

pipeline



HOLDING OUT
A BEACON
OF **HOPE**

*Messengers of Light
commissioned as officers*



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Brisbane Salvo Gordon Knowles has just returned from spending five weeks in Germany serving refugees fleeing war-torn countries in the Middle East

Photo: Matt Seaman

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Discerning the will of God

SCOTT SIMPSON • MANAGING EDITOR

For many people, a new year equates to the opportunity for a fresh start. This issue of *Pipeline* is full of stories about people who are embarking on a new journey as we begin 2016. Not only do we bring you a comprehensive coverage of the recent graduation, ordination and commissioning of the latest group of Salvation Army officers, we also introduce you to the new cadets of the *Messengers of the Gospel* session who are entering the School for Officer Training later this month.

All of these people are taking giant steps of faith as they head into another year, and yet they can stride out confidently in the assurance that they are following God’s will for their lives. Ah yes, that big question that is so common among Christians – what is God’s will for me? So what is the answer? Well, the Bible doesn’t seem to spend too much time in providing specifics on this subject, but it does make this somewhat crucial summary in 1 Thessalonians 4:3: “It is God’s will that you should be sanctified …” Now that, to me, seems pretty clear – God wants your sanctification; his desire is that you are made holy. God’s will is not so much about what you do, but who you are.

As you flick through the pages of the Bible, what you’re going to learn is that God is passionate about changing the inner you. He knows that if he can change you into the person he wants you to be, then you’re going to know the answers to those “will of God” questions. You’ll know where you’re supposed to live, who you’re supposed to marry, where you’re supposed to work, and where you should be serving in ministry.

Romans 12:2 also provides us with critical insight. “Do not

conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.” Discerning the will of God, it would seem, assumes a renewed mind. What this passage of scripture is talking about is how do biblical teachings, and other relevant factors, conspire to produce a direction for my life that God will bless? That renewal comes mainly through the reading of God’s word and prayer. The Christian mind is shaped by the word of God, all the while “praying without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

So as we enter a new year, let me encourage you to stride out confidently in the assurance of what has been revealed to you in prayerful reading of the Bible. Because it is in those pages you will find God’s will for your life.

AND ANOTHER THING ...

Storytelling was a key part of Jesus’ ministry on earth. At *Pipeline* we also, understandably, place a huge emphasis on storytelling; communicating stories of transformation and the work of The Salvation Army to Salvationists and others has always been an important part of our mission.

That is why it is our hope that as *Pipeline* enters a new era, with the introduction of a paid subscription model for the hard copy version of the magazine and the launch, in coming months, of a new, free website, that you will continue to support us. You can subscribe by filling out the form at the bottom of this page and sending it back to us, or online at pipelineonline.org/subscribe. You will also still be able to read the magazine in its entirety free and online at pipelineonline.org. Whichever option you choose, we hope *Pipeline* remains an essential part of your reading.¶



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Life is one big ‘if’

PLANNING IS IMPORTANT, BUT PLANNING WITHOUT INVOLVING GOD IS PRESUMPTION

COMMISSIONER JAMES CONDON IS TERRITORIAL
COMMANDER OF THE AUSTRALIA EASTERN TERRITORY



“You are not listening.” I am sure you have said these words on numerous occasions – husband to wife, parent to child. It is very frustrating when people don’t listen. In James 4:13, it says, “Now listen”. It is obvious James has something serious to say. He is trying to help the reader understand that no one knows how much time they have.

James is primarily talking to wealthy merchants who travelled all over the ancient world, buying and selling in the major trade centres of that day. Because this involved shipping, it could easily take a year or more to set up a business. They made one big mistake: they presumed and were counting on the future without taking into account that God holds the future in his hands. James could see that these businessmen had made very impressive plans and had worked out almost everything very well.

Their business plan could have looked like this: When? “Today or tomorrow.” Where? “This or that city.” How? “Spend a year.” What? “Do business.” Why? “To make money.” But the big mistake they made was to omit the *who*. God was not included in their plans. Planning is important, but planning without involving God is presumption.

The Bible makes it very clear that our whole existence is a gift from God – from the day of our birth until the day of our death we are blessed with the gift of life. But life is frail, as James refers to in verse 14. The businessmen had planned, but left no room for unforeseen circumstances because they had not stopped to think they would not be around forever. It is unwise to presume upon the future. We don’t even know what the rest of today holds, let alone

next week or next year. Life is unpredictable. But notice that in the middle of *life* are the letters “*if*”. In Proverbs 27:1 we read: “Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring”. However, the good news is that today’s faith prepares us for tomorrow. According to James, we should be saying: “If it is the Lord’s will we will live and do this or that”. If we don’t then we forge ahead with our arrogant plans and boast about them, and boasting is sin.

Wise people seek God’s plan for their life and he is involved in every detail of their daily life. No amount of money, influence, power or planning can guarantee tomorrow. Only God can grant us the blessing of another sunrise or even another breath. Life is a gift from God and we need to plan to live according to his will for our lives. As we submit to God’s plan for our life we can avoid heartache, pain and confusion because he is not the author of confusion, but of peace.

James’ final challenge to his readers is in verse 17 of chapter 4: “So then, if you know the good you ought to do and don’t do it, you sin.” Did you know that you can sin by doing nothing? Someone has put it this way: “Procrastination is my sin, it brings me nothing but sorrow. I know that I should stop it, so I will ... tomorrow.”

Let us all make the most of the opportunities that come our way from the hand of the Lord and always remember to seek God’s plan and blessing on our life. Or as the writer to Proverbs expressed it in chapter 3 verses 1 and 2: “... never forget the things I have taught you. Store my commands in your heart. If you do this, you will live many years, and your life will be satisfying.”

Good advice for us all in this new year.¶

Continued obedient faith

CONTINUING A SERIES ON THE SALVATION ARMY'S 11 ARTICLES OF FAITH,
 WRITTEN BY MEMBERS OF ITS INTERNATIONAL DOCTRINE COUNCIL, WE
 FOCUS ON THE NINTH FOUNDATIONAL DOCTRINE

WORDS • LIEUT-COLONEL GABRIEL ADEPOJU

*We believe that continuance in
 a state of salvation depends upon
 continued obedient faith in Christ.*

(The ninth doctrine of The Salvation Army)

It is an encouragement to sincerely desire a serious commitment to the way of the cross – the symbol of man's salvation. It is necessary here to put on record the meaning of salvation in the context of Christian experience. According to *Webster's Universal Dictionary and Thesaurus* (2010), salvation in Christianity is "the act of saving someone from sin or evil: the state of being saved from sin or evil". In ordinary terms, there are many things from which one could be saved, such as an accident or death. But it can also mean to be delivered from circumstances or situations: for instance, the Israelites' exodus was salvation from captivity or oppression; the Jews' return from Babylonian exile was salvation; as was the abolition of the slave trade in the British Empire in 1807.

Within the frame of this study, salvation refers to the deliverance from the power that holds a human being hostage or captive to sin. Even when we know what is right and wrong, the power to say "no" to wrong that has previously been elusive, becomes ours when we are saved. In this instance, I define salvation as the presence of Jesus Christ in any life. When Jesus is present in a life, the power to say "no" to wrong and say "yes" to right is always there.

According to the ninth doctrine, no one can remain saved (though previously saved) without a corresponding continuous obedient faith. Obedient faith – the very foundational faith that brought a soul into union with Christ through repentance and regeneration – must necessarily be a continuous experience. By this

declaration, the Army has put the basis of our faith in the Wesleyan tradition. John Wesley was influenced by what is known as Arminianism. This teaching, associated with the Dutch theologian Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609), is essentially rooted in the rejection of the concept of predestination taught by Calvin (Calvinism), whereas Arminianism went further to affirm the freedom of human will.

FREE WILL

According to Arminianism, a human being has free will or the ability to choose. At the Fall, human nature was seriously affected and left in a state of total spiritual helplessness. As the sovereign God graciously enables every sinner to repent and to believe but does not interfere with a person's freedom, every sinner possesses a free will on which their eternal destiny depends. Man's freedom exists in his ability to choose good over evil, which means his will is not enslaved by his sinful nature. The sinner has the power to either cooperate with the Spirit of God and be regenerated or resist God's provision and perish.

Christ's redemption makes it possible for everyone to be saved but does not actually secure the salvation of anyone. For faith is the condition to man's salvation. There is no controversy that Christ died for all and for every individual, but only those who believe in him are saved. His death enables God to pardon sinners on the condition that man believes. Christ's redemption becomes applicable only if man chooses to accept it. The Holy Spirit can be resisted. Those who believe and are truly saved can lose their salvation by failing to maintain their faith. This is the premise that influenced our doctrine that "continuance

in a state of salvation depends upon continued obedient faith in Christ". The faith God's people should continually exercise is of the same nature as saving faith.

Another great thinker who had great influence on the Protestant Church during the Reformation of the 16th century was John Calvin. He strongly believed in predestination and election. He was of Augustine's tradition and thought that "a believer's salvation is due solely to God's free choice ('election') and depends on the action of this irresistible grace" (John Coutts, *This We Believe*, 1990). This thinking led to the doctrine of the final "perseverance of the saints", otherwise known as "once saved, always saved". Or in a more contemporary language, it is called "eternal security". According to David Stewart, "If mankind has nothing to do with saving himself, then why would God require men to do something to maintain it?"

Stewart failed in his analysis of the above quoted phrase. God appeals to our will/volition: "Whoever ..." (see e.g. Mark 8:34-38, 16:16; John 3:36, 6:35). This is not an imposition. It is a condition that allows us to choose. Yes, the necessary procedure for pardon has been obtained through the death of Jesus, but we must accept and believe this before we can be saved. If our salvation is based on the acceptance of the offer, the sustenance of the offer requires a corresponding cooperation from us. Jesus emphatically taught this in John 15:2. If someone who is truly saved does not bear (continuously) corresponding fruit, such would be plucked out of the vine. Verse 6 talks of the obstinate person who refuses to remain and will inevitably be eternally lost.

GOD'S PLAN

Neither was John Calvin right in his postulation. If God had predestined some for eternity, he would not be justified to send or subject the erring ones (whom he destined so) to any punishment since, in the first instance, he was responsible for their action. And if he does, it would be a contradiction to his very nature and person. God did not choose to save anyone against his/her will. The plan of action for man's justification is provided by God, yet man must be ready to accept it.

Our filiation in the family of God is that of adoption, that is his plan for mankind. Therefore, to sustain that Father-child relationship between God and us, this continued obedient faith must necessarily be observed. God is faithful and thus he requires a certain level of faithfulness from his grafted children. Anything short of this may neither be sufficient to face the tide of time nor the demand of scripture. If "once saved, always saved", why would Jesus tell his disciples to "watch and pray"?

When someone becomes saved, the sinful nature has decisively been dealt with at the conversion. However, before long, sin will again begin to attempt resurfacing in our life and if it's not dealt with, through continued obedient faith, we may find ourselves in a state worse than before conversion. Continued obedient faith entails diligently studying the Word of God, living it both in attitude and lifestyle, manifesting in prayer an utter dependence on God, and not relying on the provision of political authorities or social settings.¶

This article appears courtesy of The Officer magazine



Shining like stars

NEW OFFICERS CALLED TO BE LIGHTS IN A DARK WORLD

WORDS • SCOTT SIMPSON / PHOTOS • CAROLYN HIDE

If ever the world needed to hear a message of light it is now, Commissioner James Condon told new officers of The Salvation Army Australia Eastern Territory at their ordination and commissioning service in Sydney. Commissioner Condon, the territorial commander, in a direct challenge to the eight new lieutenants who graduated from the *Messengers of Light* session at the territory's School for Officer Training, said that the salvation of many could depend on them.

The ordination and commissioning was held at the University of Western Sydney on 29 November. Each of the cadets – Jess and Paul Farthing, Bronwyn and Perry Lithgow, Jodie and Matthew Sutcliffe, and Frank Wang and Belinda Zhou – entered the darkened auditorium carrying a lantern, symbolic of their sessional name. Commissioner Condon drew upon the theme of light in his message to the newly commissioned officers.

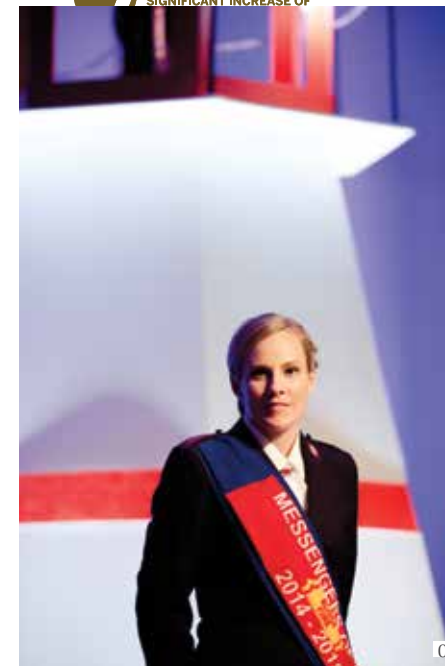
"If ever the message of light is needed it is today," he said. "Did you ever think you would live to see what is happening in the world today? War, terrorism, death, destruction and fear. Many in the world are living in darkness; they need their eyes opened. Jesus says in John 8:12, 'I am the light of the world. He who follows me will not walk in the darkness but will have the light of life.' We, as The Salvation Army, and you, as the *Messengers of Light*, have this wonderful opportunity to shine the light for all to see. But, we must understand that Jesus is the true light; we are only reflectors of that light. *Messengers of Light*, that is part of your calling, to expose darkness and to serve as a guide; a light along the way."

LIGHT OF GOD

The commissioner, quoting Philippians 2:14-16 in which the apostle Paul talks about shining like stars in a crooked and depraved world, then asked the new officers. "Is that what you are doing, *Messengers of Light*? Are you shining like stars in the universe as you hold out the words of life? *Messengers of Light*, the salvation of others could well depend on you." In bringing his message to a close, Commissioner Condon reminded the new officers and the congregation of the concluding words of Salvation Army founder William Booth's famous "I'll Fight" speech: "While there remains one dark soul without the light of God, I'll fight – I'll fight to the very end!"

Earlier in the service, the School For Officer Training Principal, Colonel Julie Campbell, in presenting the cadets to Commissioner Condon, said: "I want to thank God for each of the cadets; for their obedience and their commitment. For each of you, this isn't the end nor is it the beginning. No, this is just the continuation of what God has already begun in you and will continue to do in you."

Colonel Campbell also paid tribute to her predecessor, Colonel Janet Munn, who had overseen the first 18 months of the cadets' training before returning to her home territory, USA Eastern, mid-last year to become principal of its training college. A special video message prepared by Colonel Munn was shown to the cadets. Cadet Belinda Zhou then gave her testimony, revealing her journey from atheism to belief in God (see pages 14-17 for a feature story on Belinda and her husband and fellow cadet, Frank Wang).



01. Cadets Belinda Zhou and Frank Wang stand in front of a model lighthouse which was set up on stage to symbolise the *Messengers of Light* session of cadets. They have been appointed to Bankstown Corps as corps officers.

02. Commissioner James Condon presides over the ordination and commissioning of cadets ceremony which took place in Sydney on 29 November.

03. Cadets Perry and Bronwyn Lithgow join in song during the ceremony. They have been appointed to Townsville Faithworks as corps officers.

04. Cadet Jessica Farthing has been appointed as corps officer, with her husband Paul, to Shellharbour Corps.

05. Commissioner Jan Condon receives her 45 years of ministry certificate from Colonel Mark Campbell at The Movement evening service.

06. Cadets Matt and Jodie Sutcliffe and their children, who have been appointed to Shoalhaven Corps as corps officers.

07. The cadets entered a darkened auditorium behind a lantern which represented their sessional name.



The eight new lieutenants from the *Messengers of Light* session ready to be sent out to serve.

► SENDING OUT

The afternoon "Sending Out" service was a more informal – and colourful – affair, with music and involvement of the children of the new officers. During the service, the new lieutenants were officially given their first appointments as officers. Lieutenants Jess and Paul Farthing were appointed as corps officers at Shellharbour; Lieutenants Bronwyn and Perry (corps officers at Townsville Faithworks); Lieutenants Jodie and Matthew Sutcliffe (corps officers at Shoalhaven); and Lieutenants Frank Wang and Belinda Zhou (corps officers at Bankstown).

Lieutenant Jess Farthing spoke on behalf of the new officers. "Two years ago, the *Messengers of Light* sat in a quiet assembly hall, some of us not really sure what we were doing there, but we had the audacity to believe that God would use our lives," she said. "And on that day there was an intensity of anxiety over who we thought we were or would ever be. But on that day, I'm so thankful that we chose not to rely on our own understanding. Instead, it was perfect love calling us forward, calling us to have a hope beyond what we thought to be true, calling us to be a light to the world. Because God's mission, no matter how impossibly difficult it may have seemed, was to become clear to us."

Quoting Luke 11:33, she continued: "No one lights a lamp and hides it in a drawer. Rather, it's put on a lampstand so those entering the room have light to see where they are going. Fear can tempt us to hide our light. Fear wants us to remain unseen and silent. But the light of God that is

in us was never meant to be hidden. Rather, it is meant to serve as a lighthouse to those living in the darkness. This is the plan for each of us. This is what each of us is here to do. *Messengers of Light*, it is time to fan into flame the call we have chosen and which we surrender our lives to."

Chief Secretary Colonel Mark Campbell, in his message, spoke on the theme of character, competency and calling, using the life of John the Baptist as a model. Again picking up on the sessional name, Colonel Campbell reminded all present that "our light attracts others to the greater light that is Jesus". Commissioner Condon brought a benediction before "sending out" the new officers to their first appointments.

YOUTH CELEBRATION

The Commissioning weekend culminated with The Movement – a celebration of young people in ministry. Finding and accepting Christ's mission was the theme for the evening and was celebrated through a number of dramas, musical items, video testimonies and a message by Sydney East and Illawarra Divisional Youth and Candidates Secretary, Lieutenant Rebecca Gott.

The Movement was also an opportunity to celebrate the retirement of four officers – Majors Ann Lingard, Joy Goodacre, Jennifer Stringer and Pauline Staples. A number of officers were also honoured for their years of long service to the Army, including Commissioners James and Jan Condon for 45 years of ministry. □

Cadets' parents honoured at Silver Star luncheon

WORDS • ESTHER PINN / PHOTOS • CAROLYN HIDE



02

"May we be as faithful to our calling as you have been," said Cadet Matthew Sutcliffe as he honoured his officer parents, Majors Peter and Miriam Sutcliffe at the Principal's Reception and Silver Star luncheon. Held at Earlwood in Sydney, the cadets of the *Messengers of Light* session publicly expressed their gratitude to their families, with their parents each presented with Silver Stars as part of their recognition.

School For Officer Training Principal, Colonel Julie Campbell, opened the luncheon by thanking the cadets' parents for the role they have played. "We're so grateful for your input, your investment into their futures," she said.

In between courses at the Principal Reception's meal, the tradition of giving a Silver Star to each of the cadets' parents took place. Each cadet was individually introduced with their parents by Territorial President For Women's Ministries, Commissioner Jan Condon, before



03

02. Cadet Matthew Sutcliffe speaks about his parents, Majors Peter and Miriam Sutcliffe, at the Silver Star luncheon.

03. Cadet Bronwyn Lithgow honours her parents.

she presented the parents with their Silver Stars. Cadet Jodie Sutcliffe then shared her testimony, expressing her gratitude for having loving and supportive parents. She also spoke about her journey of living out the Bible verse, Matthew 22:27, when faced with trials through her officership training. "So now as we pack up to go and leave the college, I go into the future with the focus of wanting to love God with all my heart, soul, mind and strength and to love my neighbour as myself, still knowing no matter what I do, God loves me and is with me every step of the way," she said.

School For Officer Training Spiritual Formation Officer, Captain Kaelene Greenaway, presented Bibles to each of the cadets' children. Commissioner Condon brought a message about the importance of encouragement, and inspired the parents of the cadets to continually encourage and pray for their officer children throughout their ministry work. ¶

The new lieutenants (*Messengers of Light* session) of the Australia Eastern Territory who will commence their new appointments on Thursday 7 January 2016 are:

Lieutenants Jess and Paul Farthing with their son, Patrick – (Corps Officers, Shellharbour Corps and Team Members Illawarra Multi-site).

Lieutenants Bronwyn and Perry Lithgow with their children, Joshua, Rebecca and Zachary – (Corps Officers, Townsville Faithworks).

Lieutenants Jodie and Matthew Sutcliffe with their children, Emma, Caitlyn and Sarah – (Corps Officers, Shoalhaven Corps).

Lieutenants Frank Wang and Belinda Zhou with their children, Flidon and Hannah – (Corps Officers, Bankstown Corps).

Achievement celebrated at graduation ceremony

WORDS • ESTHER PINN / PHOTO • CAROLYN HIDE



Cadet Jodie Sutcliffe receives the Philip Cairns Award from Lieut-Colonel Jan Cairns and Matt Cairns.

The eight *Messengers of Light* cadets officially graduated from The School For Officer Training a week prior to their commissioning as Salvation Army officers in late November. The cadets were supported by family and friends, as well as the first-year cadets of the *Joyful Intercessors* session, at their graduation ceremony held at Campsie Corps. Also in attendance were The Salvation Army Australia Eastern territorial leaders, Commissioners James and Jan Condon.

The evening opened with School For Officer Assistant Training Principal, Major Deborah Robinson, singing *Send The Fire*, while the cadets entered the Campsie Corps hall. Captain Kaelene Greenaway, Spiritual Formation Officer, then congratulated the *Messengers of Light* on their academic achievements before leading the congregation in *Be Thou My Vision*. "I expect their commitment for the past two years has been for one reason, for one person: Jesus," said Captain Greenaway. "The *Messengers of Light* all love Jesus and want to serve him faithfully. He's their vision, their power and their inspiration."

Three cadets then shared about three different study areas they completed at the School For Officer Training. Firstly, Cadet Bronwyn Lithgow spoke about her studies in theological understanding. She explained her initial uncertainty in her own ability to study theological understanding and how she was surprised by her academic success.

"Coming into college I hadn't done any formal study for 22 years," she said. "The qualification I did have was in a totally unrelated field of nursing and I had certainly

never studied in the field of biblical studies or theology. I didn't even know if I could. But incredible as it may seem, the academic study for me has been one of the best parts of my college experience. The learning here has been fantastic."

Cadet Matthew Sutcliffe shared his learnings from field training in corps and centres across the territory. "One of the highlights for me was out-training at William Booth House [recovery services]," he said. "It is a place where each and every day you get to witness transformation occurring not only in the life of participants but also in the staff as well."

Lastly, Cadet Frank Wang, in his native Mandarin language, spoke about spiritual formation, while Director of Spiritual Formation, Major Alwyn Robinson translated. Cadet Wang said he discovered how crucial it was to spend time with God when working in ministry.

Earlier in the service, School For Officer Training Residential Manager, Lieutenant Jisook Wunderlich, brought a Bible reading from Matthew 25:14-30. The Booth College Principal, Major Peter Farthing, spoke out of that Bible passage and then challenged each cadet to keep sharpening and developing their gifts for the kingdom of God.

Colonel Julie Campbell then presented each cadet with their graduation certificate. In honour of his father, who was promoted to glory last year, Matt Cairns then presented the Philip Cairns Award, for the first time, to Cadet Jodi Sutcliffe. Commissioner James Condon followed and congratulated the cadets on their academic achievements, and concluded the service with a prayer. ¶

New group of Messengers enter training

As the newly commissioned officers from the *Messengers of Light* session take up their first appointments, another group of salvationists embark on their journey to becoming Salvation Army officers. Seven cadets will begin their residential training at the School for Officer Training in Sydney, while another four will join the group of the non-residential cadets located in both Queensland and NSW who will be completing their training part-time.

The cadets of the *Messengers of the Gospel* session are:



Rong Fu & Dillon Wu
Burwood Chinese Corps



Matt & Jacqueline Gluyas*
Maroubra Corps



Ayly Haupt
Rockdale Corps
Ayly is married to Captain Zane Haupt (territorial pastoral care and well-being team)



Cameron & Maryanne
Lovering
Townsville Riverway Recovery Mission



Danielle Star*
North Brisbane Corps



Rachel Mina & Pavlos
Anastasiou
Athens, Greece



Stephanie Savage*
Caloundra Corps

* non-residential cadets.



Frank Wang and Belinda Zhou, who were recently commissioned as Salvation Army officers of the Australia Eastern Territory.
Photo: Cal Harmer

Communism to Christ

CHINESE ATHEISTS FIND SPIRITUAL FREEDOM

WORDS • BILL SIMPSON

His parents were angry, but Frank Wang knew God had called him out of his atheist past to a new life as a Christian. His course was set, no matter the family pressure he was under. This was something he was compelled to do. These were traumatic times for a young family man born and raised under Communist control in China.

Frank's parents had lived most of their lives under Chairman Mao Zedong's ruthless Communist rule in the mid-1900s. They neither understood nor appreciated their son's new-found belief. Frank's father threatened to take drastic action. So serious was the threat that Frank feared for his father's life. There was no place for God in the family, according to Frank's father. He believed God was just a fanciful invention of a capitalist Western society.

Frank and his wife, Belinda Zhou, worked their way through the family minefield for several years. In November, they graduated from The Salvation Army School for Officer Training in Sydney. A week later they were commissioned and ordained, and appointed officers in charge of Bankstown Corps. A long and, at times, painful journey, which took them from their China homeland to Australia had climaxed with introduction to and acceptance of a Saviour who had been hidden from them for more than half their life.

Like their parents, Frank and Belinda were also atheists in China. Belinda was also a Communist Party member. Frank

was born in 1969 and Belinda the following year. God didn't mean anything to them. Belinda had hardly heard God's name used, except once at university in China when she was invited to a Christmas service. She didn't understand what it was about. She thought it was a mystical festival of some sort.

DISTANT GOD

As a teenager, Frank had heard short-wave radio broadcasts about God and wondered what it all meant. At night, he would stare at the stars and ponder if there was a "super power out there". He wondered about his purpose in life. But Marxism, he says, taught him that he was of no consequence in the world. Certainly, in China, God was of no consequence.

Both had had fairly contented lives growing up in their homeland. Each was from a different city in China's north. Frank had a sister. His parents were mechanical engineers. They earned just enough to keep their family above the poverty line. Frank was a bright student, graduating with a chemical engineering degree.

Belinda had a brother and a sister. Her father was an engineer and her mother a teacher. Belinda, like Frank, graduated from university with a chemical engineering degree. They met at the same work site in 1992 and married two years later.

Frank was encouraged to join the Communist Party, but ►



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► declined. "Joining the party was considered good for your career," he says. "But I kept putting it off because I didn't think the Communist Party had a strong foundation of beliefs. I looked at Western society and thought it had more to offer." Belinda did join the party. She became a factory manager and, when it was explained party membership would help her career, she signed up.

Frank and Belinda's careers were going well. They planned a family, but without success. They were told they would never be able to have children. They came to Australia at the start of 1999 to "try something new". "We came with a dream and plan to have a new life," Frank says. "For me, it was to build a business empire and make lots of money; the more the better."

Frank came first on a skilled migrant visa, hoping to quickly find work in his field. He arrived at Sydney Airport with two suitcases. There was nobody at the airport to welcome him to his new country. He made enquiries at the airport and took a taxi to a migrant resources centre at nearby Rockdale, hoping to get help with accommodation. The centre couldn't assist. He took another taxi to Marrickville, only a few kilometres away, booking into a backpacker hostel.

Belinda arrived six weeks later. They arranged accommodation at Rockdale and then Campsie, and started their search for jobs. Both registered with an employment agency. The best Frank could find was a

machine-operator role. Belinda was offered work one day a week as a cleaner. It was at The Salvation Army Burwood Corps. She had no previous knowledge of The Salvation Army.

ARMY CONTACT

Corps leader at the time, Alan Wu, invited them to a Sunday morning meeting. They went, but didn't understand anything, although they liked the music. "Alan would drive us to the railway station to catch our train home and he would talk to us about God," Frank says. "We told him we didn't believe in God."

Frank and Belinda were invited to teach at a Chinese school attached to the Burwood Corps. Frank was later to become school principal. They also started their own shoe retail business. It did well.

Frank and Belinda continued attending Sunday services, even though they understood very little. The songs, however, were impacting on Belinda. She often cried. They were invited by a corps member to have Sunday dinner at her home. Others from the corps joined them. "People there talked to us about God, but we didn't want to hear about God," says Frank. "We only went and listened because we wanted to be polite."

Frank and Belinda were asked if they wanted to pray (silently). "We wanted a child," Belinda says. "I thought that if God was real and he could give us a child, I would give that child back to God. So, that is what I prayed."



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"Jesus' cross used to seem to me to be just a symbol for a charity. Now when I see the cross ... I see the Prince of glory died on that cross for my sin and salvation. I am so happy that I have found the truth."

02. Lieutenants Frank and Belinda and members of their family at the ordination and commissioning weekend in November. Frank's parents are standing to his right.

03. Belinda is all smiles as she marks a significant milestone in her faith journey – being commissioned as a Salvation Army officer. Photos: Carolyn Hide

When we got home, I found out that Frank had prayed the same prayer." Not long after, Belinda discovered that she was pregnant. It started her thinking that maybe there was a God and that he had answered their prayers. They now have two children, a son, Flidon, 15, and daughter, Hannah, 10.

"It was in January 2001 that I started to believe in God," Belinda says. "Our pastor preached the Gospel to us and asked if we wanted to accept Jesus. I said yes." Frank did not join his wife in the decision. He had more questions and needed time to think. "I was so happy. I had joy like never before," says Belinda. "I was different and I hoped that one day Frank would know this joy, too." One month later, Frank telephoned his pastor to say that he was ready to accept Jesus.

CALL TO OFFICERSHIP

Home in China, Frank's parents worried that their son had been "brainwashed by Western culture". They moved to Australia in 2005. Belinda's parents were more accepting. There were two occasions when Frank and Belinda believed they were called to be Salvation Army officers. But they did not act on those calls. In late 2010, Belinda says she became aware that only obedience to God could fill an emptiness in her life.

"I started to seek God's guidance earnestly," she says. "On one day in June 2011, I was filled with the Holy Spirit and God talked to me using the Bible (John 21:15), saying 'Feed my lambs'. This was the third time God called me to serve

him as a pastor. From then on, my heart was deeply moved by the Holy Spirit. But, at that time, my husband still didn't want to accept the calling.

"I knelt in front of the cross, with tears in my eyes, and asked God to make the same move on my husband's heart as he had made on mine. In March 2012, when I arrived home, my husband told me that when he was praying that day a very clear voice sounded from his heart indicating that this may be his last chance. We were aware that being Salvation Army officers was the will of God for us. No more hesitation. We started our application for officership."

Frank says his parents were still upset about the decision, at that time. "I love and support my parents. I was really worried that my father would do something extreme. It was a deep burden for me." Frank and Belinda started officer training in 2014.

"I have talked to my parents about God, but they are not ready to accept," Frank says. "But when I telephoned to tell them that we had been appointed corps officers at Bankstown – near where my parents live – Mum said she would come on Sundays to hear my messages and Dad said he would come and help me in my job. I didn't expect that. I think God is at work.

"Jesus' cross used to seem to me to be just a symbol for a charity. Now when I see the cross ... I see the Prince of glory died on that cross for my sin and salvation. I am so happy that I have found the truth." □

Heart for the refugee

BRISBANE SALVATIONIST GORDON KNOWLES RECENTLY SPENT FIVE WEEKS HELPING THE SALVATION ARMY IN GERMANY SERVE THE FLOOD OF REFUGEES FLEEING WAR-TORN COUNTRIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

WORDS • SIMONE WORTHING

Moved by the desperate plight of hundreds of thousands of refugees arriving in Europe from war-torn lands last October, Gordon Knowles knew he had to respond. A Salvationist at Brisbane City Temple, Gordon with his wife, Barbara, contacted Captains Matthias and Anni Lindner, corps officers at the South West Corps (Korps Südwest) in Berlin, Germany, as well as North-East Divisional Leaders Majors Poldi and Ruth Walz, about any possible assistance he could provide. Within days he had paid for his flight and was on his way.

Gordon spent the next five weeks serving tea and coffee to thousands of traumatised and desperate, yet hopeful and grateful, refugees from countries including Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq. He was also instrumental in writing grant proposals to The Salvation Army's International Headquarters.

"I was tired of sitting and watching the news and seeing big queues of people (refugees), because I knew what was going to be at the end of those queues," Gordon explains. "I had spoken to the corps officers in Berlin about a mission opportunity for the Army to provide a service. The refugees were cold, wet and hungry and we could provide the simple service of hot cups of tea and coffee. The idea gelled with the officers and I saw an opportunity that I could be a part of. I wasn't going to be the manager or coordinator. I offered myself to be a pair of arms and legs to assist them, have an involvement and be an encouragement for their corps support program.

"The words of Jesus in Matthew 25:34-39, about giving food, water and clothes in his name, was a significant biblical foundation for me. Knowing that Jesus was an asylum seeker (Matthew 2:11-15) made these verses even more pertinent! Human needs are not dependent on

beliefs or religion. We really are global neighbours and the Bible tells us to love our neighbour."

Gordon, whose recently completed PhD thesis examined the exclusion of women from poverty-alleviation programs, and who also holds a Master's degree in Development Administration, is also an experienced international aid consultant. From 1991-2008, he served as Overseas Development Coordinator for The Salvation Army National Secretariat and Development Office in Canberra, fulfilling a grant acquisition, project co-ordination and community development consultancy role. "I have a bent for vulnerable, marginalised people and finding solutions for them," Gordon explains. "Most often they know their own solutions to their own problems."

As part of his role, Gordon travelled to Salvation Army development projects around the world, including China, North Korea, Vietnam, Japan, the Philippines, Bolivia, South East Asia, Jamaica, Africa and the Middle East. He was able to transfer his experience working in Lebanon, where The Salvation Army served in 12 refugee camps, as well as recovery work in India after the devastating tsunami of 2004, to work on the ground with the refugees in Berlin. "This is a great opportunity to help people, many of whom have been traumatised by their experiences, with something small like a smile, an extended hand of friendship and a hot drink," he says. "This is something simple that The Salvation Army has been doing well for many years."

GLOBAL NEIGHBOURS

Not long after Gordon arrived in Berlin, accompanied by Captain Matthias he began handing out tea and coffee at 5.30am every morning from a Salvation Army emergency services van parked outside the LaGeSo offices – the first contact point for newly arriving refugees where they could register and officially apply for asylum. The urns of hot drinks had been prepared the evening before and catered for approximately 500 people each day. He spent time with the refugees, listening to their stories and getting to know some of them.

Gordon also worked with the relatively small South West Corps to organise regular volunteers, both from within ►

Brisbane's Gordon Knowles, who was compelled to go to Germany and offer his assistance to the refugee crisis. Photo: Matt Seaman



photo: Matt Seaman

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the church and the surrounding community. "There were some very enthusiastic people," he says. "The volunteer system is now well established. People are serving, bringing in donations and being involved in mission. I was just a catalyst to help the process. This really is their work; it's in their paddock."

The volunteer teams distributed the tonnes of clothing, warm coats, shoes and blankets that were deposited at the Army hall. The clothing was delivered to refugee centres who advertised on their Facebook pages what they needed each day.

One evening, Gordon joined the youth of the corps at one of the centres for a kids' club activity. "The refugee children are clearly traumatised and were therefore very difficult to control or influence," he says. "They seemed to be happiest when drawing sketches of their homes and countries, including their flags." The corps was also approached by a neighbouring church, asking whether 50-60 Muslims could use the corps' commercial kitchen on a Sunday afternoon to cook their Sunday meal. "This has taken place on a regular basis and has provided an avenue for conversation and sharing," says Gordon. "This was a new approach on taking opportunities to open the doors to the unconverted!"

Brisbane City Temple donated \$4500 through a special collection that was taken up soon after Gordon left for Berlin. "God's personal challenge to Gordon became a challenge to all in our corps," says Major Dean Clarke, Brisbane City Temple corps officer. "The refugee challenge

moved from 'out there' to 'in here' as we were offered an opportunity to partner with the Salvationists in Berlin and invest in their ministry."

The Army's South Queensland Division also supported the ministry. "When we heard that Brisbane City Temple had taken up a love offering to send to Berlin, we decided to match it from the division to support this ministry," says Divisional Commander, Lieutenant-Colonel David Godkin. "The whole world has been moved by the images of these people fleeing their countries to find asylum and refuge in foreign lands and equally moved by the way countries have opened their borders and welcomed them. Gordon has always had a passion and a heart for the vulnerable and when he indicated to me his desire to travel to Berlin to help the asylum seekers, I did not hesitate to pledge my support."

Gordon also used his extensive aid experience to draft a funding proposal for International Headquarters to support the program. This was successful, with the \$13,000 given used to buy supplies and run the emergency services van. Gordon also drafted a proposal for a refugee community centre for Christians, to be run by The Salvation Army as a social centre where refugees could come for worship, a kids club, mother's room, access to trauma counselling, German language training, and a men's employment referral space.

"The longer-term ambition is that this might become an outpost of the corps," says Gordon. "If this proposal for a year's support is funded, the Army in Berlin is also



photo: Matt Seaman

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preparing an application to another local donor who will make up funds for on-going needs into years two and three if required."

FAMILY AND LOCAL SUPPORT

Gordon is also keen to emphasize how appreciative he is that his family were fully supportive of his mission. "The South West Corps are appreciative also, and so many asked me to make sure I thanked my family and my corps for letting me come," he says.

Barbara had also been feeling a sense of desperation and geographical distance, watching the plight of the refugees. "I was so glad Gordon could go, and I wish I could've gone too," she says. "I felt supported by our corps' response, not just financially but by the many who were so interested and supportive of the ministry. Gordon has spent so many years working in overseas aid that I saw this as really an extension of that – responding to humans in need. We are all world citizens and every refugee could be one of us."

Gordon's willingness to travel to the other side of the world to help people in desperate need has also been appreciated by those he served alongside. "Gordon has been a great ambassador and if there are any more volunteers like him we would love to have them," says Captain Matthias. □

For information on how The Salvation Army is responding to the refugee crisis in Europe, go to salvationarmy.org/ihq/europerefugees

"The words of Jesus in Matthew 25:34-39, about giving food, water and clothes in his name, was a significant biblical foundation for me."



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01. Gordon and his wife Barbara, soldiers at Brisbane City Temple Corps.

02. A gift Gordon received from his Salvationist friends in Germany.

03. One of the refugee contact points in Berlin.

04. A Salvation Army van serving tea and coffee.

05. Inside one of the many tents set up to offer assistance to refugees.



Gordon had many interactions with desperate refugees while in Germany. Here he shares two experiences ...

Looking for hope

I met a dentist from Damascus one morning and, as he spoke reasonable English, we had a long talk. He left four months ago to come to Germany. He told me his wife and children were all killed by government bombs and his house was completely flattened. His elderly parents were buried alive in the rubble. Since he had no other relatives, and no future, he decided to leave and take the perilous journey to Berlin. He is not sure if his qualifications will hold up here, but will give it a go. He cried as he told me his story, and I cried too as we hugged each other. He had three cups of coffee as we talked and then he went and melted back into the mass of other refugees, but not before I said "God bless you", and he waved and nodded his thanks. Please continue to pray for all the workers in Berlin in the harrowing work they are doing.

All alone

A young man who seemed to be by himself and without friends came to get a cup of coffee. After I gave it to him he said, "bread, bread. I hungry," motioning with his hand on his stomach. He must have just arrived and spent the night out in the cold since all refugees who are in the centres have access to food. I said to him "just a minute," knowing we had a loaf of bread somewhere in the van. When there was a lull in the coffee line I was serving, I looked around and saw this young man. I caught his eye, he came over and I offered him an open loaf of bread. He declined, but pulled four slices out, grabbing as if he hadn't eaten for a long time. He handed the rest back to me with thanks, and started feverishly eating as he walked away. I wished I'd had more time to talk with him about the "Bread of Life" but perhaps a coffee and slices of bread was the limit for today! This young man represents so many of this mass of people who are coming into the unknown; a new country, new language, new customs, and so often without family and friends.



photo: Matt Seaman

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"We really are global neighbours and the Bible tells us to love our neighbour."

01. Gordon shows The Salvation Army cap he wore while serving in Germany.

02. Salvation Army workers listen to a refugee tell his story.

03. Refugees camped at one of the European borders.

PATHWAYS TO OFFICERSHIP

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Full throttle for God

MOTORCYCLE MINISTRY MAKING INROADS IN PEOPLE'S LIVES

WORDS • SIMONE WORTHING

A group of Salvation Army officers, soldiers and friends, dressed in leather and riding motorbikes, isn't always the first image that springs to mind when thinking about Salvation Army programs, but this worldwide ministry is definitely making a growing impact in Australia for the Kingdom of God. The Salvation Army Motorcycle Ministry (MM), which is thriving overseas in countries such as the United States, Canada, Norway, Sweden and Iceland, held its first meeting in Australia last year, in the northern NSW town of Grafton. The original 12 members of MM had been part of the former Salvation Riders, which closed down in 2009.

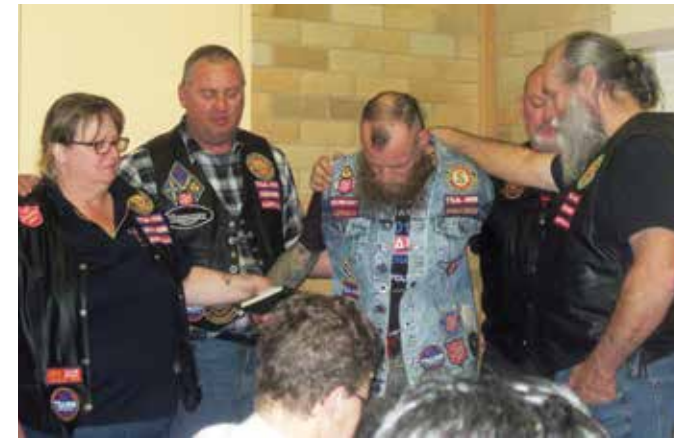
"This ministry is all about reaching motorcycle riders," says Captain Phil McCall, Goulburn Corps Officer and national executive of MM. "This could be riders from a bike gang, or members of a local dirt bike club. Anyone who rides a bike, we will sit with and have a chat. If it leads to conversion well and good. It's all about coming alongside other motorcycle riders."

In Australia, MM currently has 25 members, with the majority being in NSW and Queensland. National rides take place each year, and local rides organised by local members happen most weekends. "The members naturally ride bikes and witness when they get the opportunity," says Captain McCall. "In the next 12 months, we are having

more regular meetings and runs to focus intentionally on connecting with more riders. We are also planning on visiting different corps, sharing our ministry and serving there."

In October last year, for their first national ride together, MM members met at Pheasant's Nest on the outskirts of Sydney and rode to Goulburn on the Friday of the long weekend. On Saturday, members held a general meeting to discuss their ministry and plans for the future, followed by a ride and barbecue, which was also attended by members of the Goulburn Corps. Tony Stevens, sergeant major of MM and a soldier at Grafton Corps, spoke at the corps on Sunday about the ministry, and shared his powerful testimony (see opposite page). MM ran the meeting, with each member participating in the service. The group rode back to Sydney together that afternoon.

Although small in number, MM was invited by the Christian Motorcyclists Association of Australia to attend their annual general meeting in Canberra last year, as well as their conference in Brisbane. On the north coast of NSW, and in Melbourne, MM has also been asked to be part of a number of military motorcycle clubs for returned servicemen. "We are becoming a legitimate part of the Australian motorcycling community," says Tony.



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01. Tony and his fellow Motorcycle Ministry members share a prayer.

02. Tony and his bike outside Grafton Corps, where he became a senior soldier in 2012. He attends the corps with his son Dylan.



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Bringing other riders to Jesus is a focus area for MM. "Wherever there are motorcyclists, Jesus died to save them, and we know that the places where bike riders go are unique places where we can serve," says Tony. "That's one of the reasons that our ministry is considered a 'special service' within the Australia Eastern Territory. We witness to other riders, mainly in our clean living with no smoking or drinking, and coming alongside them in life. We ride different bikes, including all sorts of cruisers, sports bikes, even Harleys, and we include females in our membership – a lot of clubs don't do that.

"We will go to any bike club, including those that look a lot like bikie gangs, military clubs and social clubs – and chat with any group of riders in different places. No bike rider is forgotten. We wear a Salvation Army badge, so it's obvious who we are. Wherever people are, they need the Lord, and our target is to reach those people. We want all riders to know that we're here for them!" ¶

"We witness to other riders, mainly in our clean living with no smoking or drinking, and coming alongside them in life."

RIDING LIFE'S UPS AND DOWNS WITH THE LORD

Despite his unhappy childhood, Tony Stevens remembers that, from the age of four, he somehow knew that everything would work out. "During some of the worst times, there was a warm little tingle in my chest and I just knew I was going to be okay," he said.

As Tony grew up, he got into trouble with the police and was sent to prison at the end of 1995. Now-retired Howard Mole, who knew Tony, visited him regularly in different prisons and gave him a Bible. Tony didn't read it until he was sent to another prison, which was particularly challenging. "When I got to the book of Luke, that same little warm tingle started happening again," he said. "I knew it was the Lord! He had been with me all along!"

Tony had many subsequent discussions with Howard and asked him many questions. "Strangely, it was a really good time," said Tony. "I did years in prison when it was just me and the scriptures and the Holy Spirit. I'm forever grateful for those years. Reading the Bible would make me happy. I would see where I was making a mistake. I would come face to face with myself and what I had to change."

Tony left prison in 2004 and started going to church. His son, Dylan, was born in 2007. When the relationship with Dylan's mother broke down, Tony began to really seek God in his life. "The Lord showed me that the only fight worthwhile was to fight to bring people to the Lord," he said.

Tony became an adherent of Grafton Corps in 2009 and a soldier in 2012, and now also brings Dylan to meetings where the corps is a family for both of them. "Without the Lord, the Bible, the Army, and Howard, my son wouldn't have a family and neither would I," he said. "My life really began when I met Jesus."

Tony loves to serve others. He assists with feeding the homeless in Grafton and as sergeant major of The Salvation Army Motorcycle Ministry.



The digital gospel

TIPS FOR SHARING YOUR FAITH ONLINE

WORDS • DAVID GILES






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“Engaging with people using social media offers a unique opportunity to dispel misconceptions some may have about the church”

Social media: waste of time or of paramount importance? Should we get involved? How does it all work? If this was a tweet, it would end ... now! Thankfully, the printed page does not limit us to 140 characters – so I have more than enough room to explore how the world has taken to social media and why it’s crucial that Christians get involved.

The most recent statistics reveal that Facebook has more than 1.3 billion active users. That’s in excess of one-sixth of the Earth’s population – and broadly equivalent to the number of people in the world’s most populous nation, China. Twitter, on the other hand, has 550 million active accounts. That’s the same number as the inhabitants of the United States, United Kingdom and Japan combined. Put simply, it’s a lot of people.

Because you’re reading this in a magazine, I don’t know whether you count yourself among this multitude or not. As a Christian I would suggest to my fellow believers that they probably should be. The technology that has developed over the past few years is well-suited to our mission to fulfil the Great Commission. Salvation, we are reminded in Romans 10, is for all who call on the name of the Lord: “But how can they call to him for help if they have not believed? And how can they believe if they have not heard the message? And how can they hear if the message is not proclaimed? And how can the message be proclaimed if the messengers are not sent out? As the Scripture says, ‘How wonderful is the coming of messengers who bring good news!’” So how can we proclaim the gospel message effectively? Here are a few tips:

1. MAKE FRIENDS

Follow interesting people on Twitter, and not just Christians. Comment on their updates – particularly where you share a common interest. You can interject in most conversations by prefacing your message with the originator’s @-handle

2. USE HASHTAGS

Many Twitter conversations include one or more hashtags to help keep everyone in on the topic (our Worldwide Prayer Meeting tweets, for instance, use #WWPM). This makes it easier to search for particular themes. Facebook has recently got in on the hashtag act too.

3. “DO” GOD

The senior aides of former British Prime Minister Tony Blair famously told reporters who asked about his faith: “We don’t do God.” I would suggest the opposite. If your faith shapes who you are, you have a responsibility to talk about it. Have you been to your corps today? Tweet about it. Thinking about a particular Bible passage? Share it in a Facebook status. Praying about an issue of personal/local/national/international significance? Tell people. Celebrating answered prayer? Tell even more people!

4. AVOID JARGON

According to the vast majority of people CO = carbon monoxide rather than commanding officer. DC = direct current not divisional commander. THQ = probably a typo! The overwhelming majority of social media users will not be familiar with Salvation Army terminology, especially when abbreviated. Try to use straightforward language.

5. SHARE OTHERS’ CONTENT

While many territories/divisions/corps have official social media channels, they’re no substitute for personal relationship. Your own network of friends and contacts will have a much more immediate connection with you, so your voice is important. Retweeting “corporate” Twitter messages or sharing our Facebook statuses helps us to reach a much wider audience than going it alone, and at far less cost. We need you.

6. BE YOURSELF

Don’t just rehash other people’s material. You’ve got something to say too. Why are you a Christian? Why do you belong to The Salvation Army? What are your other interests and how can you speak into the conversations of others who share your passions? You are uniquely you and personal reflection can be compelling and engaging.

7. DON’T LEAVE IT TO SOMEONE ELSE

Seen something unfairly critical about The Salvation Army? Make sure you’re certain of the facts, but then put the record straight. This needs to be done in a gentle, kind and truthful way, and without making up Army policy on the spot! A clear link to our non-discriminatory international mission statement (sar.my/mission) often defuses heated situations.

8. BE SALT AND LIGHT

Colossians 4:6 hits the nail on the head: “Your tweets should always be pleasant and interesting, and you should know how to give the right answer to everyone” (paraphrased slightly). Engaging with people using social media offers a unique opportunity to dispel misconceptions some may have about the Church and Christians while demonstrating a Christ-like attitude. Have integrity. Don’t brag. Be honest!

9. INCLUDE PICTURES, VIDEOS AND LINKS

Digital marketers know that social media content works best when people can visualise what you’re talking about and provide a clear call to action (“give here”, “volunteer your time”, “help us”). Why not use Vine to create a six-second look around your Sunday morning meeting? Or Pinterest to curate your own view of The Salvation Army world?

10. BE TIMELY AND RELEVANT

The immediacy of social media is one of its great strengths – we can very quickly convey breaking news to a large audience, without needing to adhere to publication deadlines or broadcasting schedules. If you are part of a Salvation Army response to an incident in your community, try to find a few seconds to tweet about it. You may find your experiences then get shared or retweeted.

11. PICK AND CHOOSE WISELY

Jesus was right when he said: “Not everyone who calls me ‘Lord, Lord’ will enter the Kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 7:21). Not all social media content claiming to be Christian is edifying either. Don’t feel railroaded into resharing dubious content, but don’t be deterred from taking part in online petitions and awareness-raising campaigns, especially where they are orchestrated by bona fide organisations.

12. QUALITY NOT QUANTITY

The median active Twitter user has more than 60 followers. If you successfully engage those people, they may be minded to share with their followers. More than 60 retweets later, and there’s a potential audience of thousands. If those people are similarly enthused and share the message with their circle of contacts, we have a theoretical reach of a quarter of a million. Clearly, with overlapping friendship groups, the true figures are usually less than that, but it’s evident that the message can wquickly be amplified.

13. REMEMBER IT’S A CONVERSATION

Social media is not a book, a radio broadcast or a TV show. And it’s certainly not a sermon! It’s interactive, it’s participatory and it’s risky. Listen to other people’s opinions and be open and honest – you’ll almost certainly be “found out” if you’re not. ¶

David Giles is the web manager for The Salvation Army’s International Headquarters. This article first appeared in All the World.



Suffragette

RATING: M
RELEASE DATE: 26 December



They attacked the homes of politicians, assaulted police officers and claimed responsibility for London bombings. They held illegal meetings that advocated violence and radicalised others to destroy public property. If the word “terrorist” had been in common use it would almost certainly have been applied – to the women activists who strove to gain their gender the vote. The new film *Suffragette* highlights their inspiring struggle, while at the same time raising questions about the part violence plays in social change.

Carey Mulligan leads an all-star cast as Maud Watts, an early 20th-century factory worker and housewife who finds herself drawn into the struggle to see women enfranchised. Meryl Streep plays Emmeline Pankhurst, a leading suffragette who encourages her audience and Maude to see themselves as social revolutionaries: “We’re fighting for a time when every little girl born into the world will have an equal chance with her brothers.

Never underestimate the power we women have to define our own destinies. We do not want to be law breakers. We want to be law makers!” However, Emmeline’s catchphrase is “It’s deeds, not words that will get us the vote”, and her tactics increasingly turn on the sort of drastic actions guaranteed to gain the attention of the press. The authorities, personified by Brendon Gleeson’s Inspector Arthur Steed, react with arrests, imprisonment, and public shaming.

But these tactics only go to show just how unequal their struggle is. For Maud it becomes increasingly an issue of justice rather than equality: Steed: “Violence doesn’t discern! It takes the innocent and the guilty! What gives you the right to put that woman’s life at risk? Maud: “What gave you the right to stand in the middle of a riot and watch women beaten and do nothing?!”

Their stand-off highlights the tension seething through every moment of *Suffragette*. Maud slowly sacrifices everything she has to the cause – her public standing, her job, her husband and finally her son. Modern audiences will have no trouble identifying the justice of her cause, but the approach she is adopting is just as clearly hardening hearts rather than softening them. As Christians called to change the world, it falls to us to ask if her path is as worthy as her purpose?

Ben Whishaw plays Maud’s husband Sonny, a man who cannot bear to see the transformation taking place in her: Sonny: “You’re a mother, Maud. You’re a wife. My wife. That’s what you’re meant to be.”

Watching, I was reminded of the similar rejection many believers go through as those close to them realise their religion is not some passing fad. However, our leader offers a path radically different to Ms Pankhurst. Jesus’ call to arms involves suffering, but the sort that derails violence rather than perpetuates it: “You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth’. But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also” (Matthew 5:38-39).

“Love your enemies” was no easy platitude. Jesus offered it to people in far more desperate circumstances than Maud’s contemporaries. But it points to the world-changing truth that God’s peace is far more powerful than our most persistent protests. *Suffragette* reminds us that we should involve ourselves in the social struggles of the day, fighting to see that all are treated with the love and respect that characterises the Kingdom of God. But never forget, human efforts can only compel change. It is the Spirit that transforms hearts.

– Mark Hadley



The Revenant

RATING: M
RELEASE DATE: 7 January



Revenant is not a word most Australians will be familiar with, but it’s well suited to the Leonardo DiCaprio film being released this month. It describes the restless body of a dead person that refuses to stay in its grave, usually because it’s animated by some grievance against the living. In the case of *The Revenant* movie, it’s the story of a father driven by revenge. Filmgoers won’t have any trouble appreciating the righteousness of his cause, but what will they do with his realisation that vengeance is best left in God’s hands?

The Revenant opens with DiCaprio as Hugh Glass, a famous 19th-century American woodsman, participating in the fur-taking expedition in the upper reaches of the Missouri River. An attack by Native Americans devastates the expedition. Glass and his companions escape into the wilderness with the hope of making it to the safety of Fort Kiowa. However, during their trek Glass is attacked by

a grizzly and looks certain to die from his wounds.

Tom Hardy plays John Fitzgerald, one of the men who volunteers to stay behind with Glass’ Indian son Hawk, and bury Glass when he dies. However, fear of approaching war parties wears away Fitzgerald’s patience and he settles on a more direct method. Glass is left for dead and must fend for himself with no weapons, severe wounds and winter coming on. But Fitzgerald doesn’t reckon on a desire for revenge so potent it’s enough to drag a man across 320km of hostile wilderness.

The Revenant sounds like a survival film, though it’s really an intensely spiritual examination of the things that drive us. Both Glass and his dead native wife elevate endurance to the level of a virtue for Hawk. As Glass struggles to survive his encounter with the bear, his son reminds him: “Remember what mother used to say – the wind cannot defeat a tree with strong roots.”

Glass has already offered the boy similar thoughts in a moment of seemingly insurmountable tragedy: “As long as you can grab a breath, you keep fighting.” But through the film’s journey the woodsman learns that perseverance is a value worth pursuing, not an undeniable virtue, especially when it comes to seeking justice.

Glass might be driven by an all-consuming desire for vengeance but on several occasions *The Revenant* suggests that only God has the power to see it carried out. Initially, Glass’ skill keeps him alive but eventually he faces insurmountable obstacles. It’s at these points that providence intervenes in the form of miraculous escapes or unlooked-for aid. A Pawnee Indian who helps the near-dead Glass offers him advice that will eventually steer the conclusion of the film: “Sioux killed my family. My heart bleeds, but revenge is in the Creator’s hands.”

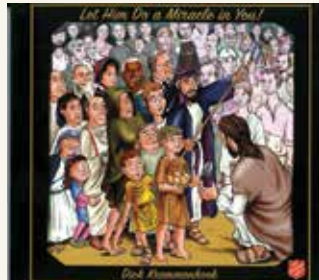
The Bible, likewise, presents God as the judge of all the earth and one who is aware of every evil. In it God promises us that though justice tarries he won’t fail to see it done: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay. In due time their foot will slip; their day of disaster is near and their doom rushes upon them” (Deuteronomy 32:35).

Glass eventually realises that pushing on till he gains his retribution isn’t enough. He arrives at an understanding that revenge can only wreak havoc for past wrongs; it cannot redress them. By the end of *The Revenant* the most determined and capable person in the film concludes that usurping God’s role will not lead to healing. It’s a grudging, awkward admission, but Glass finally utters the truth: “Revenge is in God’s hands.” – Mark Hadley

New Releases

1

Music



Let Him Do a Miracle In You

Let Him Do a Miracle In You is a recording by The Salvation Army Norway, Iceland and the Færoes Territorial Commander, Commissioner Dick Krommenhoek. Among the 11 tracks on the album are original works written by Commissioner Krommenhoek, as well as songs from the pens of General John Gowans, Fanny Crosby, and Frances Ridley Havergal. The lyrics of a further two songs are written by Commissioner Krommenhoek's friend and colleague, Major Richard Mingay.

What is particularly interesting about this recording is the contemporary style that Commissioner Krommenhoek has deliberately adopted. "I have recorded a good number of traditional Salvation Army CDs," he says, "(but) I have long felt an inner desire to do a recording in very different contemporary styles than is usual for The Salvation Army." *Let Him Do a Miracle In You* is the fulfilment of that long-held desire.

"My only wish is that through it (the album) men and women, boys and girls will open their hearts to God's miracle of salvation and sanctification through the love and sacrifice of his son, Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world and the only way to God," Commissioner Krommenhoek adds.

"For this purpose, and this purpose alone, I recorded this CD and wrote the title song, *Let Him Do a Miracle In You*."

Let Him Do a Miracle In You is available from The Trade (thetrade.salvos.org.au).

2

DVD



One Thing For Us - Season 1: Bringing personal prayer to life

One Thing For Us, produced by The Salvation Army's Prayer Network Team in the UK, is a three-part teaching series on prayer. The first part of the series, *One Thing For Us*, features six sessions on how to grow and deepen your personal prayer life. Each session includes teaching on a particular theme, interspersed with opportunities for discussion and reflection. You will also hear stories from people who are working out what it means to put prayer at the centre of their lives.

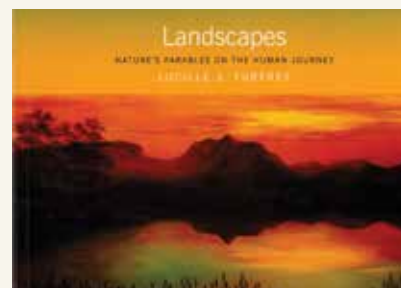
One Thing For Us will introduce you to the fun and freedom of discovering your prayer personality and building your personal prayer rhythm; it will help you to answer questions like: "How do I hear God's voice?" and "Does God answer prayer?", and it will challenge you to understand

and overcome the obstacles which stop you going deeper in your relationship with God.

The course is designed as a group study resource, but can also be used for individual study. It is available from The Trade (thetrade.salvos.org.au) for \$40.

3

Book



Landscapes: Nature's Parables on the Human Journey

An eight-week series of daily devotions, *Landscapes* is the latest book from the pen, paintbrush and camera of noted Salvation Army writer, Lieutenant-Colonel Lucille Turfrey. It offers readers the "hope, joy and peace of travelling with a sense of the abiding presence of God".

Each reflection includes a prayer, a point to ponder and a pilgrim's pool discussion starter for small groups, offset by a beautiful full-colour photograph. *Landscapes* is a sister publication to *Reflections: Nature's Parables on Wholeness and Holiness*, published in 2014, and *The Sacred Journey: Nature's Parables on Redemption* (2012).

Landscapes: Nature's Parables on the Human Journey is available from The Trade (thetrade.salvos.org.au) for \$15.

DO THE STORIES FROM SELF DENIAL capture your heart?

If the stories from Self Denial have left a lasting impression on you, please don't wait until the Altar Service to consider your financial gift to the Appeal.

We'd like to invite you to consider becoming a **year-round supporter** of our work in poverty-stricken communities. Find out more about becoming a regular giver by visiting

www.selfdenial.info/Pipeline

The Salvation Army School for the Blind and Visually Impaired is the only one of its kind in Jamaica. The school accommodates 110 children.

SELF DENIAL APPEAL 2016

Jamaica • India • Myanmar • Moldova

IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING...

Q: What are the benefits of regular giving?

A: Regular giving allows you to divide your sacrificial gift into manageable monthly or quarterly payments.

Q: When will the next Self Denial Appeal begin?

A: Even though you can give all year round, our next Self Denial Appeal will officially launch on 14 February 2016.

Q: Can I give my one-off Altar Service gift online?

A: Yes you can! Your gift will be included in your Corps' total.

Q: If I give online, can I still participate during the Altar Service at my corps?

A: Of course! Simply tick the "I've given online" box on your envelope.



SALVATION ARMY LEADS FIGHT AGAINST MODERN SLAVERY ▼



Commissioner James Condon signs the joint declaration, watched by Commissioner Floyd Tidd.

A campaign launched by The Salvation Army in Australia to end human trafficking and slavery has been endorsed by Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull. Writing on the day the Australian Freedom Network was launched – International Day for the Abolition of Slavery on 2 December – Mr Turnbull said: “It’s important that all corners of the community join together to work towards the noble goal of eradicating slavery and human trafficking across the world by 2020 ... I thank The Salvation Army and the Freedom Partnership for its commitment to this important cause. By educating Australians about slavery and providing ways in which they can take action, you are empowering everyone to make a difference.”

A launch event at Parliament House in Canberra was attended by Deputy Prime Minister Julie Bishop and Tanya Plibersek, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. A wide range of leaders from across Australia, representing 11 Christian groups and the Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist

and Hindu faiths also attended. The church and faith representatives – including Commissioner James Condon and Commissioner Floyd Tidd, leaders of the Army's Australia Eastern and Australia Southern territories, respectively – signed a declaration to advocate and take action against slavery, including a commitment for at least the next five years to take measurable actions towards ending slavery in Australia.

The Global Slavery Index estimates that 35.8 million people are enslaved globally, including 3000 people in Australia. In recent times, abuses of people in Australian agriculture, food production and retail franchises have been exposed on an unprecedented scale.

Commissioner Condon said the cases of slavery known to exist in Australia represent only the tip of the iceberg. “We must do more to close the gap between the victims we know about and the thousands still enslaved in Australia,” he said. ‘Faith communities can play a critical role in this and be part of a global movement that prevents slavery in the first place because the world’s major faiths share universal values of dignity, freedom and social justice.’”

The Global Freedom Network is founded on the premise that religion can be a powerful motivating force to inspire individual and community action both spiritually and practically. By signing the declaration, Australia's faith leaders have made a commitment to measureable actions towards ending slavery in Australia for at least the next five years.

To read Commissioner Condon’s blog on fighting slavery, go to endslavery.salvos.org.au/blog. More information – and the opportunity for Australians to add their signatures to #EndSlavery declaration – can be found on the Australian Freedom Network website, afn.org.au.¶

MILESTONE BIRTHDAY FOR HONOURED AGED CARE RESIDENT ▼

Bethany Aged Care Plus Centre at Port Macquarie recently hosted the 100th birthday celebrations of one of its esteemed residents, Geoffrey Baskett MBE. Family and friends from as far away as Malaysia travelled to the NSW Mid North Coast town to be with Geoffrey on 6 November for the milestone of this gentle and humble Christian man.

Geoffrey remembers being at the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge in 1932 and was in London, where he was studying, for the coronation of King George VI in 1937. There is also a painting hanging in the War Memorial in Canberra, painted by William Dargie, of a young Geoffrey as a soldier in World War Two.

But the people of Papua New Guinea became his passion in life, and he devoted many years to supporting and being involved in mission work there. He was awarded an MBE in 1990 for dedicated service to the community of Kwato and the people of PNG.

A high school teacher, Geoffrey wrote stories for children which were printed in the *Papuan Times* each week. These stories were also read on ABC Radio, and later used as comic strips. In the 1960s, he worked in radio in Port Moresby, writing over a thousand scripts. He also wrote many books of prayers.¶

HISTORY
SNAPSHOT

Pioneer Salvationist Edward Saunders constructed Australia’s first purpose-built Salvation Army building in the inner Sydney suburb of Newtown. Read the full story by going to the “Our History – Local History” link (Sydney East and Illawarra – Glebe and surrounds) at salvos.org.au

NEW CORPS BUILDING REFLECTS FOCUS ON CHRIST ▼



Commissioners James and Jan Condon, Majors Warren and Denise Parkinson, and Majors Graham and Christine Longbottom, and the Southern Highlands Corps band and timbrels march down the main street of Bowral behind The Salvation Army flag bearing the new corps name.

Commissioner James Condon, Territorial Commander, officially opened the new Southern Highlands Corps in Bowral on Saturday 21 November. Formerly known as Bowral Corps, the name change more accurately reflects the corps boundaries, from Picton in the north to Marulan in the south. The new building combines the worship centre and Family Store in one location, with the corps at the front of the property and the store at the back.

“A lot of people in our community see The Salvation Army as a shop and we wanted them to know that we do what we do because of our love for Christ and that’s what compels us,” said Major Christine Longbottom, Southern Highlands Corps Officer with her husband, Major Graham Longbottom. “We wanted to reach out to our community and meet their needs through our church and the old

building was inadequate as a worship centre. Now, people have to walk past the church to get to the shop. This is a great way for us to show that our focus is on Christ and that’s what it’s all about.”

Prior to the official opening ceremony, Commissioners James and Jan Condon, Greater West divisional leaders Majors Warren and Denise Parkinson, Majors Longbottom, members of the Southern Highlands Corps and junior timbrels, marched from the old corps building to the new, complete with police escort. During the opening ceremony, senior soldier Daphne Davies, who has served at the corps for 54 years, cut the ribbon to open the new complex. The Parramatta Corps band and singing group “Elevate” provided musical support.¶

STREET SAFE SALVOS LAUNCHED IN NEWCASTLE ▼

Street Safe Salvos, a joint initiative of The Salvation Army’s Oasis Youth Network Hunter and North Lakes Corps, Newcastle Council and the NSW Police force, was launched on 31 October last year. The program is designed to engage with vulnerable and isolated groups and individuals participating in night-time activities in areas of the Newcastle CBD that have seen an increase in the rate of assaults and other issues. The program is based around the successful models found in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Hobart.

“Street Safe Salvos will be based in the heart of Newcastle, with a command centre that acts as a refuge for those who are vulnerable, at risk or requiring further assistance,” said Peter Martin, manager of the Oasis Youth Network in the Hunter region. “This area will become a recovery zone for those whose night has not quite turned out as planned and need somewhere to recuperate before heading home. This will also be the base for our street teams.”

Trained Street Teams will be sent out at specified points in the night to commuting hot-spots, to ensure that late-night revellers are staying safe and antisocial behaviour is kept

to a minimum. The team’s focus is on non-violent crisis intervention. The team members will be in constant contact with the command centre which will have a direct line to both ambulance and police services in the area for rapid response to potential crisis situations.

“We will stay in contact with the young people and their families after the night to provide additional and continual care and support, and tie that into the other services The Salvation Army offers in this area,” said Peter. “This is an opportunity to meet people where they’re at, engage with them and demonstrate that we care. The streets of our cities are the trenches of today.”

Around 50 volunteers from North Lakes Corps staff the program, with the potential for other corps to become involved. The program will run in a trial phase in the CBD for six months, on Saturday nights into Sunday morning. “It the trial goes well we will move to add Friday nights as well, for three years,” said Peter. “This is our opportunity as the body of Christ to rise up in a very real way and fight for those who are lost and in darkness.”¶
– Simone Worthing

HUB HOSTS INDIGENOUS CULTURE TRAINING DAY ▼



Allen Minniecon (front right) with attendees at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture training day.

The Salvation Army's Far North Queensland Hub hosted a special day of training in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture in Cairns in November. Allen Minniecon, the Army's Indigenous Community Development Worker in Cairns, organised and facilitated the training which also included presentations from social workers and police liaison officers, and dances, traditional food, and coconut leaf weaving from local Indigenous community members. Representatives from different Salvation Army expressions attended the training, the first of its kind in the Australia Eastern Territory.

Staff from Centennial Lodge, which offers crisis accommodation and personalised support services in Cairns, initiated the training. "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make up four percent of the population in Cairns, yet 30 per cent of our homeless men and 60 per cent of our homeless women come from these communities, so they are over-represented in our service," said Lieutenant Cara Brackstone, manager of Centennial Lodge.

"We want to learn how to minister and work effectively in that space. Although we really just scratched the surface on some complex issues, it has opened the door to future discussions and has allowed us to build relationships with the community members who came."

Shirli Congoo, Territorial Indigenous Ministry Coordinator, said the training day reflected The Salvation Army's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) which was launched in August. "The plan was developed to put our good intentions into action," Shirli said. "A thread through the RAP is to build Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural competence and capacity within the Army and develop relationships with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, agencies and individuals."¶

For more information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ministry, contact Shirli on shirli.congoo@aue.salvationarmy.org

– Simone Worthing

ALLEYS HEAD BACK 'HOME' TO PNG ▼



Lieut-Colonels Julie and Kelvin Alley have returned to PNG for their second appointment to the country.

Australia Eastern Territory officers Lieutenant-Colonels Kelvin and Julie Alley have taken up new appointments in Papua New Guinea – a country they both call their second home. It is their second appointment to the PNG Territory, after a two-year stint that began in 2008. "I guess I've thought about Papua New Guinea every day of my life since then – it's a place that really grips hold of you," said Kelvin.

Kelvin is the territory's new Chief Secretary and Julie is their Territorial Secretary for Women's Ministries and Director of Health Services. While they are excited by the new adventure that awaits them, both will miss their previous appointments, Kelvin as National Secretary and Julie as Director of Salvation Army International Development (SAID).

"Both of us have had jobs that have been shaped for us," said Kelvin. "We're shaped for them. My existence in Canberra has been like nothing else; a really great part of my life. You have to say goodbye to people, not files or things. You are actually saying goodbye to relationships and friends. Even politicians have become friends."

As the PNG Territory's Director of Health Services, Julie will oversee The Salvation Army-run health clinics, hospitals, HIV Aids program and birthing clinics. She's excited that it's very much a hands-on role. "I just hope that whether it's women's ministries or health, that I will be open to any opportunity for God to use me," she said. "So what that means, I don't know. Whether that's to minister to a woman who's been harmed in domestic violence or whether it's to help a young mum with a baby."

As Chief Secretary, Kelvin is looking forward to working alongside personnel in PNG to support and grow the ministry of the Army. "I hope God might use me to help people develop their full capacity," he said. "Sometimes that means opening doors, encouraging, it means maybe giving inspiration to people, to be a help, to clear away injustices, to clear a pathway to develop what God wants them to be." ¶

- Esther Pinn

RECIPE BOOK RAISES \$15,000 FOR CHARITY ▼

Cowra Corps officer Captain Cathryn Williamson would have been happy to sell only 100 copies of her recipe book *Two Thumbs Up: A dozen dozen sensational slices*. Yet, even before the book was published mid-last year, she already had more orders than the planned print run. Since then, she has sold almost 2500 copies and raised about \$15,000 for charity.

Captain Williamson said she was directing profits to the Salvos Women project "I will survive", a program that teaches living skills to orphan girls in war-torn Ukraine. "I never expected to raise so much money," she said. "I truly believe it's going to make a difference to young girls."

Word of mouth and promotion of her book through articles in The Salvation Army's *Creative* and *Warcry* magazines have also helped boost her sales. Looking to capitalise on the success of her first book and the enthusiasm of her readers, Captain Williamson is 23 recipes into her new biscuit book which she plans to publish this year. "We just want to get it out as soon as we can as people are asking for the biscuit book already," she said.

Funds raised through the biscuit book will also go towards Salvos Women. It will be used to sponsor four young girls from Papua New Guinea to attend the Salvos Discipleship School on the NSW Central Coast, and The Salvation Army's Safe House for victims of human trafficking. *Two Thumbs Up: A dozen sensational slices* can be purchased for \$10 (plus postage) by contacting Captain Williamson via email at two.thumbs.up@hotmail.com. ¶
– Esther Pinn



Captain Cathryn Williamson's recipe book, *2 Thumbs Up*, has sold almost 2500 copies.

EXPERIENCING NEW TASTES IN CREATIVE WORSHIP ▼

Developing creative "muscle", exploring the storytelling of Hip Hop, live art as worship and multi-sensory experiences were just some of the experiences for participants at the most recent WorshipArts Unconvention "Taste", held in Toowoomba in November. Bringing together worship and creative leaders, the Unconventions, held in various locations around the territory throughout the year, seek to encourage and equip those who are involved in worship in local corps.

"The weekend was about experiencing and getting a taste of new approaches in creative worship," says Territorial WorshipArts coordinator Chris Brindley. "The Unconvention is a facilitated forum. Guest speakers share their experiences and all delegates then drive the conversation. Working with this group of people is critical for WorshipArts. It feeds into our planning and strategy as we listen to these champions for

worship content and evangelism opportunities. By doing this, we can support and multiply their effectiveness."

Guests for the weekend were Hip Hop Emcee artists Warren and Bridget Mackenzie, ABC3 StayTuned Host Joel Phillips and live worship artist David Morgan, who led worship, teaching sessions and practical workshops. The group of 20 participants were drawn from corps in the Brisbane area, including Lake Community Church (Forest Lake), North Brisbane, Brisbane City Temple and Carindale, as well as Toowoomba and Warwick.

WorshipArts Unconventions planned for 2016 include Central Queensland region (29-30 July) and Newcastle (4-5 November). For information on other upcoming events, visit facebook.com/salvos.worshiparts or email worshiparts@aue.salvationarmy.org – Anne Halliday¶

HISTORY
SNAPSHOT

Horse-drawn cavalry forts with their "Salvation riders" enabled The Salvation Army to reach people in the Australian bush with the gospel. Read all about this arduous ministry at salvos.org.au (Our History – Local History – ACT & South NSW – Grenfell)

MOBILE MISSION SOWS SEEDS IN RIVERINA ▼



The Territorial Mobile Mission band and timbrels perform in Leeton's main street.

They came with their motorhomes and caravans, from southern NSW to central Queensland, for a mission to spread the message of God's love in music, song and testimony. This was The Salvation Army Eastern Australia Territorial Mobile Mission carrying on a tradition that was born when a small group of Salvos, on holiday together, decided to bring their instruments and help out at worship services wherever they found themselves on a Sunday.

Fifteen years on and a 70-strong group of dedicated and mature-age Salvos and friends recently showcased God to the NSW Riverina towns of Leeton and Deniliquin, making the most of opportunities created by the local Salvation Army corps folk to deliver their message in streets and public parks, at Saturday programs in Salvation Army halls and during Sunday worship. Add to that an appearance at a

farmers market and a Remembrance Day service, being part of an Outback band festival and conversing with the locals during a community breakfast and a community lunch.

At Leeton, where the visit coincided with the local corps' centenary celebrations, corps officer Major Jennifer Stringer reported great interest and word got back that people had come to the hall for the first time for the musical performances and Sunday worship. During the town's annual Outback Band Spectacular, the group's band and timbrels were featured in the main street, at a community breakfast in the local park and then were first up at a grand concert featuring some 200 band members in the historic Roxy Theatre.

Next stop was Deniliquin where the local RSL had already issued an invitation for the band and timbrels to participate in the Remembrance Day service. The musicians also featured in Deniliquin's Saturday farmers market on the banks of Edward River, during which leaflets advertising the mission in concert that night were handed out.

An unexpected and moving event during the Saturday evening program was an RSL presentation of a slouch hat to the family of Sidney Gerald Jones, an Indigenous soldier killed in action in France in World War One. Sidney's father, John, had been a bandsman and corps sergeant major at Deniliquin where he worshipped for 40 years.

The 12-day outreach has been summed up as having been a powerful tool of sowing seed for God to water in his time in a region typically regarded as the food bowl of NSW. All members are thanking God for answer to much prayer for leader, Noel Druery, who again rose to the occasion after becoming seriously ill during a mission held 12 months earlier. - Kevin Elsley¶

RETIRED OFFICERS SUPPORT COLLEAGUES IN DEVELOPING WORLD ▼

More than 200 retired Salvation Army officers from the Australia Eastern Territory are maintaining a more than 20-year tradition of giving at Christmas by raising about \$10,000 for retired officers in developing countries. Known as Operation Generosity, retired officers from the territory donated the funds at three Christmas functions in Sydney, Brisbane and Newcastle late last year.

Lieutenant-Colonel Graham Durston said many of their fellow-retired officers in developing countries may not receive a government pension or only a small Salvation Army pension and often struggle with living expenses.

"We believe retired officers in Australia are well looked after and cared for and the officers in developing countries, they have nothing like we have," he said. "We like to share some of the blessings we have with the officers who have more difficulty and are less well-off in these developing countries."

Through Operation Generosity, about 190 retired officers in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, South America, Uganda and Angola have each received \$50. Every year, different countries are chosen by the Territorial Retired Officers Council to benefit from Operation Generosity.¶

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COMMISSIONER COX LEADS SOUTH ASIA CONFERENCE ▼



02

Women leaders from across The Salvation Army's South Asia Zone gathered in Sri Lanka for a conference led by Commissioner Silvia Cox, World President of Women's Ministries, and Commissioner Nemkhanching, Zonal Secretary for Women's Ministries. The conference started with vibrant worship and prayer, laying a solid foundation for a God-glorifying time of deliberation, reflection and sharing.

The South Asia Zone comprises The Salvation Army's six Indian territories – Central, Eastern, Northern, South Eastern, South Western and Western – with the Pakistan Territory, Sri Lanka Territory, Bangladesh Command and Middle East Region.

In her opening message, Commissioner Cox focused on 1 Peter 2:9: "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light". The verse would be a recurring theme through the event.

COLLARROY HOSTS CAMP FOR SINGLE MUMS ▼

Nine single mums and their 15 children had the opportunity to enjoy a range of experiences, learn some valuable life skills, and hear the Gospel in a non-threatening way during the single mother's camp at The Collaroy Centre last November. The women were referred from local Salvation Army corps and centres throughout the Australia Eastern Territory. "The purpose of the camp is to offer them a break from their normal routine and give them some skills to help them in life," said Sherrie Cocking, Mission Executive at The Collaroy Centre.

The ladies learned about budgeting and easy gift ideas they can make at home; enjoyed a movie night and formal dinner while their children were being entertained; and spent the



01

01. Commissioner Silvia Cox (left) shares a lighter moment with delegates to the conference in Sri Lanka.

02. Commissioner Cox and delegates pose for an official group photo.

One of the main topics on the first day was the vital issue of human trafficking. Captain Andrews Christian from the India Western Territory provided education, information and inspiration to take action.

The second day of the conference was marked by inspiring worship, thought-provoking Bible teaching and open discussion on relevant topics. The issue of domestic abuse and violence against women was highlighted by Colonel Marieke Venter, Territorial President of Women's Ministries, Sri Lanka, and focused specifically on the roots and symptoms of the issue in South Asia. Commissioner Cox provided up-to-date teaching on the potential dangers to be found online, and valuable training on Internet technology was provided by Buddhika Adikari, Information Technology consultant for the South Asia Zone.

The conference concluded with a devotional time during which delegates were invited to give thanks for their experiences.

day with their children at Taronga Zoo. On the last day of the camp, volunteers from the Australasian College, specialising in beauty and hairdressing, did the ladies' hair and makeup during a pamper day. Glamour and family photos were also taken for the families. "The ladies were totally blown away," said Sherrie. "When the ladies first arrived they were somewhat fearful of coming out of their routines and comfort zones, but by the time camp ends, they don't want to leave."

Two officers run the program – Captain Bronwyn Barkmeyer, corps officer, Life Community Church, in Brisbane's Slacks Creek; and Captain Jenny Hall, corps officer, Palm Beach Elanora Corps on the Gold Coast. Volunteers give up a week of their time to assist the officers.

WOMEN'S REFRESH CAMP HELD AT YEPPPOON ▼



(From left) Jenny Stokes, Captain Rachel Busst and Leanne Young enjoy the festivities during the camp.

Ladies from as far north as Mackay, south to Bundaberg and out west to Longreach gathered at "Coolwaters" near Yeppoon, in Central Queensland, for a weekend of physical and spiritual rejuvenation at the end of last year. The theme for the weekend was "Bringing Out the God Colours". Lieutenant-Colonel Simone Robertson was guest speaker for the weekend, and Captain Paula Hambleton led worship.

The women enjoyed the interactive teaching, singing, a

"bright and beautiful" dinner, and an auction to raise money for the 2015 Women's Ministries territorial project – assisting young women leaving orphanages in Ukraine.

"God's presence was felt among us and the ladies returned to their homes feeling blessed from this time of retreat from the 'every day'," said Lieut-Colonel Elaine Rowland, Cental and North Queensland Divisional Director of Women's Ministries.



Captivated by the Word

Brisbane 12 - 13 February
Canberra 16 February
Sydney 19 - 21 February

Major Beth Pearo
Guest Speaker

Registrations open mid September

Salvos Women Bible Conference 2016

GENERAL CALLS ZONAL LEADERS TO GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY ▼



General André Cox and Commissioner Silvia Cox (front, centre) with delegates to The Salvation Army's South Asia Zonal conference.

It was to the beating of drums and the rhythms of traditional music that General André Cox and Commissioner Silvia Cox were welcomed to Colombo, Sri Lanka, the host city of The Salvation Army's South Asia Zonal conference 2015. Fifty-five delegates gathered for the event, including all zonal, territorial, command and regional leaders, together with subject experts and facilitation team members.

The South Asia Zone comprises The Salvation Army's six Indian territories (Central, Eastern, Northern, South Eastern, South Western and Western), with the Pakistan Territory, Sri Lanka Territory, Bangladesh Command and Middle East Region. In his keynote address, the General was specific about the purpose of the conference, which had a strong focus on his call for accountability across The Salvation Army. He spoke about the recent setting up of the International Accountability Movement Group, saying that accountability would be "the main focus for the weeks and months ahead".

He challenged leaders to "reflect on what must change" and formulate a clear action plan for their areas of responsibility, telling them: "We all have to be accountable for the decisions we make and for the way in which we use the assets of the Army. We must never forget that we do not own the Army's assets personally. We are but the custodians of assets entrusted to The Salvation Army by God."

He explained further that the accountability movement is "more than finance and property. We are also accountable for people. It is no longer enough for us to satisfy ourselves with vague numbers that do not give a clear picture of impact or outcomes in people's lives. God placed us in this world to bring about change and transformation through the Gospel message as we preach it and, more importantly, as we live it." - Colonel Marieke Venter¶

ONE ARMY TEACHING RESOURCE TO GO 'LIVE' ▼



The versatile One Army international teaching resource is introducing yet another dimension to encourage Salvationists and friends around the world to learn together. The program's 13 informative books and the accompanying DVDs are already complemented by a website and social media presence, but from 13 January, One Army will introduce virtual meetings, linking Salvationists and friends internationally in real time.

Majors Nick and Kerry Coke will host the first meeting from Raynes Park (United Kingdom Territory with the Republic of Ireland) as they launch a One Army study discussion group at their corps. Using the "One Life" theme from the series introduction, they will invite participation from those who engage with the material online.

Worldwide participation is an integral part of the One Army concept. The Salvation Army's internationalism is

one of its main strengths, with mutual support and sharing consistently enriching its effectiveness. The DVDs present views and culturally specific activities from many of the 127 countries in which the Army is at work. "One Army has been received eagerly in an enlightening diversity of locations and situations," said scriptwriter and producer Commissioner Robert Street. "It will be good if we can encourage more international links between people who share the same faith, or even none – as yet."

The virtual meetings begin on Wednesday 13 January at 7.30pm GMT, and are planned to run for about an hour. They will be held each Wednesday at the same time until 10 February. Further venues and times will be arranged according to how these first meetings develop.

More details of One Army's first virtual meeting can be found at www.salvationarmy.org/onearmy, and on Facebook and Twitter.¶

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TOOWOOMBA CORPS ▼



The new soldiers signing their covenants (left to right): Jeffery Camm, Jane Bachmann, Lorna Decker, Samantha Creamer, Zac Creamer, Jean Barltrop, Pam Bruggemann and Sarah Bachmann.

Major Kevin Holland enrolled eight senior soldiers and accepted eight adherents during a memorable service on Sunday 27 October. Family and friends from the local community and other churches in the area came to support the people who made commitments to God and The Salvation Army.

“There was significant excitement in the corps that day,” said Major Holland. “It wasn’t just another event; it was a very special day and celebration for everybody. The transformation stories are strong. The corps is in the middle of corporate transformation; we are becoming the body of Christ and learning to live in grace. We are about people finding freedom, a culture of grace, a community of love and an attitude of gratitude.”

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS CORPS ▼



Abbey Holley is enrolled as a senior soldier by her grandfather Major Robert Holley.

Major Robert Holley enrolled his grand-daughter, Abbey Holley, as the first senior soldier of the recently renamed Southern Highlands Corps, on Sunday 22 November. Abbey is active in the corps and has just completed the SAGALA program. She also assists Major Christine Longbottom, Corps Officer, with Sunday school, helps run the audio visual equipment and is in the timbrel brigade.

NAMBOUR CORPS ▼



Kerryanne Bright is enrolled as a soldier by Major Greg Saunders.

Kerryanne Bright was enrolled as a senior soldier by Majors Greg and Karen Saunders on 29 November. Kerryanne is growing in leaps and bounds in her new-found faith. She is the receptionist at the corps, coordinates junior soldier lessons, and is involved in starting youth activities.

In her testimony, Kerryanne shared that despite growing up at Nambour Corps it wasn’t until earlier this year that she accepted Christ as her Saviour. “March this year was when everything changed for me,” she said. “I hear everyone saying that it was because I finally started working, that I had left my studies or maybe because I was in a new relationship, but the truth is it was Jesus; it’s always Jesus.”

BRISBANE STREETLEVEL MISSION ▼



New soldier Andy Steele with Major Bryce Davies, and Catherine Philpot holding the flag.

Major Bryce Davies, Streetlevel Team Leader, enrolled Andy Steele as a senior soldier at a special chapel service last month. Andy has been a part of Streetlevel for two years, assisting the homeless, helping those going through recovery from addictions, and connecting those in need with spiritual support. He also began a prison ministry, helping former inmates get established in the community after their release. “There is so much love and respect for Andy Steele as he consolidates his dedication to God, the Streetlevel community and his ministry with ex-prisoners by becoming a Salvation Army soldier,” said Major Davies.

BUNDABERG CORPS ▼



01

Lieutenant-Colonel Merv Rowland, Central and North Queensland Divisional Commander, enrolled two soldiers and accepted four adherents at Bundaberg Corps in November. Felix and Jovelyn Dig-O became senior soldiers and three family members – Fely, Charmaine and Vincent – became adherents. The family, originally from the Philippines, had been worshipping with The Salvation Army at the Tuggeranong Corps in Canberra and are now fully engaged with the life of the Bundaberg Corps. Sharon Graham also became an adherent. “Sharon has been coming to the corps and is really looking forward to serving as an adherent,” said Captain Melissa Millard, Corps Officer.



02

01. Lieut-Colonel Merv Rowland enrolls Felix and Jovelyn Dig-O as seniors soldiers.

02. Lieut-Colonel Merv Rowland accepts Vincent, Fely and Charmaine Dig-O and Sharon Graham as adherents.

SHELLHARBOUR CORPS ▼



01

Shellharbour Corps celebrated three enrolments, the acceptance of an adherent, and a baby dedication on Sunday 6 December. Captain Craig Spooner, Corps Officer, enrolled Robert and Sarah Walker as senior soldiers. “Robert and Sarah are our Battalion Youth Group leaders and Robert is also in charge of the audio/tech desk in our worship centre,” said Captain Shirley Spooner, Corps Officer. “Captain Craig



02

01. Captains Craig and Shirley Spooner accept Emma Webb as an adherent.

02. Captain Craig Spooner enrolls Sarah and Robert Walker as senior soldiers.

also had the great privilege of enrolling the Walkers’ 15-year-old son, Christopher, as a senior soldier. Christopher is a member of Battalion Youth, and he plays in the brass band.” During the meeting, Captain Craig also accepted Emma Webb as an adherent. “Emma has only been attending the Shellharbour Corps for a short time and feels part of the Shellharbour Corps family,” said Captain Shirley.

FAITHFUL SOLDIER ▼



Mary Ernst was promoted to glory on 20 September, 2015, aged 78, in Sydney. Her funeral was conducted by Reverend Andrew Prior of the Revesby Uniting Church, and was ably assisted by Lieutenant Nathan Hodges, corps officer of The Salvation Army, Panania Corps. Rev Prior and Lieut Hodges gave tremendously faithful and reliable support in much appreciated visits (around the clock) and prayer at the family home and later at the hospice.

Mary’s sons – Richard and Ronald – were present at the funeral and gave a family tribute. Michael, her eldest grandson, and Michael’s mother Catherine shared treasured memories, via a letter from Zurich, Switzerland. Flowers were sent by her beloved family in India as an expression of their love

and value for her. Richard delivered the eulogy in line with Mary’s request, with support from Paul Gates.

The songs chosen for the service were *Abide with Me*, *To God Be the Glory* and *I will Rise*. Benjamin Gates, 4, placed a rose on Mary’s coffin after his mother, Sonya Gates, read the poem “May you always have an angel by your side.”

Mary Ernst was born in India on 12 October, 1936, the daughter of Salvation Army officers. She was the eldest daughter of six children. From an early age Mary attended nursing school and was a tremendous inspiration to her family in her serving. Mary married Envoy Eric Ernst on 21 December, 1960, at The Salvation Army.

Together Eric and Mary served in the front lines in the relief effort of the East Pakistan war and later as soldiers at the Rockdale Corps, taking on various

positions. After Eric’s passing away in 2012 Mary became involved with the friendship group at Panania Corp, Bankstown Square walking group, tai-chi, and craft classes. Mary continued to be involved in the Revesby Uniting Church, helping out in the cafe’ and church service group.

Mary was well known for her gift of hospitality, generosity, strength and her cooking skills. Those who knew her were also familiar with the beautiful craft work she did, notwithstanding her love for antiques. She remained a member of the Ladies Fellowship group. To sit around Mary’s table at breakfast time meant to be involved in a quiet devotion and talk to her family before the day began. At night, she would also be seen listening to 2CH 1170 on the air with the Bible open on the bedside table. What better tribute could be given to a faithful soldier of Jesus Christ? Servant of God, well done.¶

ABOUT PEOPLE ▼

APPOINTMENTS

Effective 7 January: Lieutenants Jess and Paul **Farthing**, Corps Officers, Shellharbour Corps and Team Members, Illawarra Multi-site; Lieutenants Bronwyn and Perry **Lithgow**, Corps Officers, Townsville Faithworks Corps; Lieutenants Jodie and Matthew **Sutcliffe**, Corps Officers, Shoalhaven Corps; Lieutenants Frank **Wang** and Belinda **Zhou**, Corps Officers, Bankstown Corps.

BEREAVED

Lieut-Colonel Simone **Robertson** of her brother, David **Riley** on 18 November.

BIRTH

Captains David and Tahlia **Grounds**, a son, Rupert, on 24 November.

CONCLUSION OF SERVICE

Captain Michelle **White** on 30 November, 2015; Lieutenants Asena and Heath **Firkin** on 31 December, 2015.

PROMOTIONS

To Major on 26 October, 2015: Captain David **Cook**.

To Major on 2 December, 2015: Captain Gaye **Day**, Captain Philip **Gluyas**, Captain Diane **Gluyas**, Captain Ben **Johnson**, Captain Chris **Radburn**, Captain Neroli **Radburn**, Captain Nigel **Roden**, Captain Penni **Roden**, Captain **Grant Sandercock-Brown**, Captain Sharon **Sandercock-Brown**, Captain Gary **Smith**, Captain Marilyn **Smith**, Captain Braden **Spence**.

To Captain on 12 December, 2015: Lieutenant Jon **Belmonte**, Lieutenant Leah **Belmonte**, Lieutenant Peter **Gott**, Lieutenant Rebecca **Gott**, Lieutenant Nathan **Hodges**, Lieutenant Jo **Williams**.

PROMOTED TO GLORY

Major Thelma **Jenkins** on 29 November.

RETIREMENT

Major Nancy **McLaren** on 1 March, 2015, Major Phil **McLaren**, 1 January.

TIME TO PRAY ▼

27 December – 2 January

Majors Philip and Deslea Maxwell, International Headquarters; Major Mark Watts, International

Headquarters; Majors Kevin and Heather Unicomb, Papua New Guinea Territory; Majors Stuart and Donna Evans, The Netherlands and Czech Republic Territory.

3-9 January

Office of the Territorial Commander, Women’s Ministries, Office of the Chief Secretary, Spiritual Life Development, Territorial Moral and Social Issues Council, all THQ.

10-16 January

Salvation Army International Development Office (SAID); Booth College, School For Officer Training, School for Christian Studies, Stanmore House, all THQ.

17-23 January

Salvos Discipleship School, Vocational Training Office, National Secretariat, National Editorial Department, Personnel Administration, Centre for Restoration, all THQ.

24-30 January

Territorial Candidates Department; Human Resources Department; Program Administration; Salvos Housing; School For Multicultural Ministry, all THQ.

31 January – 6 February

Sydney Staff Songsters; Strategic Disaster Response Unit, Territorial Mission and Support Team – Corps; Generous Life team; Territorial Recovery Program Team – all THQ.

ENGAGEMENT CALENDAR ▼

COMMISSIONERS JAMES (TERRITORIAL COMMANDER) AND JAN CONDON

*London: Tues 19 Jan – Meeting of the International Management Council, International Headquarters
Stanmore: Mon 25 Jan – NSW/ACT Division Area Officers Conference
Stanmore: Wed 27-Fri 29 Jan – Leadership Training
Stanmore: Fri 29 Jan-Mon 1 Feb – Territorial Leadership Council

*Commissioner James Condon only

CHIEF SECRETARY (COLONEL MARK CAMPBELL)

Stanmore: Wed 27-Fri 29 Jan – Area Officer Consultation Days
Stanmore: Fri 29 Jan-Mon 1 Feb – Leadership gathering

NO TOLERANCE OF SEXUAL ABUSE

The Salvation Army is committed to providing a safe place for all children and the vulnerable in our care. Let me state in the strongest terms our **no tolerance approach** to any form of child abuse or, indeed, the abuse of the vulnerable.

I also want to reaffirm our commitment to persons who suffered sexual abuse in a Salvation Army corps or children’s home. If you were abused, please tell us. You will be received with compassion and a careful restorative process will be followed.

If you feel you need to make a complaint, please contact us at our Centre for Restoration.

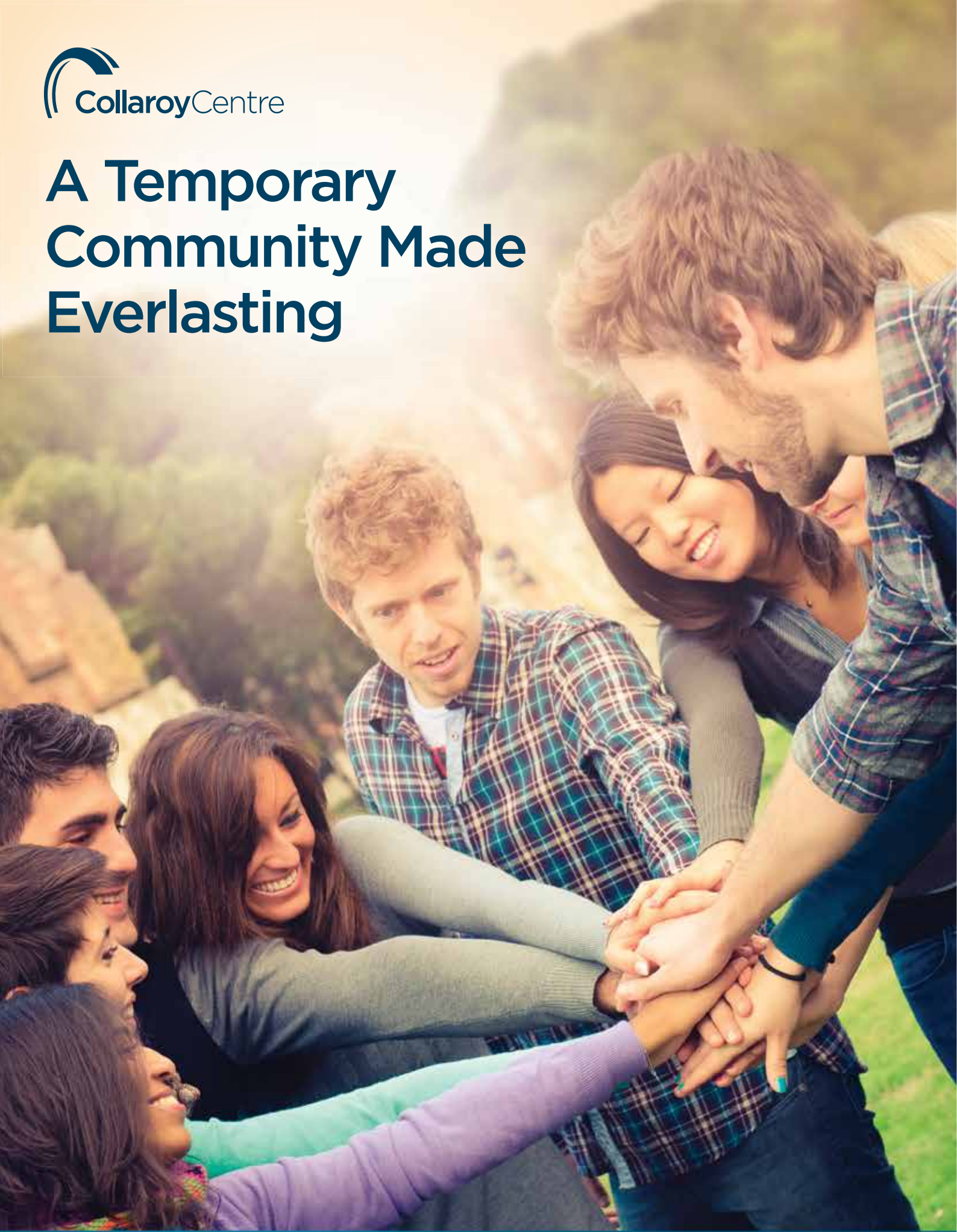


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Commissioner James Condon
Territorial Commander
The Salvation Army
Australia Eastern Territory



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Journey of the heart

CHURCH MUST SEEK GOD'S RENEWING SPIRIT



PETER MCGUIGAN

On the future of the Church, I've got to admit to being a little on the worried side. Something big is up in Eden, so to speak, and I'm growing tired of old truisms like: "The Church is God's and he will look after its future." I could list everything that's wrong, but why? To justify what I'm saying? To make myself and others more worried, depressed even? Perhaps I should write such a list, given the assertion of American change expert John Kotter that without creating a sense of urgency, nothing will change.

But there are already enough naysayers around, announcing the Church's so-called irrelevance in a postmodern, "post-Christian" world, actively seeking to derail or defame it, predicting its imminent demise. Why should I become another one, especially when I actually love the Church with all my heart – its Lord and Saviour first, and then its community of transformed people.

That is, after all, what we actually are – God's community of transformed people. John Stott once called us God's new society. And I would say that the biggest thing we need to do right now is to act like we're transformed, like we do have the power of the Holy Spirit and the

love of Christ in us to share with all humanity. Perhaps at this point in our 2000-year history, we need a grease and oil change. To put that in some kind of church speak, we need to go on a journey of renewal, where the passion and the love and the power of God are brought fresh back into our lives; where we experience deeply the "times of refreshing" Scripture encourages us about (see Act 3:19).

I say this, because I do believe that Christianity has lost its heart in many places. We have become too cerebral, too didactic, too prescriptive about what we think the Church should be and how it should be led. Certainly that is true in The Salvation Army. We have become prone to sameness, more attached to Army traditions and procedures, seemingly, than attached to God and the creativity of God's Spirit.

To put it bluntly, there is a fork in the road of The Salvation Army's future. We can choose sameness and proceed towards oblivion, and probably get there in a hurry. Or we can choose God and God's renewing presence, and be surprised where the road leads. More and more, I sense that's where we want to go, and some decisions that have been taken in recent times reflect such a longing.

This will be a journey of the heart, in which we seek the giver of life and

love of Christ in us to share with all humanity. Perhaps at this point in our 2000-year history, we need a grease and oil change. To put that in some kind of church speak, we need to go on a journey of renewal, where the passion and the love and the power of God are brought fresh back into our lives; where we experience deeply the "times of refreshing" Scripture encourages us about (see Act 3:19).

Such a journey will not only require the Army and her people becoming much more spiritually astute and self-aware regarding the future. It will require a powerful self-transcendence as we arise from the ashes of self-focus and self-serving to let go of all that we were, all that we are and all we can be into the hands of God. Together, we will partner with God in ensuring the future of this part of the Church on earth, exercising a God-led stewardship of the future, especially the spiritual gifts that will come alive in us, and our renewed passion and vision to serve God and the world.

Our brokenness and humility before God, personally and in every expression of The Salvation Army, will be the catalyst for such monumental change. It will be like God birthing and nurturing Micah 6:8 in us all over again: "And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

MISSION PRIORITIES



OUR PEOPLE MARKED BY
PRAYER AND HOLINESS



OUR PEOPLE IN EVERY
PLACE SHARING JESUS



CORPS HEALTHY
AND MULTIPLYING



OUR PEOPLE EQUIPPED AND
EMPOWERED TO SERVE THE WORLD



OUR PEOPLE PASSIONATE ABOUT
BRINGING CHILDREN TO JESUS



YOUTH TRAINED AND SENT OUT
TO FRONTLINE MISSION



SIGNIFICANT INCREASE OF NEW
SOLDIERS AND OFFICERS

