Colonel Ervis Diaz has been appointed by the General as the Territorial Commander of the Central Territory. She will take up this appointment with the rank of commissioner on August 1, 2023. Colonel Diaz returns home to the Central Territory from being the Chief Secretary in the Canada and Bermuda Territory and will succeed Commissioner Bradford Bailey, who along with Commissioner Heidi Bailey, will be retiring from active service.

"I am excited, honored and privileged," Colonel Diaz said in a video greeting to the territory upon the announcement. "What I want you to know is that I love Jesus and look forward to seeing how and where God is working in the territory."

While the majority of her more than 40 years of officership has been spent in the Central Territory, her service also includes several overseas appointments. Prior to serving in Canada and Bermuda, she was the Assistant Chief Secretary for Administration and then Chief Secretary at International Headquarters (IHQ) in London, England, where she played a critical role and gained an in-depth knowledge of The Salvation Army globally.

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She led both the Heartland and the Kansas and Western Missouri divisions before moving to London in 2016. Her passion and priority in both of those appointments was the pastoral care of officers, community development and innovative ministry.

The colonel also has a strong interest in urban and multiethnic ministry and Christian community development. She enjoys teaching and preaching and holds a practical ministry degree from Olivet Nazarene University in Bourbonnais, Ill. She is a second-generation Salvationist, having grown up moving throughout the territory with officer parents.

In commending Colonel Diaz to the territory, Commissioner Bradford Bailey said she is an excellent and capable leader with vast experience and is a beautiful woman of God, concluding, "Her heart beats for the things that are of the Lord."

On target for God

Captain James Beardsley of the Lansing, Mich., Corps has a hit a "bullseye" with the success of his Impact Archery program.

Each Tuesday night, youngsters shoot arrows at targets while learning about God. The popular activity, now marking its first fully year, has 28 students in grades one through six. "I am excited, honored and privileged," Colonel Diaz said in a video greeting to the territory upon the announcement. "What I want you to know is that I love Jesus and look forward to seeing how and where God is working in the territory."

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I am praying for you
by Lt. Colonel Paul Smith
Assistant Chief Secretary

Do you recall the people who have prayed for you throughout your life? It could be an extensive list: parents, family, corps or church members, friends, officers, pastors, teachers, mentors. Maybe they prayed for your protection, healing, direction, or salvation.

I am encouraged when someone says: "I am praying for you." Whether during a conversation or expressed in a card, I am thankful to know someone is praying for me. And it is amazing how many times that message has come at just the right time, when I have been going through a difficult situation or facing a tough decision. What is even more incredible is how repeatedly God has provided the strength, guidance and wisdom which I needed.

One of my favorite images the Apostle Paul uses to describe Christians is the body (1 Cor. 12:12-31). As a member of the Body of Christ, we are connected, interdependent, and because of this we influence, support, impact and, yes, encourage one another. One important way we can encourage each other is by prayer. That, of course, is known as intercessory prayer. Studies have shown those in a hospital who have someone praying for them do better—even if they don't know someone is praying for them! We pray for others because we believe God answers prayer and that there is power in prayer.

The Bible has many examples of intercessory prayer. Moses prayed for water, food and forgiveness for the Israelites. Elijah prayed the widow's son would live again. Daniel and Ezra prayed for God's mercy on behalf of their people's sin. Jesus' prayer recorded in John 17 includes praying for His disciples and those who would believe because of their ministry, praying to us. But I really love Paul's prayer for the Ephesians (3:14-21). I can imagine how encouraged they were when this letter shared that their "spiritual father," though physically separated from them, continued to pray that the Holy Spirit would fill them, providing the strength, power and love—passing all understanding—they needed to live holy lives in Ephesus.

There are people throughout the territory who are facing challenges or who are seeking God's grace or guidance. As followers of Christ, we have the awesome privilege to listen to our sister or brother and then lift their needs to our Heavenly Father. As we are faithful in supporting other members of the Body of Christ by praying in faith, we are "loving our neighbors as ourselves." And they may find you praying for them. As Paul wrote, they might find you praying for them, perhaps even without your knowledge of it. And when you come upon others because we believe God is answering prayer, you will be encouraged, and they might find you praying for them as well.

Paul Augustin

A soldier at the Madison, Wisc., Corps, Paul is the divisional sergeant-major for the Wisconsin/Upper Michigan Division (WUM) and is part of the Territorial Soldiers' Forum. He retired from the workforce in July of 2022—just about the time he was asked to be part of the forum.

"The timing was just right," he said. "I have time to dedicate to this new position. This was all the Lord's doing."

At his corps, Paul has held many positions. He currently plays the guitar in the praise band and teaches adult Sunday school. He also volunteers with the corps' emergency disaster services team.

"I'm so happy to have been a member of The Salvation Army for almost 50 years," Paul said. "My wife, my kids—we are all soldiers. It has been a wonderful experience."

He came to know The Salvation Army through a corps-sponsored Boy Scout troop and gave his life to Christ at camp in 1971.

"I have been a soldier for all of these years. At times, I thought about becoming an officer, but I never heard that call [in my heart]," he said.

After high school, Paul went into the U.S. Air Force. He began working as a custodian at the Janesville, Wisc., Corps after leaving the military. While in Janesville, Paul delivered food to a local family in need. Little did he know that his future wife, Julie, was part of that family. The two met, fell in love and have now been married for almost 40 years. They have four children and seven grandchildren (with another grandchild expected in September, Paul said happily).

Paul spent 19 years working at the William S. Middleton Memorial Vet-
Rallying the troops

Recognizing the ones who make us what we are

by Major Deannie Moore

What’s an army without soldiers? Could it be similar to a bunch of chefs in the kitchen with nobody to feed? More likely, it’s an army with no future.

The Western Division has long recognized the value of its soldiers. This spring the division met for its fifth annual Soldiers’ Rally Day with 235 people in attendance. The theme this year was “One for All, All for One.”

Sound familiar? Maybe. But this year was “One for All, All for One.”

Jesus. He gave His life for us; we give people in attendance. The theme this year was “One for All, All for One.”

The day began with a youth-focused rally that alternated between character-building and junior soldiers. The focus led toward remembering who we are as the Body of Christ and how each one of us is essential. “Together you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of that body.” (1 Cor. 12:27, NCV)

With an opening session of singing and devotions, junior soldiers were given a charge and set off to complete several activities including a Mr. Potato Head team relay race, a junior soldier puzzle missing one piece (doesn’t work without everyone), and a team tower building race with a piece of spaghetti and Cheerios. It was teamwork all the way! Senior soldiers participated by helping and cheering on the junior soldiers.

After a delicious lunch served by the host corps, young and old gathered for the rally. With worship and fellowship, God was praised, and soldiers were honored and challenged. Junior and senior soldiers were recognized by their corps officers and divisional leadership in four categories—Outstanding Corps Sergeant-Major, Outstanding Division Commanders’ Recognition, which included a framed certificate and a figurine of a young William Booth surrendering his all to Christ. The rally included two important aspects. First, “Our Future,” celebrating junior soldiers, and second, a “Call to Follow” Christ into whatever He is calling us to do, whether that be service and leadership in the corps or becoming a Salvation Army officer.

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The day was all about soldiers coming together to worship God and celebrate each other. The soldiers were excited for each other as they said the captain. They headed home knowing they are loved and valued. Soldiers play a vital role in building and sustaining our corps and winning the world to Christ. They really do make us who we are, an Army of the Lord.
A look behind the scenes

There are many acronyms in The Salvation Army. I’d like to add one more. IVYK. “If you know, you know.”

I’ve been attending The Salvation Army since I was a baby. I’ve been a sunbeam, junior soldier and senior soldier. I worked as an employee at territorial headquarters and the adult rehabilitation center in Chicago for a total of 13 years. So, I thought I knew what an officer’s job was. I’d worshipped and worked with quite a few of them. But as it turns out, you don’t know until you know.

I didn’t know the heartache. I didn’t know the fulfillment. I didn’t know the stress. And I didn’t know the freedom. I didn’t know until I knew.

You don’t know, until you know, the privilege and sorrow of walking with a family as they face saying goodbye to their newborn baby, until you’re in the thick of it with them.

You don’t know, until you know, the laughter and joy that helps you get through another day when you watch your explorers troop listen and eagerly form answers together about how often to wash bed sheets as they work on their laundry emblem.

You don’t know, until you know, the hope that gets you through defeat until you see new kids learn old Sunday school songs and gleefully jump to their feet to sing their part, “Hallelujah!”

You don’t know, until you know, the assurance you can experience until you see your corps’ leaders acknowledge, “This is out of my comfort zone, but I see God growing me.”

And you don’t know, until you know, the ways God will grow and stretch you as you learn to balance a corps budget, pray for your congregation, or overcome doubt or fear.

I invite you, dear reader, to pray this scripture over me and all officers and soldiers. “We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding. Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, you will grow as you learn to know God better and better.” Colossians 1:9b-10 (NLT)

By Lt. Sarah Micula

This article provides opportunities for those interested in ministry through The Salvation Army to spend up to two years looking behind the scenes to discover the ins and outs of officership as interns in a corps setting.

Coming from many backgrounds and stages of life, interns gain experience by joining in a wide variety of ministries from providing social services to planning and leading worship services and programs. They are included in work like budget preparation, meetings with advisory boards and corps councils, and fundraising such as the red kettle campaign. This gives them insight into the daily lives of corps officers.

“I grew up in The Salvation Army and transitioned into the Ministry Discovery Program after being employed at a divisional headquarters for 16 years,” said Accepted Candi- date Matt McCarter, intern at the Lincoln, Neb., Corps. “I still have so much to learn about the day-to-day work of corps officers, and I’m thankful for great teachers and mentors.”

Regular check-ins with the corps officers, divisional candidates’ secretaries and territorial candidates’ secretary encourage dialogue, allow interns to gain insight into their strengths and areas that need development, and help them to make informed decisions. Many, like Matt, choose to become officers; some move on to other opportunities.

Christians, 18 and older, who are interested in officership are encouraged to consider learning more through this program.

For more information, contact your divisional candidates’ secretary.

Pointing people Godward

“I will not wear that hat!” a defiant 21-year-old Cherry Hobbins told the Lord as she wrestled with the call. He had placed on her heart to become a Salvation Army officer. It had come unexpectedly. After all, she wasn’t even a Salvationist. She had merely worked a few summers at one of its camps. But as a senior sitting in an unrelated chapel service at Asbury College, the call was undeniable.

At first, Cherry was incredulous. God would ask her to forsake the vocation she’d envisioned since age 12, being a pastor in the Methodist church, to become an officer in a quasi-military Christian organization where women still wore bonnets.

“What I learned, and know in my heart, is that The Salvation Army blends the message of Jesus with the actions of Jesus,” Major Cherry said.

C oming to terms with this new direction and with the blessing of her parents, who at first worried she’d been lured by a cult, Cherry “jumped the denominational fence” and was enrolled as a soldier. By the time she headed to the College for Officer Training (CFOT) in Chicago that fall in 1980, policy had changed, and the bonnet was out! It was as if God had winked at her.

While her first encounter with the Army, working at camp, had not been entirely positive, she found her passion teaching the gospel and watching many mothers and children accept Christ. It fore-shadowed what would be her joy as an officer.

“It’s always been about pointing people Godward,” she said.

No wonder of her nearly 41 years of officership, ranging from corps to territorial appointments, the 17 years serving at the CFOT in different roles, including principal, resonated with her most.

Though demanding work, she relished leading brigades and teaching cadets. Hundreds of officers throughout the territory are familiar with her green pen.

Especially by the second time I worked at the CFOT again even in retirement, she says she’s been learning new the simplest but most significant lesson: God absolutely loves us. It’s not based on our performance but because He is love.

“Keep your relationship with God first and foremost. Don’t neglect it,” she urges Salvationists. “Keep learning into Jesus.”

Conversely, her most challenging time in any appointment was when she couldn’t “rock people off center,” when they remained complacent in their faith.

Recently, she says she’s been learning the simplest but most significant lesson: God absolutely loves us. It’s not based on our performance but because He is love.

“Keep your relationship with God first and foremost. Don’t neglect it,” she urges Salvationists. “Keep learning into Jesus.”

Major Cherry Hobbins receives her retirement certificate from Commissioners Brad and Heidi Bailey.

Major Cherry Hobbins signs the Soldier’s Covenant.

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“Keep your relationship with God first and foremost. Don’t neglect it,” she urges Salvationists. “Keep learning into Jesus.”
Encouraged by the Pathway of Hope (POH) 10-year celebration and symposium last fall, caseworkers at the Fox Cities, Wis., Corps returned home with enthusiasm to serve their community.

“We were inspired by the panel discussion on parenting classes at the symposium,” said Katie Schmanski, POH coordinator. “We knew we wanted to do something similar to engage families.”

After consideration of their community’s needs, the corps developed Hope Night, a quarterly family event to engage community members, connect families and spread the word about the POH initiative.

The inaugural carnival-themed event was created jointly by the corps’ caseworkers and other staff, corps officers Majors Dawn and Jeffery Russell and volunteers. In addition to working together on the finer details, the majors invited caseworkers to give a presentation about POH to the advisory board to increase awareness and enlist support, and the development director secured a $1,500 donation from a local Bobs Bae store owner to fund the evening and future Hope Nights.

“Planning was everything,” said Major Dawn. “That night really was everybody coming together and knowing their roles and executing them perfectly to create the best experience possible for the families.”

Current and former POH families were invited to facilitate connections between each other so they could provide ongoing support to one another. Each family also was encouraged to invite another family to broaden the event’s reach. A promotional flyer and Facebook event were created with online registration to make it easily accessible to other families connected to the corps through social services.

The evening of Hope Night, Majors Russell, staff and volunteers, including advisory board members, created a welcoming atmosphere and engaged with families. Children enjoyed a bounce house, won small prizes, and got their faces painted as their parents took them to the stations. Everyone enjoyed a menu of carnival foods including hot dogs, popcorn and cotton candy.

“I got to meet with the families as they came and went,” said Major Dawn. “We shared information about POH and our corps activities. Every family also received a package of Peeps with an invitation to the Easter service.” The major noted that several new families expressed interest in POH.

At the end of the night, families were asked to give feedback and vote on the next quarterly Hope Night theme. The responses by families were overwhelmingly positive. “It was a great little night out with the kids,” one mother shared.

“Our vision is to continue to engage the community with corps members, staff and advisory board involved in the ministry,” concluded Major Dawn. “Hope Night is one way we can stay connected.”

New grant for major cities

by Linda Brinker

All four USA territories are participating in a new three-year Pathway of Hope [POH] initiative funded by the national office. The grant, titled Pathway of Hope Renewal, is designed to expand family engagement in major cities across the country including Chicago, Detroit, Indianapolis, Milwaukee and St. Louis.

In part, the new focus is in response to the third-party evaluation completed by RTI, an independent nonprofit research institute, at the completion of the initial national grant which included identification of gaps in implementation in the major cities and challenges related to limited staff availability to provide POH services.

Services with this new opportunity are focused on BIPOC families (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) that meet low-income requirements. The major portion of the funding is allocated to support two case managers for each of the five Central Territory cities and requires a 100 percent focus on POH.

To expedite the local engagement process, the national office is providing the funding allocations at the beginning of each year. In turn, the funding is being sent directly to divisions and local sites for timely hiring and onboarding of new staff. Central Territorial Headquarters is completing a three-day comprehensive training for the new teams to educate them fully on POH concepts including unique grant requirements.

The Central Territory is excited to be involved in the establishment of the new POH-R grant as it is anticipated to have a strong impact on underserved communities in urban areas and lead to the establishment of best-practice models for other cities to replicate. This opportunity also provides another great avenue to partner with the national office and other USA territories as we continue to evaluate the impact of services and lessons learned.
Holy Land pilgrimage brings Bible to life

by Captain Blake Fewell

For nearly 2,000 years, Christians have made pilgrimages to Israel to experience the places where Jesus walked, taught and healed. Earlier this year 80 Salvationists from the Central Territory joined that heritage to the Holy Land. For some, it was their first opportunity to see the Bible come to life in the sites and experiences of Israel. For others, it was an opportunity to rediscover and rekindle previous experiences.

Over the eight-day trip, Salvationists clad in their khaki vests stood on the roads of Roman ruins, sat on the Galilean hillsides, and walked the limestone streets of Jerusalem. Throughout the tour, local guides provided historical, geographical and archeological insights, while guests Lt. Colonel Vern Jewett and Lt. Colonel John Needham provided biblical teaching each day.

The Salvationist pilgrims began their journey on the northern Mediterranean coast and the Sea of Galilee region. They visited Mount Carmel where Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal, Jesus’ hometown of Nazareth and many northern cities where Jesus ministered. These cities, which contained ruins from the times of Jesus, gave a glimpse into the daily life of work and worship.

The group held their first of several worship times on the Mount of Beatitudes where choirs rang out from the hillside, and Colonel Jewett brought Jesus’ words of joyful promise to life. Later that day, they worshiped on a boat on the Sea of Galilee, remembering the many hours Jesus and His disciples spent on those waters.

Making their way south, they visited places such as the spring where Jesus taught and healed, the Pool of Bethesda where Jesus healed a lame man; and Hezekiah’s Tunnel, a tunnel which provided and protected the major water source for Jerusalem. Several Salvationists braved the journey through the dark tunnel, wading through the knee-high waters before exiting at the Pool of Siloam. The day concluded with a stark reminder that Jewish persecution is not a distant history. The group visited Yad Vashem, Jerusalem’s Holocaust Museum, to learn, reflect and pray.

While the weather was beautiful for most of the trip, the day in the desert was unique. Instead of experiencing the hot Judean desert, rain brought fast-flowing streams to life in the valleys. A few visits were cut short, but the group was able to experience some of the desert’s wonders, including Qumran, the Jordan River, Jericho and the Dead Sea.

The final day brought vast experiences. Returning to Jerusalem, the pilgrims again turned their attention to Jesus’ sacrifice by visiting the house of Caiaphas and a site where Jesus was likely imprisoned before His death. They held their final worship service at a place called the garden tomb—the second possible site where Jesus may have been crucified and buried. As each person entered the tomb, what they saw was no surprise: the tomb was empty. “Because he lives, I can face tomorrow,” rang throughout the garden by Salvationists in song.

For many, the trip provided profound experiences. Soldier Yvonne Mongeau shared, “My intimate relationship with Jesus has become even closer.” Captain Karla Salsbury’s most memorable experience was at the Western Wall. “It was a sweet time of reflection and deep surrender as I drew near to God in that place,” she shared. For Captain Rachel White, it was at the Pool of Bethesda. “There was a church there, and our group sang ‘Jesus, Jesus, Jesus; There’s just something about that name.’ As we sang, the line hit me: ‘Kings and kingdoms will all pass away, but there’s something about that name.’ Kings and kingdoms do rise and fall—especially in this area—but the name of Jesus will never pass away.”
Doing Holiness

The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love. Galatians 5:6b [NIV]

by Dr. Bill Ury
National Ambassador for Holiness

Holiness includes every part of us; heart, soul, body, mind—everything.

It is a return to the original plan when the Sanctifier offers 10 “words” to order all our motives and actions. Holiness is meant to be expressed in a body in community. He desires that in every action of an ordinary person’s life the Holy One is seen for who He is. Don’t carve or bow down to an idol. Don’t break the marriage covenant, lie, malign another or grab for yourself. As Charles Wesley loved to say, the Law is both a portrait of Who God is and a promise of what He can do in a human heart.

That was His plan for the world—that those He had called to be like Him would live as He would if He had a body. The sad history of the people of God is that they never fully comprehended their life’s purpose—“to sanctify His Name among the nations.” If a person cannot be made holy, then those who want to see how God acts will never witness that reality.

The problem is that we look at our stumbling lives and wonder how we can truly reflect the perfection of our eternal God.

That is why Jesus took on our flesh as the Holy Son of God to show us what we forgot—the Holy One in our human life. Everything He was and did injected hope that we might be brought back by His eternal plan. He directly tied perfect love to not greeting people because they can do something for us (Matthew 5:47-48).

Pentecost purified hearts; it did not perfect performance.

We know works don’t save us. We also know that the Spirit enables works: walking and talking and working which are free of self-congratulation. The problem is that we look at our stumbling lives and wonder how we can truly reflect the perfection of our eternal God. Apparently, it is not as hard as we make it. Pentecost purified hearts; it did not perfect performance.

The One who sanctifies is not a tyrannical taskmaster. He offers all that He is to us, second by second, so that we can come to the place of knowing the actions of our lives arise out of a heart made perfect, one, whole, complete in love. The Spirit witnesses to the fact that He has access to all my being. That means that words, work and ways of living can arise out of a clean source. And that source is never a stagnant remnant of a past commitment. It is the Artesian well of empowering love sourced in the One who has made me to be His cleansed mind, His holy hands, His pure mouth, His compassionate feet.

My Prayer List

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Bible Reading</th>
<th>Pray for The Salvation Army</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Saturday</td>
<td>Philippians 1:2</td>
<td>Indianapolis, Ind., ARC</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Sunday</td>
<td>Leviticus 10-12</td>
<td>Grand Haven, Mich., Corps</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Monday</td>
<td>2 Kings 1-5</td>
<td>Muskegan Citadel, Mich., Corps</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Tuesday</td>
<td>Psalms 78-80</td>
<td>Michigan City, Ind., Corps</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Wednesday</td>
<td>Proverbs 8-9</td>
<td>France and Belgium Territory</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Thursday</td>
<td>Ezekiel 19-24</td>
<td>Kansas City Citadel, Kan., Corps</td>
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<td>7 Friday</td>
<td>Luke 17-18</td>
<td>Decatur, Ill., Corps</td>
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<td>8 Saturday</td>
<td>Leviticus 3-4</td>
<td>Jacksonville, Ill., Corps</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 Sunday</td>
<td>Leviticus 13-15</td>
<td>Minneapolis, Minn., Harbor Light</td>
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<td>10 Monday</td>
<td>2 Kings 6-10</td>
<td>Milwaukee, Wis., Area Command</td>
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<td>11 Tuesday</td>
<td>Psalms 81-83</td>
<td>Indianapolis Fountain Square, Ind., Corps</td>
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<td>12 Wednesday</td>
<td>Proverbs 10</td>
<td>India Northern Territory</td>
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<td>13 Thursday</td>
<td>Ezekiel 25-30</td>
<td>Detroit Harbor Light, Mich., Corps</td>
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<td>14 Friday</td>
<td>Luke 19-20</td>
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<td>15 Saturday</td>
<td>Colossians 1-2</td>
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<td>16 Sunday</td>
<td>Leviticus 16-18</td>
<td>Jefferson City, Mo., Corps</td>
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<td>17 Monday</td>
<td>2 Kings 11-15</td>
<td>Noble Worship Center, Minn.</td>
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<td>18 Tuesday</td>
<td>Psalms 84-86</td>
<td>Great Lakes Harbor Light System</td>
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<td>19 Wednesday</td>
<td>Proverbs 11-12</td>
<td>Japan Territory</td>
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<td>20 Thursday</td>
<td>Ezekiel 31-36</td>
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<td>21 Friday</td>
<td>Luke 21-22</td>
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<tr>
<td>22 Saturday</td>
<td>Colossians 3-4</td>
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<td>23 Sunday</td>
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<td>27 Thursday</td>
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<td>28 Friday</td>
<td>Luke 23-24</td>
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<td>29 Saturday</td>
<td>1 Thessalonians 1-3</td>
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<td>30 Sunday</td>
<td>Leviticus 22-24</td>
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<td>Quincy, Ill., Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center</td>
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If you follow the prayer calendar during the year, you will have read through the Bible! ARC = Adult Rehabilitation Center

---Mustard Seeds---

The First Non-Traditional Session Sash Ever Used at Commissioning

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On the road again

If you spot a woman wearing a Salvation Army Motorcycle Ministry (TSAMM) vest zipping down the highway on a three-wheeler Harley Tri-Glide motorcycle, it’s Ellen Lloyd doing her favorite thing. The 70-year-old Nebraska resident and retired nurse is a Salvationist who is on a mission to travel the country and share the gospel of Jesus Christ.

“It’s very freeing,” Ellen said of being on the road. “You feel the breeze on your face. You smell the smells; you see the sights. You feel that God is there.”

Ellen, who is also part of the Christian Motorcyclists Association, generally rides during the nine months of the Midwest’s spring-through-fall seasons. But if a warm winter day should arrive, the cycle is out on the road.

“I had my bike out one day in January of this year. I went 50 miles that day,” Ellen said proudly. Ellen takes part in bike blessings and gives away Bibles at bike dealerships, repair shops, bike rallies and other bike-related events. “Any place where there are bikers,” she said.

According to Ellen, a bike blessing is a fairly straightforward process.

“You basically just talk to the person a bit and pray with them. You say, ‘Bless this bike; keep it safe; keep the driver safe; help them stay awake and alert,’” she explained.

Ellen usually travels in Midwestern states, but makes one long trip across the country each year. Texas was her destination in 2022— and New York the year before that. She goes to the annual famed Sturgis Motorcycle Rally in South Dakota every year.

Ellen rode her mother’s motorcycle when she was a teenager. It was not until she was 40 and she and her husband purchased a small motorcycle at a garage sale that she began to ride again. She joined TSAMM about five years ago.

She proudly wears her Salvation Army vest whenever she is out riding.

“It’s amazing how many people come up to me when they see the vest. They tell me things like, ‘The Salvation Army helped me as a child.’ I have heard that comment many times,” she said.

Ellen always has a traveling companion with her: a stuffed bear that rides on the back of her motorcycle. It acts as another point of connection with people.

“A lot of kids comment about the bear,” Ellen said. “If a parent is OK with it, I will let a kid sit on the bike. It makes the kid’s day.”

When she is not on the road, Ellen is active at the Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center in Omaha, Neb. She uses her sign-language skills to sign during the singing of certain hymns during worship services and is involved in women’s ministries. She also helps with the Angel Tree at Christmas.

Ellen enjoys making machine-sewn quilts (“I have made 10 in the last year,” she said.) One quilt recently sold for $300 at a fundraising auction with proceeds benefitting the Christian Motorcyclists Association. She has given other quilts to friends and family; another quilt went to a local veteran in need.

Ellen has no plans to stop riding her motorcycle anytime soon.

She concluded, “God has led me into a wonderful ministry, serving him through the motorcycle. And it brings me great joy.”

GO OUT INTO THE HIGHWAYS AND HEDGES, AND COMPEL THEM TO COME IN… LUKE 14:23

STURGIS, SD MISSION 2023
August 4-7, 2023
Cost—$200

For more information visit:
The Salvation Army MM Central, USA Facebook page or tsammcentral.org