



# Central Connection

The Salvation Army / USA Central Territory  
News and Views from the Midwest

"We are all one body, we have the same Spirit, and we have all been called to the same glorious future." Eph. 4:3,4 (NLT)

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## Love rings true at Christmas

by Craig Dirkes

A 45-year-old man is in his fourth year of ringing bells at kettles in the cold and snow for the Grand Rapids, Minn., Service Extension

Unit. Incredibly, his last name is Winterringer!

Michael Winterringer has manned the same spot outside the local Walmart for more than 200 hours each season—and he's loved every minute of it.

"You know that feeling you get when you fall in love with Jesus? That's the way I feel when I ring bells," he said.

Michael credits Jesus with saving him from addiction. He spent most of his adulthood on the streets hooked on drugs and alcohol. He lives with sev-

eral mental disabilities.

"The only reason I'm alive is because of God," said Michael, who celebrated five years of sobriety last spring. "There are no words to explain the depths of God's love," he said, fighting back tears. "It's better than any drug. It's better than any drink."

Michael's lifelong struggle with addiction ended when he moved to Grand Rapids and got involved with a Presbyterian church in the nearby city of Coleraine. Several members of his church have been like parents to him, as have members of other churches he has attended in northern Minnesota. Today, Michael has a part-time job and apartment and manages his own finances, all with minimal assistance.

Without Michael's help, the kettle at the Walmart largely would go unstaffed. But because of Michael, it's the busiest one in town with Michael raising an average \$30 an

hour for The Salvation Army.

Although ringing bells outside for eight hours a day is frigid work, Michael said he doesn't mind the cold. In fact, he almost prefers it. "I lived a major portion of my life on the streets—being outside is like being home," he said.

"Michael is incredible," said Kathleen Saelens, a Salvation Army social worker in Grand Rapids. "What stands out about him is his love of God. It just shines. Given his life story, for him to have so much love is a lesson for all of us."



## Truth for Today

by General André Cox

We pause once again in the busyness of our hectic and frenetic lives to give thanks to God for his wondrous gift. It was the greatest gift ever given to humankind; a gift of healing, wholeness, restoration, love, reconciliation and relationship with the God who created the universe and our world.

The apostle Paul reminds us of just how awesome that gift is: "Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!" (2 Corinthians 9:15, NIV).

It is sad how many people fail to recognize and experience the truth of the gospel message; a message of good news reminding us of God's love and provision for whoever chooses to believe and take him at his word.

At the trial of Jesus, Pilate asked, "What is truth?" (John 18:38). Today, increasingly, we ask ourselves that same question. In recent months, we have had to expand our vocabulary to accommodate concepts such as

alternative facts, false news, fake news. Little wonder that we live in a generation that is more and more skeptical and suspicious of any claims of absolute truth.

For many, truth has become relative and subjective; it is what feels right for them or what they choose it to be on any given day or in any given situation.

In fact, subjective approaches to truth are nothing new. People of all generations have chosen to read and interpret truth as they see fit.

How desperately we need to hear and live truth in a world that has lost its moral compass. Some would question the relevance and importance of Jesus and yet we see through the life he lived that God was truly with him. When we look at Jesus, we see evidence of God working in and through him. His life reveals the truth of God's promise and message for the world.



Living in the confusion of this 21st century, it can be hard to distinguish truth, yet Christmas is about God breaking into our world in the gift of his Son, Jesus. The angels broke into the world of the shepherds to announce the birth of our Savior and those shepherds then went to the manger to experience the truth of what they had been told.

Jesus came and walked among us, died on the Cross that we might be saved, then rose again and ascended to Heaven where he reigns at the right hand of God. We know that one day he will return again to establish God's reign on earth—and what a glorious day that will be! By returning to the Father however, Jesus did not abandon or forget us.

He said, "I will talk to the Father, and he'll provide you another Friend so that you will always have someone with you. This Friend is the Spirit of Truth. The godless world can't take him in because it doesn't have eyes to see him, doesn't know what to look for. But you know him already because he has been staying with you, and will even be in you!" (John 14:16-17 *The Message*).

The challenge for us is to allow ourselves the space to be aware of and experience the presence of Jesus, which can be as real as that first Christmas.

We need to be his followers and his disciples in this generation, and he has promised us that, "If you stick with this, living out what I tell you, you are my disciples for sure. Then you will experience for yourselves the truth, and the truth will free you" (John 8:31-32 MSG).

Christmas is God's greatest gift because we can know truth—truth that is more than abstract concept, a truth that is real and alive, embodied in Jesus and imparted by the Holy Spirit.

"And we know that the Son of God came so we could recognize and understand the truth of God—what a gift!—and we are living in the Truth itself, in God's Son, Jesus Christ. This Jesus is both True God and Real Life. Dear children, be on guard against all clever facsimiles" (1 John 5:20-21 MSG).

I pray that you will experience the Truth this Christmas season.

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## Rockford Temple celebrates 125 years with Scandinavian Jubilee

by Lt. Colonel Marlene Chase

Celebrating 125 years of ministry, the Rockford Temple, Ill., Corps hosted a biennial Scandinavian Jubilee which drew 150 delegates from across the country to participate in lively meetings, worship, fellowship and fun under the theme "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever." Many more individuals attended programs or concerts at various times during the weekend. The opening flag-filled evening brought 275 individuals together, and a total of 1,831 persons attended the three days of programs and events highlighting the Scandinavian heritage of Rockford.

The Stavanger Brass Band from Norway, led by Bandmaster Per-Erik Petersen, inspired crowds and honored the message of salvation



Colonel Jan Peder Fosen, chief secretary for Norway, Iceland and the Faeroes Territory

through Jesus Christ. The band, organized in 1892, has given consistent service and earned a reputation for high quality performance and spiritual integrity. In addition to its tour of Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota,

the band has toured extensively in Europe.

Colonels Jan Peder and Birgit Fosen, chief secretary and secretary for women's ministries, respectively, for the Norway, Iceland and the Faeroes Territory, returned for their third Scandinavian celebration in Rockford. The colonels brought Spirit-filled messages and accentuated the warm and lively camaraderie that marked the weekend. They were ably assisted by Majors Sidney and Betty Anderson who represented the Scandinavian history of the Eastern Territory. The weekend was hosted by Rockford Temple Corps Officers Majors Mark and Teri Martsof, and Lt. Colonel Bodil Dahl and her committee planned the events.

In the Sunday morning holiness meeting, God's hand on the ministry of the Rockford Corps—past and present—expressed a worldwide evangelistic fervor that included stirring music from the Congolese Choir, prayers in Norwegian, Swedish, Spanish, French and English, and a call to embrace people from all over

the world with the gospel. The meeting's concluding song, "They shall come from the east," gave fitting expression to the corps' service.

The Salvation Army's work in Rockford began as a revival movement among Swedish immigrants. Meetings were held nightly with capacity crowds. Far from their homes, Swedish people were open to the gospel; they were saved, enrolled as soldiers, and the Army's ranks swelled.

"This was truly a great celebration of God's faithfulness to generations of Scandinavian immigrants," said Major Mark Martsof. "God used these Salvationists to spread the gospel throughout the Midwest and to build His Kingdom. The rich tradition we celebrated looks ahead to what God wants to do next. Who will He use to accomplish His great purposes now and in the future?"



The Stavanger Band of Norway



Leaders of the jubilee are (back, l to r) Majors Sidney and Betty Anderson, chief secretary and secretary for women's ministries, respectively, for the Norway, Iceland and the Faeroes Territory, returned for their third Scandinavian celebration in Rockford. The colonels brought Spirit-filled messages and accentuated the warm and lively camaraderie that marked the weekend. They were ably assisted by Majors Sidney and Betty Anderson who represented the Scandinavian history of the Eastern Territory. The weekend was hosted by Rockford Temple Corps Officers Majors Mark and Teri Martsof, and Lt. Colonel Bodil Dahl and her committee planned the events.

Photos by Faith Slack and Diane Toicher

## A prize-winning presence

For the last several years The Salvation Army in the Black Hills region of South Dakota has been provided a unique opportunity to raise awareness of its presence and ministry in this expansive area of the state by participating in the highly popular "parades of lights" held each Christmas in the towns of Rapid City, Spearfish and Sturgis.

"We look forward every year to the team efforts of people connected with Army ministries in the Black



Hills region to design, build and decorate a float as a witness for God and a statement about The Salvation Army," said Major Nathan Johnson, Black Hills area coordinator. Parade participants are required to enter a different design of float each year, so the challenge is on to constantly outdo previous years' efforts.

"Last year's float was designed to capture the life-changing themes of 'God, Country and The Salvation Army.' It turned out particularly nice," the major added. In fact, the float was so nice it won the prestigious "Spirit of Christmas" award in Spearfish's 16th annual "Holidazzle Light Parade!"

Belinda Rovere, manager of the Rapid City Salvation Army thrift store, was the creative force behind the float backed by the muscle of her husband, Scott, who built and decorated it with the help of store staff and South Dakota Department of Corrections workers who assist at the store.



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## A legacy of bringing Good News

Major Cherri Hobbins

*How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the messenger who brings good news, the good news of peace and salvation, the news that the God of Israel reigns! (Isaiah 52:7 NLT)*

Family and friends recently honored Lt. Colonels Daniel and Rebecca Sjögren as they retired at a service at the Rockford Temple, Ill., Corps. Individuals representing every appointment of more than 45 years of shared ministry were present to reminisce with and encourage the Sjögrens. In addition to testimonies of God's faithfulness throughout their ministries, the theme of strong and faithful preaching and teaching of the message of salvation and the privilege of holiness were recounted. The Sjögrens' faithful ministry has helped to fulfill Isaiah's joyful picture of ones who live out a pastor's heart.

Musical tributes played a part in the celebration. Jodi Beach and Jim McDowell offered inspiring vocal and instrumental pieces. The

Sjögrens' grandchildren gathered around a makeshift campfire to sing playful choruses recalling precious times with their grandparents.

There was even a visit by Jeremy, Colonel Dan's ventriloquist mannequin who assisted in Captain Michael and brother Nathan's ministry memories. Musical tributes were complete only when Colonel Dan strapped on his guitar so he and Colonel Becky could lead a gospel song.

Captain Michael Sjögren conducted the official retirement ceremony for Colonel Becky, as did Major Russell Sjögren for Colonel Dan, who remarked it was thrilling to hear the impact of their ministry. God has proven Himself to be faithful as they sought to be faithful to Him.

In retirement, the Sjögrens will reside in Rockton, Ill., close to Rockford Temple Corps. They will continue their ministry as messengers of peace and good news as they provide pastoral care as a part of the HEART (Healing and Restoration Team) program.



Lt. Colonels Daniel and Rebecca Sjögren (center) with Major Russell Sjögren and Captain Michael Sjögren

# Developing a heart for the city

by Major Cherri Hobbins

How do you view life in a large city? Many people form opinions of what it's like to live in a large city through media reports, which often lead to fear and abandonment of urban centers. Unfortunately, this can result in a softening or abandonment of accomplishing our mission as Salvationists. If we are to be salt and light to the whole world, a new and restored vision of ministry within our large cities must come clearly into focus.

The Salvation Army's Urban Mission Center (UMC) in St. Louis,

Mo., and Olivet Nazarene University are partnering to renew, restore and reshape a vision for ministry in an urban setting through the development of an urban ministries practicum.

Demonstrating a keen interest in and need for the program, all spaces were filled in just 90 minutes when the program was announced. This fall 12 officers from across the Central Territory met at the UMC for the new practicum which explores the city and its issues.

The week-long intensive course included explorations of the variety of neighborhoods incorporated into the City of Saint Louis. The first afternoon activity helped to underscore the diversity of culture by riding Metro trains in order to walk through four different city environments. Some brought a sense of comfort; others brought a sense of dis-

couragement and great need. How will we, as Salvationists, join God in the work He is already accomplishing? There is so much to do!

The officers also were introduced to a variety of individuals who have ongoing ministries in urban settings. Amy Williams shared her life of ministry to high-risk young adults involved in gangs. Glenn Burliegh taught an eye-opening session regarding lending practices that have kept diverse populations from homeownership. Alderman Dan Guenther shared the challenges of local government in the neighborhood around the UMC. Major Gail Aho led daily devotions and discussions related to a biblical view of urban mission. Sara Johnson taught about the Urban Millennium which involves over half of the world's population.

Academic credit is awarded to individuals who complete pre- and post-practicum activities. Officers may enroll in the practicum to fulfill their Salvation Army Continuing Education Program (SACEP) requirements. The practicum also may help to complete bachelor or master-level programs in practical ministries at Olivet Nazarene University.



The next urban ministries practicum is planned to take place in April 2018. In the future, the practicum hopefully can be opened to soldiers and employees as well.



A walk through the neighborhood helps students understand its uniqueness.



Exploring a neighborhood demographic with Glenn Burliegh

## Bikers give back

The Circle City Toy Run is a 23-year tradition that calls on hundreds of bikers to combine two of their great passions—motorcycles and giving back—to benefit the children of Indianapolis, Ind.

Toys strapped to the back seats of their Harley-Davidsons and classic Indians, hundreds of bikers participate in the event. On the Saturday after Thanksgiving the streets come alive with the sound of motorcycles in a parade from a gathering point on the city's east side to Indiana Divisional Headquarters to deliver toys, bikes and games.

The donations help make Christmas possible for thousands of families who benefit from the Angel



Tree program in the Indianapolis area. Toys gathered at this event fill the gap when not every angel ornament tag is chosen from the city's Angel Trees. Entry fees and additional monetary donations go to purchase gifts for older children.

Ron "Bumper" Herron, founder of the event, was introduced to the Army through his mom, who volunteered regularly and saw the need.

The first year, Bumper gathered a dozen friends, and they donated 22 toys. Each year the event has grown. It is now a full day of festivities, complete with barbecue, hot cocoa served from an emergency disaster services canteen, and live music. A police escort leads the way across town to deliver the toys.



Major Collette Webster rides in the Circle City Toy Run.

## Gone to the dogs!

Few things are more effective in attracting people to the Army's red kettles in Livingston County, Mich., than the happy, highly trained dogs and their owners of the local Dog Scouts of America (DSA) troop. For more than 20 years, these "kettle stand magnets" have made the Christmas season bellringing a tradition.

Last year the troop collected \$5,300, earning it the 2016 "Top Club" Golden Kettle Award which was presented by Major Prezza Morrison, Livingston County corps officer.

"The dog scouts are an important part of our Christmas kettle fundraising and very helpful to us reaching our goal each year. They are now a part of our traditional Christmas appeal," said the major. "Nothing like it brings a smile and a generous donation on a cold day."

The troop's bellringing tradition began with Beth Duman and her Belgian sheepdog, Jacques. When Beth volunteered to man a kettle stand with her well-behaved dog, donors' delighted reactions gave her an idea.



She trained Jacques to help in her volunteer bellringing. Beth also helped other troop members train their dogs for this unique community service, the idea for which has now spread to dog scout troops in many other states! Some dogs have even learned how to "ring bells" by shaking them or pushing a short swing bedecked with bells! Beth's current dog, Magic Genie, is as much a crowd pleaser as her predecessor two decades ago.

"Every year people call to ask when the dogs will be out ringing bells," Beth said. "Having them at the kettle stands makes people happy to give and supports our goal of demonstrating dogs can be trained to be more helpful to society."

Visit [dogscouts.org](http://dogscouts.org) for more information.

# A taste of college life

by Cadet Karen Kumar

A day in the life of a cadet. In essence, this is what the 730 Weekend 2017 provided. Held at the College for Officer Training (CFOT), the conference gave Salvationists looking into the possibility of officership the opportunity to shadow a cadet, hearing from them first-hand about their calling and gaining a better understanding of the training process.



Photos by Nicki Hudgens

We, the #messenger squared (Messengers of Compassion and Messengers of the Gospel sessions), were thankful to host 67 delegates from across the territory. Walking through registrations in the Booth Mansion, I could sense excitement!

The weekend kicked off with a dynamic worship service. In her keynote, Commissioner Heidi Bailey talked about the round table of a railroad track, where it splits and sometimes takes a dramat-



ic turn. She asked delegates to be prepared for that turn and to be willing to go off the normal route to follow God's will for their lives. It was an amazing start to the event for which God had been preparing people's hearts.

Following the meeting we indulged in a Taste of Chicago with Giordano's deep dish pizza, Chicago-style hot dogs and Garrett popcorn.

(Sorry you missed it, huh?) This casual gathering demonstrated community living as people ate, laughed, played games, talked about God's work in their lives and connected at a deeper level.

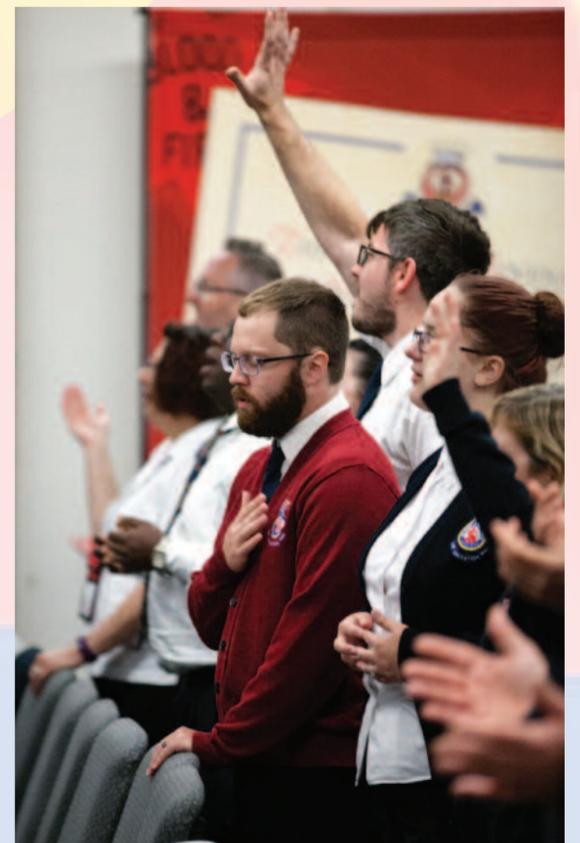
Here at the CFOT, community living is a highlight for cadets and vitally important for delegates to experience. Along with fellowship, delegates experienced cleaning details and prayer time in the morning, then Bible and doctrine



classes on Saturday afternoon.

We not only shared our space but shared our hearts through authentically worshipping together and being blessed by God through our territorial leaders, Commissioners Brad and Heidi Bailey, and the entire Cabinet, who are all down-to-earth and mission-minded people. The one-on-one conversations and interaction with them proved invaluable for delegates.

Lt. Colonel Richard Amick, territorial secretary





God has for them. I was struck by the number of people who answered the call and thought, *Man, wouldn't it be great if the CFOT here in the Central had sessions this size? How many people in those dark places would be reached with the light! God, do great things! Please, call us. Train us. Send us!* I believe God has a great plan for our territory as we continue to trust Him with our lives.

Before Saturday night, I'd heard some comments like: "I don't like big cities." "Chicago's not home." "Is the Army where I need to be?" or "Why now?"

But Lt. A.J. reminded us the dark areas aren't getting smaller but are growing, and God is calling Salvationists, many as officers, to go and be light.

After Saturday evening, I heard people saying things like: "I don't like big cities, but here at the CFOT it's obvious we are a family. The city doesn't look quite as big anymore." "The Army is at the forefront of fighting for Christ." "I feel God's peace as He is leading me

to walk through the open doors into officership." "Why now? Why wait? The darkness is growing, and God has chosen me."

The territorial commander concluded the weekend with a powerful message that solidified many people's calling, including mine. He reminded delegates they are at that round table on

for business administration, even ventured onto the basketball court for a game! If you know anything about basketball at the CFOT, you understand this was a leap of faith as I've yet to hear of an officer who played basketball here who didn't witness some sort of injury. But the colonel was willing to risk it in order to participate in friendly community competition.

Lt. A.J. Zimmerman, officer for congregational life at the Chicago Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center, spoke Saturday night about being called to the darkest of dark places and how officers especially are to share God's light in those spaces. He talked about how the Army trains cadets and sends them out as officers with the keys to a corps, reflecting the responsibility God has given us to minister to a community. He challenged delegates to take a key from the altar, signifying their willingness to answer the calling of officership and to assume the responsibility

the track, and the path is about to make a dramatic change that might lead to officership. Then, he gave five types of people God calls. God calls the *broken* people. God calls *different* people. God calls *active* people. God calls *responsible* people. And God calls *committed* people.

I was blessed to be surrounded by my brothers and sisters in Christ and to witness the broken, somewhat different and very active, responsible people who are answering the call and committed to service for Christ. Perhaps, you might join us next year for a taste of CFOT life?



## Reinforcing the mission

The Central Territory hosted the National Kroc Conference (KrocCon) which gave staff and officers from the 26 centers throughout the country the opportunity to share ideas, learn and network earlier this fall. Its focus on mission reinforced the transformational opportunities Kroc centers provide to both community members and staff.



According to Jonelle Bailey, Central territorial Kroc Center mission integration manager, the conference's goal was to provide an experience and information that would surpass the four-day event and which could be shared with others back at their centers to accomplish mission.

"Mission is not just heard on Sunday in a room with a cross but is

lived out in how we welcome members, listen to someone's struggles, encourage a coworker or tie a shoe for a member with a disability," said Jonelle. "It is providing anger management and GED classes for young adults, selling candy to raise funds for World Services, or working with a family who has an autistic son or daughter to find the right fit so they can learn and grow at their own pace. It is all these things and much more."

KrocCon 2017 also highlighted "Kroc Stars" with the Beacon of Hope Award which is presented to a Kroc Center employee in each territory who exemplifies the spirit envisioned by Joan Kroc. This year's winner from the Central Territory was Lt. Colonel James Nauta who helped create National Kroc Standards. Winners from the other territories included: Jeffrey Hewlings (Eastern), Patty Lauritzen (Southern) and Katherine Au (Western).

The conference also promoted some "Chicago-style" fun and fellowship with unique meetings like a Sweet Home Chicago/Blues Brothers night at the Chicago Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center which showcased the amazing talents of its students and staff.

The evening began with a flash mob welcome and finished with high-energy praise

that had everyone on their feet. Two meeting highlights included a devotional by Territorial Commander Commissioner Brad Bailey and a compelling testimony by Yuliana Martinez, winner of The Voice Mexico. She not only shared her personal journey of faith but spoke about her mother, an officer stationed at the training college in Mexico, and how they helped pull people from the rubble after the devastating 7.1 magnitude earthquake that shook Mexico City in September. Yuliana concluded in song and then was prayed with in Spanish by Commissioner Bailey.



## Equip, engage and enlarge

by Jan Kelly

They came from the west and they came from the north to be a part of the Wisconsin and Upper Michigan (WUM) Divisional Soldiers' Rally hosted by the Oak Creek Centennial Corps and divisional leaders Majors Steven and Christine Merritt. They came with flags waving, bands playing and children singing!



Colonel Janice Howard is welcomed by a junior soldier.

mended, as well as new corps interns.

Colonels Steve and Janice Howard, chief secretary and territorial secretary for women's ministries, brought a spark of enthusiasm as they shared their testimony, enrolled senior and junior soldiers and taught from God's Word.

Tying into the rally's theme, "Equip, Engage and Enlarge," the chief secretary shared the importance of engaging those around us. Soldiers stood in promise to share Jesus with one person in the coming week.

Another highlight of the evening was the kick-off of the division's World Services/Self-Denial fundraising efforts by Major Tim Meyer, WUM divisional secretary.

Against the backdrop of great Salvation Army music by the WUM Divisional Band, led by Stephen Hull, and the Stavanger Brass Band all the way from Norway, this inspiring evening challenged soldiers to mobilize and engage in ministry beyond the walls of their corps buildings.

Colonel Steve Howard prays for the new junior soldiers he's enrolled.

From Marquette and Janesville to Racine and Madison, 17 corps in all participated.

Having served at the Sheboygan, Wis., Corps for 75 years, Catherine Lilyquist was recognized as the division's longest serving soldier. Nearly 90 others who have served for 40, 50, 60 and 70-plus years also were com-



Majors Steven and Christine Merritt with new corps interns

## Christ is all

Celebrating 30 years as officers, Majors Richard and Brenda Herivel retired in a ceremony conducted by Colonels Jeff and Dorothy Smith and Major Herbert Luhn. The theme "Christ is all" was woven throughout the service.

The Herivels were commissioned in 1984 with the "Servants of God" session. After 18 years as corps officers, Rich began a series of divisional appointments in finance, while Brenda served in a number of capacities, including being instrumental in the development of two Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Centers.

"I love getting to know people where they are and assisting them on

their journey of faith," said Brenda, referencing her love of social service ministry and teaching.

For four years the Herivels served in Moscow, Russia, where Richard was a steward of God's resources as the mission resource secretary for the Eastern Europe Territory and Brenda oversaw social service projects with orphans and HIV-positive individuals as the divisional secretary for the Russia Division. After returning to the Central Territory, the Herivels served in the Midland Division and at Territorial Headquarters.

In retirement, the Herivels will live in Bellevue, Neb., spend time with family in the area and soldier at the Omaha Citadel Corps.



Majors Richard and Brenda Herivel receive their certificates.



# The blessing of prayer

**B**lessings flow both ways at the Norridge Citadel, Ill., Corps when those who come for Christmas assistance ask to meet for prayer with a corps member. This simple yet powerful ministry has enriched the lives of people in need and those who've prayed with them for more than 15 years.

During the two days of the corps' toy shop and food box distribution, several rooms are set aside for the opportunity for prayer.

Salvationist Khris Werner, who's coordinated the prayer ministry the last several years, knows how demand-

ing Christmas distributions can seem but advocates corps take time to really connect with people and incorporate this additional ministry.

"To pray with people who are so open and trusting in sharing their needs has been an absolutely humbling experience," said Khris. "One lady who'd been struggling with cancer told me, 'I know God has still blessed me,' in spite of her latest prognosis." Khris has also had the opportunity to pray with one of the many volunteers.

With the support of Captains Michael and Kristina Sjögren, corps officers, Khris stocks the prayer rooms with paperback Bibles in several languages, the Christmas *War Cry* and other takeaways such as a Christmas CD recorded by the Norridge Citadel Band. Also on hand are prayer request cards, which are entrusted to corps members after Christmas for prayer throughout the coming year.

For Major Jo Langham, volunteering in this ministry marks the start of Christmas. "I pray with people who don't understand my language or even my faith, but they want to know someone loves and cares for them and will remember them throughout the year," she said. "Many times I'm brought to tears as they share their stories. I'm so blessed to be part of this wonderful ministry."



Khris Werner

# Weathering the gap

by Kristin Oxendahl

**I**n Williston, N.D., a unique Christmas fundraising partnership has been formed between The Salvation Army and Weatherford, an oil and gas service company.

It began two years ago when Salvation Army representatives met with Denise Gustafson, Weatherford logistics coordinator, to brainstorm how the company could partner with the Army during the holidays. They hit on the idea of the company hosting a "Weatherford Rings Week" where it would fill empty bellringing slots for The Salvation Army during a week in December.

What seemed like a fun idea has turned into a successful fundraising partnership! During the 2015 "Weatherford Rings Week," the company manned kettles for 187 hours! Employees had such a great time volunteering, they clamored to do it again.

Despite a severe downturn in the oil industry and its effects on the local economy last year, Weatherford and its employees remained committed to helping their community by participating in another Weatherford Rings Week. Not only did the company have less staff to ring bells but their kettle week landed on the coldest week with the worst weather in December. Recruiting volunteers and



delivering them to kettle sites was tough, but the company still put in 88 hours of bellringing!



My Prayer List	Day	Bible Reading	Pray for The Salvation Army
	1 Monday	Genesis 1-3	Blessings in the New Year!
	2 Tuesday	Joshua 1-5	Mankato, Minn., Corps
	3 Wednesday	Psalms 1-2	Mitchell, S.D., Corps
	4 Thursday	Job 1-2	LaPorte, Ind., Corps
	5 Friday	Isaiah 1-6	Menasha Fox Cities, Wis., Corps
	6 Saturday	Matthew 1-2	Captains Sergii Kachanov & Tatiana Kachanova (Canada)
	7 Sunday	Romans 1-2	Southeast Michigan ARC*
	8 Monday	Genesis 4-7	Mt. Clemens, Mich., Corps
	9 Tuesday	Joshua 6-10	Moline Heritage Temple, Ill., Corps
	10 Wednesday	Psalms 3-5	Logansport, Ind., Corps
	11 Thursday	Job 3-4	Northern DHQ**
	12 Friday	Isaiah 7-11	Elgin, Ill., Corps
	13 Saturday	Matthew 3-4	Mattoon, Ill., Corps
	14 Sunday	Romans 3-4	Cultural Awareness Sunday
	15 Monday	Genesis 8-11	Minneapolis Central, Minn., Corps
	16 Tuesday	Joshua 11-15	Newton, Iowa, Corps
	17 Wednesday	Psalms 6-8	Ludington, Mich., Corps
	18 Thursday	Job 5-6	National Advisory Board meeting in Sacramento, Calif.
	19 Friday	Isaiah 12-17	Milwaukee Citadel, Wis., Corps
	20 Saturday	Matthew 5-7	Chicago Staff Band ministry in Kansas City, Mo.
	21 Sunday	Romans 5-6	Grand Rapids Kroc Center, Mich., Corps
	22 Monday	Genesis 12-15	St. Louis, Mo., ARC*
	23 Tuesday	Joshua 16-20	Owosso Citadel, Mich., Corps
	24 Wednesday	Psalms 9-11	Muscatine, Iowa, Corps
	25 Thursday	Job 7-8	Madison, Ind., Corps
	26 Friday	Isaiah 18-22	India South Eastern Territory <sup>PIM</sup>
	27 Saturday	Matthew 8-10	Olathe, Kan., Corps
	28 Sunday	Romans 7-8	New souls for Christ this Decision Sunday
	29 Monday	Genesis 16-19	Evanston, Ill., Corps
	30 Tuesday	Joshua 21-24	O'Fallon, Mo., Corps
	31 Wednesday	Psalms 12-14	Minneapolis Parkview, Minn., Corps

Go to [www.salarmycentral.org](http://www.salarmycentral.org)  
 If you follow the prayer calendar during the year, you will have read through the Bible!  
 \* = Adult Rehabilitation Center  
 \*\* = Divisional Headquarters  
 PIM = Partners in Mission



# ONE conference encourages synergism in service

by Karen Young

Have you ever done something with another person and were amazed at what you accomplished? You could never have done it by yourself even with twice the time. That's synergy!



Speaker Mark DeYmaz

Challenging perspectives, creating safe spaces to speak authentically, pushing through hard truths, uplifting and joyful singing, Spirit-led preaching: these were the gears turning to produce moments of insight and inspiration—moments of synergy—at the territorial multicultural conference.

Keynote speaker Mark DeYmaz,



Delegate Darren Young shares his story.



Speaker Sandra Van Opstal and Karen Young

author, pastor and leader in the Multiethnic Church Movement, spoke from his book, *Disruption*, about the Church's need for individuals who can see how God is leading "ahead and around the corner" and who can prepare the Church for an unpredictable future.

Sandra Van Opstal, pastor, liturgist and activist, shared her passion about re-imagining multiethnic worship and identified three key parts of worship: hospitality (welcome), solidarity (standing with) and mutuality (needing each other). "Diversity follows as the Church engages in reconciliation," said Sandra.

Building bridges was the focus of



Workshop leader Major Amy Reardon



Nikki Lerner

Saturday's united session. Eric Law of the Kaleidoscope Institute spoke on this topic, followed by a panel discussion on ways to build bridges between polarized communities. Discussion touched on



Major Romeo Alip shares scripture.



Panel participants Kathy Khang, Oneya Okuwobi and Chris Dorsey

artist and intercultural coach Nikki Lerner; and Bruce Harding, singer, song leader and advocate for community song.

Saturday evening was framed with people's stories that reflected creativity and engaged the community in impactful ways. These themes were echoed on Sunday morning in the territorial commander's message titled "A Synergistic Savior." Commissioner Brad Bailey spoke of how Jesus breaks fetters in our lives and encouraged us not to live in isolation but rather to use our God-given gifts and skills to be creative, relevant and authentic in ministering to our culture without compromising the gospel.



Major Gonzalez, territorial multicultural ministries secretary, welcomes delegates.

hard topics, and questions were challenging, but participants pushed through.

Workshops focused on a variety of topics. One delegate commented that the practical workshops invited her to look at her own culture and that of others in a fresh way. Another said the conference provided an opportunity to hear stories of others in a new way and thereby gain a deeper understanding of the histories and challenges others face.

An amazing roster of musicians included Crazy4Jesus, a male Congolese group; author,



Commissioner Brad Bailey spontaneously joins Crazy4Jesus in the conference theme song.

## Expect the unexpected

by Major Sheila Davisson

Have you ever received an unexpected letter and weren't sure how you would feel if you opened it? And when you did read the contents, it wasn't anything you'd imagined? Maybe a rich relative left you great wealth or you were accepted to a university you didn't think you could get into, or perhaps a long-lost pen-pal reconnected with you.

Well, a telephone call one August day was equally unexpected for us, and what was asked of us certainly took us by surprise. Chief of Staff Commissioner Brian Peddle said we were appointed as leaders of the Spain and Portugal Command.

"It will be a little different place than you have been, but I know that you will embrace it and flourish," he shared. "There are lots of young officers, and you will contribute greatly to help them on their spiritual journey."

We are trying to stay focused on the tasks in our present appointment this semester at the College for Officer Training (CFOT) in Winnipeg, Canada, while planning for this appointment change in January. Phil



and I feel blessed to have the opportunity to serve wherever the Lord and The Salvation Army see fit. We do have a bit of a learning curve ahead, but we feel ready for the challenge. Phil has been working on several writing projects that have stretched and strengthened his faith, and I have been enjoying my time here at the CFOT gaining confidence and experiencing a great season of encouragement.

We look forward to bringing this experience to Spain and Portugal, to be used by God. We ask for prayers for discernment, a quick ability to learn Portuguese and the wisdom to lead with great grace, patience and love.

COME JOIN OUR ARMY

**New Members**

May - September, 2017

150 Senior Soldiers  
65 Adherents  
122 Junior Soldiers