



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)

Volume 55, Number 3

March 2025

Norfolk blessed with new facility

Ministry at the Norfolk, Neb., Corps has been expanded and further enabled by the completion of a new facility.

"The project was in the works for about 10 years," said Major Jesús Trejo, corps officer with his wife, Major Kelli Trejo. "When we arrived in 2018, we were very happy to participate in moving it forward. It was something we were really privileged and excited to do."

With a vision for increasing both social services and corps ministries, Majors Trejo worked closely with the city to procure an old post office that had been vacant for some time. After purchasing the building, which was already equipped with amenities such as loading docks that would facilitate receiving donations, the inside

was a blank canvas that could be designed to the corps needs.

"One of the greatest needs for us was more space in order to meet the increasing needs of our community," Major Jesús said. "When we found out about the post office building, we were pleased with the size and the potential. It lent itself really well to be able to do what we wanted to do."

The new building features a large commercial kitchen that allows the corps to feed more people through their weekday lunch program as well as to prepare food more comfortably and efficiently. Social services staff also are able to receive, store and distribute more food through the pantry to families in need.

The modern worship center serves as a place for the corps and community to gather on Sundays



Major Kelli Trejo cuts the ribbon, held by Advisory Board Chairperson Faythe Petersen and Western Divisional Commander Major Scott Shelbourn, at the opening of the new Norfolk, Neb., Corps. Major Jesús Trejo on left of Major Kelli.

and throughout the week. Classrooms provide additional spaces for Bible study and other weekly ministries, and for the first time, the corps has recreation spaces including a gymnasium which will be used for their growing afterschool program, character-building groups, archery, pickle-

ball, and young adult fellowship focused on supporting and mentoring high school and college kids.

"We are excited because for the first time ever we have a true community center," said the major. "God opened the doors, and it is such a blessing."

General Paul Rader promoted to Glory

General Paul Rader, The Salvation Army's 15th beloved international leader, was promoted to Glory on January 18, 2025.

He was General from 1994 to 1999. Earlier he had served as Chief Secretary in Korea Territory (1977-1984) and USA Eastern Territory (1989) and as Territorial Commander in USA Western Territory (1989-1994). In retirement, he served as President of Asbury University in Wilmore, Ky. (2000-2006).

General Rader's dynamic ministry and visionary leadership had a tremendous influence around the world. He will be remembered for his preaching, teaching and sterling example of Salvationism.

General Lyndon Buckingham paid tribute to him, saying, "General Paul Rader was a devoted servant and leader. I salute his unwavering commitment to his calling, his unrelenting vision for the growth of The Salvation Army and the sharing of the gospel to the furthest reaches of the globe."



The Chief of the Staff Commissioner Edward Hill added, "General Paul Rader was a dynamic and engaging leader who inspired me and countless other officers of my generation. I thank God for the power of his preaching and teaching."

The global Salvation Army family is asked to hold Commissioner Kay Rader and their family in prayer.

From an IHQ Communications bulletin

Bringing people together

Reggie Brooks never imagined himself as a worship leader. In fact, when he was first invited to join the Rockford Temple, Ill., Corps praise team, he couldn't play an instrument and didn't think he could sing very well. He wouldn't have believed that more than a decade later, he would be the director of contemporary music and audio production for the Central Territory and leader of the praise band Of Dust, but that's exactly what God has called and equipped him to do.

"By the grace of God I keep finding myself in these positions," he said with a laugh. "This is my first job within a Christian organization. I love being able to serve the Lord freely."

In his role at Territorial Headquarters (THQ), Reggie is dedicated to



Leading worship at the ONE Conference

bringing people together to lead authentic worship through the Territorial Worship Collective (TWC) and helping others bring their vision for recordings to life by using his skills in audio production.

Raised in a large extended family

Continued on page 2



Reggie and the TWC lead worship during commissioning weekend.

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Where do I belong?

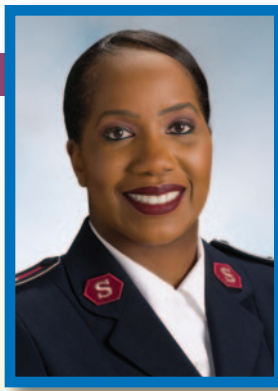
by Lt. Colonel Johanna Pook
Territorial Secretary for Program

One of the questions we are often asked when meeting new people is, "Where are you from?" or "Where do you belong?" I don't know about you, but I often find myself unsure of what to say, as I have moved frequently since childhood. Now, as an officer, whenever I return to the place where I grew up, people often say to me, "Oh, you're not from here," and I have to clarify: "Yes, I am from here! I grew up here! I belong here!"

But what's the problem? The issue is because I haven't lived in that area for so long, it feels as though I

no longer belong or fit in with the people I grew up with. Many of us lead nomadic lives, moving from one place to another. As we go through the natural stages of life—evolving and growing—we can't help but encounter changes that affect our sense of belonging.

This constant change keeps us searching for places, groups or connections where we feel we belong. But here's the hard truth: just when we think we've found where we belong, changes come along, throwing us off balance. We are then left needing to recalibrate and find a sense of belonging once again.



Despite this, I am reminded of an unchanging truth: though we and our circumstances change, we serve a good God who remains the same yesterday, today, and forever. Hallelujah! This means that no matter how out of place we may feel at times, when we belong to Him, He is our solid foundation and ultimate source of belonging.

I don't know about you, but I'm excited about what's coming in the months ahead for our corps, divisions, and territory, including our General's Congress, Belonging! It

will give incredible opportunities to build community, foster relationships and create a sense of belonging.

Webster's Dictionary defines belonging as "possession; close relationship." Let us ensure that we cultivate a close relationship with God above all else. When we do that, everything else will fall into place—in His time and in His way.

When we gather, things may look and feel different. Our time together might be longer than usual. Some songs may be new. People may seem unfamiliar. You might even feel a bit out of place or unsettled by it all. However, don't lose sight of this: we are God's people, and ultimately, we belong to Him.

Worshipping with anticipation and hope

by Natalie Shiels

"The most important sound on a Sunday morning is the sound of the congregation worshipping alongside the worship team," said Simon Gough, contemporary music specialist for the Canada and Bermuda Territory and leader of the territorial worship band NEON.

At the North American Worship Leaders Conference, themed "Anticipation and Hope," leaders reiterated throughout the event the importance of leading worship with humility and intention. This year's conference held in the Eastern Territory brought together 75 delegates, including 11 Salvationists from the Central Territory. Each person was chosen by their divisional and territorial music leaders, providing an opportunity to grow in their leadership skills and spiritual life in order to meet the needs of their corps.

John Copeland, director of Camp Tecumseh in New Jersey, started the weekend by talking about the importance of hope and how cynicism can derail a worship leader's vision for their ministry. The next meetings were led by Callum McKenna, deputy worship pastor at the Bromley Corps in London, England. He spoke on the dimensions of worship, explaining how a worship leader must "look up, get

down, press in, and move out." He emphasized the important balance of a leader's calling, competency and character and how these impact ministry effectiveness.

The conference ended with a message from Erin Morgan, a member of the Spiritual Life Department in the Eastern Territory, who encouraged delegates to focus on Jesus. She said, "You will get wherever your eyes are focused. So, make sure you're looking at the right person."

Throughout the weekend, delegates participated in worship and attended breakout groups taught by worship leaders Sheena Marquis, Victor Morales, Josh Powell, Kevin Larsson, Carlos Navarro and Reggie Brooks. The sessions covered a wide range of topics including leading intentionally.

The conference was an incredible opportunity to connect and worship with people from other territories and backgrounds. Delegates were



The Central Territory delegates to the North American Worship Leaders Conference

able to collaborate to come up with creative solutions for the things they were seeing in their corps, personal

challenges and more, leading to growth and greater connections across the five territories.

Reggie Brooks

Continued from page 1

led by minister grandparents, Reggie grew up in church. When his grandparents' congregation began meeting in the Rockford Temple Corps, it was not long before the extended family became involved in corps programs and activities. Because his grandparents' congregation was Spanish-speaking, many from the younger generation spent time with the English-speaking corps congregation.

"Slowly through the years, they integrated into the corps," he said. "Many of my aunts, uncles and cousins became soldiers, and some officers."

For several years, Reggie enjoyed attending the corps with his family, but he began to wrestle with his faith as a young teen. He stepped away from church but quickly found himself bored and lonely.

"I missed my cousins. When I asked to hang out with them, they said come back to church," he said, smiling at the memory.

Hanging around the corps, Reggie

was often present when the praise team practiced, but he just listened and waited for his cousin, Scottie Rodriguez (currently a cadet at the College for Officer Training), to finish rehearsal so they could play in the gym. But God was at work and began to use music to connect Reggie with Himself.

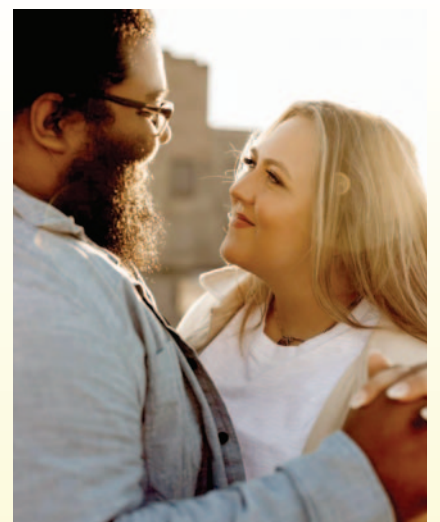
"I was invited to sing with them one night," Reggie said. "I learned that I love music. I love to sing, and I wanted to know more about God."

By the time he was 14, Reggie began to get serious about his faith. He attended the intensive discipleship group Band of Survivors twice and gave his life fully to Christ while attending Wonderland Camp one summer.

"I've never looked back," he said about the decision.

Now in a position of leadership that allows him to help develop praise teams and worship leaders throughout the territory, Reggie feels he has found where he belongs and is doing what God designed him to do.

"Whatever I can do to put people in



Reggie with his wife, Corrina

a place to share their authentic worship to the Lord, I want to do that," he concluded. "It's easy to sing a song or be a musician and just do what you're asked to do, but it's another thing to find the reason behind it. That's the impact I want to have."

If you're interested in learning more about leading worship or want to join the Territorial Worship Collective, reach out to Reggie Brooks, Jr.



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Making a difference in the world—together

Seeing a social media post about The Salvation Army's International Social Justice Girls (ISJG), Erin McDonald instantly knew she wanted to be part of it.

"It's so important there is a space in The Salvation Army where young women are given the opportunity to grow and learn from each other and be encouraged to use their voices in a world where we are so often discouraged from doing that," said Erin, 25.

Erin and Anna Tooley are the Central Territory's new representatives on ISJG, a group launched in 2021 to encourage young Salvationist women to be advocates for women's issues. Both come from families with Salvation Army roots and are very involved in their corps. Erin is a soldier at the Grand Rapids Fulton Heights Citadel, Mich., Corps, while Anna is a soldier at the Norridge Citadel, Ill., Corps.

"The experience of being in contact with girls from around the world is really cool," said Anna, 20, of meeting via Zoom with the 30 members of the ISJG.

at the Muskegon Civic Theatre and has run social media and project management for an independent studio in Kalamazoo, Mich.



Anna, ready to head to college

Using her training in design, she helped prepare an ISJG project for the annual international 16 Days of Activism campaign to battle violence against women and girls. She also worked on the International Day of the Girl.

Erin feels her strong sense of right and wrong makes her a good addition to ISJG.

"Even though I am very introverted, I have always had a strong sense of justice," she said. "I am also an inquisitive person. One of the best ways to learn about another person's culture or ideology is being able to sit down and have a

conversation with them; learn from them."

Anna is majoring in history at Greenville University and hopes to make the world a better place for women.

"Feminist topics are really important to me," Anna said, citing studies that show large discrepancies between men and women in employment and education.

"I've done a lot of research into gaps there," Anna said. "I know globally there is a problem with women and education, as men have more access to it. I'd like to be part of a group that can help change that. Sometimes, you can't change much as an individual—but you can change a lot as a group."

Along with ISJG, Anna has a full schedule of classes, plays in her university's marching and jazz bands, serves as secretary for the college theater's board of directors and is part of an environmental hiking club that removes trash left on trails.

Researching and working with others are things Anna looks forward to



Erin, far right, with friends Amanda Mercado and Brie Simmons in 2023

doing for ISJG. She has worked on an event focusing on "The Girl Child" for the upcoming 69th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women at United Nations Headquarters in New York in March. As part of ISJG, she and Erin will both attend.

"I am willing to go down rabbit holes, exploring topics, being curious and working hard to get an answer," Anna said.

She also believes her faith will be an asset.

"I try and live by what I believe, and I believe we are supposed to

love others," Anna said. "I try to be kind to people and see they are made in God's image. I might be the only 'Jesus' that person sees that day."

Major Katherine Clausell, Central territorial social justice and city mission secretary and one of ISJG's advisors, said, "I am confident that Anna and Erin will represent the Central Territory well. This is a tremendous opportunity for them to be a part of a global community of young women who are passionate about making a positive impact on matters of injustice."



Erin McDonald meets with corps officer Captain Thomas Moffitt.

Erin concurred, saying, "We have young women circumnavigating the globe from California to Australia and New Zealand. There is something beautiful we can learn from sitting down and listening to other people's perspectives."

Holding a triple-major bachelor's degree in design and technology, acting and directing and dramaturgy from North Central College in Naperville, Ill., Erin recently worked



Anna Tooley plays in the Norridge Citadel, Ill., Corps. band with her brother, Justin.

USA CENTRAL TERRITORY

BELONGING

UNITED IN PRAYER **2025**

WEEKLY PRAYER TOPICS

"I call on you, O God, for you will answer me; give ear to me and hear my prayer." Psalm 17:6

Week of March 2nd:
Emergency Disaster Services Emotional and Spiritual Care

Observing Lent as...

Week of March 9th:
Easter People with Joy

Week of March 16th:
Easter People who are Overcomers though Christ

Week of March 23rd:
Easter People who are Attentive and Mindful

Week of March 30th:
Easter People who are Good Stewards

I commit to...

- Praying for **BELONGING 2025**.
- Praying for the different programs and ministries of The Salvation Army.
- Praying for those entering our doors to feel like they BELONG.
- Praying for myself and my relationship with Christ.

Signature _____

Date _____

Rising Stars goes live!

Belonging Congress to showcase the very best

Five years after its debut, Rising Stars is going live! Don't miss your chance to participate in this exciting event or to encourage our up-and-coming music and creative arts leaders. Come out and see the Central Territory's premier musicians and performers from each division at the Belonging Congress in June.

"Rising Stars is an incredible opportunity for musicians and artists to grow in their skills and confidence, no matter where they are in their journey," said Beth Malovance, assistant territorial music and creative arts ministries secretary. "It's not about competing—it's about learning, creating, and offering our best to God through worship."

First held in 2020, Rising Stars began as an online solo exhibition for musicians to display their talent and skill in a number of instrumental and vocal categories. Since then, it has expanded to include drama, dance, and group performances in addition to solos. Rising Stars has come to serve as a vital resource, equipping participants to grow and become confident in their abilities,

with the ultimate aim of enhancing the worship experience through vibrant, creative expressions of faith in every corps and center of the Central Territory.

Rising Stars features the following categories, encompassing beginners to advanced level performers:

Musical Performance Solo: Four Levels

- brass
- vocal
- percussion
- piano

Creative Arts Solo: Two Levels

- dance
- drama monologue

Musical Performance Group

- beginner band
- youth band
- singing company
- youth choir

Creative Arts Group: Two Levels

- dance ensemble
- drama troupe



Leading up to the Belonging Congress, Salvationists are encouraged to showcase their gifts and talents in a divisional round of selection. Participant performance requirements for each category and level, including age ranges, required pieces/selections, uniforms and time limits, along with detailed scoring guidelines for adjudicators, will ensure consistency of assessment across the board.

Each division will choose the top soloist or ensemble in each category and level. These outstanding performers will be invited to participate in the territorial round at the Congress on Saturday, June 7, where delegates will have the opportunity to

watch, listen, and encourage the Central Territory's finest talent. An awards ceremony will be held prior to the evening meeting.

"I'd love to see more people join us in this journey to develop their gifts and be part of a community that celebrates creativity and faith," concluded Beth. "Whether you're just starting out or have been performing for years, there's a place for you in Rising Stars!"

For more information, visit samusiccentral.org/rising-stars

To register for the Belonging Conference and Congress, visit www.belonging2025.org

THE SALVATION ARMY USA CENTRAL TERRITORY

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Saturday
APRIL 5
6:30pm



This summer the Central Territory is sending three teams of young adults, ages 18-29, to serve with Salvationists in ministry in the Kenya East Territory, Mexico Territory, and for the first time in Slovakia (part of the Netherlands, Czech Republic, and Slovakia Territory).

During this eight-week leadership and discipleship program, team members will learn to become cultural learners, practice partnership and engage in matters of justice.

Please join us in praying for the young adults as they prepare to serve God through SMT, and come see their sendoff at the Belonging Congress in June.

To learn more about SMT, visit centralmissions.org

Kenya East

Nyakuar Kuon*
Jessica Perez
Annalise Reinier
Lydia Robinson

Mexico

Joshua Walker*
David Bazan
Dominique Reinier
Leslie Torres

Slovakia

Annelyse Spencer*
Meosha Mason
Carlos Trejo

* Leader

Time for a checkup?

by Mark Bender

I don't like going to the doctor's office. I'm not sure why. Maybe it's the testing, the time involved, or the possibility of finding out I'm not as healthy as I think. But it's so important.

God desires us to grow spiritually, and His Word encourages personal examination as an element of growth. For instance, Psalm 139:23-24 says, "Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my concerns. See if there is any offensive way in me; lead me in the everlasting way."

When we pay attention to our spiritual health and ask the Holy Spirit to make us more like Jesus, we can grow both personally and together as a body of believers. Assessing where we are individually in the development of our faith also is key.

I came across a simple tool called the "Spiritual Growth Assessment Process" (Lifeway), which looks at six areas of spiritual discipline and gives simple but effectual ideas to help us:



Abide in Christ

- Attend a corporate worship experience weekly.
- Set aside a specific time and location for a regular quiet time with God.
- Make a list of things that hinder your spiritual growth and seek God's help to remove them.

Live in the Word

- Memorize one scripture verse each week.

- Take notes from the sermon or Bible study and consider personal application.
- Teach or participate in an ongoing small group Bible study.

Pray in Faith

- Participate in your corps' prayer ministry.
- Lead a small group study related to praying in faith.
- Journal your prayers and record God's answers.

Fellowship with Believers

- Ask each family member or friend to identify ways you can improve your relationship.
- Ask God to help you forgive people who have hurt you.
- Attend a retreat or workshop on marriage or parenting.

Witness to the World

- Write your testimony and practice sharing it.
- Make a list of non-believers you know and pray regularly for their salvation.



- Participate in an evangelistic outreach.

Minister to Others

- Complete a spiritual gifts inventory.
- Volunteer for a ministry in your corps where you can use your gifts.
- Send encouraging notes to your corps officers and employees.

When we are growing personally, we can contribute to the growth and health of our corps congregations.

To download this and other spiritual life resources, go to: salarmycentral.org/cacm/resources/

Acting in obedience

Where do I fit in? How do I find where I belong here? What can I contribute? These are all questions people often ask when visiting a church.

Helping people discover where and how they belong in a body of believers is a passion of Major Barb Owen, Mt. Clemens, Mich., Corps officer with her husband, Lt. Robert Owen. So much so that the Mt. Clemens Corps sent the largest delegation from a single corps to the first Ignite the Spirit of Leadership weekend last fall.

"I once had a divisional commander say that your budget reflects your vision," she said. "That stuck with me. Whenever possible, we put it in the budget to do things like this. We want to invest in our people."

The corps' delegation to Ignite included both longtime corps members and more recent additions to the congregation.

"It's also taking chances on people," said Major Barb. "Sometimes we think we know what people need or who needs it, but that person you didn't consider for a role might just be the one."

Throughout the Spirit-filled weekend the Mt. Clemens delegation participated in the lay leadership track, which focused on discipleship and Bible study. For Louis Austin, who has served as the corps praise team leader for nearly two years, the weekend was an opportunity to make connections and learn new skills, such as how to pray with seekers at the altar.



Louis Austin leads the praise team.

"Being on the praise team has helped me so much with my faith and developing my character," he said.

Frances Holmes and Lisa Lemieux returned from Ignite with resolve to embrace their calling to service. Recently, they were installed as corps sergeant-major and recovery sergeant, respectively.

"The leaders were awesome," said Frances. "It confirmed that this is my home—where God wants me to be, how I can be of service to Him, and how I can be of service to all the people we come into contact with."



Frances Holmes and Lisa Lemieux lead a weekly restoration meeting.



The Mt. Clemens, Mich., Corps delegation to Ignite

As someone who has gone through addiction and recovery, Lisa is suited to her new role in corps ministry. The recovery sergeant is an essential part of corps leadership in Mt. Clemens as much of the congregation consists of those who com-

pleted the Harbor Light program.

"About half of our delegates to Ignite are stepping into leadership roles," Major Barb concluded. "It helped to solidify their role in our church."

ALL WE NEED



A new podcast focusing on spiritual health

Each month a guest joins Territorial Commander Commissioner Evie Diaz to discuss the Central Territory's priorities of spiritual life, youth or leadership development.

Episode II: A Conversation with Mark Bender about Spiritually Healthy Corps

Listen and subscribe through your favorite podcast app.

His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. — 2 Peter 1:3 (NIV)

A life unexpected

The improbable story of how Lts. Adam and Amanda Hines became officers

by Craig Dirkes

Lts. Adam and Amanda Hines never dreamed they would become Salvation Army officers. They expected to raise their family in the small town of Manly, Iowa, located near the Minnesota border. They met there in 2005 while Adam was teaching middle and high school social studies, and Amanda was pursuing a teaching degree after leaving her military career in nursing. As part of Amanda's education, she had to observe Adam teaching for 10 hours.

"I ended up observing him for 30 hours," Lt. Amanda said with a laugh.

They fell in love and married two years later. As they dreamed about their future, their plans did not include The Salvation Army. They knew almost nothing about it.

I was captivated by The Salvation Army's mission. I just knew it is where we belonged. —Lt. Amanda

Just months after Adam and Amanda were married, their dreams turned into a nightmare when Amanda was diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). She would spend the next five years paralyzed by anxiety.

"I couldn't go to the grocery store without having a panic attack. The doctors thought I had extreme mental illness," recalled Lt. Amanda, who was homebound much of the time she was raising their children, now 15, 16 and 18. Amanda also has a daughter, 22, who recently graduated from college.

Thankfully, a surprising breakthrough occurred in 2013 when Amanda came down with influenza. While treating her for the ailment, doctors discovered she had lupus—a disease in which Amanda's immune system was attacking her own tissues and organs, including her brain. After five years of anguish, Amanda and Adam were relieved to learn that lupus, which is highly treatable, had been the cause of Amanda's issues, not PTSD.

As part of Amanda's treatment, doctors advised her to volunteer to reacclimate to the outside world. Amanda's mom had volunteered at the Mason City, Iowa, Corps and sug-

gested she try it. The corps offered plenty of opportunities for involvement as it had a pantry, youth programs, community services, plus Sunday morning worship.

"Until that point, I had no idea The Salvation Army was a church," Lt. Amanda said. "Members of Salvation Army corps don't just go to church, they live out their faith every day."

"I was captivated by The Salvation Army's mission. I just knew it is where we belonged," said Lt. Amanda, who had been attending a different church with Adam for several years.

Adam and Amanda soon became regular members of the Mason City Corps. Eventually, they began directing the youth programs offered there.

"I loved the fact that at The Salvation Army, you can't separate the teaching from the doing," Lt. Adam said.

The couple's decision to become officers began to take shape at a retreat in 2016. One of the main speakers shared about leaving her teaching career to become an officer and the fulfillment she'd found. Her story resonated with Adam, who had been a teacher for 12 years. He liked the idea of becoming an officer but was conflicted about leaving his career. Amanda, however, was all-in on becoming an officer. She'd felt called to become a minister many years earlier, but her idea was shot down by the wife of a local deacon who told her that women aren't allowed to preach.

The Salvation Army is the perfect place to put theory and practice together for God's glory. You can't do it any clearer. —Lt. Adam

"The lady told me that maybe I could be a great pastor's wife someday. So, I wrote off the idea," recalled Lt. Amanda, who was thrilled to find out that gender equality has been central to The Salvation Army since its founding.

Amanda was patient with Adam as he pondered the idea of becoming an officer. Eventually, he surrendered to God's calling.

"The Salvation Army is the perfect place to put theory and practice together for God's



Lts. Amanda and Adam Hines

glory," Lt. Adam said. "You can't do it any clearer."

The Hines entered the College for Officer Training in Chicago in 2020. Upon being commissioned in 2022, they were appointed to lead the Lakewood Temple Corps in Minneapolis, Minn., where they still serve today.

"We love where we landed," Lt. Amanda said. "We could not have chosen a place where we would be happier."

During the past few years, the Hines have focused their time and energy on boosting the outreach programs offered by the corps.

They've held SA Gaming events which draw dozens of local youth to play video games together.

"Our focus is building relationships and community, fostering trust and providing a safe place for wherever they are in their lives," said Lt. Amanda. "We see a great combination of new and regular attendees, and each session brings new connections."

In addition to video games, the Hines have seen an increased interest in board and tabletop games, and foosball has grown in popularity. One of the unique features of the game nights are Q&A boards where gamers can ask questions about what's on their minds; sometimes the questions are faith-related which gives an opportunity for conversation about God.

We were meant to become officers later in life because of everything God did to prepare us for it. —Lt. Amanda

Another addition to the corps schedule has been a contemporary worship service on Saturday nights. It offers a dynamic and inclusive approach to complement the traditional Sunday morning service, effectively reaching out to new demographics that may be underserved or unengaged by the more conventional/traditional worship formats.

This alternative timing and style create an inviting atmosphere for individuals who may have scheduling conflicts on Sundays, such as young families, professionals, and those in-



Lt. Adam takes part in a divisional gaming outreach event.

volved in various weekend activities. By incorporating modern music, relevant messages, and a more casual setting, the contemporary service resonates with younger generations and those seeking a fresh, relatable expression of faith. Additionally, it fosters a sense of community and connection, encouraging those who attend to invite friends or family who might be hesitant to attend a traditional service.

"Ultimately, this blend of worship styles enriches the corps' overall outreach efforts, making it more accessible and appealing to a diverse array of individuals to enhance spiritual growth and community engagement," said Lt. Amanda.

In the community, the Hines have enhanced relationship-building with local schools, law enforcement, and faith leaders.

Lt. Amanda is very engaged in a group of leaders from churches and faith-based organizations who attend a monthly meeting with the mayor of Maplewood. As part of another group of faith leaders connected with the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office, she volunteers as a chaplain and meets monthly with the other pastors who serve as chaplains.

There are gaps in our community, and we can fill them when we work together, when we 'Go and do something.'
—Lt. Adam

"Building these relationships has given us direct connections to programs for clients, as well as partnerships with our community events," said Lt. Amanda.

For instance, members of the Lions Club volunteer at the corps' coat distribution and hold



The Hines family is overjoyed to receive their first appointment to lead the Minneapolis, Minn., Lakewood Temple Corps.

their annual chili dinner fundraiser at the corps. The partnership and connection with a local women's shelter has brought participants to the corps' free music lesson program. Being on the YMCA Board has allowed Lt. Adam to share community events quickly with some of the most vulnerable people in the community. Lt. Amanda serves on the Maplewood Police Department's Multicultural Advisory Committee which meets monthly and works to build connections and trust between law enforcement and the community, specifically with immigrants, people of color, indigenous people and faith communities.

"This connection has allowed us to be a voice for the people we serve with our local government and build beneficial connections with public safety," explained Lt. Amanda.



Lt. Amanda shares her testimony during Commissioning weekend in 2022.

The Hines say they have no regrets about the life-altering decision they made to become officers and feel that God's timing is perfect.

"We were meant to become officers later in life because of everything God did to prepare us for it," Lt. Amanda said. "My ministry has been enhanced so much by all of the trials I've gone through."

When Lt. Adam reflects on his decision to become an officer, he recalls a conversation between William Booth and his son, Bramwell. According to the story, William was troubled by the poor he saw who slept on the bridges and urged his son Bramwell to "Go and do something."

Lt. Adam concluded, "There are gaps in our community, and we can fill them when we work together, when we 'Go and do something.'"



The Hines family: Lts. Amanda and Adam with Elizabeth, Averie, Isabella and James

Help when disaster hits

"I live to solve problems," Jacob Heiser said. "I am a very hands-on person—so when I go out on the road, I am out setting up the shelter tent; I am setting up the generators."

Jacob began his work as the territorial disaster trainer and resource manager for emergency disaster services (EDS) in January 2024. He is based in Rockford, Ill., at the new 54,000-square-foot EDS warehouse that is under construction.

"Jacob has been an amazing addition to the team. He is a true emergency responder at heart," said Kevin Ellers, then territorial EDS director.

"He has the core characteristics essential to help the territory grow a stronger EDS program. Qualities such

as flexibility, creativity and the ability to go into chaos and help bring order are essential."

In the past year, Jacob has traveled around the Midwest, due to flooding and tornado damage. He also deployed recovery equipment and teams to Florida and North Carolina after Hurricanes Helene and Milton.

When a disaster hits, Jacob said he goes straight to the logistical side of his brain.

"I come into a situation, spend a few minutes and come up with a solution. First, I look at the unmet needs. Then I look at the equipment that's needed, the number of volunteers, etc., and bring everything to the table. We want the local team to



Jacob at Central Territorial Headquarters

respond first. If it is larger than what they can handle, we step in from a territorial level," he said.

Jacob is enthusiastic about the new warehouse in Rockford that will allow for larger training operations and many more service vehicles.

"I look forward to developing training aspects with all of the new specialized equipment and components and having a warehouse to support that equipment. We have to do bigger and better training."

Jacob uses some of his fabrication and design skills to recycle EDS vehicles.

"I have a unit from Springfield, where they got a new canteen kitchen vehicle. We have their old canteen, and I am helping to refurbish that into a communications rig," he said.

After working as a part-time auxiliary police officer for more than 20 years and receiving disaster training there, Jacob volunteered with a Salvation Army EDS team for 10 years. He

then worked for five years as operations manager at the Winnebago County Area Coordinator's Office in Rockford, Ill., until his current full-time position opened at Central Territorial Headquarters.

While volunteering with EDS, Jacob assisted when the roof collapsed on the Apollo Theatre in Belvidere, Ill., one stormy spring evening in 2023. The theater was just blocks from his home.

"I was out there within four minutes," he recalled. "I was helping pull people out of the building. I sat out in the front with about six people, waiting for ambulances."

Everyone is equal when a disaster strikes, Jacob said.

"We could be in a multi-million-dollar [home] area. It doesn't matter. Everyone needs help during those times," he said. "We give people some warm food, give them water. Some need emotional and spiritual care as well. We are there to help, regardless of their story."



Surveying the damage after tornadoes hit Goreville, Ill., in 2024

New warehouse enhances disaster services

The Central Territory's Emergency Disaster Services (EDS) has established its first territorial warehouse to serve as a hub for all things EDS in the Midwest. Located in Rockford, Ill., it's the largest of three EDS warehouses in the Central Territory funded by a national grant that will help enhance preparation and response to natural disasters in the Midwest and beyond.

"The locations of the warehouses are very strategic," said Kevin Ellers, then territorial EDS director who has overseen the establishment of divisional warehouses in St. Louis, Mo., and Minneapolis, Minn., as well. "Between the three, they provide good coverage, not just for distribution or

service, but also for making connections and communicating with other organizations."

The Rockford warehouse serves as a location for storing, sorting and distributing goods and houses large-scale disaster vehicles and equipment such as a shower trailer. Its expansive capabilities were recently seen during the response to Hurricanes Helene and Milton, when donations were accepted from individuals who purchased items from an Amazon Wish List which were then sorted, packed and delivered to affected locations for distribution.

"We were able to contribute to the relief effort by staging product here and then supplying it to the South,"

said Kevin, adding that the new territorial warehouse also enabled them to accept larger donations, such as semi-trailer loads, which in the past wasn't possible due to limited space.

In addition to providing ample room for storing goods and housing vehicles and equipment, the Rockford warehouse is becoming a hub for training exercises. The large parking area is ideal for staging disaster scenarios to give volunteers hands-on opportunities to practice response skills.

"The vision is that this will be a really vibrant center for the whole Mid-



Jacob Heiser, EDS resource manager, shows off a piece of heavy equipment stored at the Rockford warehouse.

west," said Kevin. "We're building a really strong team that can go out and support divisional teams. We are planning to do trainings there so we will have several robust teams for feeding, clean up and spiritual care."

The warehouse also helps to keep volunteers engaged throughout the year, especially during "blue sky" times, or periods with fewer disasters to respond to, when parts of the facility can be used for other Salvation Army services like food drives and holiday distribution.

"One thing we're trying to do is during blue sky times, getting people involved in stuff like Christmas distributions," he said. "Last year we used the parking lot for that and our SATERN (Salvation Army Team Emergency Radio Network) guys came out and helped walk the families through. They got to see a different part of The Salvation Army, and they loved it!"

Visit edscentral.org to learn more about emergency disaster services



A birds' eye view inside the spacious new EDS warehouse which will enable ministry year-round.

How I belong



Janel Zuranski
Aurora, Ill.

What do you do with The Salvation Army?

My two dogs, Moose and Gossamer, are HOPE Animal Assisted Crisis Response Canines. With Salvation Army emotional and spiritual care (ESC) members, our teams attend training and help people during disasters and crises.

Why do you do it?

The combination of ESC chaplains and canine support is powerful. Witnessing people in emotional distress being calmed and comforted by dogs, then seeing them listened to and deeply heard by chaplains is beautiful and heartwarming.

What's the best part about volunteering?

Hearing people's stories about struggle, faith and growth is inspiring.

How did you become involved with the Army?

My initial introduction to The Salvation Army was at the Midland Divisional Emergency Disaster Services (EDS) Summit in Missouri. Kevin Ellers taught essential information and skills for deployment, along with ways to support the people we serve, our partners and ourselves. From there, with the unwavering support of Micheal Stack in EDS, we have built a HOPE training module in Litmos, grown relationships with Salvation Army members, and done great service work together.

What are you currently reading?

The Wisdom Pattern by Richard Rohr, and my husband and I are studying *Breathing Under Water* also by Rohr.

What lifts you up?

The dogs and I walk in the forest regularly. Gossamer, my Zen Master, insists that we slow down, listen, and sniff the world. Usually, I pick up a small item—an acorn, rock, leaf, twig—and contemplate its beauty and how nature reflects God.

What's your favorite Bible verse?

"Your hair is like a flock of goats." Song of Solomon 4:1 has amused my family since our daughter was young.

If you could have an unlimited supply of one thing, what would it be?

Patience, for sure. If I could have two, add grace, for myself and those around me.

Navigating the road to recovery

Mackenzie Edwards is new to The

Salvation Army, having just started her role last August as territorial long-term recovery specialist—a brand new position—for emergency disaster services (EDS).

"There has been a lot of learning so far," Mackenzie said. "My primary objective right now is to get a firm foundation of The Salvation Army and its structure, and the ways it is embedded in communities."

She is based in Springfield, Mo., where she lives with her husband, Drew, and their border collie, Bleu.

"Mackenzie has been a great addition to the team and brings new perspectives for us to consider, as we seek to build a strong long-term recovery program in the Central Territory," said Kevin Ellers, then territorial EDS director. "This will facilitate coordination across divisional lines and help liaison with NHQ for funding, statistics, and monitoring progress. EDS will be working closely with the divisions to provide expertise and support to the corps, social services and service extension programs following disaster impacted communities."

A Georgia native, Mackenzie received her undergraduate degree in public health from Georgia College and State University and got her master's degree in social work from the University of Georgia.

"I have always been drawn to improving access to health and human services within communities," she said. "But I don't think I realized until graduate school how passionate I was about community development."

Prior to getting her degrees, Mackenzie held several positions working with people from different socioeconomic statuses. She was a summer camp counselor; worked at an orphanage in Honduras as part of a mission trip in her junior year of college; and spent three months in Costa Rica, as part of an internship requirement for her public health degree. She also worked as a preschool paraprofessional in her hometown of Valdosta, Ga.

She says those roles taught her about human nature.



Mackenzie and her husband, Drew

"It was the culmination of these experiences with diverse populations, paired with my faith, that led me to the belief that people generally want to feel safe, known, and loved. The same feeling my relationship with God gives me," Mackenzie said. "Ultimately, it is this belief that motivated me to pursue a master's degree in social work."

Her first job after graduate school was with Convoy of Hope and their international disaster services department. Working there for seven years, she eventually became a humanitarian response manager.

Keeping calm when disaster strikes is important, Mackenzie said.

"I desire to have a presence that is calm and collected and puts people at ease," she said. "That is a skill I want to continue to hone."

Mackenzie has helped with disaster response in various parts of the world, including in the Bahamas after Hurricane Dorian, and assisting with drought relief and emergency food relief in Kenya.

"Anyone who works in disasters—both domestic and international—can tell you it requires adaptability and flexibility. There will be times when I am not going to know everything. You need to give yourself grace with making the best decisions you can with the information you have available at the time a decision is required," she said.

Mackenzie will be working with other territories to build capacity, curriculum and resources and train divisional staff and volunteers.

"The goal is to create a combination of new in-person and online training curriculum to better equip the divisions for effective long-term recovery efforts," concluded Kevin.



Mackenzie helps with drought and emergency food relief in Kenya.

Stitching up a broken heart

Since 2015, Hazel DeSaulnier, a soldier at the Royal Oak Citadel, Mich., Corps, has made nearly 2,000 dresses for young girls in other countries.

Having learned to sew in her youth, she joined a project nearly 10 years ago for the Dress A Girl Around the World program which is part of Hope 4 Women International.

"I thought it would be a one-time deal," Hazel recalled. "But then I felt a calm come over me for the first time since my daughter left."

Her daughter left home abruptly in 2009 at age 22, moving to California. After marrying, she has only been in touch sporadically with family. Hazel now has a 12-year-old granddaughter she's only met once, during a brief visit when the child was 3.

God has used sewing as a way for Hazel to heal from that pain and to bless others.

"I realized I could help little girls around the world, even though I could not help my own granddaughter," she said.

Hazel now sews on her own and shares the dresses with Salvation



Colonel Anne Kiama with some dresses for girls in the Kenya East Territory.

Army programs worldwide. Her husband, Albert, set up an area with several sewing machines in their home's basement. Here, Hazel listens to Family Life Radio and Christian music while her sewing machines hum away.

Dresses are made in a sundress-style, with ruffles at the bottom.

With no buttons or zippers, they are easy for the girls to slip on over their heads. As Hazel measures and cuts the colorful fabric for each dress, she prays for the girl who will wear it.

"I pray that she will be safe from harm and that

she learns about God," Hazel said.

She searches for fabric at garage sales and second-hand stores and prays that the venue will have material for her to use. She always finds what she needs.

"God answers prayer," Hazel said.

In the fall, Colonel Anne Kiama took 100 of Hazel's dresses back to the Kenya East Territory after speaking at the Abide women's conference. Dresses also have been shipped to Malaysia, Kenya and the Dominican Republic by the Territorial World Missions Department.

Most recently, Lt. Colonel Darlene Harvey, territorial officer resource and development secretary, took 100 dresses to Peru when she spoke at a women's ministries camp in the South America West Territory. After her session, women were invited to take a dress to bless a child in their life.

"I think Hazel's story is inspirational," Lt. Colonel Darlene said.



Delegates to a women's ministries camp in Peru receive dresses.

"She encourages all of us to think of ways to turn our disappointments into an opportunity to share God's love and our resources with others to bring God glory."

As for Hazel, she continues to search for fabric, measure, cut, sew and pray. "I feel that this is what God wants me to do," she said. "This is my mission."



Hazel works in her sewing area at home.

The best fishing hole

by Captain Alex Yanez

As a young Christian Salvationist, one of the most challenging statements from the Lord Jesus that impacted me is recorded in the Gospel of Matthew 4:19: "Come after Me, follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

While I always understood that Jesus calls all of us to share the gospel with everyone, when I was 14 I felt He had bigger plans for me during a music camp. I remember returning to my corps and speaking to my corps officer, offering him my help in whatever capacity he needed. After that, I was involved in youth groups, Sunday school, music groups, and other ministries.

Later, I started my own family. Our work was thriving. God blessed us professionally, and at the same time, the demands at the corps continued. Even so, I felt something was missing and did not feel fulfilled in my service to God. I wanted to do more and serve Him as an officer.

Over the years, we have been fortunate as officers to serve in various appointments. I find it amazing to see the countless opportunities that Salvation Army ministry provides to share the gospel with others. It's as though Jesus is reminding me I don't need to search far and wide for "fish"; He is bringing those who hunger for love, grace and forgiveness right to my doorstep. Isn't that wonderful?

For the past four years, I have had the incredible opportunity to serve with my wife at the Omaha, Neb., Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center. With thousands of members, our "lake" has significantly expanded. One day, I noticed a mother speaking with our front desk representative, inquiring about programs for her



three children. Feeling guided by God, I approached her and introduced myself. I encouraged her to enroll her children in our School of Music program, led by Kroc Church, and invited her to join our community of believers to see what we offer. She visited with her family, and they became very active members. They have since become leaders and soldiers in our corps and are now interns at a corps in Council Bluffs, Iowa, and accepted candidates.

As I look back on this beautiful story, I am reaffirmed that Jesus has called me to be a fisher of men in the best place to fish, The Salvation Army.



To learn about becoming an officer, visit salarmycentral.org/candidates

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Calling all YOUTH ages 6-29,
Join Our T-Shirt Design Contest!

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SCAN ME

TRADECENTRAL
USA CENTRAL TERRITORY

A beautiful partnership



Evelyn donates from her savings to send kids in Brazil to camp.

At the Omaha, Neb., Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center, led by Captains Alex and Carolina Yanez, giving of time, talents and resources to missions is a central focus. In addition to encouraging participation in missions among the staff, congregation and Kroc Center members, one week of day camp each year is dedicated to a vacation Bible school in which campers hear the Gospel and are introduced to the Salvation Army's international work.

"It's a good way to connect the overall mission with people," said Lori Miles, Kroc Center youth development and mission integration specialist and a soldier at the corps who also oversees youth ministry and activities. She said it seemed natural to focus on Brazil since Captains Yanez, in partnership with Brazil Territorial Leaders Colonels Wilson and Nara Strasse, spearheaded a trip to lead a music camp for one of the divisions in that territory last spring.

At the start of the week, a presentation highlighted the need for funds to send kids in Brazil to music camp. Parents also were informed of the fundraising initiative. Lori set the goal at \$300, expecting it to be a stretch since many campers come from low-income families. Little did she know how much one little girl was moved by the stories of Brazilian children selling their hair and even beloved pets so they could attend the music camp last year.

But the next day 9-year-old Evelyn arrived with her mother and asked if she could give her donation to the missions project early.

"It was a \$100 bill!" Lori recalled, amazed at the generosity. "I asked if she was sure, and her mother explained that the family had been talking about the importance of giving over the past year."

Evelyn had taken the money out of her own savings and was adamant it should be given to help ensure children in Brazil would be able to go to camp and have fun, just like she did.

On the final day of camp, Evelyn, accompanied by her mom, gave an additional \$300 for Brazil—again all from her own savings.

"It's a beautiful thing," said

Captain Alex. "The girls in Brazil sold their most precious things to go to camp, and a girl here gave much of her savings to send to Brazil."

Combined with the donations from the other campers, just over \$700 was raised. Captain Alex added to the amount so that \$1,000 would be given to Brazil. He presented a check to Colonels Strasse who were in the country for a zonal conference and visited during a Chicago Staff Band concert.



In celebration for reaching their fundraising goal, day campers make Lori into a sundae.

"They were floored. When you consider the value of American dollars in Brazil, it's a lot of money and can stretch far," said Captain Alex. "Brazil became a big part of us in Omaha. We hope to return for a territorial music camp this spring."

The Salvation Army

PRAYER CENTRAL

USA Central Territory

April Prayer Calendar

My Prayer List	Day	Bible Reading	Pray for The Salvation Army
	1 Tuesday	Ephesians 4:32	Alma, Mich., Corps
	2 Wednesday	Mark 11:25	Belvedere, Ill., Corps
	3 Thursday	I John 1:9	Ghana Territory
	4 Friday	Matthew 6:15	Brookings, S.D., Service Center
	5 Saturday	Matthew 18:21-22	Chicago Irving Park, Ill., Corps
	6 Sunday	Colossians 3:13	Cloquet, Minn., Service Extension Unit
	7 Monday	James 5:16	Des Moines Citadel, Iowa, Corps
	8 Tuesday	Luke 6:27	East Chicago, Ind., Corps
	9 Wednesday	Psalms 103:10-14	Farmington Hills, Mich., Corps
	10 Thursday	Ephesians 1:7	Galesburg, Ill., 360 Life Center
	11 Friday	Luke 17:3-4	Great Bend, Kan., Red Shield Center
	12 Saturday	Acts 2:38	Southern Africa Territory
	13 Sunday	Isaiah 1:18	Huntington, Ind., Corps
	14 Monday	Psalms 32:5	Jasper Newton County, Mo., Corps
	15 Tuesday	Luke 23:34	Kirksville, Mo., Corps
	16 Wednesday	Daniel 9:9	Macomb, Ill., Corps
	17 Thursday	Isaiah 55:7	Mattoon, Ill., Corps
	18 Friday	Psalms 103:12	Minot, N.D., Corps
	19 Saturday	2 Chronicles 7:14	Russia Territory
	20 Sunday	Colossians 1:13-14	Norfolk, Neb., Corps
	21 Monday	Psalms 86:5	Ottawa, Ill., Corps
	22 Tuesday	Luke 7:44-50	Quincy, Ill., Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center
	23 Wednesday	Jeremiah 31:34	Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., Corps
	24 Thursday	Micah 7:18-19	St. Charles Tri City, Ill., Corps
	25 Friday	James 5:14-15	Superior, Wis., Corps
	26 Saturday	Isaiah 43:25-26	India Central Territory
	27 Sunday	Isaiah 53:5	Waukegan, Ill., Corps
	28 Monday	Joel 2:13	Northern DHQ
	29 Tuesday	2 Chronicles 30:9	Owatonna, Minn., Service Extension Unit
	30 Wednesday	Psalms 51:2-5	South Central, Mo., Service Unit

Go to www.salarmycentral.org

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

--Mustard Seeds--



Facing loss together

Our Partner in Mission, the Kenya East Territory, has established Gracious Empowerment Ministries to help widows and widowers address the challenges they face after the death of a spouse.

More than 3,000 participants meet every month in the Salvation Army compound to receive support and counseling.

"It is estimated that there are about 245 million widows in the world, with 115 million of them living in poverty," said Colonel Anne Kiama, Kenya East territorial president of women's ministries.

She continued, "Widows and widowers face significant social and economic challenges, including poverty, discrimination, and lack of access to education and employment opportunities. They are often forgotten even by their closest relatives immediately after the burial of their spouse."

Objectives of Gracious Empowerment include reaching widows and widowers with words of comfort; helping them to apply God's Word in practical ways; bringing them together to share experiences and to support one another; and offering an understanding of the mourning process.



Program leaders have found immediate needs include employment, access to healthcare and better housing. Poverty is the most common problem though, Colonel Anne said, and it leaves people open to disease, poor living conditions, crime, exploitation and even death.

"The Bible repeatedly declares the sacred importance of caring for the widows, who were more vulnerable than widowers in biblical times," Colonel Anne said. "This is still an important ministry, not to be left to chance, but organized and coordinated so that no one is neglected or left out. Widows and widowers need to stay involved with life, and the church can help them do so."

During meetings, participants can encourage and pray for one another. Officers share the Word of God and offer counseling.

At each meeting, members are encouraged—but not required—to contribute a small fee of Kenya shillings.

From this fund, they may take out loans to help start businesses, including soap-making, basket-weaving and kitchen-gardening, where they can sell products at local markets.

According to the colonel, widows and widowers often face a challenge as they try and move on with temporal lives.

"Some find it hard to make important decisions alone or to assume responsibilities formerly shouldered by a spouse" the colonel said.

The term "gracious" was chosen for the program instead of "widows" or "widowers" to fight the stigmas that can be associated with the death of a spouse.

Colonel Anne said, "We had to stand in the gap and bring these men and women together in the community and offer counseling to them and their children—helping them to rise up again to beat their challenges associated with their loss."



A wide variety of uplifting programs are part of Gracious Ministries

Promoted to Glory

Major Constance Bridge

On January 1, 2025, Major Constance "Connie" Bridge was promoted to Glory at age 88. Known as a trailblazer, she served for 35 years as an officer, giving strong leadership to the communities in which she was stationed.



Born on October 7, 1936, in Helena, Mont., to Brigadiers William and Bertha Murtaugh, Connie was commissioned from the School for Officers' Training in Suffern, N.Y., where she met her former husband, Melvin Bridge, and served with him in the Eastern Territory.

After a break in service, she was reinstated as an officer in the Central Territory in 1981 and served in numerous corps appointments in Illinois, Michigan and Indiana, as well as in the program department at Territorial Headquarters. She touched countless lives, with many people referring to her as "Mom."

In 2001, she retired to Tecumseh, Mich. In retirement she continued to encourage and mentor officers, pastors and others—even ministering to the nurses in the hospital on the day she was promoted to Glory.

Connie was preceded in death by her oldest son, Daniel. She is survived by her children George, John and Catherine; five grandchildren and one great-grandson.

Mrs. Major Alyce M. Wallin

Mrs. Major Alyce M. Wallin was promoted to Glory on December 27, 2024, at age 99.

Alyce was born on November 28, 1925, in Chicago, Ill., the daughter of Swedish immigrants, Eric and Goldie (Melin) Samuelson.

She married Ehlert Wallin on September 29, 1949, in Moline, Ill. After being commissioned as an officer from the School for Officers' Training in Chicago in 1948, she proudly served with her husband for 43 years in corps appointments in Illinois, Minnesota, Nebraska and Michigan before retiring in 1989.

In retirement, she continued to minister to people through her compassion and undaunted faith, even in the face of challenges like cancer and loss of sight due to macular degeneration. At 97, she performed her first wedding—for her granddaughter. Alyce loved music and could sing, play the piano, organ and accordion. She was a talented sermon writer and was known for telling interesting stories, especially about the Great Depression.

Alyce was preceded in death by her husband, Ehlert, and her brother, Kenneth Samuelson. She is survived by her daughter, Laurie (Henry) Rivera; grandchildren Chad (Meagan) Rivera and Sierra (Trevor) Childers; and two great-grandchildren.



Major Mike Mills

Major Mike Mills was promoted to Glory on January 1, 2025. He found great joy in serving and interacting with people. Mike was an avid reader, a diehard Chicago Cubs and Bears fan, and enjoyed sports of all kinds.

Mike was born in Niles, Mich., on July 29, 1955, the son of Walter and Annamae Mills. He entered officer training as a young man and was commissioned in 1976, marrying Lt. Judy Schram a year later.

For more than 40 years, Mike and Judy served as officers in the Midwest. While they held several corps appointments and served at the College for Officer Training with Mike as personnel officer, most of their service was given leading adult rehabilitation centers for 25 years. The Mills retired in 2020 from their final appointments at territorial headquarters, where they served as pastoral care secretaries.

Mike was preceded in death by his parents and four siblings, David, Phillip, Rose Blakely, and Arthur. He is survived by his wife, Major Judy Mills; two children, Staci (Tim) Stewart and Steven (Samantha); three grandchildren; siblings, Walter (Ruth Ann), Ruth Ann (Geno) Rodriguez and Bob (Mary); and many nieces and nephews.



Major Richard Strommer

Major Richard "Dick" Strommer was promoted to Glory on December 21, 2024. Dick was known for his kindness, love and faith. He had a deep appreciation for music and leaves behind a legacy of warmth, devotion, and service.

Born on February 4, 1935, in Rockford, Ill., to Erwin and Clara Strommer, Dick grew up in Rockford. After graduating from high school, he entered the School for Officers' Training and was commissioned in 1956. During a break in service, Dick met the love of his life, Margaret Bluhm. They married on November 11, 1967.

Magaret was commissioned in 1974, and then they served together for more than 25 years in corps appointments in Illinois, Minnesota and Iowa. They retired in 2000, and Dick continued his ministry as corps sergeant-major at the St. Augustine, Fla., Corps.

He is survived by his beloved wife of 57 years, Major Margaret Rose Strommer; children, Rebecca (Louis) Palmer, John (Gail), and David; siblings Phillis McGough and David; and four grandchildren. His sister, Mavis Fuller, passed away on the same day as Dick.

