

Central Connection

The Salvation Army / USA Central Territory

News and Views from the Midwest

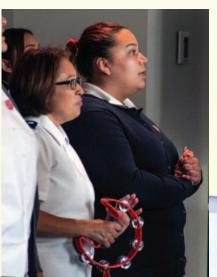
"We are all one body, we have the same Spirit, and we have all been called to the same glorious future." Eph. 4:3,4 (NLT)

Volume 54, Number 10 November 2024

New conference fans the flame of leadership

by Captain Jenny Moffitt

yrrazo, a Greek word meaning red hot, glowing, aflame. This was the foundation for the "Ignite the Spirit of Leadership" conference where 189 people from the territory met in two tracks to discern their next steps in obedience to God's calling.



The weekend began with a

Guests Captains Marc and Mariska Potters, international youth and children's officers, brought dynamic messages throughout the weekend

based in the book of Acts. The

to be empowered and visionary lead-

work in and through them. They ad-

vocated the Army needs leaders who

ers, not giving into fear but surren-

dering to the Holy Spirit's mighty

Potters encouraged attendees

Spirit-filled welcome to the "Keepers of the Covenant" ses-

sion. (See page 3.)

are willing "to get off the beach and into the deep ocean" of ministry for the sake of the Gospel.

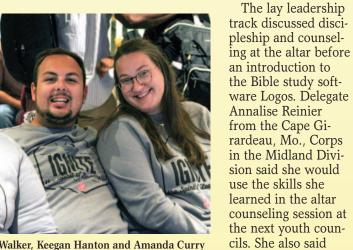
Saturday morning the Territorial Worship Collective (TWC) led the delegation, which filled the Territorial Headquarters chapel, in powerful praise. The Holy Spirit could be felt working amongst the delegates



Captain Marc Potters, guest, shares during a united session.

and leaders seeking God's will.

On Saturday afternoon, delegates split into two tracks to focus on corps lay leadership and officership in breakout sessions.



Delegates Joshua Walker, Keegan Hanton and Amanda Curry

that the practical advice she gained about discipleship would be beneficial at her corps and in her division.

College for Officer Training (CFOT) officers and cadets connected with those exploring officership before Ahjah Gage from The Lanier Practice

spoke about the Candidate Coaching Action Plan (CAP).



Captains Matthew and Virginia DeGonia throw axes during the western-themed evening.

This initiative is aimed at supporting and developing candidates spiritually, physically, academically and psychologically, equipping them



Guest Captain Mariska Potters speaks at Ignite.

and their families with the tools they need to enter the CFOT from a position of strength, gaining the most they can from their training experience with the ability to fulfill their potential as officers.

In addition, delegates in the officership track had the opportunity

Continued on page 12

Heatwoles appointed National Leaders

entral Territory officers Commissioners Merle and Dawn Heatwole, who are currently serving as Territorial Commander and Territorial President of Women's Ministries in the Latin America North Territory, have been appointed as National Leaders for the United States. Commissioner Merle Heatwole will serve as National Commander and Commissioner Dawn Heatwole as National Secretary for Program effective March 1, 2025. They will succeed Commissioners Kenneth

and Jolene Hodder who will retire



on February 28, 2025. Please pray for the Heatwoles as they prepare to take up these responsibilities next year.

ext year.

God sees your potential

by Lt. Colonel John Pook Assistant Chief Secretary

his summer at Central Bible Leadership Institute, the book of Nehemiah was studied. I have read this book of the Bible many times, but on this occasion, there was a verse and a word that jumped out at me. Nehemiah 1:11: "I was cupbearer to the king."

To recap the book of Nehemiah, the walls of Jerusalem were destroyed, and some Israelites were taken into exile and made slaves. Nehemiah ended up in Susa, a royal Persian city, where he was made "cupbearer to the king." Although being cupbearer to the king was a very trustworthy, elite position for any servant, Nehemiah was still in exile and a slave.

His brother sends word that "the wall of Jerusalem was broken down and the gates have been burned." (Nehemiah 1:3) On hearing this news, Nehemiah's heart was broken (v. 4), and he was moved to action.

Of all the people who could possibly have done something and have been a leader of this major construction project, Nehemiah would not be anyone's first choice, especially if



this happened today. He was not an architect or builder. He had no trained workforce or resources. He had no leadership training or experience. Adding to that, he was a slave in exile. The key word is "was." He didn't say, "I am" or "I will be" but "I was"—past tense.

But Nehemiah didn't allow his past or present situation to deter him from doing what God had laid on his heart. Nehemiah didn't care what he was or how other people viewed him. He cared about what God had called him to do.

Scripture is full of men and women who we would never consider to be leaders, but God saw who they could be. He saw their leadership potential. We can all look at our past or current situations and find reasons why we should not be leaders. We can allow people's opinion of us to deter us from leadership, but God doesn't allow our past or others' opinions to stop Him from calling us to leadership. He sees our potential.

The Salvation Army needs Nehemiahs today: people whose hearts have been stirred by God to do something and who step up in faith. Will you respond to God's call?

Make every moment count



Corps administrator Grace Jones trains some volunteers at the Princeton, Ind., Corps.

race Jones has retired twice and is now enjoying her third career as a corps administrator in Princeton, Ind.

"I am using my background in business and my degrees in ministry. They have merged together," Grace said. "This was the time I was created for, at age 69. I love it!"

In 2023, due to the health issues of an incoming officer, the Princeton Corps was left without leadership. Divisional leaders found themselves considering Grace, a soldier at the Kokomo, Ind., Corps, for the position.

"Grace, a lifelong Salvationist, came with some great skills and knowledge. Most of all she has a desire to serve God," said Major Karen Johnson, Indiana divisional leader for office to preaching on Sundays.
"I am doing every function of

"I am doing every function of a corps officer, although I missed the opportunity to go through officers' training," G]race said.

She has applied for a grant to revitalize the corps' recreation program.

"We need to find a way to make a positive impact on all generations in this community and to make our gym program a viable community center again," she said.

Her intentionality applies to all corps programs and events. For example, the senior group holds monthly Bingo where they are asked to bring non-perishable food items for the pantry. Grace encourages corps members to welcome and interact with them.

"When anyone comes through the doors, we are the hands and feet of Jesus," Grace said. "As a result of being intentional, we have seen more people come to church and to Sunday meals."

A third retirement is not on Grace's agenda.

"There is nothing in the Bible that says when you get to be 70 years old you have to retire," she said. "I want to make every moment I have count. I want to finish well."

officer development. "We were trying to find a good fit. We really believe God brought Grace to mind." Grace thought so too, and she ac-

cepted and began her new position in January 2024. She has committed to the job until June 2025—perhaps longer.

"I'll be here as long as the Lord wants me here," Grace said.

She grew up attending the Waukegan, Ill., Corps, and went to college at what is now Indiana Wesleyan University. Returning to Waukegan, she became a nursing home administrator. Her career took her to work for a large senior housing company in Chicago.

As a regional director and a vice president of operations, she worked with large budgets, did due diligence for potential properties and managed large continuing care retirement communities, serving seniors in all levels of retirement and health care. Since many of the sites were in the west, she moved to Denver, Colo.

When Grace retired, she moved back to Kokomo where she opened The Popcorn Café, becoming known as "the popcorn lady" in town.

"I still am 'the popcorn lady,'" she said with a gentle laugh, referring to people who still stop her on the street of her hometown.

Grace sold the cafe after nine years and was working as a chaplain at an assisted living facility when Major Marc Johnson, Indiana divisional commander, approached her about leading the Princeton Corps.

Now, her days are filled with everything from managing the front



Newly accepted candidates



Donna and William BerrymanBoth first-generation Salvationists

Omaha, Neb., Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center Western Division

Captains Alex and Carolina Yanez, Kroc Center officers

Spiritual Gifts

Donna: Discernment ◆ Leadership ◆ Serving William: Evangelism ◆ Giving ◆ Serving

Ministry Passion or Experience

Donna: Children/Youth ◆ Missions William: Missions ◆ Worship

Spiritual Mentors

Donna: Major Jolinda Shelbourn, Lori Miles **William:** Paul Washer, Major Dan Sawka



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Called to lead

ou have been called by God to ministry but even more than that, you are called to be leaders that know and uphold the promises of God...Keep the covenant, not out of duty, but out of an overwhelming love for the Savior, who has kept His promises to you," Captain Kelly Hanton,



Keepers of the Covenant cadets Logan Saydera, Olyvia Shiels, Chelsey Steckbauer and James Kaake



Captain Mariska Potters

territorial candidates' secretary, charged the "Keepers of the Covenant" session at their welcome meeting.



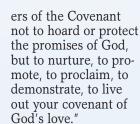
A lighthearted moment between Territorial Commander Commissioner Evie Diaz and College for Officer Training leaders Majors Peter and Catherine Mount.

Introducing them, she indicated the session consists of cadets who are both first and multi-generational Salvationists and, though small, boasts an impressive 19 local leadership positions among them, including 10 youth and 9 senior roles.

Along with the new session, Majors Catherine and Peter Mount were welcomed respectively as training principal and assistant training principal for personnel of the College for Officer Training (CFOT). Territorial Commander Commissioner Evie Diaz

introduced them as "wise, corps officer heart people, joy-filled and ready for the challenge of training leaders to be officers."

Echoing Captain Kelly, Major Catherine addressed the session, "God is already keeping the covenant... You are charged today as Keep-



For the first time, the meeting welcomed an auxiliary captain, A/Captain David

Hamilton, who is on track to be commissioned with this session after five years of service and successfully completing the Distance Learning Program. The newest aux-

iliary captains, A/Captain Dawn Windham and A/Captains Eugene and Marsha Ware, also were recognized and prayed for by Major Peter Mount.

Captains Marc and Mariska Potters, international youth and children's officers, were guests for the welcome and Ignite Conference.

In her energetic and engaging message from Acts 1:1-14, Captain Mariska spoke about the disciples waiting in the upper room and encouraged modern-day disciples to pause in ready anticipation of what God will do and lean in with open hands to receive it.

"God is challenging and inviting us to become openhanded people in a closed-fist culture so we can receive," she said. "If we become receptive to the Holy Spirit, it opens our eyes, it sharpens our minds, it grows our love for the world, and we will see God at work in a better and clearer way."

In response, everyone in attendance was invited to place a brightly lit pin on a map of the territory, a visual representation of God at work in the Midwest and Salvationists joining Him.



Members of audience place brightly lit pins on a territorial map.



St. Joseph Corps recognized for POH

he St. Joseph, Mo., Corps has received the Pathway of Hope (POH) Achievement Award. As a result of their teamwork and dedication, 14 families in the past year have not only made significant strides in changing their lives and futures but have been connected to the corps as a network of support and community of faith.

interest. Her strong personal faith is evident in her caring interactions, and families who accept the offer for spiritual support are connected with corps officers Majors Ron and Laura Key. The Keys are committed not only to ministering to POH families but encouraging integration into the corps if they do not already belong to a place of worship.

THE SALVATION

PATHWAY of HOPE

In addition to some families attending Sunday services together, 23 children have become members of character-building programs while their parents participate in programs like women's ministries.

According to St. Joseph Corps POH Case Manager Jeaneal Byrd, pastoral care is a central component for POH participants who express "We have wonderful officers. They help us; we all work as a team. Everyone has a hand in making sure people succeed," Jeaneal said.

Uniquely, the corps has incorporated POH as part of an optional aftercare plan for families who've been in the emergency shelter for one to three months which encourages them to develop long-term sta-

bility and sufficiency.

"As a team, we do our best to set families up for success," said Jeaneal. "Through POH, we want to end the revolving door of seeing the same families in and out of the shelter every few months or years."

When a family enters the shelter, they meet the officers and staff at the corps and learn about the programs and services that are offered. When they leave the shelter, they are again welcomed at the corps and invited to participate in programs, activities and worship. Each person has a part, whether giving a warm welcome, providing financial assistance or case management, inviting youth and adults to programs and Sunday worship or encouraging them spiritually. According to Jeaneal, most families accept the invitation to bring their



Case managers Jeaneal Byrd and Emily Bravo congratulate a family upon their completion of POH.

children to youth programs and many also join Sunday worship.

Currently 24 families are enrolled in the POH initiative in St. Joseph with eight on the verge of completion. After four years managing POH, Jeaneal has found the approach a meaningful and effective way to help families move forward.

She concluded, "I have yet to find a family that hasn't appreciated POH."

Creating an amazing life

by Craig Dirkes
few ye

few years ago, Hannah Batres came to Minnesota from California during a dark season of her life. She had just left a broken marriage after being a stay-at-home mom for six years, with no work experience other than that of a waitress and cashier.

"When I came to Minnesota I had my three little kids, no job, no money, a dog, and \$20,000 in debt," she recalled. "I was really scared."

She came to the Willmar, Minn., Corps for rent assistance but soon enrolled in the Pathway of Hope (POH) initiative. The Salvation Army not only helped Hannah avoid homelessness but through POH create an amazing life.

Hannah's top goals were finding a steady job and getting out of debt. She devised a plan of action with help from Kandi Tetzloff, a licensed social worker at the corps.

"Kandi was exactly what I'd prayed for: someone to hold me accountable for my goals, ambitions and what I wanted to do with my

life," said Hannah, who received support as well through pastoral care. Her children also have attended Vacation Bible School and Kids' Club at the corps.

Today, Hannah could not be doing better. She works full-time and is close to opening her own business, all while moonlighting as a certified yoga instructor. She also has paid off her debt, and her credit has been restored.

Even more incredibly, in February Hannah and her friends opened a local Community Closet that provides free clothing for those in need. In just two months, the closet distributed about 5,000 clothing items to 300 families. Hannah's involvement in her community also has included volunteering to teach children at the Dream Technical Academy of Willmar which recognized her with an award.

"I wouldn't have been able to do any of this without all the resources The Salvation Army provided me," Hannah said. "I always thought The Salvation Army was just a place to buy furniture, but now I know it's so much more."

Siblings of a POH family with Major Laura Key during a visit to the Kansas City Chiefs football team training camp.

Blessed beyond measure

by Lt. Johnny Miller

s corps officers, we planned to have a worship service on Christmas Eve to conclude the long season of kettles and service. We anticipated it would be attended by probably 40-50 people. After the service, we'd arranged for a Christmas dinner since many of those who would attend worship wouldn't have meal on Christmas Day.

Thirty minutes before service began, people started to walk through the doors. Soon our chapel was overflowing, and we had to move the program into the corps gym. The estimated 40-50 people turned out to be closer to 200! We were both excited and terrified. I'm sure my wife felt like Jesus feeding the 5,000 with just five loaves and two fish.

On a day when we tried to control the outcome, God surprised us. He brought people, and we are certain He multiplied the food. But most of all, He filled our hearts at the end of a season when we were exhausted.

Honestly, if we had followed our plan, we would have rushed through that intimate Christmas Eve service and then into lunch so we could go home. But we are so grateful God used that moment to teach us to slow down even when we are ex-



hausted so we can see Him work.

Officership does not fit into a neat mold. I've found that in the times it doesn't, I can expect God to show up and do a new thing because that is what He does. His surprises and blessings know no boundaries, and his timing is always perfect.



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



Hannah at the Community Closet she opened with friends to provide free clothing to those in need in her community.

Discovering discipleship

nspired by his own life-changing experience of having an adult invest in his character and spiritual

development,
Captain Henry
Boateng is passionate about helping
young people reach
their full potential
in Christ. "If you
saw me as a child,
you wouldn't have
thought I'd be a
leader," he said. "I
don't know where
I'd be if someone
hadn't seen potential in me."

As divisional youth secretaries in

Wisconsin and Upper Michigan (WUM), Captain Henry and his wife, Captain Pamela, have devel-



oped a new program aimed at helping young people discover and develop their gifts as the next generation of disciples.

"We know they are the leaders we need for the church now and in the future," said Captain Pamela. "We have a lot of teens expressing the desire to be a part of what's happening, and we want to let them run with it."

The idea was sparked by teen camp in 2023, when after studying the book of Daniel counselors were encouraged to point out leadership skills in each of their campers and how they reflected the biblical characters. Captains Boateng wondered what kind of impact could be made by not only recognizing teens' natural abilities but intentionally cultivating them through focused

The program kicked off in August with a small group of youth ages 13-17 participating in Young Leaders, a camp designed for youth discipleship and leadership development. Limited to 20 campers, the five-day intensive proved a successful endeavor.

discipleship.

"We were really impressed with their existing skills," said Captain Henry. "We found that the kids who came were already advanced and were invested in their leadership development. The kids really responded very well and they wanted to be there."

Using the Four Chair method, campers identified their strengths, spiritual gifts and areas of development. They explored and studied scripture, engaged in team-building and began to develop meaningful relationships with one another, the Boatengs and the officer faculty. There also was plenty of time for fun.

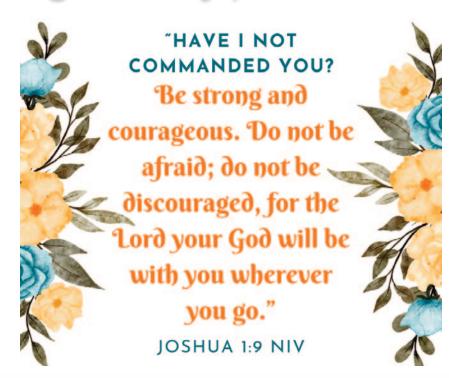
But camp



was only the beginning. As they returned home, the young leaders connected with their corps officers for ongoing opportunities. Throughout the year they will engage in additional discipleship activities during regional and divisional events.

Ultimately, the goal is to disciple young people who will not only lead at camp and in corps, but in their homes, schools and communities, becoming adults who will continue to disciple others throughout their lives.

Light to my path



by Sophia Brookins

ach morning my Mimi,
Major Joyce Gauthier,
sends me and the rest of
her older grandchildren
who have phones a Bible verse. Her
consistent, gentle reminders help
me stay connected with God. Even
when my Papa, Major Bob Gauthier, was in the hospital and recovering from a serious illness, she
continued to send the daily verses.

"It's important to me that my grandchildren know what is in God's Word," Mimi said, explaining why she makes it a priority. "It is my hope that God will speak to their hearts through these verses."

Even if the verse she sends doesn't speak to our need in that moment, my cousins and I can come back to it later.

"For example, Joshua 1:9 may not be what you need on a certain day, but it might speak to you on a day that you have a big test or have to give a speech," Mimi said.

In my experience, this is exactly what happens. I am often reminded of the right verse at the right time.

I think Mimi is an amazing example of a Christian. I've never seen her waver in her faith. She's shown me how to be kind to everyone—no matter their past, personality or actions. I've watched her selflessly help others, and I've learned not to



pass judgment on people who have committed certain sins or believe different things, but to love them and share Christ with them.

When I asked who her role models in Christ were when she was young, she said her corps officers were intentional about teaching God's Word and answering her questions.

I'm glad that I have my Mimi to encourage me in my relationship with God. I'm thankful that I have somebody so close to God to teach me how to be like Him. In my eyes, Mimi is someone who has been molded by God and who all followers can look up to.

Editor's note: We thank 15-year-old Sophia for this beautiful article which honors her grandmother and shares a meaningful and replicable way for adults to connect with and encourage youth in their lives. Sophia, you rock!





Many children around the world have never experienced the JOY that Christmas can bring. The Share Your Christmas Joy campaign gives children that unique feeling of excitement, love, and joy that only happens during Christmas time.

This program aims to send designated funds to 100 Salvation Army children's facilities worldwide for a special Christmas celebration.

Not only will children feel more connected to our Savior as we celebrate the JOY of His birth, but you will too when you Share Your Christmas Joy!

Will you help us reach our goal? Ask your family, friends, and coworkers to join!

Send a check to:

The Salvation Army, ATTN: Share Your Christmas Joy 5550 Prairie Stone Pkwy, Hoffman Estates, IL 60192





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BELCHGE AND 2025

CONFERENCE AND GENERAL'S CONGRESS



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WORKSHOPS

JUNE 6-7
 GENERAL'S CONGRESS

JUNE 8
 ORDINATION AND COMMISSION

ORDINATION AND COMMISSIONING OF THE CHAMPIONS OF THE MISSION

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

Irving Park reopened, thriving

oasting a long, rich history of ministry and service, the Chicago, Ill., Irving Park Corps has been reestablished after a short merger with Mayfair Community Church (Corps). The decision to reopen was made in 2022 to ensure that each corps would be able to provide the necessary services to an ever-growing and changing urban population.

"Time has proven that the decision was the right one as soldiers and corps members have engaged with the community, families have been added and growth is happening," said Carlos Moran, corps administrator with his wife, Kerman.



Enjoying family time at the Chicago Irving Park Corps.



A joyous occasion as new soldiers are enrolled.

Since the original building was sold years ago, they are currently meeting at North & Central Illinois Divisional Headquarters, located in the heart of the Albany Park neighborhood, where they are uniquely positioned to provide ministry to migrants. Irving Park Corps has become a place of safety and connection for new arrivals to the United States.

"The corps is entirely Hispanic," Carlos said. "Some have been here a long time, some are second-generation, some are brand new, but we are immigrants."

When migrants were being bussed to the city and housed temporarily at a local police station and shelters, the Morans and corps members felt compelled to reach out. According to Carlos, it was a natural response to seeing people, especially families with children, struggling.

"What people see as a crisis, God sees as an opportunity," he said.

They began to engage with people, offering assistance with immediate needs, providing resources, and inviting them to attend worship and corps programs. The connections were almost instant as stories and encouragement were shared.

"Most of us here are immigrants, but there is a unity where differences do not divide us," said Ivan González, who arrived in 2018 from Mexico. "I didn't know about God, but through the Word that is taught, I have come to know God. God brought me here."

"Since we arrived in this country,



Carlos and Kerman Moran lead the Chicago Irving Park Corps.



Kerman Moran assists with food distribution from the corps pantry.

we have faced tough situations as immigrants and in the shelter," said Franni Colina, who arrived from Venezuela with her family less than a year ago. "I always had faith, but the day I visited Irving Park Corps, I felt that the message preached was for me. And we decided to stay here"

Although their living arrangements are often temporary, families find consistency and stability at the corps. Many families first encounter the corps through emergency services and assistance programs, but return for fellowship and worship, enjoying a place to belong while they work toward establishing themselves in a new country.

"Everyone is welcomed with open arms," said Carlos. "Not everyone will stay forever, but while they are here, they will get to know the Lord, grow in their relationships, and get established."

Beautiful integration



Captain Jason Bigelow, new soldiers Angel Figuevoa, Martin Beltran and Kevin Burbey, Captain Dana Bigelow and Major Brendon Robertson.

by Captain Dana Bigelow

ransformation is our desire and goal at the Oak Creek, Wis., Corps, and we're blessed over and over again as we see God changing lives. Recently we had the privilege of enrolling three new senior soldiers who've joined our congregation. They, like many others, have decided to make life changes, turning from addiction and unhealthy lives and finding healing and transformation in Christ at the Adult Rehabilitation Center (ARC).

Partnering with the Milwaukee, Wis., ARC, our corps has had the opportunity to walk alongside men as they graduate from the ARC program and continue a life of recovery and holistic healing truly found through Jesus.

"I am finding truth and love. The

reason why we are here on earth is first to trust and love our almighty God with all our hearts; to treat others with love, kindness and respect; to give back the love and knowledge I receive," said Martin Beltran, one of the new soldiers on being part of the life of the corps. "I'm finding myself and who I really am, living for God and not myself. Love is an amazing thing, and when we learn to live and love the way God does, we will be sure to find love, gratefulness, happiness and peace."

There is no wrong door to walk through when you enter the Oak Creek Corps. We want to welcome you and help you experience love and joy. Our congregation believes in connection to each other and Christ. We welcome everyone and want to continue to continue to grow in faith and point others to Jesus.



The Soldiers' Forum has been called by God to inspire and empower soldiers to positively influence, strengthen, and grow our Army now, and for future generations.

Find out more about the Soldiers' Forum here: salarmycentral.org/territorial-soldiers-forum/

A legacy of faith and community

mong the trees and buildings of Three Trails Camp (formerly known as Camp MO-Kan), the community gathered in an event tent to celebrate a milestone few can claim—100 years of ministry, fellowship and unforgettable memories. The centennial celebration was more than just a mark of time; it was a testament to the presence of God in a place that has touched countless lives across generations.

The day was filled with activities that brought together 350 people of all ages and was carefully planned to honor the camp's rich history, while celebrating its present and future. Festivities began with a commemorative ceremony where camp leaders, past and present, were recognized. Divisional Commander Major Kelly Collins reflected on the camp's ministry over the decades. The meeting was filled with gratitude, not only for the physical space of Three Trails Camp but for the sense of community and ministry it has nurtured.



Carrie and Mike Dixon, who were honored for 19 years of leadership at camp, with staff members Stephanie Wade, Samantha Littleton and Paco Navarrete



ments was the recognition of Martha Rieger, a volunteer who has spent more than a decade tending to the camp's garden. Martha's dedication to cultivating the garden not only has beautified the camp but has provided a space of learning. To honor her dedicated service, the garden was renamed Martha's Garden.

Michael and Carrie Dixon, executive camp director and assistant camp director, also were recognized for faithfully leading the camp for the past 19 years.

"Camping ministry offers a unique opportunity for spiritual growth and

community building," said Michael. "Away from the distractions of daily life, both children and adults of all ages can connect deeply with nature, each other and their faith. It's a space where lives are transformed, relationships are forged, and God's presence is felt in powerful ways. Carrie, our three children and I have





been honored and blessed to serve at Three Trails Camp for all these years."

Through a historical exhibit attendees could walk through a hands-on



display of the camp's storied past. Old photographs, journals and memorabilia were on display, sparking memories and conversations among those who have been part of the camp's journey. Many people shared stories of how the camp shaped their faith, fostered lifelong friendships and played a role in family traditions.

Throughout the day, the camp's beauty was on display. Enjoying the outdoors, families swam, played in inflatables, participated in archery,

hayrides and crafts. Friends, old and new, gathered and shared stories and laughter.

The camp's legacy of nurturing spiritual growth and fostering a sense of community was evident in every smile, hug and shared story and expressed hope for the future. It is clear Three Trails Camp is not just a physical place, but a space for fostering spiritual growth, building community, and creating a sense of belonging that transcends generations.

As Three Trails Camp looks toward its next century, pray that God will continue to meet people here and that it will continue to influence lives for many years to come.



ong before campers race about in the summer heat, volunteer Martha Rieger is hard at work, preparing the garden at Three Trails Camp in Kansas City, Mo.

"Depending on the weather, I sometimes start planting in March, so things are ready when the first campers are there," Martha said.

She plants green peas, sugar snap peas, potatoes and carrots in the spring.

"The most enjoyable time is when the kids taste peas or dig up a potato or carrot. They get so excited. It's like a treasure!" Martha said.



Campers often come to the garden in groups with their counselors. There, they find cucumbers, squash and tomatoes, along with bell and hot peppers and of course, carrots, peas and potatoes.

A variety of wildflowers, along with zinnias and marigolds, also add to the garden's color, like a living patchwork quilt.

"Over the years, the garden has evolved. I have added things," Martha said. "We have more beds than we did at first."

Martha became a volunteer in 2009 when camp directors, Michael and Carrie Dixon, were going on vacation and needed someone to look after the garden. Martha, who had always loved gardening and had grown up on a farm, fit the bill perfectly.

A lot of the produce grown in the garden is served in the camp's cafeteria. And a lot of it is tasted by campers right there in the garden, Martha said.

"The kids like to taste the cherry tomatoes," she said. "And the carrots—more often than not, we go to the garden hose, wash a carrot and eat it right there."



Martha Rieger

As part of Three Trails Camp's 100th anniversary celebration, Matha was honored for 15 years of service. The garden was officially named "Martha's Garden," and a new metal sign, bearing the name, was hung on the garden's fence.

"A garden is a special place to be, thinking about how God created all of these different plants," Martha said. "It is peaceful, just being in nature and seeing how amazing it is."

Finding the Creator in creation

by Captain Christopher White

hat do you get when you take experts in outdoor programming, add a group of leaders in the U.S. who are eager to start and promote those programs, and mix in beautiful parts of God's creation in the Midwest? The Salvation Army Outdoors (TSAO) Leadership School.

Formerly known as the American Wilderness Leadership School (AWLS) and with the continued help and support of the Safari Club International Foundation (SCIF), this new program has been crafted post pandemic to enable Salvation Army leaders to develop and hone their TSAO knowledge and skills or to be exposed the program for the first time.

"TSAO is not a new program, but an initiative designed to enhance and support existing programs through vested partners and friends in Salvation Army facilities," said Jeanie Dobney, territorial camping and outdoor ministries director, who led the leadership school.

"It encourages our leaders to look at a resource found anywhere—all of creation—to experience and learn more about the Creator. This week-



long retreat of intensive training encourages leaders and vested partners from around the nation to uphold that vision while educating and equipping them in a variety of outdoor pursuits. When we can learn how to safely utilize outdoor spaces, we reduce the intimidation of the unknown to set the stage for exciting educational opportunities and adventures."

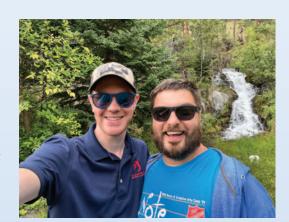
Officers and leaders considered experts in various program areas, along with a contingent of SCIF staff, composed the school's faculty this summer at Rimrock Camp and Retreat Center and The Salvation Army's Black Hills Camp in Rapid City, S.D.

Teaching ranged from subjects like outdoor/stream ecology to hands-on activities like making an emergency survival kit, creating a shelter and starting a fire. In addition, campers received training and certification in skills like archery and mountain biking.

"I think this is a great platform for leaders and outreach programs," said Vitalii Kovalchuk, Wisconsin/Upper Michigan divisional youth and family discipleship coordinator.

Of course, no retreat in the Black Hills would be complete without taking in the breathtaking scenery and visiting the Crazy Horse Monument, Sylvan Lake, Mount Rushmore National Memorial and Pactola Reservoir where Major Bob Fay taught a class on kayaks and canoes, which included canoe refloating techniques—much harder than it seems!

Major Bob was also chaplain for the week. Even on long days of teaching and training, the Author of cre-



ation that surrounded the group was never far from their minds. Each day ended with a campfire reflection where the major shared a devotional which was thoughtfully

tied to the day's schedule. For instance, after solo hiking around Sylvan Lake, he spoke on taking the less travelled path from the world.

While people arrived at the TSAO Leadership School as delegates and faculty, they left as friends joined in a commitment to help children and adults experience and learn more about creation, and, in doing so, be guided to its Creator.



Golfing for good

he Battle Creek, Mich., Corps held a miniature golf event this year that raised nearly \$10,000 to support Salvation Army programs in Cal-



houn and Barry counties. With temps in the low 70s, nearly 200 participants of all ages took advantage of the sunny day, as they navigated their golf balls through a wagon wheel, water traps and even an outhouse.

The \$10 admission to "Golf for Good" included a round of golf and lunch. Tee times were held every hour from 1:00-5:00 p.m. A popular silent auction featured items like a car-detailing certificate, themed baskets and bags, a beautiful handmade quilt, and a hot air balloon ride from Hot Ziggity's valued at \$600.

"We are so pleased with the tremendous success today, especially because it's the first time we've held a minigolf event," said Captain Mika Roinila, who leads the Battle Creek Corps with his wife, Captain Grace Roinila. "Today's success is a testament to the unwavering dedication and support of our board members, sponsors, golfers and volunteers. Their collective effort truly made a difference."

A teachers tailgate

he first annual Teachers Tailgate at the Kalamazoo, Mich., Corps was a resounding success. The event was created to give back to the incredible educa-

tors who dedicate themselves to shaping the minds and futures of children.

"We understand the challenges educators face, and we wanted to make sure they knew how much they are valued and supported by our community," said Major Ronnie Amick who leads the corps with his wife, Major Bridgette Amick. "We wanted to create a day that not only provided much-needed supplies but also showed our deep appreciation for all that teachers do."

Each teacher who attended the event left with a Rubbermaid® tote full of classroom supplies, as well as a \$50 gift card. A luncheon provided an opportunity for teachers to enjoy good food, relax and connect with one another. They also learned more about The Salvation Army and opportunities to partner with the corps. A highlight of the day was a drawing for prizes like Owala water bottles and 14 house-cleaning sessions donated by a local business.

This unique back-to-school event was the brainchild of Major Ronnie, who wanted to complement the many backpack giveaways for children. It was promoted through word-of-mouth, corps Facebook posts and press releases. The corps



is looking forward to making it bigger and better next year, and, gauged by the interest already expressed, attendance could double!

"We are committed to continuing our support for teachers in every way we can. We want to thank everyone who participated, donated, and volunteered—your contributions made all the difference," said Major Bridgette. "We can continue to uplift and empower our educators, ensuring they have the resources and recognition they deserve. Here's to the teachers, the heart of our community."



Steve Dykstra and Major Ronnie Amick man the grill.

Grant multiplies services for veterans

his month, the North & Central Illinois Division's Veterans Services is concluding an 11-month federal grant that has significantly increased legal services for veterans. The Legal Services for Veterans Program (LSV-H) has been focused on assisting female veterans, especially those who are homeless or who are low-income and at risk for becoming homeless.

"We had one veteran who became 100 percent service-connected disabled [the highest rating the Veteran's Administration can assign for service-related disabilities] and that brought her monthly income from zero to \$3,737 a month. That turned her life around," said Legal Services Coordinator Jessica Parker, who oversaw the program. "We were able to get another veteran's tuition waived at a college. We filed an education debt waiver for him. He was able to get his diploma and become employed."

Jessica, a veteran herself of the U.S. Army and Illinois Army National Guard, who also manages the legal services for the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program, was assisted by one legal services benefit coordinator, Jennifer Hobbs, who conducted outreach to veterans in the Illinois Department of Corrections, Grant and Per Diem Housing programs and more. She screened incoming veterans to identify their legal needs, later removing their legal barriers to housing through resourcing, making referrals to appropriate outside legal agencies and developing claims for state and federal veterans' benefits.

"We really feel like we are making life-changing impacts on veterans we serve; moving them from homelessness to permanent housing; removing the legal barriers they have," Jessica said.

Kelly, a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps in Peoria, was one of the beneficiaries of the grant program.

"I was facing homelessness for about the third time," Kelly said. "I was put in touch with Jessica Parker. Through the grant program, Jessica—who is a real fighter for veterans—helped me file for my VA disability. Things are so much better. Now I am getting assistance, and that allows me to focus on myself and on my health. It has changed my life."

Since the program has had such a tremendous impact, there are plans to file for the LSV-H grant again, if it is available in the next fiscal year, Jessica said.

"Overall, the program has been very successful for our first year. We were able to reach veterans from several different regions of the state; we have served them in different capacities from immigration law to family law to income support. And we have built professional relationships with other community agencies which will as-

Legal services benefit coordinator Jennifer Hobbs works with veteran Jeremy Jean.

sist us in future endeavors," Jessica

The NCI Division's SSVF operates out of 10 locations throughout Illinois. It includes a plethora of assistance to veterans and their families from rental assistance to transportation and health care navigation services.

A helping hand



by Merri Bennett

ince 2015, The Salvation
Army in Kent County, Mich.,
has partnered with The Home
Depot Association, local
"Team Depot" associates and hundreds of volunteers, who complete
landscaping and outdoor home repair
projects for veterans and active-duty
service members and their families.

Chris Striebel, Great Lakes executive director of emergency disaster services, has been working with The Home Depot from the beginning.

"The Salvation Army is known for helping veterans and for our canteens," Chris said, "So when Home Depot reached out asking if we could feed volunteers, we knew we wanted to help in any way we could."

Over the past two years, The Salvation Army also has provided emotional and spiritual care. At a morning rally with volunteers, Grand Valley Area Commander Major Tim Meyer delivered the invocation, then traveled to different sites as lunches were delivered to converse and encourage veterans, their families, and those involved in the projects. For instance, this year when a flagpole was erected at one veteran's home, Major Tim gathered everyone to salute and sing "My Coun-

try 'Tis of Thee" as the American flag raised for the first time.

"As a veteran myself, I am so thankful we are a part of this project," Major Tim said. "For all they have given of themselves, veterans are often the last to ask for help."

Over the past 10 years, approximately 200 veterans and their families have been helped.

Maribeth Groen, who is with the Heart of West Michigan United Way which has provided volunteers since 2019, says that the volunteers' commitment to making a difference for veterans and their families often stems from a desire to honor their own family members who were veterans.

"Many of our volunteers have a connection to veterans through family members that are no longer with us and that is why they do this," she said. "One volunteer's father passed away, and that is why he is here every year."

For veterans, the projects often serve as a reminder of the gratitude we have for the sacrifices they've made for our country, and they are grateful as expressed by one veteran who wrote, "God Bless you. And God Bless America."

Still remembered

ince World War I, The Salvation Army has been known for its love and support for service personnel. Archives are replete with photos of Salvationists serving coffee and donuts. From the trenches of France to the United Service Organization (USO) Clubs to canteens in the South Pacific, The Salvation Army has provided prayers, comfort, hope—and donuts.

In 2008 a group of 12 Quad City citizens came together to plan the first of what would become 60 Honor Flights. One of them, Steve Garrington, was a Salvation Army Advisory Board member and son of Salvation Army officers.

Knowing the history, Steve approached the corps officers stationed in the Quad Cities with a fantastic opportunity. The Salvation Army could continue its tradition of supplying donuts to soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines—now aging veterans—flying to Washington D.C. The officers would need to be at the airport at 5:30 a.m. to meet the 165 veterans and guardians with cups of coffee and, of course, donuts.

Steve paid for the donuts that first year and then found other funding sources for future outreach at the Honor Flights. It continues to this day. Four times a year, The Salvation Army assembles at the airport to serve coffee and donuts, to share a



smile and listening ear and express appreciation. Over 5,500 veterans and 4,000 guardians have flown from the Quad Cities to see the monuments erected in our nation's capital in their honor. Seeing the uniform and receiving a donut, many have shared a story.

"It is a great privilege for us to serve these men and women who have sacrificed so much for us," said Lana Tranchitella, North & Central Illinois Division central emergency disaster services manager. "It makes my heart happy that these veterans come back from Honor Flights knowing how much

they matter, the difference they've made, the love and respect we have for them. That's the goal, and I feel Honor Flight fulfills that so well. I'm grateful The Salvation Army can have a part in that."



Ready to respond



by Monica Kriegel

wenty Central Territory members of the Salvation Army
Team Emergency Radio Network (SATERN), an international network of volunteer ham radio operators who play a supportive role in emergency disaster services (EDS) by providing communications and other technical assistance to enhance response and effectiveness, participated in the Central States Communications Exercise in Quapaw, Okla.



The biennial event, which began in 2017, was born of the desire to assess interoperability (communications) challenges brought to light during the 2011 EF5 tornado in Joplin, Mo. It focuses on honing communications skills, exercise equipment and capabilities with the added benefit of documenting training for credentialing.



"In the case of an emergency or disaster that impacts communication—such as damage to radio/communication towers, cell phone towers, high winds, lightening, solar flares/sunspots—it is imperative for emergency response agencies to maintain communication in real time to support recovery efforts," said Martin Rueter, Midland divisional EDS director. "While our EDS team [SATERN] has been testing communications viability for decades, this formal program ensures that all involved disaster relief organizations are working together seamlessly."

The event, which started with 10 emergency communication trucks from four states, has grown to exceed 300 participants, including communications experts from state emergency response agencies and nonprofit

organizations active in disaster relief and recovery, from 29 states and one U.S. territory.

In addition, there were communications personnel from the U.S. military, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and major cellular service providers such as AT&T, Verizon and T-Mobile.

This was SATERN's second year to participate in the exercise and included members from the Midland, Kansas and Western Missouri, Indiana and Western divisions, along with Major Michele Heaver, Central Territory SATERN liaison with National Headquarters. They practiced setting up a variety of radio antennas and equipment and worked toward a series of evaluations and tasks to become certified as Auxiliary Communicators. They also worked alongside communication teams during the exercise to provide communication as needed.

During the weeklong training, SATERN members also partnered with members of American Legion Post 13 in Joplin to conduct wellness, or "buddy," checks with veterans. This partnership enabled assistance and resources to meet veterans' needs and to determine mental or physical stressors they may be experiencing. The checks can help address potential vulnerability to self-harm or suicide, an all too often occurrence. According to Veterans Affairs mental health reports, approximately 22 U.S. military veterans take their own lives each day.

Martin concluded, "By practicing communications preparedness and conducting wellness checks, we hope to support the communities we serve in times of great need."

| December Pr | ayer Ca | alendar | |
|----------------|---------------------|-------------------|---|
| My Prayer List | Day | Bible Reading | Pray for The Salvation Army |
| | 1 Sunday | Acts 19-20 | Jefferson City, Mo., Corps |
| | 2 Monday | 1 John 3-4 | South America West Territory |
| | 3 Tuesday | Deuteronomy 13-15 | Bloomington, Ind., Outpost |
| | 4 Wednesday | Nehemiah 5-9 | Detroit Grandale, Mich., Corps |
| | 5 Thursday | Psalms 140-142 | Grand Rapids, Mich., ARC |
| | 6 Friday | Song of Songs 1-2 | Watertown, S.D., Corps |
| | 7 Saturday | Revelation 1-6 | "I'll Fight" Day |
| | 8 Sunday | Acts 21-22 | Boone, Iowa, Corps |
| | 9 Monday | 1 John 5 | Germany, Lithuania and Poland Territory |
| | 10 Tuesday | Deuteronomy 16-18 | Marquette County, Mich., Corps |
| | 11 Wednesday | Nehemiah 10-13 | Brooklyn Park, Minn., Noble Worship Center (Corps) |
| | 12 Thursday | Psalms 143-145 | Salvation Army Staff and Volunteers |
| | 13 Friday | Song of Songs 3-4 | Christmas Distribution |
| | 14 Saturday | Revelation 7-11 | Omaha Citadel, Neb., Corps |
| | 15 Sunday | Acts 23-24 | Port Huron, Mich., Corps |
| | 16 Monday | 2 John | Royal Oak, Mich., Corps |
| | 17 Tuesday | Deuteronomy 19-21 | St. Louis Temple, Mo., Corps |
| | 18 Wednesday | Esther 1-5 | Washtenaw County, Mich., Corps |
| | 19 Thursday | Psalms 146-148 | Pray for every family served |
| | 20 Friday | Song of Songs 5-6 | Angola Territory |
| | 21 Saturday | Revelation 12-17 | Downriver, Mich., Corps |
| | 22 Sunday | Acts 25-26 | Minot, N.D., Corps |
| | 23 Monday | 3 John | Niles, Mich., Corps |
| | 24 Tuesday | Deuteronomy 22-24 | Missionaries Overseas |
| | 25 Wednesday | Esther 6-10 | Celebrate Immanuel—God with us! |
| | 26 Thursday | Psalms 149-150 | College for Officer Training |
| | 27 Friday | Song of Songs 7-8 | Italy and Greece Territory |
| | 28 Saturday | Revelation 18-20 | Oakbrook Terrace, III., Corps |
| | 29 Sunday | Acts 27-28 | Retired Officers |
| | 30 Monday | Jude | Wichita, Citadel |
| | 31 Tuesday | Revelation 21-22 | Be thankful for all that God has done! |
| | | | |

PRAYER CENTRAL

Go to www.salarmycentral.org

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

-- Mustard Seeds --



Petoskey Corps celebrates new facility

ith a history stretching back to 1901, the Petoskey, Mich., Corps has been a mainstay in the community for more than a century. This fall, the corps is increasing ministry and service opportunities with expanded program space thanks to a new facility which is enabling growth.

"We were operating far beyond our capacity," said Envoy Roman Hank, corps administrator. "In the summer we were setting up tables outside for our weekly community meal. The building wasn't fully accessible. The congregation had grown."

Envoy Greg Irwin, then corps administrator, orchestrated the purchase of a vacant building that was larger and with some work could accommodate the corps' needs. After taking the reigns in 2023, Envoy Roman began to oversee the relocation.

"It's all come together," he said with a smile, noting that Territorial Headquarters was supportive and

donors were happy to give. In addition, some large bequests occurred.

As the corps prepared to move across town, adjustments had to be made in order for programs to remain operational. While the old building had been sold, the new building was undergoing renovations to prepare program spaces and to install a commercial kitchen.

Through it all, a strong volunteer base and community collaborations helped keep things running. Social services continued through virtual appointments and phone calls. Another church offered space for youth programs. The senior fellowship moved to the community room of a senior housing complex. Volunteers delivered meals donated by a restaurant to shut-ins, veterans and the elderly.

Corps members continued to gather for worship at the thrift store, where they set up chairs, brought in the pulpit and a piano, and sang familiar hymns and songs from the Salvation Army Song Book.



At the Petoskey Corps dedication earlier this year are David Meyer (Meyer Ace Hardware), Envoy Greg Irwin, Petoskey Advisory Board Chairman Jeff Higgs, Scott Newsted and Fred Hackl (FAH Architecture), Envoy Roman Hank, Bear Creek Township Supervisor Dennis Keiser, Serenity Dankert (Ironwood Construction) and Lt. Colonel David Harvey.

"It wasn't high-tech," said Envoy Roman. "No screens or sound system, but we made it work."

At the grand opening this summer, The Salvation Army's enduring service to the Petoskey community was celebrated, and a symbolic key to the building, custom made by a high school student, was presented. After the ceremony, guests were invited to tour the facility.

The corps plans to install an outdoor playground, use the commercial kitchen and community spaces to host events, provide use of showers to those experiencing homelessness, and have a more active emergency disaster services (EDS) presence with a new quick-response EDS vehicle in the garage.

Continued from page 1

to ask questions to a panel of terriforial leaders.

Saturday evening, leaders and delegates enjoyed a western-themed meal with axe throwing, themed board games, and a cornhole tournament. The roots of relationships went deeper during this time of fellowship and fun. The night ended with a concert by the Territorial Worship Collective.





The conference concluded on Sunday morning with impassioned worship and preaching, calling each person to surrender to God and His call for their

Ignite lived up to its name. Many of those who attended were inspired—set aflame—to continue to serve and lead.

Everyone has a call from God. Each of us is called to share Jesus. Some of us will share God's love in the context of full-time ministry; others may have another vocational calling. However, all of our service is vital to God's Kingdom.



Promoted to Glory

Major Margaret Crampton

On August 19, 2024, Major Margaret "Midge" Crampton was promoted to Glory. Midge's life was a testament to the grace and compassion which flow

from a heart surrendered to God. She had a gentle spirit and a deep, abiding faith.

Born on March 9, 1947, in Ferndale, Mich., to Horace and Janet Cumming, her first best friends were her five siblings. She graduated from high school in 1966 and shortly thereafter met the love of her life, John Crampton.

Midge and John wed on October 29, 1966, and had two daughters. When their girls were in grade school they answered the call to serve in fulltime ministry and became envoys in 1981. The Cramptons continued to serve in corps throughout the Midwest for more than 30 years, receiving their full commission in 1991 and retiring in

Midge loved life. She enjoyed singing and was most fulfilled when she was with her family.

She was preceded in death by her husband, John, and siblings, Ada, Bob, Janet (Gary) Kovie, Mary, and Neil (Karen). She is survived by her children, Jacqueline (Alan) Ross and Kimberly Lange; six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Major Roy Mills

Major Roy Mills was promoted to Glory on July 23, 2024. He was a humble man of faith and integrity who loved God and His Word. Roy's heart

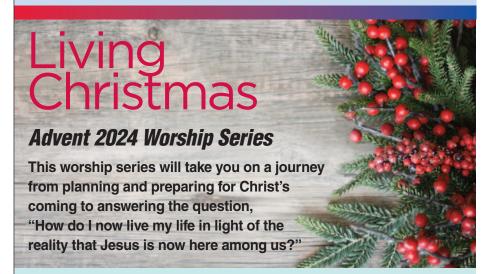


was in the corps and bringing people to Christ.

Born in Stockport, Cheshire, United Kingdom, on September 22, 1928, Roy began attending the corps in Beacontree, Essex in 1935. When WWII began, Roy and his brother Ernest were sent to the country for their safety. Upon returning home, Roy participated in the corps band and youth activities and gave his life to the Lord as a teenager. He later served in the British Army.

Roy immigrated to the United States in 1952. Called to officership during a meeting led by Colonel Albert Pepper, he entered training and was commissioned in 1954. After serving four years as a single officer, he married Lt. Kay Bailey in 1958. The Mills served in corps appointments for more than 35 years before retiring in 1993.

Roy was preceded in death by his wife. He is survived by his children, Susan Devilbiss, Annette Kueker, Roger (Annette) Mills, and Carol (Ron) Hedgren; 15 grandchildren, 20 great-grandchildren, and sister, Dr. June Mills.



The five-week series includes:

- Worship service materials (music options, dramas, readings, and a variety of other resources) for the five Sundays of December
- A Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
- Service elements in English and Spanish
- Graphics for PowerPoints and social media
- Daily devotionals for bellringers
- NEW!—Kids Five videos from Eastern Territory!

Find them under the "Resources" tab at: salarmycentral.org See your corps officer for more details.