

BCM UPDATE



The father was filled with compassion

A few weeks ago, Jackie was travelling by a direct train to Devon. As she is registered disabled, I arranged for her to have assistance at New Street Station. We arrived at the 'Assistance Office' and a young man pushed Jackie in a wheelchair to the platform and helped her find a seat. I could see her talking to the lady next to her as I waved goodbye.

An hour later Jackie called. 'There is a fire on the train ahead and we have to change at Bristol,' she told me. It was going to be inconvenient, but Jackie had assistance for the journey. Unfortunately, when the train arrived at Bristol, none was provided! Thankfully, the lady next to her said she would kindly help. Jackie got off the train with her walking stick and the lady carried her case. Suddenly, the scores of people who had also got off the train started to get back on as they were being told it's the next station!

The lady again helped Jackie, and when they got off at the next station she helped her to the platform for the connection to Tiverton. As they waited there was an announcement that the platform had changed! The lady grabbed Jackie's bags and said, 'I will go ahead and get us seats.' Hundreds of people started to move. There was no way Jackie could take the stairs so she had to find a lift. Once at the new platform she had no idea of how to find the lady with her bags! Suddenly, along the platform, she saw someone jumping up and down waving. It was the lady. She had secured two seats, and even got a couple on the train to guard them! If you are reading

this and are the lady, or know her, please thank her for her kindness.

As I thought about that lady jumping up and down and waving, it reminded me of someone else. In his book 'The Father Heart of God', Floyd McClung tells a story. In Thailand, a son had wasted his life and ended up in prison. When he was released, he wrote to his father to say that he was sorry and asked if he would accept him back. If so, he should put a white cloth on the tree next to their house that he could see from the train as he passed by. As he neared home he couldn't look, but a fellow traveller said, 'Look, look.' He looked out and saw a tree covered in white cloths, and his dad jumping up and down waving. His father said, 'I have been waiting for you.'

When the Lord Jesus told the story of the prodigal son, he described the father as looking hopefully for his son. Luke records, 'But while he was a long way off his father was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son threw his arms around him and kissed him.' I wished it said in the text that he was jumping up and down!

Like the lady, every day we all have the privilege of showing kindness to people. There is nothing kinder and more loving than to share the good news that God loves us, and His arms are open wide, waiting for us.

Pray that God will bless BCM this month.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Wes Erpen'.

Wes Erpen, Chief Executive



A safe and secure home

According to the city council's figures for April, there are 44 people sleeping out on the streets of Birmingham. 15 were identified as long-term rough sleeping (for 3 or more months), and 32 had returned to the streets.

260 to 270 people each week are presenting to the council as homeless. The 3 main reasons for their becoming homeless are that (a) family and friends can no longer accommodate them; (b) they have had to leave private rented accommodation; and (c) they have been evicted from supported housing. There was a huge increase in 'no-fault' eviction notices served during the month. As of 1st May these notices have now been abolished under the Renters' Rights Act. In Birmingham there are currently 5,600 individuals in temporary accommodation and over 600 in bed and breakfasts.

The UK government's National Plan to End Homelessness is its strategy to ensure everyone has access to a safe and secure home. It focuses on preventing homelessness through tackling the issues that lead people into homelessness, or prevent them from sustaining a tenancy and returning to homelessness.

Many face complex challenges and they are looking for real help.

For decades BCM's Care Centre has done just that. It has been and is a place where homeless and marginalised people can come to find both practical support and a sense of family. Many face complex challenges - addiction, broken relationships, physical and mental health problems - and they are looking for real help in finding accommodation, signing up at the Health

Exchange, accessing mental health support or taking up the offer of a place in rehab. Many are also lonely and need a place to socialise and belong.

From Mondays to Thursdays the centre is busy with guests eating meals, doing jigsaws and building bird boxes. Partnering organisations such as MIND, the DWP and Citadel Housing regularly drop in to offer their services. Amidst all this, staff and volunteers share God's message of hope to those who come.

Care Centre Assistant Manager, Alec Petson, reported, 'We had two clients recently, one from Northern Ireland and the other from Kent. We were able to give them clothes and food and get them both into accommodation on the same day they arrived in Birmingham. Another man came in last week. He is recently sober from drug and alcohol addiction. He told me he is praying for God's protection, and feels that God is protecting him. One woman who comes is keen to talk about God and has been reading a New Testament I gave to her. I will invite her to our next Bible course which starts in June.

We are thankful for BCM City Missionary, Kevin Williams' service to the Care Centre. We had a wonderful retirement celebration on his last day with us in April (pictured left). Our staff, volunteers and clients will miss him very much.'

Volunteer vacancies

BCM's Children's and Youth Teams are seeking regular volunteers to go into primary and secondary schools to deliver assemblies.

Full training will be provided. If you are interested in joining one of the teams, please get in touch:

Children's Team:

kathrynhindley@birminghamcitymission.co.uk

Youth Team:

youthteam@birminghamcitymission.co.uk

BCM OPEN DAY



Saturday 4th July

from 11am to 3.30pm

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

with seminar updates from BCM projects

Take a tour, discover more.

There'll be tea and cake too!



**with speaker
PAUL MALLARD**

**Join us from 11am
to chat to staff and
discover more about
our projects**

- ★ **worship**
- ★ **meet new staff**
- ★ **project updates**
- ★ **induction of new CEO**

Rejection, Fear, Forgiveness

GSUS Live visited two Birmingham secondary schools in May. Owned by Counties, this resource was delivered by BCM's Youth Team, interns and local church partners.



GSUS Live gives students the opportunity to explore their choice of the themes of Rejection, Fear and Forgiveness through the lens of a fictional character. They look at Jesus' teachings on these issues, how he himself experienced them during his life, and what Jesus' death and resurrection mean to Christians.

One aim of the resource is to improve students' religious literacy, the other to inspire and encourage them pastorally amid the problems they may face. During the lesson students are free to ask any questions about God. One student was particularly interested in heaven and who will go there. We chatted about how, for Christians, Jesus is the way to be reconciled to God, and how his death demonstrates God's love for us.

About 1,200 pupils came through the doors during our fortnight with GSUS Live. During one lesson a boy said, 'We've still got

25 left (of the lesson)! This is sick!' (in the positive sense of the word!) One day two Year 11 students popped into the GSUS Live room at breaktime, saying that they remembered taking part in it when they were in Year 7. They could even remember which theme and character in the programme they chose.

It is evident that so many students face anxieties.

We often find that students leave the lesson feeling inspired and equipped in making healthy choices, whether it be forgiving someone, 'letting go' and 'moving on'; processing emotion and dealing with anger in healthy constructive ways; or the importance of talking to trustworthy others and to God about worries and fears.

It is evident that so many students face anxieties, and that they are desperate to be accepted and included by peers. Please pray for the young people who experienced GSUS Live last month, and for ongoing opportunities for BCM's Youth Team following its visit to Birmingham.

Standing up for Jesus



At the end of April the Youth Team, supported by musician Rickeal Rix, were invited to lead an event called 'Stand Up' at Junction Road Evangelical Church. Its aim was to equip and encourage children and young people in standing up for Jesus with confidence and grace at their school and in their community. A number of the young people had been experiencing name-calling and bullying at school for their faith.

Over 35 came, plus their parents and youth leaders. We heard the story of God standing alongside the three faithful young men in the Babylonian fiery furnace. Deep questions were asked in small groups. In one group young adults spoke of the pressure they have faced from relatives of other religions, but how Jesus has helped them stand firm. BCM Intern, Lily Buttery, shared her testimony of God's help to her amid challenges at school, enabling her to stand up for her faith to her peers.

Summer Youth Camp 2026

Whilst this year's BCM Youth Camp has been scaled down to reduce the cost, its purpose remains the same - to provide a fun getaway full of activities to stimulate the young campers, catering for their needs physically, socially, emotionally and spiritually. From 7th to 10th August, around 30 young people, many from disadvantaged backgrounds, will stay at Peck Wood in Worcestershire. Each day they will learn from the Bible, go on walks, play wide games in the woods, and take trips off site.

If you would like to help towards the £3,000 Youth Camp budget, please call Finance on 0121 766 6603 (option 3).

11-18's PHILIPPA

BIRMINGHAM CITY MISSION
60 years
BCM
1966 - 2026

LIVE MUSIC - SPECIAL GUESTS

LIVE MUSIC - SPECIAL GUESTS

BCM
A SPECIAL Youth CELEBRATION

BOOK HERE

← ← ← ← ←

26TH JUNE, ST MARTINS IN THE BULLRING. 7:30PM.

AN INTER-DENOMINATIONAL YOUTH EVENT
Bringing churches together

JUNE'S PRAYER FOCUS

SUNDAY - CHILDREN'S TEAM

Please pray for assemblies, special needs sessions and lessons this term. Pray too for preparations for Junior Camp in July, and for 20+ 8 to 11-year-olds to sign up to come.

MONDAY - YOUTH TEAM

Pray that content delivered through RE lessons, assemblies and GSUS Live would increase students' understanding of Jesus (see *Rejection, Fear, Forgiveness* inside this BCM Update). Pray for good engagement with a weekly discussion club and CU in Streetly.

Pray too for strength and guidance for the team as they are busy with planning and leading church sessions, the 60th youth event and Youth Camp. Please pray for young people to attend these events and that they would be blessed through them.

TUESDAY - CITY MISSIONARIES



Please pray for the health and wellbeing of team members, a number of whom have had health issues recently, that the Lord would sustain and enable them to continue to work consistently.

WEDNESDAY - ELDERLINK

Thank God for new referrals last month for the Befriending Scheme. Pray for wisdom in planning the team's workload and for provision of care for our older people as staff levels are lower this month.

THURSDAY - BCM SHOP

Thank God for the good quality donations that we continue to receive. Pray for more volunteers to help with eBay listings, and for sales of the many great items on BCM's eBay site. **Search for 'Birmingham City Mission' at charity.ebay.co.uk to take a look.**

FRIDAY - CARE CENTRE

Give thanks that Citadel Housing has housed several of our clients. Pray that the carpentry workshop engages and encourages those who get involved, and for continued calm and peace in the building. Pray for the mental health of clients, and for staff and volunteers who have been suffering with various health issues.

SATURDAY - RESOURCE CENTRE

Pray for enough food to provide for the many people struggling to make ends meet who come for parcels each week.

If you are able to donate food, please bring items or have them delivered to the address below. We can pick up large collections. Everything except pasta needed! Thank you.



Care home residents created beautiful watercolours, the craft activity for ElderLink's services in 12 care homes in April. The theme was John 10 verse 9 when Jesus said, 'I am the gate. Anyone who enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture.'

Gather together to mark 60 years of the Mission

BCM BANQUET

Saturday 19th September

at 6pm for drinks, 7pm for food

at The Burlington

for a 3-course meal
with live music

comedian PAUL KARENZA
and speaker BOB TELFORD

Ticket: £60

Call 0121 766 6603 or email
office@birminghamcitymission.co.uk

Jean's Garden Party Take-Away Box 2026



Order for collection or local Halesowen delivery on Saturday 13th June from 9am to 1pm.

A **party box** (min donation £10) with 2

home-made scones with jam and cream plus 2 cupcakes... or a **box for one** with one scone and cupcake (min donation £5). Please let Jean know if you would like to go to the garden party at her home in the afternoon. In aid of BCM. *Sorry that food allergies cannot be catered for.* **For orders:** jeanharborne@birminghamcitymission.co.uk

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

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