For the 1,121 delegates who gathered in Milwaukee, Wis., for the first in-person Commissioning weekend in three years, there could be no doubt that God is still using The Salvation Army to accomplish His mission in America’s Midwest and each of them has a part to play.

Their joy in fellowship seemed to be heralded in the keynote session with the exhilarating opening Marching Onward featuring the Chicago Staff Band (CSB), Central Territorial Staff Songsters (CTSS) and College for Officer Training timbrels that culminated in a shower of confetti which rained down on delegates. Anticipation of the blessings God would pour out was palpable. Their hope was not misplaced.

Time and again God’s Spirit moved in hearts especially through the ministry of the Chief of the Staff Commissioner Lyndon Buckingham and Commissioner Bronwyn Buckingham, World Secretary for Spiritual Life Development. With an engaging style, they conveyed God’s Word in a down-to-earth, relatable and compelling way that resonated with delegates.

“Advancing our Evangelistic Mission” was the focus for Friday evening, an upbeat program which captured the greatest purpose of our lives—sharing the gospel in word and deed so others might come to know Jesus. While the CSB played the jubilant Salvation’s Song, it was with immense joy that Salvationists watched the number of people who sought Christ during the pandemic in each division, the adult rehabilitation centers and through the correctional services Bible correspondence program flash before their eyes, totaling an astounding 56,406!

In speaking about God’s great love, rich mercy and grace shown through Jesus Christ, the Chief of the Staff shared his own life-transforming salvation experience as a young person, the hunger that developed to know more of God and an eagerness to tell others.

“It’s still absolutely true that the most powerful tool that we have in the church for bringing people into an encounter and experience with

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Focusing on “Advancing our Disciple-Making Mission,” Saturday morning’s meeting matched the enthusiasm of the Talmud records, “A man without companions is like the left hand without the right.” Think for a moment what you do that takes both hands to accomplish like putting on your socks, washing your hands or cooking. If we don’t work together as the Body of Christ, our work and ministry will be more difficult or even impossible to accomplish.

We need everyone to step up and do their part. We need every soldier, adherent and officer to use their God-given spiritual gifts to advance the Kingdom of God. We need the dedication and passion of every employee and volunteer as they work to fulfill the Army’s mission. We are in this together.

The message of Jesus remains abundantly clear today that we are to make the cultivating of our inner life the priority for strength, energy, and wisdom to engage in any outward mission that He leads us to.

A ceremony honoring tradition and celebrating new beginnings was led by Commissioners Brad and Heidi Bailey who recognized with gratefulness the difference God has made through the Eastern Michigan, Heartland, Metropolitan and Western Michigan/Northern Indiana divisions which conclude with the territory’s reorganization. Without skipping a beat, they inaugurated the North & Central Illinois Division and Great Lakes Division which together will incorporate 85 corps, 5,300 soldiers, and 190 officers.

“We have been intentional to look at what changes might be needed to position our territory to advance into the future with greater effectiveness and more targeted deployment of all the resources that God has entrusted to us. That process has brought us to this important day and this important milestone as we honor our tradition and celebrate new beginnings, said the territorial commander.

As we move into the first months of the full implementation of Project Advance, this continues to be true. Many people from across the Central Territory have worked on the planning and implementation of this effort and much work is still ahead of us. As of July 1, 2022, some officers and employees have taken up new roles in new places and in new divisions. This means new relationships to be developed. New bonds will be established.

It is more important than ever that we understand we are in this together. We must work to strengthen the bonds of relationship so that as the Army we are like the cord of three strands. We are in this together and when we work together we will have a good return for our labor to the glory of God.

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Global Mission Team partners with Spain

by Viki Payton

It was a joy to return to partnering globally for the sake of the gospel with our Global Mission Team to Dénia, Spain. During training we looked at the “Twelve Insights” in the Short-Term Missions Workbook by Time Deaorn; here is how we saw some of them in action.

God goes before you

Welcomed by a vibrant, growing multinational and multigenerational corps congregation, we were impressed with the lively worship, full participation and service by its friendly members and volunteers. Many took part in worship, and A/Captain Josel Polanco joined with the praise team, learning their style and encouraging them. Nearly everyone stayed after church to volunteer for the community feeding program, cooking and serving the meal, talking to guests, finding them clothes from the community closet, and cleaning and disinfecting the corps at the meal’s conclusion. As the mission workbook suggested, we were just catching up on a conversation with our guests, finding them clothes and encouraging them to apply for a Global Mission Team to Chile, in October. Visit www.centralmissions.org/GMT

Short-term missions is a treasure hunt

Every day was a treasure hunt. We were awed by beautiful views of the coast from atop castle ruins. We enjoyed a wide variety of delicious food from Spain (including regional specialties from Valencia, Bolivia and Mexico). We discussed with our corps officer hosts and members of the multinational congregation who cooked for us. We discovered the corps is a haven for foreigners since many members are immigrants. Our favorite treasures were the people who became part of our family. Each one, said the image and characteristic of God. Love is the universal language

Although half our team members were bilingual, all of us relied on the universal language of love to communicate. It was not uncommon to see Major Nancy Mead connecting with women who would hold whole conversations with her while she smiled and nodded. On our final Sunday, goodbyes were long and difficult. We had forged strong bonds. We knew we would be loved by our new family, and they knew they were loved by us.

People are more alike than their cultures

Though our cultures differ, we saw how similar we are. For instance, Major Catherine Mont, who is an officer mom of young boys, instinctively knew what our host officer mom of a young boy needed. She took care of the son, playing and holding him, in essence becoming an extra parent that week. Our team members who are recovering addicts connected with some of the corps’ young men who also are recovering addicts. They became friends and encouraged each other in their faith by sharing testimonies of God’s faithfulness.

In cross-cultural encounters we meet long-last, distant relatives

From day one we knew we were family with the Dénia congregation. Envoy Scott Hurula commented that one of the greatest lessons from this week was the beauty of the Body of Christ, meeting lovely people who felt like family.

Our privilege is to lift Jesus up in word and deed

While leading women’s ministries, prayer stations, kid’s club, teen time, two Sunday worship services, street outreach and in our personal conversations, we had the opportunity to lift up Jesus. We also lifted Jesus up in our actions, working hard every day, building relationships and caring for each other and those we met. Donald Cooper said feeling God’s presence so strongly has spurred him to action back home. He is not alone. Captain Milly Lopez said she wants to recruit others to apply for a Global Mission Team, and already a member of her corps is planning to apply for the fall. Matthew Manley is excited to share his testimony of experiencing Jesus’ love in new ways through the people of Dénia.

If you would like to serve, learn and grow with our global partners, apply for the Global Mission Team to Chile, South America, in October. Visit www.centralmissions.org/GMT

McKee serves in Ukraine relief

M ajor Mike McKee, Indiana divisional emergency disaster services (EDS) director, was deployed this spring to serve for six weeks in the Salvation Army’s large-scale response to the Ukraine-Russia crisis. With more than three decades of experience responding to natural disasters and humanitarian crises around the globe, he joined other seasoned professionals and the local Salvation Army team in Romania to address the needs of Ukrainian refugees who poured into the country. The team handed out vouchers to families (one per child). The families served were predominately women and children, according to the major. The vouchers were redeemable at nearly all stores in Romania and were meant to provide for children’s needs that weren’t being met by the ongoing distributions of food and clothing. Pregnant women also received vouchers. During his deployment in Romania, the team distributed well over 10,000 vouchers, each by hand, to Ukrainian families fleeing their war-torn country.

Additionally, the team provided vital information about the risks of human trafficking to keep this vulnerable population from falling prey to trafficking rings that plague the continent. The Salvation Army has been actively fighting against human trafficking in Europe for decades. In reflecting on his service, Major Mike said, “While the vouchers and anti-human trafficking information were very well received, especially appreciated was our ‘ministry of presence,’ which provided the assurance that the refugees were being recognized as individuals and that they were cared for and being brought before the throne of God in prayer.”

Centralelie Captain Matthew Beatty, who is currently stationed at International Headquarters as an international emergency services program officer, also was deployed to Poland this spring and continues to assist in relief efforts.

Riding for hope

P rofessional fundraising cyclist Paul Lelli is riding this summer to raise money to aid the Salvation Army’s Ukraine relief efforts. With cycling campaigns for Hope Water Project and multiple sclerosis under his belt, Paul was moved when he saw on television what The Salvation Army has done to aid Ukraine during the conflict.

“Before I ride for someone, I look into what they do and how they do it. I realized what a wonderful organization The Salvation Army is. I love their mission and their values,” said Paul.

On September 1, 2022, Paul will ride 100 miles in one day, using Mcamb Orchard Trail in southeast Michigan as his route. He hopes to make a tremendous impact in Ukraine with a fundraising goal of $100,000.

“We have no idea how devastated the people are over there. We’ve got to do something,” said Paul. “The Salvation Army is giving us a way to help.”

To support Paul’s fundraising effort to help people in the Ukraine, visit Give.salvationarmyusa.org/paul-elli-ukraine
A spirit of reverent joy filled the auditorium on Sunday as cadets of the “Messengers of Reconciliation,” were ordained and commissioned as lieutenants, and four auxiliary captains were commissioned and confirmed.

It represented the culmination of nearly two years of classes and field training at the College for Officer Training (CFOT) or five years on the field engaged in distance learning while leading units under the unusual and challenging circumstances presented by the pandemic. Anticipation was evident on each face.

Expressions of worship infused Sunday’s services as music, dance, testimonies, scripture and prayer were offered to the Lord. Especially moving was Lt. Amanda Hines’ testimony of God’s healing, grace and restoration that allowed her to overcome discouragement with the church and mental and physical brokenness following military service as a combat nurse in order to serve the Hilltop. Despite these challenges, “But God,” she proclaimed. “God can take your difficulties and use them for your good and His glory.”

One by one, the cadets were affirmed in their calling and accepted into the ranks of officers by Commissioners Brad and Heidi Bailey. In several and often emotional moments surrounding their ordination and commissioning, each was given a scripture verse chosen by their officer mentor who guided and supported them through the CFOT or distance learning experience. Joining the commissioners to stand before the session, members of the Territorial Cabinet offered a heartfelt prayer of dedication, and a blessing was given over them by Lt. Donna Gooden along with Territorial Sergeant-Major Rochelle Holman.

Completing a series of excellent messages during the weekend, Chief of the Staff Commissioner Lyndon Buckingham encouraged the newly commissioned officers and fellow Salvationists to be creative and innovative and to persevere in order to move people closer to an encounter with Jesus.

Referencing the gospel story of the four men who carried a paralytic on a mat and lowered him through a roof to get him close to Jesus, the commissioner said, “I want to be part of a movement that are mat carriers for Jesus. Men and women who are absolutely convinced that the best thing we can do is help people have encounters with the living King.”

As the meeting drew to a close, the aisles and stage were lined with those making public their willingness to follow God’s calling as officers or local leaders.

Contrasting the morning meeting, the Service of Appointments held a tangible sense of excitement as the newly commissioned officers enthusiastically danced across the stage before taking their seats.

In her charge, Commissioner Bronwyn Buckingham implored the new lieutenants and captains to guard their hearts. “Don’t get distracted or sidetracked with the unimportant or dangerous where you will be tempted into unsafe places,” she said. “Guard your hearts and determine to follow the example of Jesus by making this your ministry priority.”

The new lieutenants and their families were then given their appointments by Commissioners Brad and Heidi Bailey with Google Earth visuals of their appointments.

An impassioned address was given by Session Speaker Lt. Mario Bledsoe in which he eloquently expressed thankfulness for those who have gone before, challenged Salvationists to live in reconciliation with God and one another, and encouraged the next group of leaders to come to the table in faith believing God will equip them.
Pray for the new lieutenants as they step into their first appointments as officers and share the message of hope found in God’s grace.

Messengers of Reconciliation

Lt. Victoria Noel Alip
Corps Officer
Hibbing, Minn.

Lt. Katrina Marie Andrews
Associate Corps Officer
Sioux Falls, S.D.

Lts. Maria and Melissa Lynne Bledsoe
Corps Officers
Benton Harbor, Mich.

Lts. Justin and Shannon Christine Bluer
Corps Officers
Huron, S.D.

Lt. Daniel S. Champlin
Corps Officer
Fond du Lac, Wis.

Lt. Melissa Christiansen
Corps Officer
Council Bluffs, Iowa

Lt. John and Kristi Lynn Dalberg
Corps Officers
Moline Heritage Temple, Ill.

Lt. Lucas Gantner
Corps Officer
Muscatine, Iowa

Lts. Mario and Melissa Lynne Bledsoe
Corps Officers
Benton Harbor, Mich.

Lts. John and Kristi Lynn Dalberg
Corps Officers
Moline Heritage Temple, Ill.

Lts. Rachel and Timothy Charles Gantner
Corps Officers
Des Moines Citadel, Iowa

Lts. Garry Wiley, Jr. and Heather Gladney
Corps Officers
Sheboygan, Wis.

Lt. Johnathan Roy Harvey
Corps Officer
Chicago Midway Citadel, Ill.

Lts. Adam Ernest and Amanda Beth Hines
Corps Officers
Lakewood Temple, Minn.

Lts. John and Tracy Gantner
Senior Officer and Officer for Congregational Life
South Bend, Ind., Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center

Captains John and Tracy Gantner
Senior Officer and Officer for Congregational Life
South Bend, Ind., Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center

Captains Grace and Mika Roinila
Corps Officers
Battle Creek, Mich.
New life found in reconciliation

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation. 2 Corinthians 5:17-18, ESV
Reconciliation is challenging for me because it implies someone has done wrong and needs to apologize to make the relationship right again. I didn’t feel like that with God.

I grew up with both my parents in the military. We moved a lot—talk about foreshadowing—and in every location we tried out a different church, but we never could get into it. Early on, I knew I wanted to help people in the medical field and join the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) in preparation for being an officer in the U.S. Army. I was a good person and generally accepted by everyone. I did not feel I needed to apologize to God.

As I completed the last semester for my associate’s degree, my Uncle John asked me to assist him and Aunt Tracy in their first “Red Kettle Campaign” at the Omaha Kroc Center. I found myself helping people not only physically but spiritually. I moved to Omaha soon after that and went to worship every Sunday. God laid on my heart that despite how good I thought I was I did not meet His standard. I reconciled myself to that realization and gave my life to Christ, then quickly became a soldier. In an irony orchestrated by God, I didn’t join the U.S. Army but am in the Salvation Army now.

As I completed the last semester for my associate’s degree, my Uncle John asked me to assist him and Aunt Tracy in their first “Red Kettle Campaign” at the Omaha Kroc Center. I found myself helping people not only physically but spiritually. I moved to Omaha soon after that and went to worship every Sunday. God laid on my heart that despite how good I thought I was I did not meet His standard. I reconciled myself to that realization and gave my life to Christ, then quickly became a soldier. In an irony orchestrated by God, I didn’t join the U.S. Army but am in the Salvation Army now.

I was brought up in Jamaica by my grandmother who impressed on me the importance of Christ, and at 13 I accepted Jesus as my Savior. Soon after that I went to live with my mother and stepfather in Kingston. They didn’t share the same Christian values or attend church, so gradually my focus turned from God to getting an education. As the first person in my family to get an education, my role was to lift us out of poverty. As doubts crept in and challenges with my stepfather increased, I grew into an angry, aggressive young man.

After my education, I joined the Jamaican Defense Force. Yet, despite all I’d accomplished, something was still missing. I sought counsel from the military chaplain and began attending church on base, but nothing changed. Thinking the military was the problem, I earned a degree from the Jamaican Theological Seminary and worked as a church counselor. Still, the sadness and feeling something was missing persisted.

Plans fell through when I moved to the U.S. and suddenly I found myself with no place to live, no money and unable to work. An advisor suggested volunteering with The Salvation Army Feed the Kids program in Milwaukee. Immediately I felt I was where I should be. Attending worship at the Milwaukee Citadel Corps, I asked God for forgiveness. This reconciliation has brought purpose and meaning to my life. I’ve learned that even if things don’t work out as I’d like, I can trust God and His purpose for my life.

*Written by Major Christine Poff

Photos by Visual Communications
For more than four decades, the Salvation Army Continuing Education Program (SACEP) has provided a positive educational experience for officers. Today SACEP is stronger than ever with expanded course offerings, more flexibility and the ability to tailor curriculum—yielding better equipped officers and enhanced ministry.

An ongoing partnership

When the Central Territory began its partnership with Olivet Nazarene University (ONU) in the 1980s, the goal was to provide more opportunities for education and development of officers during their first five years of service. Traditionally officers had the opportunity to attend SACEP classes twice a year on the Olivet campus, and in the 1980s a Practical Ministries degree became possible with additional course work.

Building on that success and in keeping with the trends of higher learning, SACEP began incorporating online curriculum with ONU in 2019 which brought officers the freedom to study throughout the year at their own pace without having to leave their appointments. According to Major Cherri Hobbins, who led the Officer Resource and Development Department (ORD) at that time and implemented the change, it also opened the possibility for many more courses to be offered, the ability for officers to basically design their own programs based on interests or needs and set them up to more readily obtain a variety of degrees. Although no one knew it then, the timing of this change would allow officer development to continue during the pandemic.

Last fall, ORD conducted a survey to evaluate the new SACEP format. Responses showed 83 percent of participants think SACEP classes are relevant for officers, and 57 percent prefer online options.

Captain Ken Alip, who completed his SACEP classes in June, indicated the course in Leadership and Management helped him understand the structures of business and how to be more efficient in managing time and projects.

“The class was very useful in understanding how The Salvation Army hierarchical structure fits into today’s business standards and in what areas adjustments may need to be made,” he said. “It also helped me to understand how I can help facilitate those changes in my own leadership practices within the corps.”

Some course options offered in recent years at ONU lead to credentialling certificates such as the Life Coaching Certificate program, which is open to all officers, and the Case Worker Certificate program, which is not only a SACEP option but required for all social service caseworkers in the territory.

The Life Coaching program reignited Captain Robyn Hubbard’s passion to help people reach their potential. She and her husband, Lt. Joshua, have found the group coaching tools most useful in their ministry. Each month they offer a small parenting group that brings together people from all walks of life and cultures. The coaching materials provide a mutual starting point and allow them to share their goals and support each other. The certificate specialization in Family and Marriage emphasizes “The Blessing” and empowers families to give blessings throughout generations. The Hub- bards pair this idea with Pathway of Hope as they not only want to end the cycle of intergenerational poverty but want to encourage families to live and share in the blessings of the Lord. They have seen when this is accomplished, generational legacies change.

Through the Caseworker Certifica- tion Program, Captain Corey Wheeler shared she has learned how to better engage with clients by building trust, utilizing their strengths, giving hope and treating them with dignity. “One of my greatest joys is seeing clients realize they can set goals and accomplish them,” she reflected.

Growing Spanish-speaking offerings

While the ORD Department has had an educational partnership with Nazarene Bible College (NBC) for years, NBC recently has become the primary partner for SACEP courses offered in Spanish. Lt. Günther Briceno, who took a course through NBC that focused on evangelism, says he and his wife, Lt. Yami, now incorporate friendship evangelism in their corps ministry. Emphasis on growing hospitality, the lieutenants open their home for meals and visit people where they live. This has led to discipleship where the Bricenos have seen people grow in their relationships with Jesus, as well as corps growth.

Expanding opportunities

In January, Indiana Wesleyan University (IWU) was added as a SACEP partner that offers almost two dozen new courses. These classes can be applied toward a degree and include topics in social work, counseling, trauma-informed approaches, leadership, management, youth, family, and criminal justice—just to name a few. In addition to the Kroc Leadership Certificate offered through IWU, an Adult Rehabilitation Center Leadership Certificate and a Certificate in Equity Leadership soon will be available.

Lt. Shanell Johnson shares that the Kroc Leadership Certification, which she completed through Booth University College, was an incredible educational opportunity that allowed her to advance her business knowledge in a way that makes sense for Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Centers. She explored finances, human resources, programs, operations, team leadership, and strategy.

The Operations and Programs for Kroc Centers course was her favorite...I gained greater insight about the operational side of the Kroc Centers, looking at facility maintenance, finances, marketing, guest services, and the sustainability matrix,” she concluded.

Clearly, the investment in continuing education pays off in better equipped officers to serve their congregations and communities and fulfill the Army’s mission. With this in mind, ORD will continue to look for ways to expand offerings and provide new options to benefit their personal development and enhance their ministries.
Congratulations!

We salute these officers who have achieved degrees and certificates, enriching their lives and ministries.

**Major Troy Barker**
Executive Leadership Program Certificate
Arrow Leadership Institute

**Captain Kerry Bartsch**
Master of Social Work
Indiana Wesleyan University

**Captain Jason Bigelow**
Certificate in Kroc Center Leadership Booth University College

**Lt. Pamela Boateng**
Certificate in Life Coaching (Marriage & Family)
Parrott Institute at ONU

**Captain Tony Bowers**
Emerging Leadership Program Certificate
Arrow Leadership Institute

**Captain Janelle Cleveland**
Inclusive Leadership Course International Headquarters

**Captain Jonathan Cooper**
Inclusive Leadership Course International Headquarters

**Captain Lorna Cossey**
Inclusive Leadership Course International Headquarters

**Major Amy Jo Ferguson**
Inclusive Leadership Course International Headquarters

**Major Michelle Graham**
Master of Business Administration Regent University

**Lt. Johnathan Harvey**
M.A. Pastoral Leadership Olivet Nazarene University

**Lt. Adam Hines**
Master of Divinity Regent University

**Lt. Amanda Hines**
M.A. Human Services Regent University

**Captain Grant Holloway**
Inclusive Leadership Course International Headquarters

**Lt. Rachel Johnson**
Certificate in Life Coaching (Marriage & Family)
Parrott Institute at ONU

**Lt. Shannell Johnson**
Certificate in Kroc Center Leadership Booth University College

**Captain Brandon Lewis**
Inclusive Leadership Course International Headquarters

**Major Catherine Mount**
Emerging Leadership Program Certificate
Arrow Leadership Institute

**Major Timothy Pascoe**
Inclusive Leadership Course International Headquarters

**Major Jason Poff**
Inclusive Leadership Course International Headquarters

**Captain Desenia Polusca**
Emerging Leadership Program Certificate
Arrow Leadership Institute

**Captain Daniel Simmons**
Emerging Leadership Program Certificate
Arrow Leadership Institute

**Lt. Sonya Smith**
B.A. Christian Ministry Trevecca Nazarene University

**Captain Steve Staneart**
B.S. Christian Leadership & Communication
Great Lakes Christian College

**Captain Kory Strand**
Certificate in Kroc Center Leadership Booth University College

**Major Rachel Stouder**
Emerging Leadership Program Certificate
Arrow Leadership Institute

**Major Randall Summit**
B.A. Organizational Leadership Mid-America Nazarene University

**Captain Melinda Tripp**
Inclusive Leadership Course International Headquarters

**Captain Karissa Zumwalt**
Inclusive Leadership Course International Headquarters

**Captain Zachary Zumwalt**
Certificate in Life Coaching (Marriage & Family)
Parrott Institute at ONU

M.A. = Master of Arts
B.A. = Bachelor of Arts
B.S. = Bachelor of Science

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A powerful point of connection

by Lt. Colonel Darlene Harvey

When the Salvation Army Continuing Education Program (SACEP) moved online a few years ago, the decision was made to incorporate an annual retreat so officers in their first five years could come together to build community and resiliency. While the first retreat took place at Camp Mihaska in May 2019, the pandemic cancelled retreats in 2020 and 2021. Being able to come together again this year proved a powerfully restorative and affirming experience.

For the first time, the retreat included auxiliary captains. Since they participate in Distance Learning instead of SACEP, a name change was needed, and officers were invited to give suggestions. The retreat’s new name “Connection” represents its purpose of strengthening our connection to God, ourselves and others.

Major Lauren Hodgson from the spiritual life department in the Eastern Territory led participants in spiritual disciplines to renew their spirits. Pastoral care officers (mostly retired) were part of the ministry team and led connection groups where officers shared their experiences, based on Major Lauren’s teaching, and received encouragement and affirmation from each other. In essence, they became a community sharing burdens and losses and celebrating joys in their personal lives and ministries.

Officers also were able to take part in a great range of soul care learning opportunities and experiences based on the results of their own spiritual vitality survey taken in preparation for the event. The learning opportunities incorporated subjects like keeping the Sabbath, balancing ministry and family, maintaining friendships, praying for our children, issues men face, freedom from the performance trap, financial freedom and healthy living using Weight Watchers or the Daniel Plan. Soul care experiences ranged from hobbies like Cricut crafting with scrapbooking to journaling with the prayer of Examen, hiking and worship workouts.

When officers were asked to describe the retreat in one word, responses included healing, uplifting, trusting, reconnecting, recharging, renewing, unity, liberating, anointed, family, friendship, needed and revitalizing.

Beautiful worship filled the meetings and occurred spontaneously by the fire in the Rock Pavilion in the evenings. The retreat concluded with a handwashing service where blessings were said by pastoral care officers.

Major Hodgson and myself over each officer, affirming them and providing an active commitment of continued support.

“Thank you for your diligence in listening to the Holy Spirit as you and your team prepared,” said Lt. Jenny Moffitt. “The retreat was exactly what my heart, mind, and spirit needed.”
I knew there were things about officership I would enjoy and other things that perhaps I wouldn’t.

For instance, I knew I would enjoy camp, youth programs and interacting with people, but looking back I might have been hoping for something like vacation Bible school every day. While there have been days like that, there definitely have been times when this was not the case. However, I have been surprised more often than not by the things I didn’t think I would enjoy becoming real sources of joy in my ministry.

Driving a van to pick up and drop off people was definitely a task I thought I would delegate. I do not particularly enjoy driving, and the logistics are a lot for my directionally-challenged nature. Yet, driving the van turned out to be one of my most cherished sources of ministry.

I recall much singing, laughing and fun, especially when I got lost! I also remember just listening a lot—really hearing—what the people in my corps were facing at home or in school. It gave me plenty to pray about.

I will never forget the day I brought a girl home after camp to discover that during her week away her family had completely fallen apart. Her dad was moving out, and her older siblings were taking sides in their parents’ arguments. Through the next year my van route kept following her from place to place where she was evicted, couch surfing with friends or sometimes staying with her mom and sometimes with her dad at more addresses than I can count.

I will never forget talking with the mom in the driveway one night after dropping the daughter off. She ached with feeling like a failure. I started to purposefully drop her daughter off last, and these conversations became more frequent. The mom came to worship on Sundays occasionally but was working too much to come regularly. Our conversations at drop-off became her church, and I was blessed to be her pastor.

I am in a different kind of appointment now. I rarely drive anywhere because my apartment is only three floors away from my office at the College for Officer Training. But I am still very involved in getting people started on their journey, now day one of their 730 days as a cadet until I drop them off on day one of their officership. I am enjoying these days, now 6,588 beyond my own 730 experience.
A celebration of faith and mission

Continued from page 2

Summer Mission Teams which will minister throughout the territory and in Panama.

Lt. Colonels Jonathan and Barbara Rich, territorial program secretary and assistant program secretary, thanked Dr. Maribeth Swanson for her leadership in Pathway of Hope (POH) which celebrates its 10th anniversary this year and now is in 1,000 locations across the U.S., Canada, Bermuda, Spain, Portugal, Norway, Romania and Argentina. The direction POH has made for 10,000 families was personified by the Curranos who shared their touching journey from challenging circumstances, including homelessness and losing custody of their children, to stability with employment, housing and happy reunion through courage, hard work and the support of Beth and Gary Stamper and members of the Henry County, Ind., Service Center.

“Katherine and I often wonder what our lives would be like without our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and The Salvation Army,” said Austin Currano, who was joined on stage by his family and the Stamper family. “Their embrace and the support of Beth and Gary Stamper and members of the Henry County, Ind., Service Center. So did Accepted Candidate Donald Cooper who shared his miraculous journey from addiction to new life in Christ through the Army.”

Straightforward and clear, the Chief of the Staff expounded on God’s great love expressed to us and proposed that we demonstrate our love for God by serving others. He urged Salvationists to be agents of God’s grace and consider in their heart opportunities to show God their love through service. Though a time of formal response was not planned, the Spirit of God moved in hearts so greatly that a spontaneous and steady stream of delegates made their way to the altar, transforming the auditorium for an extended time into a sacred place. At the meeting’s conclusion, their sweet victories of renewed faith, direction and commitment to advance the mission rang out with joy and determination as they sang, “Christ for the World.”

Rising Stars biggest yet

by Tom Hanton

W e all know the old joke, “How do you get to Carnegie Hall?” You practice! Since 2020, the Rising Stars Solo Festival has been a way for artists, both young and old, to practice and develop their talents. All the artforms offered can be showcased in a worship service at corps and provide encouragement to each participant. This virtual solo festivval encourages artists to submit entries in different levels of brass, voice, piano, spoken word, drama, dance, ukulele, guitar, percussion, woodwinds, songwriting, vocal arrangement and brass composition.

This spring 53 participants, representing all divisions, submitted a performance video of material with guidelines outlined by the territorial music and creative arts ministries department. Decatur and Poria, Ill., and Flint Citadel, Mich., had the most entries.

Two experts in each category shared written feedback with each participant. Artists gleaned valuable tips from our staff at Territorial Headquarters, as well as Kathryn Higgins, Kellyn Mylecreech and Doug Berry [Eastern Territory]; Josh Powell, Dr. Adely Charles and Nick Simmons-Smith [Southern Territory]; and Neil Smith and Kevin Larson [Western Territory].

Through Rising Stars artists not only have been able to sharpen their skills but have had the opportunity to prepare successful solos for summer camps and worship performances at their corps. In addition, the creative arts performances have been used as audition videos for the territory’s new Resonate Worship Arts Conservatory this summer.

“Rising Stars has been a vital ministerial tool,” said Peter Kim. “Not only can people refine and advance their skills but realize that it can be an offering of their talents at the Sunday worship is valuable.”

RISING STARS

August Prayer Calendar

My Prayer List

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<th>Day</th>
<th>Bible Reading</th>
<th>Pray for The Salvation Army</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Monday</td>
<td>Psalms 92-92</td>
<td>Des Moines Citadel, Iowa, Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Tuesday</td>
<td>Proverbs 14-15</td>
<td>Cadillac, Mich., Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Wednesday</td>
<td>Ezekiel 43-48</td>
<td>Green Bay, Wis., Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Thursday</td>
<td>John 1-2</td>
<td>Mexico Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Friday</td>
<td>1 Thessalonians 4-5</td>
<td>Flint, Mich., ARC*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Saturday</td>
<td>Leviticus 25-27</td>
<td>Bay City, Mich., Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Sunday</td>
<td>1 Chronicles 1-4</td>
<td>Evansville, Ind., Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Monday</td>
<td>Proverbs 93-95</td>
<td>Wiscosin &amp; Upper Michigan Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Tuesday</td>
<td>Proverbs 16</td>
<td>Chicago Lawn, Ill., Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Wednesday</td>
<td>Daniel 1-6</td>
<td>School Age Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Thursday</td>
<td>John 3-4</td>
<td>Duvall, Mmm., Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Friday</td>
<td>2 Thessalonians 1-3</td>
<td>Des Moines Temple, Iowa, Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Saturday</td>
<td>1 Chronicles 1-3</td>
<td>Germany, Lithuania, and Poland Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Sunday</td>
<td>1 Chronicles 5-9</td>
<td>Lansing, Mich., Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Monday</td>
<td>Proverbs 96-98</td>
<td>Elkhart, Ind., Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Tuesday</td>
<td>Proverbs 17-18</td>
<td>Henry County, Ind., Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Wednesday</td>
<td>Daniel 7-12</td>
<td>Kansas City, Northland, Mo., Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Thursday</td>
<td>John 5-6</td>
<td>Fort Wayne, Ind., ARC*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Friday</td>
<td>1 Timothy 1-3</td>
<td>Milwaukee West, Wis., Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Saturday</td>
<td>Numbers 4-6</td>
<td>Danville, Ill., Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Sunday</td>
<td>1 Chronicles 10-14</td>
<td>India South Eastern Territory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Monday</td>
<td>Proverbs 99-101</td>
<td>Hutchinson, Kan., Corps</td>
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<tr>
<td>23 Tuesday</td>
<td>Proverbs 19</td>
<td>Chicago Midway Community Church, Ill., Corps</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 Wednesday</td>
<td>Hosea 1-7</td>
<td>Petoskey, Mich., Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Thursday</td>
<td>John 7-9</td>
<td>Rock County, Wis., Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Friday</td>
<td>1 Timothy 4-6</td>
<td>St. Joseph, Mo., Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Saturday</td>
<td>Numbers 7-9</td>
<td>Gaston, Ind., Corps</td>
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<tr>
<td>28 Sunday</td>
<td>1 Chronicles 15-19</td>
<td>South Bend, Ind., Knox Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>29 Monday</td>
<td>Proverbs 102-104</td>
<td>Korea Territory</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 Tuesday</td>
<td>Proverbs 20-21</td>
<td>Grand Haven, Mich., Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Wednesday</td>
<td>Hosea 8-14</td>
<td>Vincennes, Ind., Corps</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The September territorial prayer calendar is reflected in the weekly prayer guides sent to your corps. See your officer for a copy.

Go to www.salarmycentral.org

If you follow the prayer calendar during the year, you will have read through the Bible!

---Mustard Seeds---

KARLA, HOW WAS BAND PRACTICE?

WHY ARE YOU IN BED?

MY LIPS ARE TAKING A NAP...
Major James Robbins

Major James Robbins, 80, was promoted to glory on April 23, 2022, survived by his family and friends. He was known for his big heart and desire to share God’s unconditional love which he shared with everyone he met.

Born in Springfield, Ill., on June 2, 1942, James grew up extremely close with his brothers. His life’s course was charted when his older brother died from childhood cancer when he was nine years old. James went on to contribute to the lives of many more of high school. To honor his brother’s legacy, James joined the U.S. Army and became a bass player and eventually felt called to be an officer.

During training as a member of the 17th Special Forces Group, James fell in love with his wife, Patricia Smith, who was on the staff of the Special Forces headquarters. The couple married, they served together in corps appointments throughout Minnesota and Missouri, and after a break in service in three appointments in the Southern Territories before retiring in 2001. Committed to ministry, however, they accepted many more ministry appointment.

James was preceded in death by his brothers, John and Robert, and the mother, Helen (Morrow), who was survived by his children: Major John (Michael), Major Christopher (Tina Baker), and Major John (Emily); 16 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Captain Michael Cripe

Captain Michael Cripe was promoted to captain on April 8, 2022.

Mike loved serving and teaching the Word of God to those building relationships with people as he ministered to them.

He was born on August 4, 1972, in South Bend, Ind., to Ronald and Joyce Cripe. He accepted Christ at age 9 and soon after that felt the call to be a Commissioner of the Salvation Army as a young adult.

On June 26, 1982, Mike married Tina Baker. He earned a degree as a music teacher for 35 years and spent many years in the medical field for several years but didn’t fulfill his calling. He earned an associate’s degree in computer technology in 1991.

In 2002, Mike and Tina accepted God’s call to officerhood in a Mission and Purpose conference, attended officer’s training from 2004 and were commissioned in 2006 members of the “Visionaries” session.

Together Mike and Tina led corps in Fremont, Neb., Aberdeen, S.D., and Waynodelle and Hillside, Mich. Mike’s health was severely, they were granted medical leave before retiring in 2016.

Mike was preceded in death by his father, John, survived by his wife, children, Katya, Eva, Hannah and Li; five grandchildren; his mother, Joyce; and six siblings. He is also survived by wife, Jo Myer, Christine E. Dawne; and his brother, David James.

Major James Amick

Major James Amick was promoted to major on May 7, 2022.

He had a giving heart and a love to make others laugh. He enjoyed singing and playing the piano and guitar. In his later years, he distributed music records he made to spread his joy of the Savior, Jesus Christ.

Jim was born February 23, 1949, in Independence, Kan., to David and Eloise Amick. After graduating from high school, Jim married Diana Schultz on January 31, 1969, and entered the Air Force, serving from 1969 to 1973 as a chaplain assistant. He was honorably discharged as a staff sergeant and awarded with the National Defense Service Medal and Air Force Good Conduct Medal.

In 1973, Jim and Diana entered the School for Officers’ Training. They were commissioned in 1975 as members of the “Soldiers of The Cross” session.

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