



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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Commissioner Barry Swanson leads a class.

The Great Commission in action

Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations... Matthew 28:19 (NASB)

At the Norridge Citadel, Ill., Corps, discipleship has become a central focus in the past three years as corps members have engaged in the *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* course and the follow-up *Emotionally Healthy Relationships* course, based on the book *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* by Peter Scazzero.

"The courses are a great tool for helping folks take the next step in their discipleship journey," said Major Catherine Mount, who leads the corps with her husband, Major Peter. "The value of learning in relationship with others in a small group setting is priceless; it trains the individual and builds up the Body of Christ at the same time."

The corps started offering the courses when Commissioners Barry and Sue Swanson, inspired by their own experience with the material, volunteered to lead group studies. At that time, the commissioners felt the curriculum would help people address some of the emotional and spiritual challenges they were going through during times of fear, uncertainty and loneliness caused by the pandemic.

"I felt people were hungry for something," said Commissioner Barry, adding that the curriculum is more than another Bible study. "Discipleship means learning from Jesus and following Jesus. Bible study is Bible study. This course requires the practice of discipleship."

Held twice a year, the eight-week *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* sessions have been highly successful, with 77 individuals completing the course and some returning for a second round or progressing to the *Emotionally Healthy Relationships* course.

"The premise for the courses is based on Jesus' response to the Pharisees regarding the most important commandments," said Lt. Colonel Charles Smith, who facilitates *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* while Commissioner Barry leads *Emotionally Healthy Relationships*. "The first course is 'love the Lord your God' and the second is 'love your neighbor as yourself.' It's all about relationships."

Individual participants commit a significant amount of time, including reading chapters from the book and practicing the Daily Office (devotions, prayer and silence) twice daily for a 40-day spiritual journey. They also attend a two-hour group session each week.

However, the curriculum is designed to allow facilitation without excessive preparation time. Facilitators follow a set schedule consisting

of elements like devotions, silence, prayer and group discussion, interspersed with video teaching by the author. This accessibility makes it a great option for any corps or group which wants to engage in discipleship.

Those who have participated at Norridge say the personal time and effort put into the courses are worth it. During a fall session Justin Johnson served as a table leader, a role which includes guiding a small group of five or six individuals through discussion times.

He said, "This course made me realize that in order to be able to serve in the greatest capacity that Christ has created me to do, I have to ensure that I am taking time and

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Majors Catherine and Peter Mount, Norridge Citadel, Ill., corps officers



The eight-week course has been completed by 77 people at Norridge Citadel.

Photos by Katelyn Church

Territory streamlines commissioning schedule and focus

Salvationists in the Central Territory will find this year's commissioning weekend, June 8-9, to be an inspiring event with a significantly streamlined schedule. Programs will focus on the "Defenders of Justice" session of cadets, celebrating God's faithfulness to call and equip people for ministry and expressions of living in His Spirit by Salvationists throughout the territory.

In fact, the weekend's theme, chosen by the new territorial commander, will be the Fruit of the Spirit, based on Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT), "But the fruit of the Spirit

is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. There is no law against these things!"

"We are excited to welcome home Commissioner Evie Diaz, and this will be an opportunity for us to hear her heart as she leads our territory," said Lt. Colonel Collette Webster, assistant territorial program secretary.

Saturday afternoon will offer opportunities for Salvationists to show their faith by engaging in service projects throughout Milwaukee. Delegates should come prepared to work, opening their

hearts and offering their hands to help those in need.

Saturday night's uplifting program will encourage Salvationists further in their faith and service as we look together at the Fruit of the Spirit and receive a challenge from the territorial commander.

The weekend will conclude with a Sunday morning worship service where the "Defenders of Justice" session will be ordained as ministers and commissioned as officers.

Look for more details every month. Online registration

will be open by the end of January, and onsite registration will take place on Saturday morning, June 8.

Begin now to ask yourself, "What kind of fruit am I bearing?" as you prepare your heart and mind to hear from God.

If unable to attend, Salvationists are encouraged to watch a livestream of the Saturday evening and Sunday morning meetings together as corps groups.

In 2025 the territory will gather for a Congress with General Lyndon Buckingham and Commissioner Bronwyn Buckingham.

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Champions of the sacred mission

A tribute to retired Salvation Army officers

by Lt. Colonel Lonneal Richardson
Assistant Chief Secretary



This month I would like to take a moment to express our heartfelt appreciation for the exceptional contributions of our retired Salvation Army officers. Over the years, I've witnessed their enduring dedication and their commitment of truly extraordinary service, which doesn't retire with them but leaves a lasting impact for the Kingdom of God.

In their golden years, these retired yet-active officers still engage in showing the love, mercy and salvation offered by Jesus Christ, embodying the organization's timeless mission.

What sets them apart is their remarkable resilience and commitment to their calling which doesn't end with their retirement. Many are involved in mentoring the next gen-

eration of volunteers, soldiers and officers, ensuring the perpetuation of the next generation of leaders. They pass on the sacred values of the organization, serving as guiding beacons for emerging spiritual leaders. Their commitment to their calling and service becomes a powerful legacy, shaping the compassion that future generations hopefully will embrace.

To those officers who have retired, I would commend your unwavering commitment to The Salvation Army's mission that has not dimmed but continues to shine brightly, all the while being transformed into a different, yet equally significant, chapter of service.

May God richly bless you.

A place to belong

Whether they are splashing in the pool, making jewelry, listening to a guest speaker or concentrating on a serious game of chess in the senior lounge, older adults have a wide variety of programs to join at the Chicago, Ill., Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center.

Eighteen hundred older adults currently take part in activities, said PJ Jones, program director at the Kroc Center.

More than 30 programs are designed specifically for older adults, he said, adding that field trips to Broadway shows and other venues are among the most popular. Many of them will even set sail together on a cruise in December 2024.

"Remember when you were in

school, and you could not sleep the night before going on a field trip with your classmates? The seniors here are the same way," PJ said. "They average about one trip a month; as soon as it is announced, it sells out within a day."

A number of the center's clubs are led by older adults, including clubs for chess, photography, scrapbooking and guitar. Seniors can join a walking group, do aerobics to gospel music, swim, play pickleball or bowl.

There are specific programs for veterans, including meeting on the fourth Friday of each month to listen to a guest speaker. They also help with the Kroc Center's afterschool program on Tuesdays and Thursdays, offering mentoring opportunities for youth ages 11-17.

Educational workshops bring information on diabetes, stroke-prevention and life skills such as managing money, healthy eating or making a will.

"We've had all kinds of speakers—doctors, lawyers, preachers,



Getting a workout in the pool

police officers—people from every walk of life," said 69-year-old Lillie Thurman, who became a member of the Kroc Center when it opened in 2012.

These days, Lillie is generally there from noon to 8:00 p.m. about three days a week. She calls the center her "safe haven."

"The senior program for me has been a godsend," Lillie added. "They [Kroc staff] are interested in making sure we have everything we need—and that we're not pushed off in a corner somewhere."

The Kroc's senior lounge is always a hub of activity.

"Our seniors come here for friendships, for relationships.



Pickleball is a popular sport.

They play cards, dominoes, they socialize," PJ said. "It's a home away from home."

PJ would invite any older adult to come to the Kroc Center to experience the camaraderie.

"I would challenge them to dip their toe in the water and try it out," he said. "Once you immerse yourself in it, a whole new experience takes over. Our seniors eat together, they travel together and enjoy one another's company. Come and join the family."

Darlene Humphrey, senior manager, added, "The seniors feel they belong here at the Kroc Center. And this is a place where they really can belong."



The chess club is one of many programs offered for older adults at the Chicago Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center.



Older adults brush up on their technology skills.



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She's got it covered

At the self-described age of "65-plus," Darlene Humphrey finds herself a cover girl.

The senior manager at the Chicago, Ill., Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center was both surprised and honored by University of Chicago Medicine when her photo was chosen to grace the cover of its SHARE Network's 2023-2024 South Side Aging Resource Guide.

"Now that I am on that cover, I have to work a lot harder," Darlene chuckled. "If someone puts you at that level, you want to make sure you don't disappoint them."

She has been at the Chicago Kroc Center for nine years, after working for more than 20 years at various social services agencies in conjunction with the Chicago Public Housing Authority. During that time, she interacted with many older adults in public housing. It set her up well for her current position at the Kroc Center, which she took in 2014.

Now a bit older, Darlene said, "If anyone knows how seniors think and feel, it's another senior."

Born and raised in Chicago, Darlene is a graduate of DePaul Univer-

sity, where she received a bachelor's degree in management.

She believes God brought her to the Kroc Center.

"I let God direct my path," she said. "And He has me here. I always pray and wait for His direction. And then I try to implement it. When God puts you somewhere, it's for a purpose."

She loves her job and loves getting to know the older adults who participate in programs at the center or who just come to the center to socialize.

"My oldest one is almost 100. Working with seniors here at the Kroc Center, we have bonded. It's a blessing to work with them. We are family. Faith, family, fellowship and fun—that's the essence of our seniors' program," Darlene explained.

Healthy aging is the theme Darlene said she uses as she plans programming.

"When I first came to the Kroc Center, we had only a handful of things we did. We did the same thing every week," she said.

Now, a wide variety of activities are offered during the week—rang-



ing from a senior chess club and gospel aerobics to field trips to see Broadway shows like "Hamilton." There are even special activities just for veterans.

"Miss Darlene has broadened our horizon," said Lillie Thurman, 69, who participates in the older adult programs. "Things have blossomed under her leadership."

Darlene was part of a community partners team that recently launched a monthly Memory Café at the Kroc Center where caregivers and people with dementia can socialize and receive support and resources.

"It's a way for them to have some quality time together," Darlene said.

She also helped organize the monthly Cancervive support group for those dealing with cancer and a "Walk with a Doc" stroke-prevention program, in conjunction with Rush University Medical Center.

For some older adults, the Kroc Center is a second home, Darlene said. It provides them with a safe place to socialize, stay actively engaged and improve their overall well-being.

"The Kroc is a highlight in their lives," she said. "Without the Kroc Center, some would have nowhere to go for social activities."

Darlene said The Salvation Army's mission statement of sharing the gospel and meeting human needs in Christ's name guides her work every day.

"I work for that all the time. How am I sharing the gospel and meeting the seniors' needs in Christ's name?" she said. "It keeps me on track."



Darlene Humphrey with Chicago Kroc Center program participants (l to r) Judith Reeves, Angela Armstrong and Karen Broadwater Price.



Darlene enjoys visiting with the older adults in the Kroc Center's senior lounge.

This Kind of Fruit

by Commissioner Evie Diaz
Territorial Commander

The Fruit of the Spirit is joy! While joy is often described as a feeling of happiness and pleasure, it is deeper. It's inner contentment, evidenced because of the Holy Spirit at work in our lives. Joy is not dependent on circumstances because of His presence in us.

In this series we are sharing how the Fruit of the Spirit is being expressed in the Central Territory. The examples of joy in this issue come from the holidays.

During the Christmas season I witnessed firsthand the joyful ministry of Captain Dalvius King and her staff at the Detroit Conner Creek, Mich., Corps as they met the needs of their community even though they

were working in a temporary space and dealing with construction chaos.

In Kenosha, Wis., A/Captain David and Captain Robin Hamilton and their corps held a "Polar Express" event for families of children who had attended the corps' summer day camp and National Night Out. They welcomed families to enjoy the movie with pizza, surprises, popcorn and hot chocolate, not only to make a merrier holiday but to keep them connected to the corps so those who don't know Christ might find the source of joy for themselves.

In the North & Central Illinois Division, Captain Jessica Martinez shared, "As an immigrant in this country, it brought me immense joy to be



part of the Thanksgiving parties held around the Chicago area for fellow migrants. Witnessing them relish their traditional Venezuelan food, singing Christmas carols, dancing and momentarily forgetting their life's challenges filled my heart with joy."

Stories like these are repeated throughout the territory not just during the Christmas season but throughout the year as soldiers, officers, employees and volunteers allow the Holy Spirit to work through them to share joy, especially when life is difficult for those we serve.

Share how you are experiencing and expressing joy in your community. Visit salarmycentral.org or email bearingfruit@usc.salvationarmy.org

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT)

Pathway of Hope goes Down Under

The Territorial Pathway of Hope (POH) leadership team, led by Dr. Maribeth Swanson, territorial social services secretary, and Linda Brinker, Pathway of Hope director, represented the Central Territory at the 140-year celebration of Salvation Army social services in Australia.

The five-day event held in Melbourne focused on sharing integrated mission approaches from



Linda Brinker presents on POH.

across Australia and The Salvation Army worldwide. The conference theme, "Everybody has a work to do," highlighted the call for soldiers, officers and social service professionals to serve from a heart of compassion for "the last, the least and the lost" in Jesus' name.

The invitation came following the submission of a peer reviewed proposal. A wide array of topics focused on service delivery designed to meet the unique cultural and social context of Australia and local community needs. An emphasis was placed on exploring the historical foundations of The Salvation Army in Australia and the internationalism that is unique to the organization. The conference had representation from the U.S., Denmark, New Zealand, Norway and the United Kingdom.

Following the conference, the Australia Territory's social and community services leaders coordinated tours of multiple street and community mission programs, corps community centers, healthcare facilities, and treatment and

housing programs for the international delegation. This informative time was capped off by a two-day strategy session to further discuss the POH initiative, Australia's Doorways program and other innovative programs offered by the participating countries.

The highly successful discussions resulted in an exchange of key aspects of service delivery which could potentially be adopted by each country and included plans to continue periodic consultation as part of an international collaborative effort.

The Australia team expressed a strong interest in piloting POH in



Maribeth Swanson and Commissioner Miriam Gluyas, Australia territorial commander

the future. All attendees agreed that POH strongly aligns with the holistic mission and integrated ministry of The Salvation Army.

Norridge

Continued from page 1

space to be still, listen and grow. The investment in myself will never be time spent foolishly."

Throughout the course, table groups begin to feel comfortable and share freely with one another, fostering meaningful relationships.

"The last session was my second time participating in the *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* course," said Katelyn Church, a soldier and leader at the corps. "Doing the Daily Office twice a day really helped me get more comfortable with silence and form the habit of consistently meeting with God. The group sessions helped me see that everyone has certain experiences, and there is no shame in sharing your struggles."

Both Commissioner Barry and Colonel Charles have noticed changes to the atmosphere at the corps, with participants who might not have otherwise connected forming friendships and individuals who were previously only involved in Sunday activities becoming more active in the corps or taking on leadership roles.

"I've seen it as a wonderful way for people within our corps to engage with one another on a deeper level,"



said Commissioner Barry. "I'm seeing a melting of people being more comfortable with one another. We pray for each other and together, so it becomes a more natural connection. It's a great example of what church should be. People are open and honest with each other, and it's really refreshing."

Ron McCormick attests to the changes taking the course has made in his life. "In the past I felt uncomfortable bringing Christ into discussions with people," he said. "*Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* has helped me bring Christ into my everyday life and has given me tools to take a look inside of myself and move forward with the best version of myself I can be."

Major Catherine concluded, "Offering the emotional healthy discipleship courses at our corps has been an effort to shift our corps culture from 'doing' discipleship to 'being' disciples of Jesus. It's been beautiful to witness individuals grow in their faith and their love for the Lord."



Conference leaders with the international presenters

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Songs of Love

International Staff Songsters to tour the USA and Canada

The International Staff Songsters (ISS), the premier choir of The Salvation Army, will bring their Songs of Love tour to the USA and Canada in April 2024. They will sing a varied setlist of praise, hymns, classical songs and contemporary choral music to inspire audiences.

Based in London, England, the songsters have a unique role at the forefront of Salvation Army vocal music-making in the United Kingdom and around the world. The group of 35 men and women use the power of music and song to share God's love and to bring people and communities together.

Their repertoire includes music by composers from The Salvation Army and artists such as Bob Chilcott, Mark Hayes, John Rutter and Eric Whitacre. The ISS performs each Christmas at London's Royal Albert Hall and regularly sings in cathedrals and concert halls, and leads vocal workshops in schools, correctional facilities and Salvation Army corps and centers.

The ISS is conducted by Dorothy Nancekievill who is an Honorary

Associate of the Royal Academy of Music in London. Previously, Dorothy was head of a church school (Farringtons School in Kent) and the director of music at Wells Cathedral School.

The ISS was founded in 1980 to inspire people with "heart songs." Profits from recordings and performances support the work of The Salvation Army.

Each songster is an active member of their own corps. They volunteer their time and travel from different parts of England and Wales for weekly rehearsal in central London.

One of the newest members of the ISS, Tom Grimshaw, 26, is a fundraiser for a veterans' mental health charity. As well as volunteering with the ISS, Tom is the deputy songster leader and plays euphonium in the band at Norwich Citadel. He also leads a youth chorus of 50 young people from across the East of England.

"It is a privilege to be part of the group and actively participate in music ministry," said Tom. "I have seen God working in amazing ways and connecting with a wide range of people through music: people without any faith who have attended concerts at the invite of a friend; prisoners from some of the many prisons the ISS has visited; people who have not attended church for many years; medical staff in hospitals who have heard an ISS recording being played by a patient. The list goes on.

"In the same way, I hope our tour will be one that is filled with worship and praise for our awesome God, and which encourages people to get involved in music ministry," he said. "Most importantly I pray that our music will have a lasting spiritual

impact on everyone who listens."

Ruth Unwin from the Alton Corps in the southeast of England has been a member of the ISS since it started in 1980 and is returning for her seventh North American tour with the songsters.

"I remember fondly the incredible warm welcome and generous hospitality the songsters have received on our previous Canadian and American visits," she said. "These have been wonderful opportunities to visit these amazing countries, share the gospel message and form so many lasting friendships.

Referring to the concert in Toronto in April that concludes the spring tour where the ISS will join the Canadian, USA Eastern and Central territorial staff songsters, Ruth said, "Our 2024 tour will be unique as we join in ministry with our fellow North American staff songsters, sharing our passion for vocal ministry and its future within The Salvation Army. I pray that God will use our songs to encourage, challenge and bless."

For more details visit www.salvationarmy.org.uk/iss



Ruth Unwin



Tom Grimshaw



Joy in following Jesus

Officers from the Central Territory serving around the world share their journey and joy in following Jesus wherever He leads.

Waiting on revival

In the beautiful inland town of Gumi, South Korea, nestled in a valley with high mountains all around, Captains Derek and Heather Jung have taken the lead as corps officers. After many years in the United States and attending the College for Officer Training in the Central Territory, the Jungs were happy to begin their service in South Korea last September.

"We have no doubt about God's guidance for this appointment. Every day we experience God working through us," said Captain Derek. "The greatest joy is that, as a Korean, I can use the Korean language to spread the gospel without restrictions and have deeper fellowship with my neighbors, including corps members."

The Gumi Corps is small and isolated, the only Salvation Army unit in the city of 410,000 people. With a membership of about 20 people, it is a close-knit group which worships and serves together regularly. In addition to Sunday

and Wednesday meetings, they go out into the community to serve, meeting people where they are. The service takes many forms from delivering food to older adult shut-ins to visiting a family whose child has severe disabilities.

As they continue to reach out to the community, the Jungs are focusing on pastoral care, building relationships and encouraging spiritual growth and discipleship among the corps' people.

"The center of ministry here is pastoral ministry. We are currently focusing on experiencing spiritual revival," said Captain Derek. "We expect everyone to experience God more closely through worship. And in order to help corps members live a godly life, we deliver the Word through text early in the morning so that they can meditate on the Word."

Their appointment is not without challenges.

As a small corps, they rely on divisional headquarters to help with financial assistance to meet their needs. Because the budget does not allow for staff salaries, they manage every aspect of the corps' programs and services without support personnel. Yet, in the face of these circumstances, the Jungs are not deterred or discouraged. They focus on God's provision and the blessing of the corps members.



Visitation is an important ministry of the Jungs.

"Despite financial difficulties as an independent corps, we are deeply grateful to God for the corps members who do their best to serve the corps and love and help each other," concluded the captain. "We have had time to get to know each other, and we are currently visiting each of their homes, worshipping together and having time to understand their lives more fully. We are praying that God's will for this corps will be accomplished."



The Jungs and volunteers package 200 lunches for those experiencing homelessness in Daegu City.



Captains Derek and Heather Jung

A love for adventure, a heart for the world

by Majors AmyJo and Paul Ferguson

God gave us a love of adventure—from our travels around the U.S. and Canada to our fondness of camping in God's creation to our appreciation for the flavors we find in out-of-the-way, hole-in-the-wall ethnic restaurants. Perhaps, it was this love of adventure that factored into our call to be officers. Each new appointment has been an adventure.

In 2008, we embarked on the Biblical Educational Tour in Israel. It too was an amazing adventure. We were privileged to walk where Jesus walked and to learn about the culture and the people. An unexpected side effect of this trip was the Holy Spirit placing a burden in our hearts for the people of the Middle East. We came home wanting to go back and minister there.

We shared this desire with our family and a few friends; however, we had small children at home and The Salvation Army was not even operating in the region at that time. Given the circumstances, it seemed silly to even mention this desire to our leaders at the time or to go through any official processes to move overseas. Whatever desire we had in our hearts seemed hopeless, impossible and unrealistic.

Fast forward 15 years to 2023. We were busy working in Grand Forks, N.D., on the corps' annual back-to-school distribution program when



we received a call from Lt. Colonel Dan Jennings, territorial secretary for personnel. The Middle East Region of The Salvation Army had made a request for officers, and the Holy Spirit brought to his mind a conversation he had with us many years ago about our desire to serve in the Middle East. Had he remembered correctly? Would we be willing to serve overseas? Yes, and yes!

While we had set aside the desire God put in our hearts, God had been working all that time to make possible what we thought was impossible. We are awed each time we think of each piece the

Holy Spirit had to put into place to make our next adventure a reality—from the initial desire He placed in our hearts to the perfect timing of the call from the Middle East Region to placing Colonel Jennings in a position to put it all together.

After that conversation, things began to move very quickly. Within two weeks we were preparing for a new adventure as we relocated from Grand Forks to the Chicago area to prepare to move to Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates.

We are excited and, admittedly, a little nervous. But our faith has been renewed. We are reminded of the words of Proverbs 16:3 (NIV), "Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans" and Romans 11:29 (NLT) "For God's gifts and his call can never be withdrawn."



Back to school

by Major Cassandra L. DeJesús

In February 2023, we were appointed (I as the principal and my husband, Will, as the education and finance officer) to the South America East Territory's Training College for Officers in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

So much has happened during this past year. We welcomed both sessions of cadets last year; celebrated and held a fundraiser for Independence Day on May 25, preparing many traditional and delicious dishes of locro (a traditional stew); taught and coordinated classes; hosted the candidates weekend in June; sent off the cadets to their winter assignments in July; conducted the spring campaigns in October; had the privilege of witnessing the ordination and commissioning of our five cadets on December 10; and finished the year

with kettles. Will and I have been kept very busy. However, we are enjoying every moment.

It has been such a blessing to be a part of the spiritual and academic growth of each cadet of the South America East Territory. We have been able to see relationships mended, forgiveness offered and accepted, grace given, and increased love for God and others.

As we enter our second year at the Training College, there are a couple of changes. Our officer assistants, who have served part-time at the college for three years, have returned to their home territory of Korea.

In February 2024, we welcome one full-time assistant officer, Captain Soledad Ferrada, who will have her primary responsibilities at the college and an additional ap-

pointment as corps officer at the corps located next to the training college. She and her family are excited about the new opportunities she will have at the college. Her husband will be stationed at the main Salvation Army thrift store in Buenos Aires.

In addition to the spiritual formation that is enjoyed by everyone at the Training College, one of the highlights of serving here for us is the monthly family activity and outing. This activity began last



Majors Will and Cassie DeJesus and Colonels Sheila and Phil Davisson with "Champions of the Mission" session at the cadet welcome in March 2023

year as a way of connecting with one another in an informal setting. Each month we plan an activity that consists of anything from visiting Chinatown to enjoying game night and ice cream at the Training College. These activities have helped us to get to know one another better and to experience more of the beautiful city of Buenos Aires.

On February 19 of this year, Will and I will be back at school with our new session of cadets. We are praying God continues to bless our time here at the college with new and exciting adventures and growth. We also pray that God will use us in a mighty way as we help to nurture future officers for the South America East Territory. We ask that you join us in prayer as we continue to serve God and others.



An open-air meeting during spring campaigns



First- and second-year cadets with the DeJesuses on their way to spring campaigns in Concordia, Argentina.



First-year cadets ask for donations at a local food market.

The Salvation Army in the Middle East

The Salvation Army in the Middle East began with meetings held by expatriate Salvationists from South Asia who had moved to the Gulf coast countries for employment.

After years of independent effort by local leaders, requests for official recognition were sent to International Headquarters. In August 2008 General Shaw Clifton appointed the first officers to Kuwait.

Expansion continued from 2010 onward into neighboring countries, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Oman, and became a region officially on April 1, 2011. It now includes the countries of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman and the United Arab Emirates. The region has active congregations in four countries, communicating the gospel in innovative ways. The gospel is preached in English, Malayalam and Tamil.

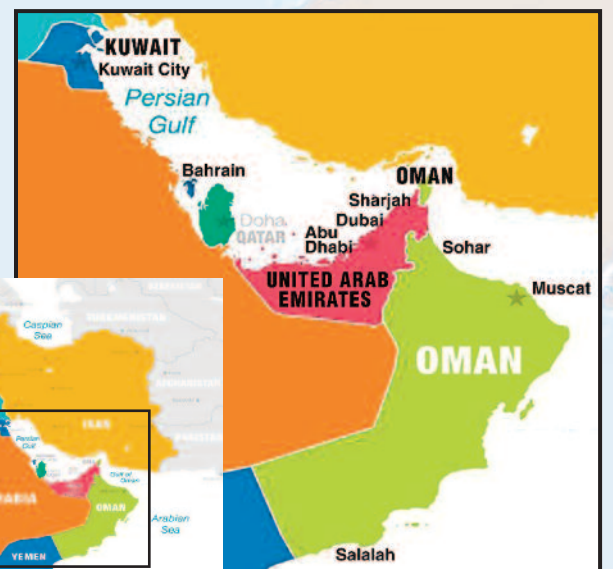
As of November 1, 2023, Central Territory officers Majors AmyJo and Paul Ferguson assumed appointments as assistant regional leaders of the Middle East Region.

Major AmyJo is assistant regional leader for mission and ministry with the additional appointments as corps officer in Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah with oversight of Oman and regional modern-day slavery and human trafficking response contact person.

Major Paul is assistant regional leader, regional secretary for the region, with the additional appointment of corps officer in Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah with oversight of Oman.

Please keep the Fergusons and this vital work in your prayers.

*Information from the 2023 International Year Book



A mountaintop experience

Conference gets to the heart of youth ministry

by Captain Chrissy Cooper

Standing in the valley of the Lawrence M. Daley Camp and Conference Center in Calabasas, Ca., my eyes were drawn to a small white cross lifted high in the mountains. This moment brought echoes of Psalm 121:1 (NIV), "I lift up my eyes to the mountains—where does my help come from?" as the National Divisional Youth Leaders' (NDYL) Conference dele-



Captain Michael Hanton, Central territorial youth secretary, speaks at NDYL.



Colonel Janet Munn addresses the delegates.

gates gathered and then rested after a day of travel. Our eyes would be drawn to the Lord in many more ways over the next few days. The conference



Captains Christopher White and Matt DeGonia

gathered divisional youth secretaries from all four U.S. territories, providing a unique setting for fellowship, collaboration and inspiration.

One of the primary benefits of NDYL was the opportunity for us to collaborate and share experiences. Our diverse backgrounds and perspectives enriched the discussions and workshops, fostering a sense of community and mutual support. The collaborative atmosphere allowed us to exchange ideas, resources and best practices, empowering us to better address our respective divisions' unique challenges and opportunities.

The conference also provided valuable resources and the latest information relevant to different areas of youth ministry.

Workshops and sessions covered topics from innovative youth programs to effective leadership strategies. We gained insights into the trends in youth development and learned practical approaches to address the evolving needs of young people in our communities. The information shared during the conference equipped us with tools to enhance our local youth ministries and make a lasting impact.

The biggest takeaway for me was the reminder that what the young people in our communities need most is the truth which only comes from the Word of God. Nothing we do matters if we are not sharing the gospel.

THE SALVATION ARMY

REGENERATION 2024

DWELL

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REGENERATION

FEBRUARY 16-18, 2024
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The heart of the conference was the impactful speakers and the transformative worship experiences.

Renowned officers, including National Commander Commissioner Kenneth G. Hodder and Western territorial leaders Commissioners Douglas and Colleen Riley, shared their expertise, giving us a broader perspective for youth's challenges and opportunities today. The speakers, chosen for their relevance and impact, delivered powerful messages that resonated with all of us, inspiring us to approach our roles with renewed passion and purpose.

The worship sessions were nothing short of transformative. Beautiful harmonies, coupled

with comforting and sometimes challenging lyrics, created an atmosphere where we could connect with God on a deeper level. The worship experiences not only served as moments of reflection and spiritual renewal but also strengthened the sense of unity among the territorial and divisional youth secretaries. The shared experiences created lasting bonds among the delegates, fostering a sense of camaraderie which extends beyond the conference.

This NDYL Conference proved to be an impactful experience for leaders in The Salvation Army. The picturesque setting, collaborative environment, impactful speakers, and perspective-changing worship moments all contributed to an event that left a lasting impression.

As each of us returned to our divisions, we carried increased knowledge, a renewed sense of purpose, and a strengthened commitment to reaching the next generation with the gospel.

The venue will forever hold a special place in the hearts of those who attended this mountain-top experience where leaders united, learned and left inspired to make a positive impact in the lives of young people across the nation.



Captains Brianne Bowers and Chrissy Cooper

Fun in the Sun

Spend your summer enjoying the sun and sharing Jesus! Being part of a camp ministry team is a great way not only to grow in your relationship with God and build lasting friendships but share your faith. Apply today.

Great Lakes Division
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Shayna Stubblefield
Shayna.Stubblefield@usc.salvationarmy.org
echogrove.org

Indiana Division
Hidden Falls Camp
Captain Sarah Eddy
Sarah.Eddy@usc.salvationarmy.org
hiddenfallscamp.org

Kansas/Western Missouri Division
Three Trails Camp
Michael Dixon
Michael.Dixon@usc.salvationarmy.org
www.threetrailscamp.org



Midland Division
Camp Mihaska
Captain Matt DeGonia
midlandyouth@usc.salvationarmy.org
midlandyouth.com/camp

North & Central Illinois Division
Wonderland Camp
Captain Tony Bowers
centralusa.salvationarmy.org/
wonderland/summer-employment

Northern Division
Northwoods Camp
Ryan Voeller
Ryan.Voeller@usc.salvationarmy.org
centralusa.salvationarmy.org/northern/
northwoodscamp



Photos by Craig Dirkes

Wisconsin/Upper Michigan Division
Army Lake Camp
Janelle Shumaker
Janelle.Shumaker@usc.salvationarmy.org
www.armylakecamp.com

Western Division
Western Plains Camp
Kim Herivel-Walter
Kim.Herivel-Walter@usc.salvationarmy.org
centralusa.salvationarmy.org/
westernplainscamp



The Ins and Outs of officer life

Reflections on the Ministry Discovery Program from a new lieutenant

The Ministry Discovery Program provides opportunities for Christians, 18 and older, who are interested in ministry through The Salvation Army to spend up to two years as corps interns to learn the ins and outs of officership.

Interns gain experience by joining in a wide variety of ministry programs, responsibilities and tasks. Regular check-ins with the corps officers, divisional candidates' secretary and territorial candidates' secretary encourage dialogue and allow interns to gain insight into their own strengths and areas that need development, helping them to make informed decisions.

Lt. Vincent Cusack, who was commissioned last June, shares his experience as an intern and how it prepared him for training and being an officer.

How were your strengths sharpened through the Ministry Discovery Program?

My internship at the Wichita Citadel, Kan., Corps was a beautiful

two years of learning, development and spiritual growth. It was a great place to foster my strengths and develop my spiritual gifts.

For instance, while I've always enjoyed helping others, during the internship I came to embrace serving as one of my spiritual gifts. I was blessed to utilize this gift working in the food pantry alongside vol-



unteers; ministering with officers and corps members; providing transportation to people who wanted to come to Sunday worship; and assisting with fundraising. With every opportunity, God deepened my appreciation for serving others.

What areas of development did you work on? How did you accomplish your goals?

Two areas I worked on during my internship were spiritual discipline and self-care. Upon entering the

program, and ultimately answering God's calling on my life, my conviction about spiritual discipline and self-care became stronger than ever. In terms of spiritual discipline this meant intentionally spending time daily in God's Word and memorizing and applying scripture to my life, praying fervently, and striving to be obedient to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

In terms of self-care, this essentially is summed up in rest, exercise and going to recovery meetings as a lifelong recovering addict. What helped me accomplish my goals was having a mentor who kept me accountable, being intentional and consistent in planning and spending time with God.

How did the internship prepare you for the College for Officer Training (CFOT)?

It prepared me for the CFOT in some substantial ways. Serving as an intern, I was blessed with corps officers who became my mentors and were intentional in preparing me for attending officer training. They provided a safe place to experience ministry with direction and affirmation. I built beautiful relationships within the Body of Christ, and so much more.

What skills did you develop in the Ministry Discovery Program that have been especially helpful as an officer?

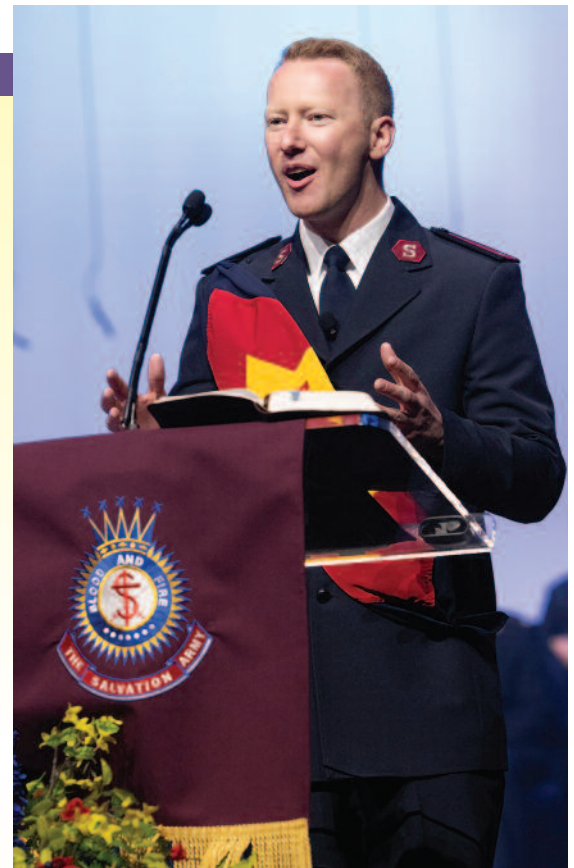
One of the key skills I learned and now use every day is flexibility. Each person has certain areas in which they are gifted. I quickly learned during my internship that ministry requires me to be flexible and to wear many hats, even in areas I may not feel gifted in. Every day comes with a

different adventure, a different task at hand, a different way to serve God. The lesson for me was to be flexible and open to where God wants to take me.

How did your internship prepare you for your first appointment?

The Ministry Discovery Program is all about practical, hands-on training. Not only was I able to observe and shadow officers, I actually got to serve and experience the roles and responsibilities of an officer. I led youth ministry programs, worked closely with social services,

Continued on page 11



Exploring the biblical foundation for justice

Do you have a passion for making a deeper and more sustainable impact on the lives of the poor and marginalized? Have you thought about the implications of Jesus' gospel for "doing justice" in all aspects of our lives? Or perhaps do you approach the subject of social justice with a bit of wariness?

Whether you consider yourself a champion of justice and believe the church should be more engaged or you feel social justice is an add-on to Christian faith and practice, the Territorial Social Justice and City Mission Center (SJCM) invites you to attend Justice Week, April 22-26.

While Justice Week has been expanded to be an elective as part of the Salvation Army Continuing Education Program (SACEP), this four-day intensive at Territorial



Headquarters is open to all officers, employees and soldiers.

"We are happy to partner with the Social Justice and City Mission Center to include this week as a class for SACEP," said Lt. Colonel Darlene Harvey, territorial officer resource and development secretary. "Justice Week gives us an opportunity for an in-person experience which is focused on the Army's mission."

According to Major Katherine Clausell, territorial social justice and city mission secretary, the intensive is designed to introduce Salvationists

and those connected to the mission and ministry of The Salvation Army to a biblical theology of justice and acquaint them

with the postures and practices of social justice as detailed in scripture.

Learners will wrestle thoughtfully with the concept of social justice as a biblical mandate and, as such, an essential and non-negotiable to Christian faith and practice. They also will have the opportunity to ignite their passion for justice by engaging in immersive experiences that will acquaint them with the is-

ues of immigration and human trafficking.

"Our goal is for every participant to return home with a greater sense of urgency for advancing justice and tools to engage in issues of justice in their lives and ministry or work," said Major Katherine.

Space is limited.

Officers who are part of SACEP and are interested in this elective should register through the Officer Resource and Development Department website.

Officers in the Distance Learning Program should contact Major Beth Petrie.

Everyone else should email Major Katherine Clausell to learn more or to register for this training at: usc.thq.socialjusticecitymission@usc.salvationarmy.org

Officer life Continued

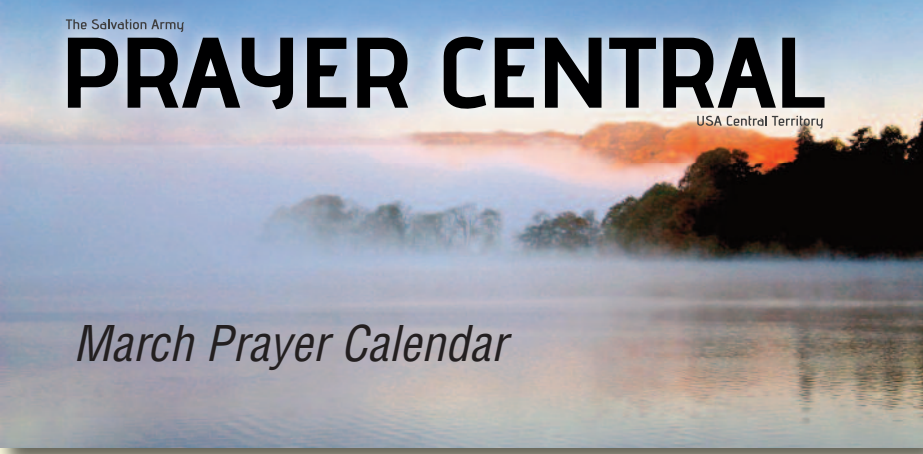
picked up donations, made pastoral visitations, was integral in the Christmas campaign, coordinated projects with other corps and the area command, was involved in worship planning and leading meetings, preached sermons, attended advisory board meetings. The list goes on and on!

Most importantly, the program gave me a tremendous opportunity to love and build relationships within the corps and community. All this to say, the program provided a way for me to live the “officer life,” and I feel I am serving better and more prepared today for the experience.

Would you recommend the program to individuals seeking ministry in The Salvation Army?

I would recommend the program 1,000 percent! If you are feeling a call from God and you want an opportunity to explore and prepare for this calling, the Ministry Discovery Program is amazing! It allows you to serve others, grow in your faith and calling, build new relationships, participate in leadership and ministry—and all this to glorify God and to walk in His purpose for you. It’s awesome!

For more information on the Ministry Discovery Program, contact your divisional candidates’ secretary.



March Prayer Calendar

My Prayer List	Day	Bible Reading	Pray for The Salvation Army
	1 Friday	Isaiah 45-50	Benton Harbor, Mich., Corps
	2 Saturday	Matthew 23-25	Sri Lanka Territory
	3 Sunday	1 Corinthians 1-2	Cape Girardeau, Mo., Corps
	4 Monday	Genesis 36-39	Chicago Midwest, Ill., Corps
	5 Tuesday	Ruth	Retired Officers
	6 Wednesday	Psalms 27-29	Dubuque, Iowa, Corps
	7 Thursday	Job 19-20	Farmington Hills, Mich., Corps
	8 Friday	Isaiah 51-55	Green Bay, Wis., Kroc Center
	9 Saturday	Matthew 26-28	Independence, Mo., Corps
	10 Sunday	1 Corinthians 3-4	Adrian, Mich., Corps
	11 Monday	Genesis 40-43	Officer Candidates
	12 Tuesday	1 Samuel 1-5	Taiwan Territory
	13 Wednesday	Psalms 30-32	Atchison, Kan., Red Shield Center
	14 Thursday	Job 21-22	Livingston County, Mich., Corps
	15 Friday	Isaiah 56-61	Music Ministries
	16 Saturday	Mark 1-2	Ottawa, Ill., Corps
	17 Sunday	1 Corinthians 5-6	Quincy, Ill., Kroc Center
	18 Monday	Genesis 44-47	Mozambique Territory
	19 Tuesday	1 Samuel 6-10	Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., Corps
	20 Wednesday	Psalms 33-35	Beatrice, Neb., 360 Life Center
	21 Thursday	Job 23-24	St. Paul Eastside, Minn., Corps
	22 Friday	Isaiah 62-66	Waukegan, Ill., ARC*
	23 Saturday	Mark 3-4	Sunday School Teachers
	24 Sunday	1 Corinthians 7-8	Davenport, Iowa, Corps
	25 Monday	Genesis 48-50	Norridge, Ill., Corps
	26 Tuesday	1 Samuel 11-15	USA Western Territory
	27 Wednesday	Psalms 36-38	Chicago Mayfair, Ill., Corps
	28 Thursday	Job 25-26	Danville, Ill., Corps
	29 Friday	Jeremiah 1-3	Detroit Temple, Mich., Corps
	30 Saturday	Mark 5-6	Freeport, Ill., Corps
	31 Sunday	1 Corinthians 9-10	Sweden & Latvia Territory

Go to www.salarmycentral.org If you follow the prayer calendar during the year, you will have read through the Bible!

* = Adult Rehabilitation Center

730... AND BEYOND

696 days and counting
by Lt. Pamela Boateng

I could never imagine that once I gave my life to the Lord, it would lead me to serve as a Salvation Army officer. But besides being a wife and mother, being an officer has been one of my greatest rewards. It is a privilege God has allowed me to serve in this capacity.

As an officer, I can’t help but go back to the first day I walked into a Salvation Army building in Iowa City, Iowa, as a broken young lady looking for purpose and a place of acceptance. The officers and leaders cared for me, loved me and saw me as a child of God. Today as an officer, I make sure I express that same love, care and patience with people in my sphere of influence.

I have learned that ministry is more than preaching a great sermon on a Sunday morning. It is being present in the lives of those God entrusts to my care. Ministry is about sharing the good, the bad, and the ugly with others. It is not always easy, but I have seen spiritual growth in others and myself during difficult times.

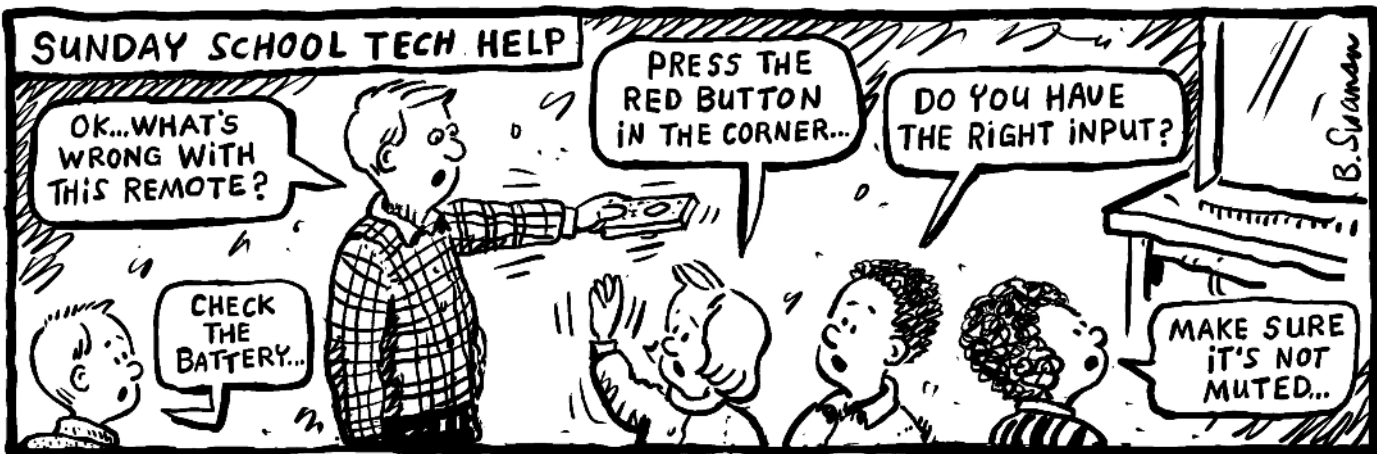
What I love about being an officer is working with people. Being an officer has allowed me to work with some unique, God-fearing people who I value very much. I have had the opportunity to be a witness of Christ’s love and to make a positive difference in their lives. Just as much as I have taught them, they also have taught me.

I have learned to never underestimate the difference I can make in the lives of individuals I encounter as an officer. For instance, while stationed in Detroit at the Conner Creek Corps, I had many individuals to “pour into” including staff, volunteers, youth, young adults, parents, older adults and community partners. Being stationed there helped me grow in my understanding of the importance of the Body of Christ. I ministered to them, and they



ministered to me. We all had a part to play. We all depended on one another to get the job done. Since we recognized we all needed each other, we were able to function as a great team! Before leaving the Conner Creek Corps, many people expressed their appreciation and gratitude for my family and me. I was blown away. In my new appointment as divisional candidates’ secretary in the Wisconsin and Upper Michigan Division, I am encouraged to continue to be a servant leader, to see others as God sees them, and to trust the new team to accomplish the work the Lord has set before us.

--Mustard Seeds--



Collaboration amplifies the impact in Kansas City

by Major Xavier Montenegro
Kansas City Area Commander

Over the last year the Kansas City Area Command has been taking concerted steps to address homelessness in its city. To discuss circumstances and take effective action, The Salvation Army and the Kansas City Government brought together 65 people representing non-profits, businesses and governmental agencies.

To accelerate the collaboration and amplify the impact, the Kansas City Command, then led by Major Toni Dorrell, contracted with GoodCities, which seeks "to discover, support, and serve vibrant city movements by building processes that create good cities." Kansas City is the first place in the Central Territory to partner with this organization.

GoodCities sent two coaches, Reggie McNeal and Glenn Barth, each with many years of ministry and mission experience, to kick-start the united effort. Arriving in Kansas City, they found strategic thinking already had taken place by a smaller task force formed earlier

by the city government. After two years researching homelessness in the city, that group unveiled a plan in September 2022 called Zero KC which identified five priorities:

1. Promote health, safety and quality of life in encampments, and re-house those living without shelter.
2. Expand affordable housing and prioritize housing stability.
3. Invest in equitable, evidence-based housing solutions and comprehensive services.
4. Address the needs of marginalized and underserved groups.



5. Optimize funding and use creative solutions.

In January 2023, the time was right for a collaborative effort to take shape.

Reggie and Glenn led three two-day sessions over the course of the last year to provide direction and momentum to a diverse group, including The Salvation Army, so it could take concrete action from the Zero KC plan.

Task groups, created for each of the five priorities, identified goals and specific steps that could be taken. Each task group then presented their plan to the entire group and received feedback. Incremental steps were taken in a positive direction.

What started as a loose collection of 65 people transformed into a cohesive group, working together to make an impact against homelessness. It was a highlight to hear what other groups had been working on which, in turn, spurred the collective group to keep moving forward.

Plans and actions took shape

much quicker and more cohesively than originally expected, and over the course of a few months real impact was felt.

Memorandums of understanding were created between agencies working on street outreach to facilitate collaboration and better meet the needs of individuals needing food and casework services. One task group created a cold weather plan that brought together various agencies in a united effort to keep people warm and safe during the winter months. A draft charter was developed to further cement the relationship of the various agencies and individuals.

Even though the work with GoodCities has concluded, the drive to end homelessness in Kansas City has only begun. There is a clear sense of momentum among the participants and motivation not to let it die. Periodic meetings have been scheduled through February, and an executive leadership team was created to help facilitate the next steps. The Kansas City Area Command will continue to stand as a leader in these collaborative efforts.

Promoted to Glory

Major Carolyn Spyker

Major Carolyn Ann Spyker was promoted to Glory on November 15, 2023. Carolyn's love encompassed not only family and friends, but everyone she served. She was quick to listen, encouraged people and kept their confidences and prayed for them. Her compassion and nurturing spirit touched hundreds of lives.



Carolyn was born on January 21, 1937, to Clarence and Marian Trombley. Growing up on a small farm, she attended the Watson County Schoolhouse where she learned to garden and cook; from her early years she was very musically inclined. She dedicated her life to Christ as a teenager.

After graduating from high school in 1955, Carolyn earned a degree in nursing. In 1957 she began working at St. Lawrence Hospital where she met her husband, William Spyker, Sr. They were married in 1958. The Spykers entered the School for Officer Training (SFOT) in 1960 and were commissioned in 1962.

Carolyn enjoyed her appointments as an officer in corps and at the SFOT. She kept her nursing credentials up-to-date and used them in her appointment as SFOT health officer. After retiring in 1997, she continued to serve as a nurse at Little Pine Island Camp; she also mentored cadets until 2018. She loved gardening, reading, cooking, studying the Bible, singing and playing the piano.

She was preceded in death by her husband. She is survived by her children William Jr. (Dana) and Marian (Brian) Rogers; sisters Katherine (Joe) Pore, Margaret (Jim) Kyser-Schmidt and Loretta Gaunt; and four grandchildren.

Major Peter Vander Vliet

Major Peter Vander Vliet, 85, was promoted to Glory on November 19, 2023. Peter's abiding faith was evident in his life and ministry as he accepted each appointment and faced each new challenge with boldness, knowing God was with him.



Peter was born in Marion, Ind., on October 12, 1938, to Majors Peter and Mary Vander Vliet. Growing up as an officers' child, he engaged in corps programs, learning to play brass instruments and developing his relationship with the Lord. He was a talented musician and loved playing bass and singing.

On July 12, 1958, Peter married Barbara Hendricks, who had been commissioned in 1955 and took a short break in service. Peter entered officer training in 1959 and was commissioned in 1960. Together, the Vander Vliets served in corps and adult rehabilitation center appointments throughout the Midwest. They retired in 1993 after serving more than 33 years as officers.

Nothing made Peter happier than to have his family around him, and he was their biggest cheerleader throughout his life.

Peter is survived by his wife, Barbara, of 65 years; children, Jeffrey (Diane) and Lisa (Fred) Parcels; sister Mary Jane Kincaid; four grandchildren and one great-grandchild. He was preceded in death by an infant son, Todd, and sisters Betty Poling, Marjorie Kraus and Virginia Russell.

LENTEN AWAKENING 2024 LENTEN WORSHIP SERIES



1ST SUNDAY OF LENT
BEGINS FEBRUARY 18, 2024



The newest worship series for Lent is a spiritual journey for Christians and seekers alike, drawn from the book, *Lenten Awakening*, by Commissioner Phil Needham. The series exposes the life and teaching of Jesus in such a way as to awaken us out of our complacencies and to encourage us to see ourselves through His eyes.

Available in both English and Spanish, the Lenten series features worship service materials for the five Sundays of Lent, Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Easter including children's moments, music options, dramas, readings and other resources.

The worship resources are available on the territorial corps and community mission department's webpage at salarmycentral.org/cacm/resources

See your corps officer for more details.