

WOMEN

in touch

Living  
hope

## Hope and peace

I recall arriving at a new appointment and within 24 hours being called to the hospital to visit a young lady. This was not a routine visit but one that challenged me.

This young lady had given birth just a few days earlier and her baby had died – so the “Army” was called to visit her. Why was this a challenge? Well, I was the mother of a healthy 6-months-old daughter, enjoying the experience of motherhood with my first child. How could I possibly try to comfort a young mother whose child had died? I must admit that I felt a bit guilty but extremely grateful for my healthy child.

However, I made the visit – it was just after Christmas. I shared with her in her sorrow, shed some tears with her and left her with a prayer. It was not the most comfortable visit as I really felt for this young woman.

I often wonder how people who don't believe in Jesus cope with tragedy and trauma in their lives. They must feel so alone and in despair at times as they experience the cycle of grief. It's tough enough for Christians when they lose a loved one, but we have hope.

Christmas reminds us of the incredible hope found in Jesus. He came to give us life with purpose and hope and a peace in our hearts and minds.

The message the shepherds received was, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people ... a Saviour has been born ...” (Luke 2: 10, 11).

The Saviour, Jesus, brings hope and peace to set our fears at rest.

As you celebrate Christmas this year, this is my prayer for you and your family – it's found in Romans chapter 15 verse 13:

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*



Commissioner Jan Condon  
Territorial President of Women's Ministries



Reaching out in hope

## In touch

**THE SALVATION ARMY**  
WILLIAM BOOTH, Founder

International Headquarters  
101 Queen Victoria Street  
London EC4P 4EP

LINDA BOND, General

Australia Eastern Territory  
140 Elizabeth Street  
Sydney NSW 2000  
JAMES CONDON, Commissioner  
Territorial Commander

GLENN WHITTAKER, Major,  
Communications and Public Relations Secretary

EDITOR: Simone Worthing

GRAPHIC DESIGN: Kem Pobjie

COVER DESIGN: Kem Pobjie

EDITORIAL AND CORRESPONDENCE:  
PO Box A435  
Sydney South NSW 1235  
PHONE: (02) 9266 9690 EMAIL: eastern.  
editorial@ae.salvationarmy.org

PUBLISHED FOR:  
The Salvation Army  
Australia Eastern Territory  
by Commissioner James Condon

PRINTED AT:  
SOS Print + Media Group  
65 Burrows Rd, Alexandria  
NSW 2015, Australia

Member of the Australasian  
Religious Press Association  
Unless otherwise stated,

all Scripture is taken  
from the Holy Bible,  
New International Version®  
Copyright© 1973, 1978, 1984,  
by International Bible Society  
Used by permission  
of Zondervan Publishers

No part of this publication may  
be reproduced whatsoever  
without written permission  
from the publisher

## About this issue – from the editor's desk

Beyond the trees and tinsel, there is so much about the Christmas season that can reach into our hearts and meet our deepest longings and needs.

The birth of Christ, his perfect life, intentional death and his resurrection give us hope – hope for today and for eternity, for all humanity.

This is a living hope – not warm fuzzy feelings that can lighten our loads temporarily but disappear just as quickly as they came – but a deeply grounded assurance that we are passionately loved, mercifully forgiven, saved for eternity and strengthened for every step of our journey here on earth.

As Christ lives in us and we rely on him, there is nothing we cannot go through and nothing we cannot face. “For I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength (Philippians 4:13 *New Living Translation*).

And our gracious God wants every person on earth to have this deep, living hope.

This issue of *Women in Touch* is all about hope. It's about the peace and joy that flow from that hope, giving us strength and comfort regardless of our circumstances. It's about a life changing walk with our Saviour and about sharing that hope and relationship with others. And it's about clinging to our loving Lord and having faith in his promises, his timing, and his power.

In this issue, several women share their stories of abuse, overwhelming grief and serious medical uncertainties and how, with their hope centred on God and his work in their lives, they are growing in faith and trust.

This is living hope – that encourages, comforts, restores and strengthens on a daily, and an eternal, level.

*Perspective* (page 10) offers some challenges to us to open the painful places in our hearts to God and to let him in – to forgive, to love, to heal and to be our companion.

Our feature on Mainly Music shows how this program is allowing corps to reach out into their communities and spread a message of hope and joy to those who don't know Jesus.

As always, my prayer is that you will find a message of help, hope and encouragement in the pages of this magazine. And on behalf of the *Women in Touch* team, I would like to wish you and your families a hope-filled, joyful and peaceful Christmas.



Simone Worthing  
Editor

## Contents

### Regulars

#### 2 TEAM TALK

From the desk of the Women's Ministries Department

#### 14 YOUNG WOMEN IN TOUCH

Stories, ideas and articles for our young women

#### 20 WOMEN IN MINISTRY

Reports from around the Territory

#### 24 HEART SONGS

### Features

#### 4 Come to the manger and see

Christmas greetings from Commissioner Sue Swanson,  
World President of Women's Ministries

#### 10 Real life hope

Different women share how hope in Jesus and his promises has brought them through some of their darkest times

#### 12 Raising Micah

Captain Cheryl Kistan shares the struggles and joys of raising a little boy with ongoing physical challenges

#### 18 Mainly Music

Three corps share their experience with running this special program in their communities



6



12



15



# Come to the manger and see

When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger. Luke 2: 15,16 *New Living Translation (NLT)*

Dear Friends,  
How many of us are thrilled to go and see a new baby just born into a new family? It is one of the most exciting experiences to see this perfect new life that has been given as a gift from God.

In the verses of Scripture from Luke there are two things that give us a particular focus. First, the invitation that the angels gave to the shepherds; and second, the response of the shepherds to the invitation they received to go and see this new baby.

Picture yourself on the Judean hillside with the shepherds. It is night, very dark and in the middle of nowhere. You can barely see your hand in front of your face. You look up and see countless stars in the sky. You bundle up against the nip in the air because even in Palestine it can get cold after the sun goes down. Off in the distance you can see a few flickering lights in the windows of the homes in Bethlehem.

And then imagine the incredible glory that interrupts your pastoral evening. The shepherd next to you says, "Now there's

something you don't see every day". On second thought, no ... nobody says a word because you're scared speechless. And the message that you hear from the angel is far beyond your understanding.

The angel did more than just announce the birth of the Saviour. He also extended an invitation to the shepherds: In other words, the angel was saying, "Come to the manger! Come and see it for yourself. Come and see this baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger".

What if the shepherds had decided not to accept that invitation to "Come to the manger"? What if they had decided to stay with their flocks? They could have absorbed all of the glory and been dazzled by it all ... the glory of the Lord, the angel's message, the heavenly host. What a great story it would be to tell the grandkids! But then, the memory fades. Without a visit to the manger, that glorious hillside experience would have been empty.

What if you and I decide to stay in the glow of Christmas instead of "Coming to

the manger"? There certainly is something magical about the Christmas season: the anticipation of gifts, warm family times; glowing, fragrant candles; sumptuous meals; the look of wonder on children's faces. And you can almost hear the angel choirs singing right along with your hymns and carols.

But then, as we clean up the crumpled wrapping paper and begin thinking about when the decorations will start coming down, Christmas for us becomes a fading memory. Without a visit to the manger, our glorious Christmas experience would be empty. It remains only a warm memory of another nice holiday.

"Coming to the manger" was a life-changing experience for these lowly shepherds. Even though this baby looked like any other baby, they took God at his word and saw there the Saviour in the hay, and they knelt down and worshipped him. And it was not a fading memory. The manger visit continued to motivate them as they left from there, as Luke says, "When they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child". And then, they returned to their vocation on the hillside on the outskirts of Bethlehem, "glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them."

The Holy Spirit works in our Christmas celebration in a similar way. He instills in

us the desire to go and see what the Lord has done. We come again to the manger on bended knee and see the Christ Child.

This visit to the manger is a life changing experience for us, too. Even though the baby looks like any other baby, we take God at his word that this baby is our God and Saviour who loved us so much that he desired to be born for us, to live among us, and to die for us – and we kneel down and worship him.

Through his birth, death and resurrection, Jesus earned salvation for us – the forgiveness of sins and life everlasting in fellowship with our loving triune God.

And this is no fading memory for us, either. Loved by God, sins forgiven – our visit to the manger motivates us as we leave to spread the Good News. We return to whatever hillside on which we live or work, glorifying and praising God for all that we have seen and heard.

This Christmas may you go with the shepherds to the manger and experience something life changing. May it motivate you in whatever you do to glorify and praise God for all that he has done for you.

Blessings to you all and your dear families this Christmas.

**Commissioner Sue Swanson**  
**World President of Women's Ministries**



## Commissioner Sue Swanson

Commissioner Sue Swanson succeeded Commissioner Helen Clifton as the World President of Women's Ministries for The Salvation Army on 2 April 2011. Prior to this, from 1 May 2010, the Commissioner was the World Secretary for Women's Ministries.

Commissioner Sue Swanson supports her husband Commissioner Barry C. Swanson in the huge responsibility that is his as Chief of the Staff of the international Salvation Army – second in charge to the General.

Since her commissioning as a Salvation Army Officer in 1978, Commissioner Swanson has served with her husband in her native United States, as well as at International Headquarters.

Just after her appointment in 2010, Commissioner Swanson introduced herself to readers of the Salvation Army *Revive* magazine, by giving them "my list of 10 things I love".

To help readers of *Women in Touch* get to know the Commissioner better, this list is reproduced, in part, below.

1. I love the Lord ... 'I want to know him' is my theme.
2. I love my husband. We have been married 35 sweet years. He is my deepest friend.
3. I love my family. We have four adult children. All are married. We enjoy two granddaughters.
4. I love my officership. For me it has been a lifelong itinerant obedient joy.
5. I love to see women getting saved and growing in their walk with God.
6. I love to hear the stories of God working in people's lives.
7. I love to walk. It's great to slow the pace and observe all that is around me.
8. I love to preach. For me this takes the form of encouraging and exhorting others toward faith.
9. I love to learn new things.
10. I love God's Word. It's my life breath. Whatever form this takes it's exhilarating to study, memorise or meditate. I never want to lose this passionate love.

Commissioner Swanson continues: "Well there you have it! And I never mentioned music, puzzles, cross-stitch, languages, mentoring, food from around the world, reading, singing or tambourines!"

We look forward to meeting and hearing from Commissioner Swanson at *Captivated by the Word* 2012. See page 24 for details.



# hope

from the manger to the cross

The lives of three different women graphically illustrate the difference the *source* of our hope can make as we face life's battles, make our choices and determine our paths

*\* Names have been changed*

**H**ope means different things to different people. Children hope they'll receive great gifts at Christmas and for their birthdays. Teenagers hope they'll get a job once they leave school. Parents hope their kids will grow up to be model citizens. Grandparents hope the world will be a better place for their grandchildren. And on it goes.

The word "hope" means to expect, to trust, to anticipate, to wish for or to look forward to. Hope – what does it mean to you?

Sometimes I hope for frivolous things like, "I hope I get this article finished on time!" Or, "I hope my daughter tidies her room today!" Or, "I hope there's some ice cream left in the freezer!" We tend to use the word "hope" as lightly as we use the word "love" – "I love Italian sports cars!"

Recently, I've had the privilege of helping three women who seemed to have very little hope. The first woman, Jasmine\*, was at her wits' end due to an abusive and failing marriage.

The second, Deanna\*, was desperate to be reunited with her terminally ill teenage son – or so she led me to believe. The third, Bronwyn\*, had just buried her elderly mother and felt she had no-one else to live for.

One of these women had no hope in God, and no acknowledgment that there is any hope of an eternity in God's Kingdom. Another had a vague hope in a God who

seemed distant and disciplinarian to her, like a heavenly authority figure who "zaps" you when you do the wrong thing.

The third woman had lived a fairly bumpy life, but for many years has professed Jesus as her Saviour. It's this woman who demonstrates real hope – a hope that sustains her through trouble; a hope that gives her courage; a hope that fills her with joy despite her outward circumstances. But I'm getting ahead of myself ...

### False hope

Deanna came to me earlier this year seeking financial assistance to travel quite some distance to see her teenage son who had been admitted to hospital in a coma. Her story seemed believable and her circumstances, though a bit out of the ordinary, were fairly plausible. Although she was hopeful that her son would be fine, she didn't know just how sick he was. She just hoped to be able to get to him as soon as possible.

The Salvation Army fulfilled her immediate hope of financial assistance and she left town headed for her son. Within less than two days I received word from her that her boy was dead – hopelessly dead! She was distraught and again reached out for help. Weeks later I learned that this woman was a fake. Nothing she told me was true and she was under police investigation. The hope she had was no hope at all, except the hope to obtain money fraudulently. Her hope was in her own deviousness and ability to deceive

people. This hope in her own criminal intent has landed her in gaol. My prayer is that she will one day meet someone who can lead her to the source of real hope.

### Discovering hope

Bronwyn was at a point where she was ready to commit suicide – she had lost all hope. Her mother had died and left her without anyone who would love her, or so she thought. I later learned that her mother's death was the last in a series of tragic deaths Bronwyn had experienced in her lifetime, which is why she felt so alone and abandoned.

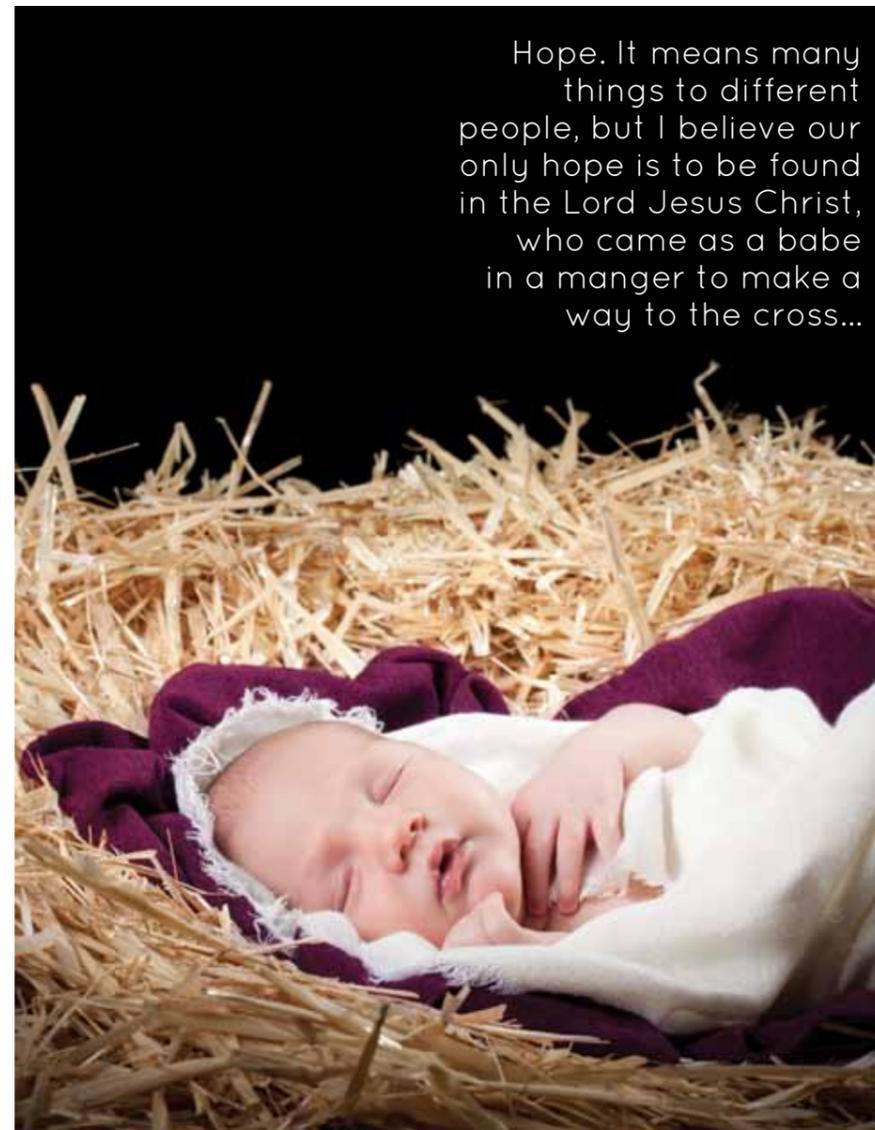
The day I first spoke to her she was a mess and reaching out in a last attempt to find hope. After assuring her that her temporal needs would be met, I prayed with her. I noticed she wore a crucifix on a chain around her neck. I asked why. She explained that it was her mother's and that it was the only thing that gave her comfort.

Here was the connection I was looking for, hoping for. Bronwyn's mother had a faith in God – she had a hope of better things and Bronwyn wanted to know some of that hope.

Today Bronwyn is on the road of discovery – discovering the hope of life that God provides; life in all its fullness. She is discovering that there are still people who care about her, and she is discovering a God who loves her.

Bronwyn still has a long way to go, but she's headed in the right direction – the direction of real hope.

Hope. It means many things to different people, but I believe our only hope is to be found in the Lord Jesus Christ, who came as a babe in a manger to make a way to the cross...



### Grounded in God

When a woman is in a marriage that's abusive, she doesn't hold much hope for the future if she chooses to remain in that marriage. Jasmine felt she was dying – mentally, physically and spiritually – and she was going under financially because of what her husband was doing with their money. This woman held no hope for the future if she remained where she was.

However, she did have hope in Jesus and sought his guidance through all the hardship. I stood in awe of our great God as I watched this lady go from insecurity and a sense of hopelessness to a place where she was secure in who she was in Christ and in the knowledge that he would see her through her trouble.

Hers was not a shallow hope such as, "I hope my husband will wake up to himself soon?". No. Jasmine's hope was grounded in a God who would put things right, and she is in the middle of God's wonderful plan right now.

As she stands on Christ, her solid rock, and watches as the sinking sand on her old life slips away, she is strengthened. She can say with, along with songwriter Edward Mote: "My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness" ... (SASB 745).

### Hope of the cross

Hope. It means many things to different people. But I believe our only hope is to be found in the Lord Jesus Christ, who came as a babe in a manger to make a way to the cross – the cross that provides our only hope of salvation and eternal life.

The cross – our source of hope.

Author's name withheld

The God of

hope

Lighting the Advent candles of love, joy, peace and hope is something that we as Christians do every December. These candles present a beautiful image of what Christmas is, or should be, about. I have enjoyed these blessings in my life and none more so than that of hope - firstly, hope in Jesus as my Lord and Saviour and secondly, the hope of new life for my husband through a heart transplant.

Let me explain.

My husband celebrates two birthdays every year - 5 February is his natural birth date and 31 May is his celebration of new life. Phil was born with a congenital heart condition which was diagnosed as terminal in 1993. He was placed on the organ transplant waiting list and received a new heart on 31 May, 1994.

In our early years of officership there were times when Phil struggled to maintain life and ministry. It was becoming increasingly difficult for me to maintain a life of faith and trust. I wanted to believe that God had the lives of Phil, my three children and myself in his hands but at times felt without hope for our future in ongoing ministry, or even for life itself.

#### Needing a miracle

I felt I needed some sort of tangible proof that God was in control of our lives, so one Saturday I said to God that if I heard the word "miracle" three times over the weekend, then this would encourage me to continue

in faith. That night we joined with our corps for ten pin bowling. We were enjoying great fellowship when one of the men got a strike. I heard someone jokingly shout, "That's a miracle", and tucked this phrase away in my mind.

The next morning I had the radio on and heard someone say the word "miracle". It seemed to jump out at me and once again I tucked this away.

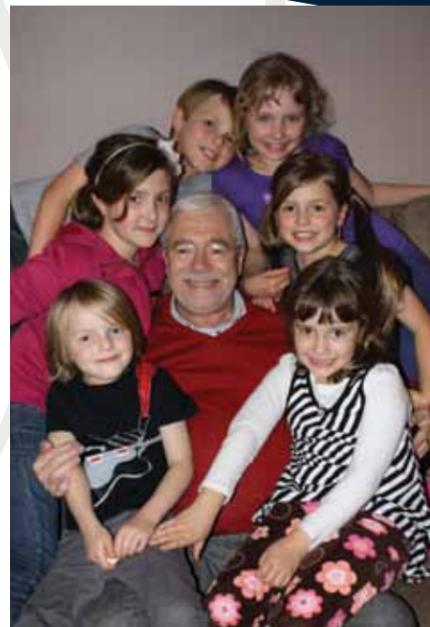
I had almost got to the end of Sunday and was thinking that maybe God didn't reveal himself to people in the way I had asked. I was unpacking the boot and saw a pile of old *War Cry* magazines at the back. I pulled them out and on the top front cover was the headline, "Japan is a nation of miracles".

I just knew that God had used three very different scenarios to confirm that he was in control and that one day he would perform a miracle in Phil's life.

#### A confident wait

The following years were those of ongoing trust in my God of hope and he never let us down. Hospitals and doctors, tests and results, a pacemaker and then transplant were all part of the journey. God never left me and continued to provide me with hope that we could continue in ministry.

He clearly told me in 1987 that Phil was to receive a heart transplant in 1993 - and in August 1993, Phil was told this was what was needed.



Lieutenant-Colonel Phil Cairns enjoying his grandchildren. From bottom left corner clockwise: Jazziah, Caitlin, Elijah, Tahlia, Luka-Angel and Abby.

Psalm 27 is one of my favourites because God used verses 13 and 14 to encourage me to keep waiting on him and his timing for Phil's health to return after his transplant.

"I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord."

I continued to wait and saw a miracle unfold as Phil regained health and strength. The ensuing years of officership have been exciting and fulfilling as God has used us in a variety of appointments.

Phil has seen his two sons married, walked his daughter down the aisle for her wedding and is now sharing in the lives of his seven grandchildren - how great is my God, the God of hope.

I thank God for the gift of hope. I pray that you too will experience his hope this Christmas time: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (Romans 15:13).

For more information on organ donation, please consider <http://www.donatelife.gov.au/ambassadors.html>



Lieutenant-Colonel Jan Cairns  
Assistant Secretary  
for Personnel  
(Administration)

## hope in Christ: my personal journey

As a family we loved Christmas. My husband Craig and I loved walking into the shops and seeing the beautiful decorations, the children's faces and their excitement, the music, carolers, choosing the right present for family and friends and selecting a colour theme for decorating our home. When our son Joshua came along, the joy and excitement of Christmas was much more special.

Christmas also has a special meaning for me because it brings a message of hope. God sent Jesus to show the world that he is our hope. For me personally, my hope in Jesus has got me through a very difficult and tragic time in my life, beginning on 24 July 2000, when I received a phone call that shattered my life, my plans and my hope for the future.

#### A broken heart

I was happily married to Craig, the man of my dreams. We had an adorable three-year-old son and life was perfect. Craig was an intensive care paramedic with Queensland Ambulance and often flew with the Rescue Helicopter Service.

On this particular night, Craig was flown to a property to assist a little boy with severe croup. He and his Mum had to be flown to Rockhampton Hospital in the early hours of the morning and, on the return flight, the helicopter got into difficulty. I waited in hope, expecting Craig to phone and say he was OK. Instead, I received a visit notifying me that all five people on board the helicopter had tragically lost their lives.

I did not accept it, and like a child at Christmas waiting to see Santa's sleigh in the sky, I sat at the window and waited for the helicopter to come over the mountain.

*Why me, God? What now? How do I tell my little boy that his daddy is never coming home? How am I meant to raise him on my own? How do I live without Craig?* So many questions.

No more kisses, no more hugs, no more "Honey I'm home". No more special times and outings in the ute for Josh with his dad,



Janelle and Joshua;  
growing together  
through hope.

chewing gum. These questions, these feelings of emptiness and hopelessness went on for many years.

As I tried to process how to cope with life without Craig, I started to panic and get pains in my chest. My doctor told me that I was suffering from a broken heart and assured me I would be alright. I was not having a heart attack and I would be around to raise my son!

#### Strength only in God

God's words, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me", spoke to me clearly one morning in church and reassured me that I could go on. I was also encouraged and aware of the prayers and support of my own family, my corps officers at the time (Majors Owen and Pam Pattison (ret.)), corps family and friends. I realised my strength was in God and there was now hope for the future.

Our son Joshua is my 'angel' sent from God and I am so very proud of him. He is so much like his dad in many ways. He has had his own personal struggles with the loss of his Dad and also asked many questions.

Our relationship is strong and, with God's

help, we will continue to grow through this together.

I love Christmas. I love walking into the shops and seeing the beautiful decorations, the children's faces and their excitement, the music, carolers, choosing the right present for family and friends and selecting a colour theme to decorate the home that I share with our precious son. Our special STAR reminds us daily of Craig (Christ Radiant Angel in Glory) and his love for both Joshua and I. The memory of my wonderful husband will always be in my heart.

Because Jesus lives I can face tomorrow. I thank God every day for his provision and the hope that I can have in him.

I know that we all at times lose hope in God, but I pray that this Christmas season you find hope in the one who brought hope into the world - Jesus.

Janelle Stains  
Personal Assistant  
to the Divisional  
Commander  
Central & North  
Queensland Division

# Reflections

## Blossoming hope

I was surprised when I first saw it: a vase of bare, brown branches; dried-up twigs looking like there was no life in them! A few days later I saw it again and the branches were full of beautiful blossoms. This is a common practice in Germany in early spring: people pick bare branches of any tree that flowers, bring them into the warmth of home and soon the branches are covered with gorgeous blossoms.



I love the celebration of hope expressed in this simple act. The branches look bare and lifeless, but to the person who knows, they are full of life and beauty. It only takes warmth, light and a time of waiting to see the fulfilment of that hope. To those who have lived through spring, the bare branches of winter are filled with hope and life just waiting to blossom.

Perhaps it was like that for the first people who saw the baby in a manger. The wise men and the shepherds had heard the message proclaiming the birth of a King and a Saviour. They had heard the angels proclaiming the Good News. Yet they found a baby in a stable – not looking much like a King or a Saviour at all.

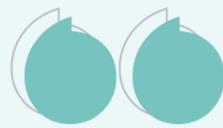
To those who didn't know, it was just a baby in a manger. There was nothing to indicate that the baby was anything but a baby. But for those who did believe, they saw more than the baby – they saw the fulfilment of all that God had promised. They saw the King – the Saviour of Israel and they worshipped.

The birth of Jesus gives us hope. For those who know and believe we see more than an historical figure. We see the Son of God who, through his birth, death and resurrection gives us the hope of eternal life, the certainty of a life spent forever with the Creator of the universe. We see the one who brings light into the darkness, peace into our chaos and hope into our despair. He makes us new, fills us with his love and turns the bare branches of our lives into glorious blossoms.

In him is the source and fulfilment of all hope.



Major Jo-anne Brown  
Corps Officer, Calamvale



God came to us because he wanted to join us on the road, to listen to our story, and to help us realise that we are not walking

in circles but moving towards the house of peace and joy. This is the great mystery of Christmas that continues to give us comfort and consolation: we are not alone on our journey. The God of love who gave us life sent his only Son to be with us at all times and in all places, so that we never have to feel lost in our struggles but always can trust that he walks with us.

The challenge is to let God be who he wants to be. A part of us clings to our aloneness and does not allow God to touch us where we are most in pain. Often we hide from him precisely those places in ourselves where we feel guilty, ashamed, confused, and lost. Thus we do not give him a chance to be with us where we feel most alone.

Christmas is the renewed invitation not to be afraid and to let him – whose love is greater than our own hearts and minds can comprehend – be our companion.



Henri Nouwen, *Gracias: A Latin American Journal* Orbis Books, 1993

## Have you left a gift unopened?

Jesus Christ is God's Christmas gift to you. Yet some of us have gone Christmas after Christmas and never opened the best gift of all - God's gift of salvation ... It doesn't make sense to leave unwrapped the gift of your past forgiven, a purpose for living, and a home in heaven.

Jesus Christ says to you, "I can replace the frustration in your heart with peace. I can replace the guilt, resentment, shame, and grudges with forgiveness. I can replace the worry and anxiety with confidence and faith. I can replace depression or despair with hope. I can replace emptiness with meaning and purpose. I can replace confusion with clarity. But I'm not going to break down the door of your heart. You've got to invite me in."

God says: "It makes no difference who you are or where you're from, if you want me and you are ready to do as I say, the door is open."

Pastor Rick Warren  
Saddleback Church

### Editor's note

This devotional excerpt was retrieved from the December 2010 *Daily Hope* devotions <http://purposedriven.com/blogs/dailyhope/index.html?contentid=5519>  
Reprinted with permission.

## Recommended Read!



### The Liberating Truth – How Jesus Empowers Women

Danielle Strickland (Major)  
Monarch Books, 2011

Are you prepared to surrender your pre-conceived ideas of Christian womanhood? The 'hook' that drew me in to *The Liberating Truth* was flicking through the index and seeing a chapter titled 'You are Not a Princess'! From that moment I knew this was going to be different to some of the other women-focused books I've read.

In her engaging, down-to-earth style, Danielle Strickland challenges what she describes as a cotton-coated version of what it means to be woman of God and gets down to the nitty gritty of what's really required – an overriding commitment to **be** good rather than look good. A world of lies is depicted – lies that have shaped the lives of women around the world, often because we have chosen to believe them.

In debunking the myths, Danielle relates stories of women in bondage around the world. Several times she refers to another book: *Half the Sky – How to Change the World* by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl Wudunn (Virago press, 2009), which is also a valuable read. Moving on to sound Biblical teaching, the author then provides a foundation of truth regarding who we are as women in Christ and our place in the life of the Church and society.

I challenge you to read *The Liberating Truth* and not be moved in your spirit to step up and fight for women around the world to be wholly free – physically, mentally and spiritually.

Be warned – there's every possibility God will speak to you through this book and, once he does, the responsibility of obedience will be yours. Are you up for it?



Major Kerry Haggart  
Divisional Commander  
Newcastle & Central New South  
Wales Division

## PERSPECTIVE ONLINE

For devotions, study material, blogs, worship podcasts and much more, take a few moments to browse these sites:

<http://saddleback.com/>

From pastor and author Rick Warren's Saddleback Church in the USA, this site offers daily devotions you can read or listen to, blogs, audio Bible studies, podcasts of services and worship nights and much more.

<http://www.halftheskymovement.org/>

Half the Sky lays out an agenda for the world's women and three major abuses: sex trafficking and forced prostitution; gender-based violence; and maternal mortality.

The site features information about the book of the same name and its authors, inspirational stories, resources and information on how to get involved.

<http://www.emotionallyhealthy.org/>

This site aims to integrate emotional health and contemplative spirituality in order to transform leaders, relationships, churches and organisations.

Resources include daily devotions, small group study materials, church-wide initiatives, sermon tools and recommended websites.



## Recipe Gingerbread latte

2 cups water  
1 ½ cups granulated sugar  
2 ½ teaspoons ground ginger  
½ teaspoon cinnamon  
½ teaspoon vanilla extract  
½ cup fresh coffee  
240 mls steamed milk  
Whipped cream and nutmeg

### Method

1. Combine water, sugar, ginger, cinnamon and vanilla in saucepan.
2. Bring to boil, then reduce heat and simmer syrup, uncovered, for 15 minutes. Remove from heat and cover.
3. Make ½ cup coffee and steam milk.
4. Put the coffee in a large mug; add ¼ cup syrup and the milk. Stir.
5. Top it off with a dollop of whipped cream and sprinkle of nutmeg!





# Raising Micah

Captain Cheryl Kistan shares the struggles of raising a little boy with physical challenges and the peace that comes from confidence in God's promises

One of the greatest joys and blessings God gives us are our children. My husband, Nesan, and I have been blessed with four children – Joshua 11, Samuel 8, Micah 4 and Faith 3. We count it a real privilege and honour to have children and believe that each of our children has been given to us by God. They are each wonderfully unique and we can see God's hand on them as they each grow.

Micah is our third child and our third son. We had prayed for a child and waited a long time for him to be born. As soon as we knew we were expecting a baby, God laid it on our hearts that we would have a son and his name would be Micah. He would grow into a man that would speak for God's justice in this world.

Micah was born in November 2007, just before we were commissioned as Salvation Army officers.

### Profoundly deaf

Micah failed the two hearing tests that are provided to all children born in NSW within the first week after birth. In early December we were told that he had a moderately severe hearing loss. We were later told that this was a genetic form of hearing loss, and that there was a one in four chance of any child we had having this same type of hearing loss.

At the heart of everything we had been

given this amazing gift of a child, and we believed the promise that God had made to us for Micah. It seemed though, that he would find it extremely difficult to communicate.

God is amazing. He provides his children with the abundance of what they need. At six weeks of age, Micah was fitted with his first set of hearing aids and we truly believed that this was the answer to his needs. Micah started his early intervention with the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children and he began to make progress towards speech. His progress then slowed and within the first year of his life he had lost the rest of his hearing in his left ear and most of the hearing in his right ear. He was now classed as profoundly deaf.

“God gave us the gift of Micah, just as he gave us the gift of each of our children, and we are indeed truly blessed to have him in our lives.”

### Switched on

We were sent into a tailspin. We questioned God and cried out in anguish and pain for our son. And so our journey took a turn and we were referred to the Sydney Cochlear Implant Centre. Micah was assessed as suitable for an immediate cochlear implant in his left ear. He underwent surgery on 22 December 2008, after a wait of only four weeks! Our God is truly all powerful.

Micah's first implant was “switched on” on 12 January, 2009. It was an amazing day for our family and for our friends. Everything we had prayed for was coming together and a little boy was given the gift of hearing.

Micah has always struggled to communicate. His progress was slow even with his cochlear implant, but at the heart of it all he is an amazingly happy little boy with a beautiful nature.

Micah received an implant in his right ear just after his third birthday and it was “switched on” just before Christmas. We immediately saw a dramatic improvement. Micah could localise sound, he became more confident and there was a sudden improvement in the amount of words he could say.

The heart-breaking thing was that Micah was still not able to speak clearly. He was inconsistent in his speech and there were some sounds that, no matter how much he tried, he still could not make. It seemed as



The Kistan family. From left to right: Joshua, Captain Cheryl and Faith, Captain Nesan and Micah, and Samuel.

though he couldn't lift his tongue.

Micah was also not able to eat like our other children. He would choke and gag on mixed textured foods and still needed assistance to eat his meals.

### Motor dysfunction

In the middle of this year, Micah was diagnosed with oral dyspraxia – a motor dysfunction in the muscles (including the tongue) in his mouth. As we received the diagnosis it was almost a relief – this is the problem and here is the solution – even though it will still take a few years to achieve near “normal” results.

There is still this gut-wrenching despair at the struggles this beautiful little boy has to face each and every moment of his life.

God gave us the gift of Micah, just as he gave us the gift of each of our children, and we are indeed truly blessed to have him in our lives. We have a deep-seated faith that God has his hand upon Micah and our family.

### Confident in God's promises

Yes, we wrestle like Jacob, pleading with God for his blessing and still walking away with the scars of that struggle. Every time I see Micah struggling to eat, or to make a sound, or put his hands on his hips in frustration when we cannot understand what he is trying to say, my heart breaks just a little bit more.

I cannot understand why God would allow such a thing, but then I am reminded that God loves us and it is not him who created the suffering. I am reminded that he shares our tears and our pain. Then the confidence in his promise that sits deep within my heart begins to rise and I am able to continue to rejoice in the Lord.

His grace continues and is much more than we ever need or deserve and his peace guards our hearts always.

Captain Cheryl Kistan  
Corps Officer, Auburn

# SOCIAL JUSTICE SNAPSHOT

## Loneliness



Loneliness is a common plight in our society. With the emergence of smaller families, the eroding of traditional community institutions and “gathering places”, a transient population, as well as the cultural trend towards individualism, much of the social connection machinery has been lost and not replaced.

This social phenomenon has created fertile ground for the spread of loneliness.

For people who are disconnected in our society, certain times of the year can be especially difficult, and Christmas is one such time. The Christmas season is strongly associated with togetherness and catching up with family and friends. Such messages tend to deepen the loneliness for isolated people and have the potential to drive them into depression, or even thoughts of suicide.

While these responses are very concerning and need to be taken seriously, they are also understandable as human beings are social creatures. We are hard wired to be in contact with fellow human beings. Like the message conveyed in the *Ice Age* movie, everyone needs a “herd”. Our mental and emotional health requires us to be plugged into nurturing and fulfilling relationships. They give us a sense of identity belonging and purpose.

Thus it is not surprising that when circumstances isolate us, we can be propelled into deep loneliness.

### Make connections

So, this Christmas if you are surrounded by friends and family consider how blessed you are and seek out opportunities to connect with those who are isolated. If you are alone this Christmas, try reconnecting with an old friend, give them a call or send them a message on Facebook.

Try starting a conversation with a stranger in the supermarket line or at the coffee shop. Even a brief informal chat can spark social connection. Another option is volunteering your time to assist those less fortunate. This is a great balm for loneliness.

### Internal loneliness

There is another type of loneliness that can be present, even when we are surrounded by loved ones. This is an internal loneliness;

a very common phenomenon and occurs when we are disconnected from ourselves or carrying a lot of emotional hurt and grief.

This type of loneliness will never be satisfied by even the most intimate relationship. It requires us to undertake the difficult task of identifying our wounds and working through the raw emotions; attending to the hurt and pain.

So, if Christmas triggers your internal loneliness, it is worth considering a new year's resolution – to seek out professional help in the form of a psychologist or counsellor. Make an appointment and see someone who can help you understand what is happening with your internal world and guide you with the healing process.

Loneliness, either from a lack of social connection or from emotional pain, can create some powerful and often uncomfortable feelings. However, it is also a healthy warning system that tells us when we need to attend to our social and emotional needs.



**Danny Guest**  
Salvation Army  
Counselling Service  
Centre Manager,  
Canberra



# Everybody has a story ...

## All that God wants me to be

**Sarah, 15, shares her passion for worship, the church, and bringing others to Jesus**

I attend the Mackay Salvation Army with my parents, Terri and Jeff Goodwin, who are the officers. I care a great deal about the church and want to see people grow closer to God and experience changes in their lives.

I try to help bring people closer to God through worship. Worship means a lot to me. I started singing in my first worship band when I was eleven at Dulwich Hill where the officers and church inspired me to go further with my worship.

When I arrived in Mackay, the church was very small. My parents wanted to start bringing people in and so did I. We bought a keyboard and every week I got up and sang a few songs for worship.

I was blessed to make some friends and asked them to join our worship band. Two girls weren't Christians but it wasn't long before they were asking questions about Jesus.

The words they were singing became real to them and they both accepted Jesus as their Lord and Saviour!

I invited my best friend, Kimberley, to come to sing and play drums. She invited her family. Her brother Brent, and his wife Emma, have become Soldiers and are considering officership! Kimberley invited a friend who now plays electric guitar every Sunday.

Brent and Emma run our youth group and I love to help out in any way I can. I try to invite people and get the word out that The Salvation Army is a good place to be. I want youth to see that it's a church and not just a charity. I think it's very sad that not many people know how awesome the Salvation Army can be or, more importantly, that people don't realise how much they need a saviour.

I'm not exactly sure what God has in store for me. I might go to Africa or the Torres Strait Islands next year on a mission trip with my school where we run worship and preach the word of God.

I'm also going to do a Certificate IV in



*Sarah (left) with friend Kimberley*

Ministry next year to build my confidence in preaching and witnessing. I just want to be all that God wants me to be!

**Sarah Goodwin**  
Mackay Corps

## Life on the other side

**Cecilie describes life as a young Salvationist in the beautiful country of Denmark**

So what is life like as a young Salvationist on the other side of the world? Well, probably not that different to your life to be quite honest! Like any 19-year-old, I'm thinking about what to do with my time and the rest of my life. Last year I moved to London for a gap year to experience living and working in another country. I also attended Bromley Corps which taught me a lot about The Salvation Army in other countries.

In February I will start studying Medicine at Copenhagen University and at the moment I'm working at the Danish Territorial Headquarters to help organise the 125th anniversary of The Salvation Army in Denmark next year.

But what do 19-year-old Salvationists get up to in a tiny country like Denmark?

Well, we have quite a lot of different activities both locally and nationally. I attend Valby Corps with about 65 people attending on a regular Sunday. It's a lovely mix of young and old so everyone feels welcome.

I have been a co-leader of our children's

Gospel Choir, with more than 30 singing and dancing children, and I'm now the deputy songster leader. I have also spent three years on our National Youth Board where we plan and organise different camps, programs and activities for children and young people across Denmark.

The last couple of years we have really experienced a growth in our youth work in both numbers and commitment to God. More and more people attend our national music camp that has developed from being music-only to more artsy and physical with dance, art, media, sport and, of course, Bible studies.

This summer we also arranged for two mission teams to go to Ukraine to help on children's camps. I was on the team that went to Yalta in southern Ukraine and we helped on a scout camp with 20 amazing children, teaching them about the Bible and playing



*Cecilie*

games with them. Although we faced a lot of difficulties (language, culture, prejudices and so on) we all had a great time getting to know the children and experiencing God's influence in our work and life!

**Cecilie Lydholm**  
Valby Corps, Denmark

—OP SHOP FASHION BARGAINS—

Are you looking for a bargain this summer? Would you like to make the most of your pocket-money or savings from all those hard long hours at your part-time job? Then Salvo Stores is the place to go.

After sifting through the racks at St Peters Salvos Store, a few Booth College cadets and a couple of staff from Territorial Headquarters had loads of fun styling different outfits with cheap price tags. After you have checked out our fabulous bargains, grab a couple of friends and head out to your nearest Salvos Store for a shopping spree.



1



2



3



4



5



6

1. Supre purple skirt \$6; Cotton On flower singlet top \$7; White summer hat with black bow \$3. 2. Black and white stripped T-shirt \$4.50; Miss Shop white jacket \$20; Pink scarf \$12. 3. Miss Shop yellow and white sundress \$4.50; White sun hat \$3. 4. Floral maxi dress \$12; Grey short sleeved cardigan \$7.50. 5. Portman's navy blue blouse \$7.50; White and black checked skirt \$7.50; America cream and brown handbag \$12; ASOS caramel brown wedges & 7. 6. Floral skirt \$7.50; Pink handbag \$12.

Models: Elyse Dickson, Cara Brackstone, Vanessa Kohler, Myfanwy Evans and Esther Pinn. Photographer: Sharon Paterson

Music Reviews

Music Review: The Great Awakening – Leeland

Leeland's voice is one of a kind. And like the band's three previous albums, Leeland's voice is definitely the unique flavour that captures the heart, soul and passion of *The Great Awakening*.

Featuring 11 fresh tracks, the band believes this album to be a passionate revival experience through the fusion of three-part vocal harmonies, a steady rock beat and ambient guitars.

Recorded "live-to-tape", Mike Smith, the band's drummer, describes the recording to be purely led by the Holy Spirit.

*The Great Awakening* was inspired by past Christian evangelists including The Salvation Army founder, William Booth. The band's

keyboardist, Jack Mooring, says they were challenged to "wake up the church to receive the Holy Spirit," with their music.

The album begins with the piano, opening with the title track, *The Great Awakening* and moves into angelic harmonies that continue throughout the whole song, building to an anthem.

Big sounding vocals are a major component of this album, where the congregation leads the first part of *All Over the Earth*.

Tracks such as *Chains Hit the Ground*, *I Can See Your Love* and *I Cry* are three songs of desperation, crying out to God to awake our souls with the fire of the Holy Spirit.

*I Wonder* is a beautiful acoustic track that highlights the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, leaving us in "awe and wonder" as the song says, of his great love for us.



Through spell-bounding vocal harmonies, *The Great Awakening* concludes with *Unending Songs*, reaching a place where our hearts are now opened to the power of our great God.

**Win a CD!**  
To go into the draw to win a copy of *The Great Awakening*, simply send us the name of a CD you'd like to see reviewed in these pages. That's all! Email [simone.worthing@ave.salvationarmy.org](mailto:simone.worthing@ave.salvationarmy.org)

**CONGRATULATIONS**

*God is Able* CD winner  
Congratulations to Margaret Nelson for her special Christmas gift idea: "For me Christmas is about love and belonging, so the most special gift I can give is a dinner invitation to someone who would otherwise be spending Christmas day alone."

*I Will Praise You* CD winner  
Well done to Catherine Plummer for her Christmas gift idea: "An individually chosen journal for the person receiving it to record whatever they do during the following 12 months. A good writing pen could go with it."

Jesus: the better way

In her regular column, Lieutenant Vanessa talks about Jesus as our never ending source of hope

Being a typical Gen Y girl, I decided to Google the word "hope" to see what would come up. It led me to a link on Wikipedia which told me that hope "is the emotional state which promotes the belief in a positive outcome related to events and circumstances in one's life". Other definitions included "to expect with confidence".

Now, I've been told throughout my studies that Wikipedia (much to my dismay!) is not a legitimate source of information for my essays. So people don't question my credibility as a writer, I decided to combine my information with a very legitimate source – the word "hope" is used 159 times in the Bible. That's a lot of hope!

We hope for many things throughout life. These change from week to week, year to year and vary in importance. We can hope that our

alarm clock goes off so we're not late for our day, and we can also hope that someone in our family overcomes an illness.

The Israelites knew what it was to hope. They were persecuted at the hands of the Romans and were hoping they would soon be freed. They "expected with confidence".

Then Jesus came along. He was everything they had hoped for, until he started telling them that what they had hoped for wasn't going to happen at all. Instead, Jesus was telling them, "Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness" (Matthew 5: 10).

I imagine they thought, "You have got to be kidding – this isn't what we were hoping you'd say! This isn't how we hoped it would turn out."

We too have hopes and dreams. We hope

God will give us what we pray for. Even though things don't always turn out how we had hoped, when we look back we actually see that the way it did happen is the better way.

One thing is certain. Jesus is the never ending source of hope. He is also the one who can be trusted with all our hopes and dreams for the future.



Lieutenant Vanessa Kohler Assistant Corps Officer, Bega

# mainly music

– connecting communities and corps

## SOWING SEEDS FOR THE KINGDOM

“I meet great people here, the caring volunteers are just amazing, my kids love the songs and it’s the favourite part of their week,” said Sue, who has been coming to Mainly Music at Carindale Corps since it began nearly three years ago.

Mainly Music attracts up to 60 children each week, plus parents and carers.

A team of 17, led and coordinated by Lyn Holman, runs the program. Each week eight team members attend the session to set up, prepare morning tea and, most importantly, spend time with the children and their families.

Corps Officer Major Michele Terracini, Children’s Ministries Coordinator Megan Halliday, and team member Gary Holley rotate leading songs and presenting the “think spot”.

“I love Mainly Music,” said Major Michele. “It fills a need in the community for good quality activities that parents and children can do together, and that aren’t expensive.”

“It gives us some good links with families and we have had a couple of families start coming to the corps as a result.”

The Mainly Music team has also had opportunities to provide prayer support and practical assistance to families with specific needs.

### A vital link

As well as the structured music session, the program includes a “think spot” where a short message relating to life and faith is given.

“Sometimes this is a Bible verse or spiritual concept, other times it’s about self-care or care of children,” Megan explained.

“People are open to hearing about the spiritual because they sense the love and caring they receive here.”

The Mainly Music team also profiles children’s ministries at the corps and invites the children and their families to Kids Church and special events, including Christmas carols and the annual children’s celebration.



**Children’s Ministries Coordinator, Megan Halliday, loves seeing Mainly Music families become more closely connected with the Carindale Corps.**

“All these occasions are a vital link between the families and the corps,” said Megan.

After the music session, team members serve a home made morning tea to the adults, while the children play with toys set up for them.

“This gives our team opportunities for chatting with the families to build relationships and share their faith, and it allows the adults to share experiences and support each other as well,” said Lyn.

“Mainly Music is the highlight of my week,” said team member, Marjorie Cathcart. “I mingle with the mums and kids here, and have special time with a single mum who is finding things difficult.”

“My desire is to show them Jesus, to be his hands and his feet.”

Lyn is confident that the impact of Mainly Music will continue to grow.

“I thank God for the positive outcomes to date and I am confident that we will see more fruit for the Kingdom in the future,” she said.



**Some of the girls enjoy making a cubby house during Mainly Music playtime.**

## BUILDING STRONG FAMILIES IN CHRIST

The Mainly Music program in Mackay, Central Queensland, started over one year ago and now runs sessions twice a week, including two groups each Friday.

Numbers are limited though, to 27 children per session, to allow close relationships to be developed.

Mainly Music is also extending to the regional areas of Marian and caters for people living in Walkerston, Marani and Seaforth.

“This is an area where many young families go for affordable housing, and there are some growing social problems there,” said Lieutenant Terri Goodwin, Mackay Corps Officer.

“The women definitely need something and are excited about Mainly Music. Already we are almost at full capacity.”

“We are also looking at holding three – monthly church meetings there but for now we are maintaining contact and building relationships with the people through Mainly Music.”

The mums and dads who attend Mainly Music in Marian will be able to access financial advice through The Salvation Army’s MoneyCare program. A case worker is also available through appointment.

“Our mission team is focused on making church relevant to today’s people and we know this will take time,” Lieut. Terri said.

“We will see where God leads us.”

### Intentional ministry

The Mainly Music team is intentional about loving the families and bringing them to Christ through the program.

“Our aim is to build strong families for life, through God, and to equip the women to be the best they can be in Christ,” said Lieut. Terri.

“Every volunteer knows that and works towards that goal.”

Five families from Mainly Music are now attending the corps and others have recently given their lives to the Lord.

### Extra care

In conjunction with Mainly Music in Mackay, the corps also runs pamper nights for the mums who attend the program, to keep up a strong connection with the women.

“Some of the mums who come to Mainly Music are quite lonely and even depressed,” explained Lieut. Terri. “They often come from mining families so the husbands are away for long stretches which is hard on the families.”

The corps realised that these mums needed more than Mainly Music, so pamper nights were introduced to run alongside the program.

“This enables us to talk to the mums one-on-one and connect with them more deeply,” said Lieut. Terri.

“When we do their fingernails and chat with them, we place the mums with the volunteers we know they can relate to the most – it’s all worked out beforehand.”

If the mums are interested, Lieut. Terri and her team can give pastoral support and home visits.

“This is their church so we can go wherever the need is.”



**Lieutenant Terri Goodwin enjoys a dance with young Sean at Mackay Mainly Music.**

## RELAXING IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD

What a gorgeous gift to a child - to look into their eyes and tell them that you love them. To hear their giggles of delight when you tickle them. To feel their little bodies relax when you cuddle them. This is what Mainly Music allows us to do with our beautiful babies.

Mainly music is a time that is precious because it allows parents to come into a safe place, to relax and to just be themselves with

their children. They all have one thing in common and that is to express themselves and allow their children to express themselves through music. Now, I believe every child has “a voice”, so to move in to a magical world of pre-school music is an absolute delight. For 30 minutes we have the privilege of moving into a world of wonder, imagination and giggles as we attempt to see, hear and feel things the way a child would. What a good lesson for us.

I have the delight of sharing with children and mums (mostly) every week. Some come sleep deprived and on the verge of tears. Some come to “keep the peace”. Some come to just breathe – and know that they will have a listening ear and some adult conversation.

We all learn from one another and to share stories and lives in community is a gift. Lots of young parents struggle to make ends meet – they haven’t got the support of parents living close or

the wisdom of “old ways” in many cases. To come to Mainly Music and to share with each other is just what our team is here for.

Luke and his Mum walked in to Mainly Music and were surprised at everyone being so friendly. They missed a few weeks, so a phone call quickly resolved that Luke had been critically ill with an infection. Do you know what a privilege it is to be able to let that mum know that she and Luke will be supported and covered in prayer? To tell her that God is love and that he is in control of Luke’s life? Luke is a precious, sweet little boy whose eyes light up every time I see him. He has had a few more operations but is doing OK.

I love the fact that we can help out when things get tough for a family – whether it be with some groceries, a meal, prayer or company at court or for coffee!

What is it that children and parents love about Mainly Music? Really, I think it’s the presence of God living through people who love him – loving and caring – just a smidge like he would.

**Major Ros Walker  
Corps Officer, Dural**



**The Nursery Farm visits Mainly Music at Dural.**

## Leigh raises profile of UN women

### Australia Eastern Territory

Leigh Cleave has a passion for empowering women. Not only does she work for The Salvation Army's Donors and Major Gifts Department, she also spends much of her time running the UN Women committee (formerly known as UNIFEM) in Queensland.

"I've always been interested in empowering women and women's equality," says Leigh.

"I see UN Women as a wonderful way to make a contribution. That's always been a part of me and The Salvation Army has given me lots of opportunity for volunteer engagement and I think you can make quite a difference by doing things as a volunteer."

Volunteering and fundraising is a familiar role for Leigh. In 1996, Leigh worked in a fundraising role for The Salvation Army in the Singapore, Malaysia and Myanmar Territory. She then spent twelve years working in the hospital healthcare sector in Australia.

Now she is fundraising for women.

For almost a year, Leigh has been readjusting the committee's focus in Queensland due to the name change to UN Women.

"We've been lifting our profile because when UNIFEM disappeared, people [didn't] understand we were the same organisation – just bigger.

"Our key focuses now are preventing violence against women, women involved in peace and conflict resolution, economic development ... increasing women in political participation and in leadership generally."

At the moment Leigh and her team are working towards raising funds for The Spring Campaign and hosting individual events to

raise money for the Pacific Facility Fund. These events include International Women's Day to be held on March 8, 2012.

"This is an awareness and fundraising [campaign] that this year focuses on a priority area of preventing violence against women or girls. So far we have raised \$51,000 but we are hoping to reach our goal of \$55,000 after two more events," explains Leigh.

UN Women also works alongside many NGOs and community organisations supporting them with their local activities.



While Leigh has only been in this role for a short period, she looks forward to the committee's future actions within local Queensland communities.

"I'd like to engage more women in understanding some of the global issues facing women and girls and to see that they can actually have a part," she says.

If you would like to attend a UN Women fundraising event visit [www.unwomen.org.au](http://www.unwomen.org.au) for further details.

## Women share life in all its fullness

### South Queensland Division

"Life Giving Women" was the theme for the recent 2011 Divisional women's camp. Over 100 women attended the camp from corps and centres across the division.

"It was especially wonderful to have 30 women, both staff and clients, from our two recovery centres, and Streetlevel," said Major Julie Campbell, Divisional Director of Women's Ministries.

"The camp provided many opportunities for the women trying to rebuild their lives to experience the love and acceptance of older mature Christian women.

"The older women were also inspired by the courage and honesty of the women from the centres."

Major Chris Reid, Divisional Mission & Resource Director – Corps, challenged and inspired the ladies with her presentations on "Life Giving" women from the Bible.

"We were reminded that Jesus came to give us life in all its fullness and we are responsible to share this life with others," said Major Julie.

Electives during camp included singing, creative movement, banner making and timbrels.

One young woman from the Moonyah Recovery Centre chose the timbrel elective because she had learnt the timbrel as a child at the local Salvation Army Sunday School.

The women were also able to show their creativity through the craft electives, accompanied by a lot of laughter and talking!

"It was moving to see the evidence of One Army One Mission as women from the centres and corps participated together in the evening concert," said Major Julie.

"Tissues were needed when the women from Moonyah sang *I'm on the Road to Recovery* and the Fairhaven group performed a creative dance to *On Eagles' Wings*.

The Spring fashion parade was a highlight of the camp, arranged by the Coolum ladies, who modelled stylish clothing from their family store. The money raised from clothing sales was donated to the Territorial Women's Ministries Project – Indigenous Ministries.

In the final session the women were asked to take a packet of seeds, to either plant or to give away, as a reminder to be Life Giving Women, making a difference in their family and community.



The ladies dressed in red and white as part of the spring fashion parade which raised money for Indigenous Ministries.

## Self-esteem course makes deep impact

### ACT & South NSW Division

A self-esteem course for girls, run as a joint project between The Salvation Army and local schools, is making a great impact in the lives of pre-teenage girls in the ACT.

The Salvation Army's Christine Love, School Community Worker and qualified teacher, and Denise Waters, a counsellor from the ACT Government Community Services, co-wrote the course.

Two Canberra schools have already seen girls graduate from the course and more groups are planned for the coming year. There are also plans to adapt the material for boys.

The course was developed in response to The Salvation Army Red Cap anger management program for children that Christine had been running in the two schools.

"Denise spoke to me about the need to follow up after Red Caps with further support for the girls and suggested we do the self-esteem course," said Christine.

"The girls lacked confidence and needed help with communicating and they wanted to attend the group.

"We wanted to get them thinking about themselves in a positive light and about self-esteem and the role it plays in their lives. We also wanted to talk to them about healthy relationships, different levels of friendships, and respecting themselves and others.

"The girls have gained a positive belief in themselves and a more positive outlook as a result of the course."

When the girls from Evatt Primary School, who named

themselves the "Lemon Sherbet" group graduated, they served afternoon tea to invited guests from their school, Community Services and The Salvation Army and spoke about the program.

"It was exciting to hear how their learning through participation in the course had helped their personal development, ability to cope with difficult situations and equipped them with practical skills for building and maintaining their peer relationships," said Karen Connors, Divisional Youth & Children's Secretary, ACT & South NSW Division.

"This is a flexible course and we can adapt it to the particular needs of the students and the desired outcomes."

The school's deputy principal also commented on the improvement in the sense of self and general well being of the students, their increased confidence and capacity to reflect.

Graduates receive copies of *Indigo* magazine which promotes a healthy self image for girls. See <http://www.indigo4girls.com>

"This is not a faith-based program, but we are following the Lord's lead in this," said Christine.

"The girls know who we are and we invite them to holiday programs and camps if they are interested.

"My prayer is that God will use whatever we do in whatever way he wants. We are motivated and have a joint concern and passion for young people, that they be safe and reach their potential with positive outcomes in their lives."

For more information about the course contact Karen Connors at [Karen.Connors@ae.salvationarmy.org](mailto:Karen.Connors@ae.salvationarmy.org)

## Coffee mornings highlight divisional ministries

### South Queensland Division

Over 300 women from around the division recently travelled to coffee mornings at Gympie, North Brisbane and Toowoomba to enjoy a delicious morning tea and to hear of the ministry they have supported within the division.

At Gympie and Toowoomba, Envoy Judith McAvoy spoke of



Ladies from the Inala Corps with some of the practical items donated throughout the year.

the joys and challenges of her work in Indigenous Ministry at North Ipswich. Many people have received practical assistance, acceptance and hope for life in Jesus through the variety of services there.

Envoy Judith also that flying the Aboriginal Flag at a Salvation Army building is a sign of welcome and acceptance for our Aboriginal friends.

At Toowoomba and North Brisbane, Karen Sagala, Mission Leader, Lifehouse Carole Park, spoke about the ministry that she has commenced with her husband, Alona. They have moved into the Carole Park community to share the love of God in many practical ways including playing sport with the children and holding a regular barbecue and craft for the families in the local park.

Two case workers from Moonyah Recovery Services spoke at North Brisbane about the joy of seeing women's lives transformed through the program.

For the past three years, women in the division have donated money, toiletries, towels and other practical items for the women's divisional centres.

Captain Sonia Whitehouse concluded each coffee morning with the challenging song *People Need the Lord* as women from each corps came and placed a coloured circle around an aboriginal painting as a symbol of the money raised to support the Territorial Project for Indigenous Ministries.

## In pursuit of God

### Newcastle & Central NSW Division

Over 100 women, aged from 16 to 80 “something” came together for the recent divisional retreat at the heritage listed Monte Pio in Maitland. “Women in Pursuit” was the theme for the weekend.

“They came in pursuit of a more God-centred life and went away with new resolves and plans to implement,” said Major Denise Parkinson, Divisional Mission and Resource Officer and Divisional Women’s Ministries Secretary.

“Major Julie Alley, Divisional Mission & Resource Director – Corps, and Lieutenant Rebecca Gott, Bateman’s Bay Corps Officer, were the “inspirational teachers” for the retreat. Karen Latouff, Salvo Care Line Manager, led “wonderful” times of worship.

“We were asked to think of the things that we are motivated to do and challenged to assess whether these things excited us more than Kingdom issues,” Major Denise explained.

“Major Julie reminded us that, ‘you never know what God will do when you offer up to him what you love.’”

Lieut. Rebecca presented the five essential key performance indicators for women in pursuit of God:

1. Coveting time with God and his word.
2. Being passionate about spiritual things.
3. Praying for the will of God in our lives (even when it doesn’t fit our plan).
4. Cheerfully and sacrificially tithing every aspect of our lives, including our time.
5. Thinking non-judgmentally about others, including their physical appearance and spiritual maturity.

“Lieut. Rebecca then invited us to make some choices,” said Major Denise. “To pursue or not to pursue, that was the question, and, using the story of Eve, we looked at the choices we have to make today.”

The women were also challenged to write down what they had learned through the teaching and how their lives would be different as a result.

“These were shared within a small group so that there would be accountability and support for each person,” said Major Denise.

“These practical steps, I believe, will be instrumental in keeping before each woman the need to continue in her development as a woman in pursuit of Christ-likeness.”

Other retreat highlights included



Talitha Brown leads a fun evening of music therapy.

the Abbey Prayer Room, facilitated by Major Janet Siddens, which provided a much-visited sanctuary for the women; and a fun evening of music therapy from Talitha Brown.



Majors Kerry Haggart and Beth Twivey enjoy learning the ukulele as part of the music therapy evening.

**Territorial Women’s Ministries Project 2012**

**Health Education Flip Charts for Africa**

Based on ten sets of “Facts for Life”

- HIV / AIDS
- Malaria
- Nutrition and Growth
- Diarrhoea and Hygiene
- Coughs and Chest Infections
- Injury Prevention
- Safe Motherhood
- Immunisation
- Birth Spacing and Contraception
- Breastfeeding

These will be used in Home League meetings, youth groups, men’s meetings and other community health training sessions in Africa.

**Target: \$110, 000**

## International Perspective – Q&A

Lieutenant-Colonel Simone Robertson, who has been living and working in London since January 2010, speaks about the joys and challenges of serving the Lord at International Headquarters



Your official title at IHQ is International Literature Programme Officer. Can you please give us an overview of this programme?

When I received my appointment, I had no idea what it was. I soon discovered though, what a great benefit and value the International Literature Programme (ILP) is to territories who don’t have the funds for even basic Salvation Army literature and courses.

Grant Aided Territories, through the ILP, submit applications to IHQ for funding for specific literature needs. These include the translation and printing of Salvation Army books, the *Adventurers* Junior Soldier course and *Discovery* Corps Cadet course, as well as Bible Lessons for children and a Sunday School course.

These territories also purchase particular Salvation Army books for only 10% of the cost and IHQ, mainly through Self Denial, pays the remaining 90% .

My role is primarily an administrative one that facilitates these processes.

You have recently received an additional appointment as editor of *Revive* magazine. What does this role involve?

I work with the World President of Women’s Ministries, Commissioner Sue Swanson, to produce this magazine which is for women around the world. It provides inspiring stories and resource ideas for ministry.

*Revive* is published quarterly and can be ordered through Salvationist Supplies, your corps officer, divisional headquarters or by annual subscription at <http://sar.my/revsubo>.

This is an exciting and challenging time for me. I can only fulfil my appointments as I keep connected to God and rely on his leading and strength. When I was commissioned, God revealed to me Philippians 1:20: “My deep desire and hope is that I shall never fail in my duty, but that at all times, and especially right now, I shall be full of courage, so that with my whole being I shall bring honour to Christ, whether I live or die” (*Good News Translation*).

In every appointment God has brought this Scripture to my mind, which for me is a reminder of his calling on my life and that, with every fibre of my being, I will be faithful to this call and bring honour to God in all I think, do and say.

What are some of the rewards and joys of serving overseas?

- The privilege of meeting people from all around the world – especially working at IHQ.
- The absolute joy of being able to visit so many wonderful places in the UK and Europe that are right on our doorstep, places we have only dreamed of being able to see.
- Living and working in the amazing city of London. As I look out my window at IHQ I can see the Millennium bridge in one direction and St Paul’s Cathedral in the other.
- Making new friends, whether it be people at IHQ or people we are getting to know well at our local Toby carvery.
- Having a broader perspective – even the way I pray has changed, it has a much more world focus now.

Which appointment in Australia did you leave to come to London?

I was the Divisional Director of Women’s Ministries for Central and North Queensland Division. My husband Laurie and I were the divisional leaders of this fantastic division for only one year. I love being able to invest in the lives of others, to inspire people in their relationship with God, to come alongside people and share the love and saving message of Jesus Christ. As a divisional leader I was able to do this on almost a daily basis.

What are some of the challenges of living overseas?

The greatest challenge by far for me is not being near our precious family – including our two gorgeous grandchildren who live in Brisbane. We have a son, Simon, who lives in Melbourne and works as a graphic designer at the Australia Southern Territorial Headquarters. Our daughter Anna and son-in-law Brennan live in Brisbane, and they have a son, Vaniah, who is four-and-a-half and a daughter, Amayla, who just turned one.

Another challenge has been the difference in lifestyle – long commuting to and from IHQ which, in the winter months, (that seem to last for a long time) can be very tiring.

How do you stay connected with your family back in Australia?

We try to Skype as much as possible, but with the time difference this is often very difficult. I have an app on my phone that means that I can receive and leave voice messages and these are especially fun between Vaniah and me. Emails help and, of course, I send little “grammy goodies” to the grandchildren.

The Salvation Army Women's Ministries THQ  
presents



# Captivated

by the Word



She chose to arise



INTERNATIONAL GUEST SPEAKER  
Commissioner Sue Swanson

BRISBANE 10-12 February 2012  
SYDNEY 17-19 February 2012