until he had left for work, when I would smoke it alone. I knew I had a problem.

I couldn't believe that something so beautiful could come from nothing.

Matt both wanted and needed to go to rehab, and ended up at Victory Outreach in Wales. He wasn't allowed to have any contact with me at all. A month after he left I found out I was pregnant with our first child. The rehab allowed me to write and have a five-minute phone call with him once a week. This was so hard but I knew it was the best thing for us all. After five months I got to see him for one day, and Matt went down on one knee and proposed to me. Whilst Matt was in rehab he gave his life to the Lord. He would talk to me all the time about Jesus and I really didn't understand. I thought he had been brainwashed!

We were married on 23rd March 2002 and later that year on 8th June I gave birth to our first child, Poppy. I looked at her and couldn't believe that something so beautiful and perfect could come from nothing. A few months later I gave my life to the Lord. All the glory goes to Him who pulled me out of the pit I was in and gave me a hope and a purpose.

Matt and I have been married for twenty-three years. Being a mother came so naturally to me that we now have five beautiful daughters, a lovely son-in-law, who also has a faith in Jesus, and a gorgeous grandson Boaz, who was born in July this year. I now serve the Lord in multiple places, BCM and our church being two of many, in order to try my best to show God's love in everything I do, with the strength of my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

HARVEST APPEAL

Please help up fill up the food bank's shelves this harvest.
At the moment we particularly need:

non-perishable food...

Long life milk · Tea · Coffee · Sugar · Tinned potatoes, carrots, peas, sweetcorn and tomatoes · Tinned fish and meat (hot and cold) · Hot puddings · Rice pudding · Custard · Tinned fruit · Tinned spaghetti · Biscuits · Flavoured pasta & noodles
Cup a soups · Rice · Tinned soup

and toiletries...

Deodorant, shower gel, shaving foam and razors FOR MEN - we are fully stocked with items for ladies. We also need toilet paper, but have plenty of toothpaste and toothbrushes.

You can give financially online at:

stewardship.org.uk/pages/bcm_harvest25

We also need help to collect, sort and date all the food.

CHRISTMAS TOYLINK

Each Christmas BCM gives gifts to thousands of children whose families struggle to make ends meet. Please help by buying a **NEW (not second hand)** gift for a child or organise a toy collection. We particularly need toys and gifts for babies (0 to 18 months) and 9 to 15-year-olds.

Or do it all online. Choose a gift from an online store and have it delivered straight to the address below.

For more on how and what to give visit:

birminghamcitymission.org.uk/christmas-toys

Please bring or send food and toys to Birmingham City Mission at The Clock Tower, 2 Langdon Street, Birmingham B9 4BP (open Mon to Fri from 10am to 4pm). We can pick up large collections - call 0121 766 6603.

Thank you.

F u l f i l

FRIDAY
21 NOV
7.30 TO 9.30PM



BIMM BIRMINGHAM
GOSPEL CHOIR



KEMI
NAOMI

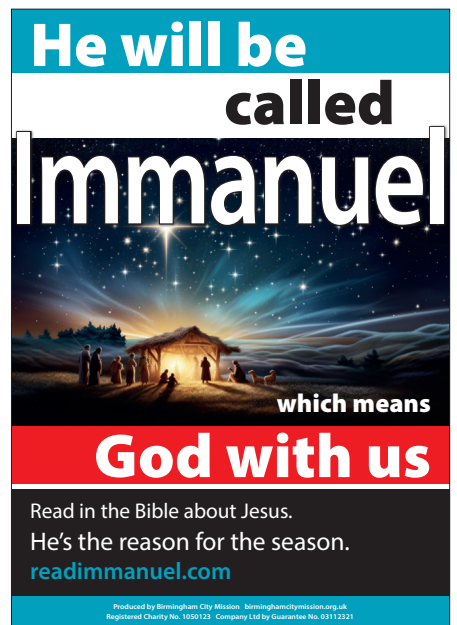
at **Trinity@**
Birmingham

AN INTER-DENOMINATIONAL
YOUTH EVENT FOR 11-18s

THE FIRST 3 WEEKS

in December will see BCM's Christmas Bible verse campaign on West Midlands trains. Posters encouraging passengers to read the Christmas story in Matthew's gospel on a linked webpage will be displayed in almost every other carriage on the network. If you travel by rail, look out for them!

Alongside the campaign BCM is producing postcards and booklets with the same theme and artwork. If you or your church can use these resources at cost price, please get in touch: email office@birminghamcitymission.co.uk or call 0121 766 6603 (option 2).



ORDER NOW!

Call 0121 766 6603 or email
office@birminghamcitymission.co.uk
Also available at BCM's shop in Kingstanding

BCM CHRISTMAS CARDS

£5 for a pack of 10 cards
+P&P for mail order



View the full range at birminghamcitymission.org.uk

BIRD BOXES

A fabulous Christmas gift

Made at BCM's Care Centre workshop
Recommended minimum donation £15
Personalise with your choice of text
For collection at the Care Centre in the city centre or the Clock Tower in Bordesley Green



OCTOBER'S PRAYER FOCUS

SUNDAY - IN-SERVICE TRAINEES



Welcome to Lilly Buttery, Ethan Yeung and Elton Scully, BCM's newly-arrived trainees. Please pray for God's blessing as they settle into their year of learning and working across the Mission's projects, that they would grow in skills, experience, confidence and faith.

MONDAY - CHILDREN'S TEAM

The team's Special Educational Needs work has expanded into over 10 SEN hubs within mainstream schools, so please pray as they share the story of Zacchaeus to even more children through the use of different methods this term. Pray for clarity as they teach, and for ongoing good relationships with schools, teachers and pupils.

TUESDAY - BCM SHOP

Pray that staff and volunteers have opportunities to chat to customers about our loving God. Pray for more volunteers both in the shop and to sell on eBay, for good health for the team, and for God's wisdom and strength as they prepare for the busy Christmas season.

WEDNESDAY - ELDERLINK

Pray for wisdom as the team grows and develops the Visiting Scheme, and for the recruitment of new volunteers. Pray for scheme members, that they would be blessed by the visits they receive, and that staff and volunteers would look after them well.

Please pray for skill and creativity in the preparation of services and activities for care homes, and that these would be accessible and enjoyed by the residents and staff who take part.

THURSDAY - YOUTH TEAM

Please pray as the team prepares and films assemblies for this academic year. Pray that October's assemblies on 'Sacrificial Love' would clearly communicate to those listening, and for more bookings for Christmas and Easter lessons and assemblies. Pray too for growth in school clubs.

FRIDAY - CARE CENTRE

Please pray for staff, volunteers and guests at the Care Centre - for friendship, safety and effective support. Pray for those attending the Care Centre's Alpha course which started last month, that they would find hope and faith in God.

SATURDAY - CHRISTMAS TOYLINK

Please pray as preparations for BCM's ToyLink ramp up - for good management and sufficient donations for this huge project. Pray that this provision to families in need would be a help to them, and that through it many might discover and believe God's plan of salvation.

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

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



with speaker **KIRK McATEAR**
Pastor at Trinity@Birmingham

& performance by singer
JO ALLCHIN

**Join us from 12.30pm to chat to staff
and discover more about our projects**
worship · meet new staff · project updates
at the Priory Rooms, Bull Street B4 6AF

2026 IS BIRMINGHAM CITY MISSION'S 60th

anniversary year. Coming up in the next few months, look out for ways to be involved, from our sponsored 60 bridge canal walk in June to a special celebration in October - to be held at St Martin in the Bull Ring where it all began in 1966.

Perhaps you have an idea for a fund or awareness raising event you would like to hold on behalf of BCM in its 60th year? Or an individual challenge you think you could take on in aid of the Mission? Please have a think and get in touch! It would be great to have BCM's supporters a big part of it all.

