

Engaging with our Mission: we need God



After a summer break, the EBA Mission Mailing is back. After the first few mailings feedback has dried up and it would be helpful to hear back from you as to how these documents are being used. Each month we will provide a parable and some questions as an encouragement to think about mission and outreach. This month is the parable of Houdini the Hamster.

Once there was a Baptist Minister whose children owned a hamster which escaped. It waited (it was suspected that there was a conspiracy involved) until he was really tired and his wife was away, so he was looking after his children alone, to make its great escape. One morning the minister was woken at 6am by his son who said the hamster wasn't in the cage and the hunt began. Eventually the hamster was tracked to the kitchen where scrabbling (scratchy noises, not the game silly) could be heard from underneath a cupboard. In a moment of brilliance, the minister decided to google 'what will lure a hamster out of hiding'. Results ranged from hamster food to carrot and even chocolate. All these were tried but the hamster was nowhere to be seen and the scrabbling had stopped.



The minister was pretty sure that Houdini (what he had decided to rename the hamster in that moment) had squeezed through a gap near one of the pipes to get outside and so he prepared to go back to bed.

In a moment of actual brilliance, the minister's son said 'when you are in church you tell us to pray so will you pray now'. A very religious prayer was prayer that went something like: "God, I'm really tired and need to sleep. Please can you make the hamster come out?"

Within seconds Houdini appeared was scooped up and put back in his cage. The minister resisted the urge to glue the cage shut!

Take some time to think about and to discuss this parable and consider whether the way that we live demonstrates that we need God or not.

*In previous months we have considered the **Places** that we are, the **Opportunities** that we have and the **Inspiration** that we need. This time we want to provoke some thought about our **Need for God**.*

Questions to consider

- Can you think of any examples of the way that you have demonstrated a deep need for God as you have approached Mission?
- Do you/your church pray less or more about mission than other areas of church life? When we do pray, do we ask God to bless what we are doing or do we ask him how we can join in with what he is doing?
- How can we listen to and be led by God in Mission?
- Have you ever said 'we can't do that because ...' or 'that didn't work last time'? When we make statements like these what do they say about our faith in God? How can we trust in God more?

We would love to hear from you (nick.lear@easternbaptist.org.uk)

When it comes to Mission, there is so much we can learn from one another. Please do let us know any thoughts that you have had or any ways that you are engaging creatively with your community. Part of our Mission strategy involves us being a conduit to share your stories rather than us centrally suggesting ideas for what could be done. Next time we will consider the **Training** that we need.