by Captain Karen Holness

The St. Louis Euclid, Mo., Corps has served its community on the city’s north side for more than 125 years. Key to its longevity and effectiveness is the individual and collective commitment of its soldiers to live out the gospel as disciples of Christ.

Last year when territorial leaders Commissioners Brad and Heidi Bailey introduced the Mission Imperative of “More people, more like Jesus,” it resonated with the corps’ soldiers, who already were suited up and on the battlefield. In fact, as a traditional African-American corps, “I am on the battlefield for my Lord” is the rallying cry, which was formerly led by retired Songster Leader Jimmy McGowans and now by Bandmaster William “Bim” Cox in many worship settings.

The corps’ soldiers reflect the imperative’s leadership focus marked by being Spirit-led, inspired, engaged and sacrificially serving with accountability. To ensure accountability in carrying out The Salvation Army’s mission, they wrote a corps mission statement that says the St. Louis Euclid Corps will be a “welcoming church, providing a holistic ministry to our community through intentional youth development, integration of spiritual and social services, and providing a positive influence toward community growth and development.”

Our soldiers can be counted on to show up to help with disaster relief, to ring bells at kettles and distribute toys during Christmas, to cook and serve community meals, to sort and distribute food and other necessities for the pantry and mobile market, to encourage and pray with community members as part of the pastoral care team and to lead worship and preach on Sundays. Local leadership is at the helm of our corps making a difference in people’s lives and the community for Christ.

We are blessed to have many men who serve in its ranks. Corps Sergeant-Major (CSM) Benny White is a strong support to us as corps officers and gives this body of believers direction and encouragement. During the Territorial Authentic Mission Engagement weekend in 2016, he received the Certificate in Recognition of Exceptional Service, acknowledging his service to the community, particularly to the youth. Assistant CSM Kelvin Stewart is a blessing to corps, supporting it wherever needed. Bandmaster Bim Cox not only leads our eclectic band but teaches adult Sunday School.

Corps Sergeant-Major Benny White speaks at an outreach event.

Mrs. Osie Wallace

Leadership

Racial Justice Summit to convene

by Major Katherine Clausell

Social Justice and Urban Mission Secretary

I magine if The Salvation Army, working intentionally to model and amplify diversity, equity and inclusion, became a place where what is envisioned in Revelation chapters 5 and 7 starts happening now, not just when Christ returns. What a glorious sight that would be!

I penned these thoughts in January as part of an article for the February/March 2020 edition of the Army’s online Journal of Aggressive Christianity. I didn’t know that in just a few months our world would be turned upside down by two significant events. The first was the global pandemic which brought to light significant disparities in our healthcare system for people of color. The second was the murder of George Floyd which captured on video credence to the belief that people of color, particularly black people, are systemically discriminated against.

While not shocking to most people of African heritage, white Americans have awakened to the realities of racial injustice and are expressing their outrage. Salvationists in the Central Territory even took to the streets of Minneapolis, Minn., as witnesses for Jesus and to declare the killing of George Floyd—and too many others who’ve had their lives taken due to racism and abuse of power—wrong.

As we continue to deal with the disruption and threat to our lives due to COVID-19, what should The Salvation Army’s response be to the realities of racism? Follow ing the prayer event in Minneapolis, the territory’s leaders have decided to hold a summit to uncover past and present realities regarding systemic racism, no matter how uncomfortable, and to articulate a clear and decisive plan and course of action that will lead The Salvation Army in the Central Territory toward mutual understanding, respect and reconciliation.

The primary goal is to advance a more inclusive and vibrant Army that reflects “unified diversity” as seen in the Trinity.

The Racial Justice Summit will take place October 26-27, 2020, at Territorial Headquarters where 50 selected delegates (officers, soldiers and employees) will contend with issues related to racial injustice with a view toward correcting wrongs and moving forward in solidarity. Some of the meetings of this historic event will be livestreamed, and you are invited to view them at salvationarmymedia.org. Jesus said the world will know the Father has sent the Son because of the witness of unity we have with one another [John 17:23]. We can be sure this is still Jesus’ prayer for The Salvation Army today.
Imitating the greatest leader of all time

by Lt. Colonel Jonathan Rich
Territorial Secretary for Program

“W hen you think about the greatest leaders of all time, who comes to mind? Abraham Lincoln? Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.? Winston Churchill? Nelson Mandela?”

Ken Blanchard, author of The One Minute Manager (over 13 million copies sold) and more than 60 other books on leadership, asked this question at a seminar I attended. Many names like those above were shared.

After people weighed in, Blanchard asked our gathering, which by the way was church and ministry leaders, “Why didn’t any of you say Jesus?” He indicated Jesus was almost never mentioned when he asked large groups that question.

He went on to say: “I soon became aware that everything I had ever taught or written about effective leadership during the past 35 years, Jesus did to perfection, beyond my ability to portray or describe. I realized that Christians have more in Jesus than just a spiritual leader; we have a biblical and effective leadership model for all organizations, for all people, for all situations.”

Each of us is called to follow Jesus, the greatest leader of all time. As followers, we are called to lead, to say to others “imitate me as I imitate—become more like Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:1, NKJV). In this sense, leadership is not for a select few. We are all called to be leaders at home and school, in our places of work and, yes, in the context of our church, The Salvation Army.

Are you leading in your corps as a local officer by teaching Sunday school, heading a small group Bible study or serving in some other way in the name of Christ? Sacrificial leadership is not optional for followers of Christ. Is God calling you to serve Him as a Salvation Army officer? As we follow Christ, the question is not “Am I a leader?” but “Whom am I leading?”

As you follow the greatest leader of all time, He will equip you. He will transform you. He will lead you to be more like Him as you faithfully follow His lead. And here is a promise you can bank on: as you faithfully lead others, Jesus, the greatest leader of all time, is with you always, even until the end of the age. (Matthew 28:20b)

Captain Patrick Holness presents the Men’s Club of the Year Award to William Murphy (men’s club leader), Benny White (corps sergeant-major) and Artemus Wallace (recruiting sergeant) and Williams Cox (band master).

The women of the corps have a feat rarely matched. They are flanked by a team of extraordinary men like Artemus “Temo” Wallace who is the recruiting sergeant, participates in emergency disaster services and

Taking part in Youth Sunday worship are Karen White (assistant young people’s sergeant-major, junior soldier Preston Willmons and Cynthia Williams (young people’s sergeant-major).
I n 2015, the Kansas City Citadel, Kan., Corps began the Hope Works Corps Integration project with the goal of strengthening our ministry impact. We believed that integration of all our ministries would better address people’s complex life challenges by ensuring holistic and individualized support. The project came at just the right time as the corps had experienced significant losses in its social service and spiritual ministries, and new life was desperately needed.

The corps began to look for opportunities to link soldiers, employees and volunteers to our social service ministries, and link program participants with the corps’ other programs. The corps has a variety of ministries on campus including transitional housing for veterans, homeless with special needs and inmates reentering society, as well as hosting an on-site drug and alcohol program.

We introduced a series of new reaches with Pathway of Hope participants, permanent supportive housing clients and New Beginnings seniors in mind. They included free pizza and movie nights, holiday dinners and backyard barbecues of self-sustaining schools with meals served from the canteen.

The corps also began practicing “in-reach” to the residents on campus through invitations to worship, Bible classes and fellowship opportunities throughout the week. In the past couple of years, the corps has added a concentration in discipleship, offering an eight-week course teaching the basics of Christianity which includes Salvation Army doctrines and 12 Steps to recovery.

The Kansas City Citadel

Leadership development anywhere we can

G rowing healthy and effective corps is much more likely when there is a solid foundation of local leaders who take ownership of the future of a corps. Unfortunately, many corps in the Indiana Division have experienced a lack of engaged soldiers who are willing to share the burden of leadership with their corps officers. The division has set out to change that.

Over the last year in response to the need for leaders and to assist corps in their development, the divisional program department began hosting a series of spiritual development retreats for leaders and pre-leaders. Held at camp, the retreats include united sessions on broad topics of spiritual development for leaders and smaller sessions which target subjects such as discipleship and spiritual giftedness.

During the pandemic it became clear that we had an opportunity to shift our retreat to a virtual setting though we admit trying this new way caused a bit of anxiety for us. Starting with Major Christopher Marques and six members of the Princeton, Ind., Corps, we gave it a shot—and it worked! We were able to worship, teach, engage in deep topics and dream together about what leadership roles and new efforts the Holy Spirit might be urging the participants toward. While it was certainly different from our gathered retreat in many ways, there were elements from which we learned and are encouraged to offer it again.

“I enjoyed listening to others and what they had to say which helped me look at myself. I realized that I have more to give than I think,” said Princess, Ind., Corps Prayer Sergeant Pat Wilson. “That weekend helped me look deeper and step up to give God my all to Him. I do help out when I am able, but I realized I can give even more.”

Phil Hull’s job as Indiana divisional director of mission and spiritual development also shows the division’s priority of local leaders. As a life-long Salvationist and the corps sergeant-major at the Indianapolis Eagle Creek, Ind., Corps, he speaks with authority on the importance and necessity of a focused effort to identify, train and empower local leaders.

We believe local leaders must not be capable merely of carrying out the duties of a program but must execute their service as a part of their personal call to mission from Jesus as they engage in ongoing spiritual development.

Hope Works at Kansas City Citadel

by Major Beverly Best

Lois Uziel and Major Beverly Best

Keatheranne Robinson endured years of rejection, abuse, addiction and forced human trafficking as a child. One day, while crying out to God in a jail cell, she heard the Lord say, “Keatheranne, I’m not through with you yet.” She committed her life to God and actively shares her testimony with others, spreading the hope of Jesus.

Kacie Cop, a young woman once addicted to drugs, was a resident in our program and now is a regular corps attendee and youth assistant. While she was in treatment, she asked the corps to pray for her mom, Cynthia, to come to church. Cynthia now comes to worship regularly with several grandchildren in tow. Their lives have been changed as well as that of Kacie who concluded, “Rehab is great. NA is great. But rehab could not save me; NA couldn’t save me. Jesus saved me. Jesus set me free!”

Lois Uziel of the Kansas City Citadel, Kan., Corps is not traditional, but each Sunday you will hear amazing stories of God breaking the chains of sin and bringing restoration and hope to His people.

For instance, Angela Canzinno, corps administrative assistant, began attending the corps when she helped at the corps on a Sunday when the corps officers were out of town. She’s now a soldier who shares her history of domestic abuse, including a forced abortion, bringing consciousness and hope to many women who have experienced similar pain. Angela teaches Adult Sunday school and discipleship to residents living on campus.

Lois Uziel, a sweet-spirited woman with deep Bible knowledge, started attending the corps and women’s ministries. You’d never guess she has a “woman at the well” name. Married five times and a survivor of domestic violence, Lois suffered a tragic loss when her son was shot and killed in front of her. She now shares how God’s love brought her healing and she’s forgiven the person responsible. Lois teaches the faith and recovery courses offered to program residents.

Leadership development anywhere we can

by Major Rachel Stouder

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Make a channel

by Katy Engle

at the Royal Oak, Mich., Corps, I serve as women’s ministry secretary. I take encouragement from the faith and ministry of Lydia of Philadelphia who we read about in Acts 16. Like Lydia, I started as a “worshiper of God,” doing all the things religious people do. By the same Spirit that opened Lydia’s eyes, I found Christ to be the main objective of my life through the study of God’s Word.

It’s incredible that God could change the heart of a person like Lydia. She enjoyed the comforts of wealth and social status. She checked off all the boxes of being “good” by going to prayers on the Sabbath. All in all, she was self-reliant, which makes submitting her heart and life to Christ seemingly impossible, unless prompted by the Spirit. It’s beautiful to see God working in that way to help others who blindly think we can save ourselves.

What really fuels my faith though is to see how God also relentlessly pursues two individuals described later in the same chapter. The text describes a nameless warrior re- signed to darkness, given into hopelessness and enslaved by abusers. Like so many of us, she mocked God until she found in Him the freedom, hope and light her heart desperately needed. Then we read of an aggressive Roman jailer, embittered from
Keeping the mission—people safe!

Local leaders are key to implementing Safe from Harm (SFH) in their corps. So, this issue seems a perfect time to revisit the territory’s child and vulnerable safety program and policy with its director Megan Olson, who’s been leading the charge since 2013.

Why should leaders in a corps care about making sure Safe from Harm is implemented? Jesus served and healed vulnerable adults throughout His ministry on earth—the poor, the elderly, those who were differently abled. He cared deeply about people and showed that through His actions, so Salvationists should, too. We should care about implementing SFH because keeping people safe is an act of love.

Children are the future of the Church, the future influencers of our culture and the future leaders of our country. The elderly give us wisdom and differently abled people help us recognize what it truly means to be made in the image of God. For all of that, SFH is worth investing in.

And, when implemented right, SFH offers added protection for soldiers and officers from false allegations that could be made against them or from falling short of mandated reporter obligations they may be held to by law.

What’s the benefit of Safe from Harm to a corps and the Army as a whole?

It’s a way of showing love, exercising care and compassion, demonstrating wisdom and placing value on those we serve, showing we are willing to create the most optimal environment to allow for focus in achieving our mission. It not only protects people but builds community trust and helps protect us from lawsuits that hinder our organization’s resources. It’s a win-win.

How is SFH achievable for a smaller corps without lots of leaders?

By working together to employ the reasoning, problem-solving and creative abilities endowed to us by our amazing Creator. He made us part of a diverse Body so we can work together for His Kingdom. Let’s not forget our resource people! Work closely with your divisional or command SFH coordinator or myself for ideas and assistance. We are part of your team!

What challenges does a larger corps with sufficient leaders face and how can they address them?

Even if a corps has lots of people, everyone must take responsibility. We can’t just think someone else is taking care of SFH. Also, if there are a lot of people across the age span, there may be differences among generations about the value of SFH and what safety measures look like. It needs to be talked about and planned out, people need to be properly trained, and it needs to be kept fresh as a priority. Lastly, leaders need to set a strong example by promoting SFH as a benefit to their corps and the organization and implementing it.

What do you feel is most misunderstood about SFH?

Unfortunately, there is a misperception that it’s all about what you can’t do, that SFH doesn’t allow ministry or that it just prevents lawsuits. If you think of what could result from failure to implement SFH, you’ll start to realize how it truly impacts lives and allows us to facilitate ministry in a quality way.

What role is the new National Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Safety Committee playing?

We are promoting holistic integration of important safety and prevention measures in collaboration with other entities like the Youth Commission and the training colleges; reviewing national policies, standards and procedures; and providing feedback to International Headquarters about international policies regarding child and vulnerable adult safety; and creating more sophisticated tracking systems to help the Army make informed decisions.

How will implementation or coordination with national and international policies and committee affect what this territory has been doing with SFH?

In the last five years International Headquarters introduced a child protection policy framework setting life-changing impacts of The Salvation Army’s mission. The investment of leaders and devoted professionals across the territory. Being prayed for and praying for others. A person’s “aha” moment during SFH training. Words of affirmation. My supportive husband and my son for whom I want to provide the safest faith-building experience when in Salvation Army programs.

Has having a son given more insight or urgency to SFH for you?

He certainly has offered a new perspective. In one of my trainings, someone put it this way, “For parents, The Salvation Army is being entrusted with their most prized possession when they drop their kids off for programs or camps,” I agreed with that before having our son, but he’s taken it to a new level. What I want most is for him to know Jesus and have an authentic relationship with Him. Because the Church and fellowship of believers play a role in this, safety in the spiritual context is absolutely necessary. Ministry, training and discipleship are relational, meaning that when there is foul play within them or negligence around them, the troubling effects can reach the very soul. For the sake of these souls, we cannot fail at SFH.

How does your faith play in?

It’s really what upholds and sustains me—a light that is able to overcome the dark and troubling realities of abuse and exploitation in our world. It fuels in me a passion for safeguarding the innocence of youth and for accountability and justice, and it reminds me that God can reverse what is broken in remarkable ways. My faith drives my work with the ultimate objective of SFH helping to provide safe contexts for our ministries where God can change lives and save souls.

Safe from Harm was introduced in the Central Territory in 2001. As we approach its 20th anniversary, what progress have we made?

In-person training has evolved with technology and content updated as best practices are discerned within the newer and developing child and vulnerable adult safety industry. Online training is available, and our course catalog will be expanding soon to include more context-specific options. To empower units with incident response, the Emergency Rapid Response (ERR) kit was created in collaboration with Territorial Risk Management and includes phone and web-based SFH reporting options, along with quick reference materials. Empowering practical day-to-day implementation of SFH is happening through unit and division/command consultations and compliance reviews that include goal setting. Most importantly, by working with the division/command SFH coordinators and through the investment of leadership and lay persons at all levels, our organizational culture is becoming one that recognizes each person’s part in SFH. This allows for a more natural integration.

What do we still have to do?

While we have a robust program, we need to stay abreast of best practices and specifically address prevention and response within each of them. That means buy-in from and collaboration with a lot of different people across various disciplines to further develop SFH in a way that works within the realities of The Salvation Army. I’d like to see SFH woven into the fabric of everything we do, always the forefront, never overshadowing ministry but a ministry itself—because it is!
A Call to Service

by Envoy Greg Irwin

leadership in The Salvation Army is synonymous with service. The most effective leaders are servants in love with Jesus, engaged in their communities and building the Kingdom of God. It’s leadership in action.

At the Petoskey, Mich., Corps, we have been blessed with people who have been drawn to The Salvation Army with people who have been looking for a place to be the hands and feet of Christ. We have a family who needed a meal and joined us for our Friday Night Live Community Meal Program four and a half years ago. They ended up volunteering at subsequent meals, then became soldiers and youth leaders in our corps. We have two other volunteers who each have been the divisional "Man of the Year" in the last four years. They are selfless servants. We have the right answers, because they didn’t desire recognition but just wanted to serve folks and draw them to Christ by example.

"But among you it will be different. Those who are the greatest among you should take the lowest rank, and the leader should be like a servant." Luke 22:36, NLT.

We have a recovering alcoholic who started his journey with our corps by ringing bells and is now a soldier who leads our Thursday night recovery support dinner and helps lead the Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meetings. He also assists with our Sunday night jail ministry and serves as our hospital chaplain.

We have a gentleman who came out of prison four years ago and now is an adherent who leads our NA meetings and is a team captain for one of our emergency meal deliveries.

Teens from the afterschool program serve Friday night community dinners to approximately 70 people, including seniors and homeless, in winter 2018. Teens from the afterschool program serve Friday night community dinners to approximately 70 people, including seniors and homeless, in winter 2018. Teens from the afterschool program serve Friday night community dinners to approximately 70 people, including seniors and homeless, in winter 2018. Teens from the afterschool program serve Friday night community dinners to approximately 70 people, including seniors and homeless, in winter 2018.

Got Questions?

by Major Mare Johnson

When we were children in school, we focused on having the right answers to questions. While it is important in education, it’s the wrong focus for good leadership. A commonly held leadership principle says great leaders don’t have all the right answers; instead, they know how to ask the right questions.

Perhaps you’re wondering, “So, what questions should I be asking as a leader?” Now, that’s a great question! The right questions stimulate others to think deeply, explore options and expand horizons. They also lead to good results.

I’m reminded of an experience I had while serving as a corps officer in Chile. I needed to get an ID card for our newly adopted daughter. At the courthouse, the desk where someone processed such matters was gone; instead, a long line of people stood in front of a closed door. I asked the security guard how to proceed, and he told me to get in line. After 45 minutes he called out a number, and the person in front of me yelled, “That’s me!” I had a problem because I didn’t have a number. I asked the guard why he didn’t tell me I needed to get a number, and he replied, “You didn’t ask the right question.” It was embarrassing for both of us.

Asking the right question as a spiritual leader is vital. Jesus often used questions to stimulate others to grow deeper in their spiritual walk with God or to challenge His accusers who had evil motives. For example, when Pharisees tried to trap Jesus by asking Him if it was right to pay taxes to Caesar, Jesus responded, “Whose picture and title are stamped on it?” “Caesar’s,” they replied. “Well, then,” Jesus said, “give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and give to God what belongs to God.” (Mark 12:16-17, NLT). The right question at the right time can be powerful.

Is God calling you to take on a leadership role in your corps but you’re afraid you won’t have the right answers? Take heart! Know that as you seek Him, God will lead you to the right conclusions.

Kids Club Curbside

The Pontiac, Mich., Corps has taken its ministry to the streets of their community to make sure they’re still connecting with children and families. Four days a week, officers and staff members travel to seven neighborhoods to host Kids Club Curbside, a program featuring food distribution, fun activities and Bible lessons based on the Orange Sunday School curriculum.

“We wanted to find ways to look kids in the eyes and remind them of God’s loving care. Not surprisingly, the parents are benefitting from our efforts at least as much as the kids,” said Captain Judith Fetzer, Pontiac corps officer.

Many of the families have attended corps youth programs and the community center, but Kids Club Curbside also has attracted others. What started with 50 kids and 22 families turned into 76 kids and 28 families in just three weeks!

The corps publicized the program by calling each family with meet-up location and time and asking them also to invite their neighbors. The initiative also garnered media coverage by a local newspaper. The article about the program was posted on the corps Facebook page and had nearly 4,000 views in less than a week.

This mobile ministry lasted for eight weeks, helping children through the summer learning loss and helping families navigate reentry into school.

Ta’Shena Smith, administrative and program assistant, with a participant in Kids Club Curbside.

Pictured (l to r) are Starling Heard, Shannon Eiler and Hannah Walters at a MadHatter Tea Party 2018 that raised funds for World Services. Adherent Ben Evans and Susan Melton of 102.9 Big Country radio take part in an event in 2017 to restock the corps pantry.

Envoy Bethany Irwin provides hot carry-out meals to community members in July. In addition, approximately 150 meals were delivered on Friday nights to homeless shelters, seniors and mobility-impaired residents.
Leading the way in our corps

With the gifts and skills God has given us, we each have a valuable role to play. Here we salute some of the exceptional local leaders in the Central Territory, whose steadfast and sacrificial service even during a pandemic is making all the difference for young and eternity.

Welcoming everyone in Watertown

by Michelle DeRusha

Luann Baseler’s self-proclaimed mission is to put a smile on every person’s face. “I love being the first person people see when they walk through our door,” said Luann, who serves as welcome sergeant on Sunday mornings and as the front desk receptionist weekdays at the Watertown, S.D., Corps. “That moment sets the tone for every interaction that follows, so I take my role very seriously.”

Just because she’s serious about her work, however, doesn’t mean Luann doesn’t have fun. “I do what I do because I love it and because I have a good time doing it,” she said. “I don’t get paid monetarily, but I get paid in a million other ways.”

Luann’s introduction to The Salvation Army came in the early ’80s, when, after graduating from college, a friend invited her to lunch at The Salvation Army in Huron, S.D. Just 25 cents, it helped Luann make ends meet when her finances were tight. “At the time I was what we would now call homeless though I didn’t think of myself that way,” she recalled. “I didn’t have a place of my own, so I bounced around a lot, staying with different friends. I had a job, but I didn’t manage my money well, so I didn’t have a penny to my name.

“There was no judgment there. Everyone was kind and welcoming,” she continued. “Back then, I didn’t even really know what The Salvation Army was. I didn’t know what they did.”

That changed in 1998 when another friend invited her to attend home league (women’s ministry) at the corps in Aberdeen, S.D., where Luann had moved. She had applied for disability and was unable to work, but when the corps needed a volunteer to answer phones at the front desk, she jumped at the opportunity. Since then, Luann has been volunteering ever since.

“Luann does absolutely marvelous work,” said Lt. Zachary Zumwalt, Watertown corps officer. “She’s at the corps five days a week, answering phones and helping people who checked in. On Sundays she welcomes everyone with a warm greeting. She makes everyone feel at home, even if it’s their first time visiting.”

When she’s not welcoming visitors, Luann helps compile statistics, posts on the corps’ social media platforms and keeps the office sanitized. “She said, ‘I tell them they’ll see a familiar face—me!’”

Connecting creatively with corps cadets in Omaha

by Michelle DeRusha

When Omaha Citadel Web Corps Program Director Matt Walter realized he needed to get creative during the pandemic in order to connect with each of his 18 corps cadets, he knew whatever he planned and tacos go together like bread and butter. “I brought some dinner over—always Taco Bell; it has to be Taco Bell—set up some chairs on the drive-way, and together we knocked out three months of lessons,” Matt said.

He hosted more than a dozen “Drive-way Tacos” meetups at the homes of corps cadets during June and July. Because the brigade hadn’t met in person since mid-March, they were about three months behind. “Zoom is fine, but I’ve found it just works better to connect with young people in person if possible,” said Matt. “This turned out to be a great opportunity to check in with each kid and get done what we needed to get done. Plus, you can’t go wrong with tacos, right?”

Matt, who oversees youth programming at the corps, including music, character-building programs and corps cadets, has worked for The Salvation Army for 15 years, but his personal connection with the Army was forged long before then.

“I walked into Citadel as a 15-year-old to fulfill my community service requirement after I’d been expelled from school for getting in a fight,” Matt explained. “The staff showed me so much support and showed my family so much support, The Salvation Army became my church home. I came to The Salvation Army as a troubled teen myself, so I get what some of these kids are going through.”

While Matt was studying computer programming at a local college, he had the opportunity to volunteer as a youth leader at the corps. Eventually he was hired full-time as program director. He’s worked for the Army ever since.

Passing on the faith

by Captain Judith Fetzer

When kids talk about a mentor, “you know they have a hero. My own children can’t stop talking about Ron Washington, young people’s sergeant-major at the Pontiac, Mich., Corps, who teaches children’s Sunday school and junior church each week.

Ron first volunteered at The Salvation Army when his wife worked as the corps’ social services director. He was inspired by the Christmas distribution, and when the job of community center director became available in 2011, he applied because he “wanted to be part of all the joy.”

Ron remembers the 1967-68 riots in Detroit when everything was shut down. “There were young people with nothing to do.” Ron’s dad, who worked as a teacher and coach in the Catholic School System, started a city-wide basketball program with the Detroit Public Schools, including summer leagues and camps. Ron went on to play four years of college basketball at the University of Massachussets and remembers the positive impact his college coach and teammates had on him.

Ron was fortunate to have another role model, especially after his father died when Ron was just 25. Monsignor Thomas Finnigan, his dad’s boss and friend, functioned as pastor and mentor for Ron during the difficult years after his father’s passing. His experience as an altar boy at Catholic School and discipleship by Monsignor Finnigan led him to faith in the One Living God and belief in Jesus Christ.

For Ron, his role at The Salvation Army is a natural expression of that faith, seeded in a Catholic tradition and bearing fruit as a Salvation Army soldier. Ron says he loves wearing his uniform as a way to connect with people and share the Lord.

Of his experiences in The Salvation Army, Ron most values visitation and transportation. He loves the “expectation of the kids who are waiting for us to arrive” and then the process of the families “becoming part of us” as a church family and culture.

In 2018, Ron experienced kidney failure and is now on the organ donor list. Despite this continuing trial, Ron has never lost hope or faith in God’s goodness and feels he already has been given a second chance at life.
Pouring out God’s love

Vanessa Brinkmann has a passion for letting others know they are loved. It’s that simple. Though she only recently took on the local officer position of young people’s sergeant-major at the Indianapolis Eagle Creek, Ind. Corps, she has been doing the work long before. In fact, every young person who attends the corps in the past nine years has connected with Vanessa in some way. She is not only committed to her girl guards and band kids but takes a real interest in every young person she meets.

“The corps is a safe place,” said Vanessa, “it’s a place for youth to meet friends, escape stress, be themselves and have fun.”

Vanessa says her passion for youth ministry comes from her own journey, which began when a friend invited her to sunbeams. “I always had something in me that was drawing me to the Lord,” she said. “God calls us in different ways. My Christian friends who invited me to church were part of God calling me.”

From her first encounter with The Salvation Army, Vanessa became involved in other programs, learned to play a horn and attended summer camps. She accepted Christ and has not looked back.

“Faith is the foundation of everything,” she said regarding the importance of reaching youth with the gospel. “When you’re young you learn to tie your shoes, to feed yourself, the basic things. As Christians, we believe it’s a basic thing to learn about God.”

Her desire to pour God’s love into young people is evident in her dedication to everything that happens at the corps. Whenever something needs to be done, Vanessa is committed to be the one.

“Vanessa loves each person who comes through the doors,” said Lt. Joshua Hubbard, Indianapolis Eagle Creek corps officer. “She is a selfless soldier, dedicated to our young people and committed to our community. We are blessed at Eagle Creek to have Vanessa as our YPSC.”

I love all of it,” said Sheila Carson of her role as women’s ministries secretary at the Kansas City Eastside, Mo., Corps which she’s held for two years.

Sheila began attending the corps with her mother after an invitation from now-Captain LeOtis Brooks about 14 years ago. She was enrolled as a soldier in 2011 and recently completed a refresher course and renewed her commitment. She wears her uniform proudly to show her dedication to the corps and to the Lord and says she lives daily by Proverbs 3:5-7.

“Shelia has grown in her faith,” said Major Janice Love, corps officer. “She has a boldness to tell it like it is, and I appreciate that about her. She’s a studier of the Word and a consistent and faithful tither.”

Since taking on the role of women’s ministries secretary, Sheila has used her gifts of organization, attention to detail and creativity to plan and lead programs and activities for the women of the corps. She especially enjoys teaching crafts and building relationships within the group.

“I love our ladies,” she said. “When we get together we have our program but we also tell each other about our lives and pray for one another.”

In addition to orchestrating women’s ministries activities, Sheila serves as head usher on Sundays, volunteers to cook for corps and community meals, and has prepared care packages for corps members throughout the pandemic, each designed for a particular group or event such as children, corps cadets, men’s ministries and Mother’s Day.

“We plan to start meeting in person again soon,” concluded Sheila. “I want to see our ladies, grow to love one another, and invite more women to join us.”

Shining for Christ

Jesus Ortiz has served as corps sergeant-major (CSM) at the Chicago, Ill., La Villita Corps for 17 years.

“Jesus is someone who lives his faith,” said Carlos Moran, corps administrator. “He is the same at home as he is at the corps, a strong family man and a good example.”

In his crucial role as CSM, Jesus helps lead and support the corps and encourages other members to be fully involved. Though limited during the pandemic, he has served as a Sunday school teacher, taught enlistment classes and filled in as a substitute Bible study leader. He also started the corps’ Facebook page and uses it to encourage corps members as well as those on the fringes in their faith.

Jesus wasn’t always a believer. In the early days, he attended the corps on Sundays primarily to spend time with the woman he would one day marry. However, through the ministry of Major Victor Garcia, who was the corps officer at the time, he began to explore spiritual matters and accepted Christ as his Savior.

“I wasn’t sure I was with Jesus at first what it really meant to be a Christian,” said Jesus, but he didn’t quit. Choosing to go all in, Jesus started attending Bible study and gave up his self-indulgent lifestyle as he realized his actions were not honoring to God.

The difference Christ made in Jesus’ heart and mind changed the course of his and his family’s lives. Jesus’ wife, children and extended family also have accepted Christ. His grown children have continued to serve the Lord through The Salvation Army as employees or soldiers at other corps.

“I thank God every day for His grace,” concluded Jesus. “I pray God keeps me in His Word and away from temptation so I can be a blessing to others for Him.”

Inspiring women to grow

I started adult life as a new mom,” said Maricssa Meras of her role as corps youth leader at the La Villita Corps. “It was a powerful experience at youth councils in which Maricssa felt the Lord calling her to step up.

“Maricssa used to be very quiet, but she began to speak up and take leadership,” said Major Lex. “She has good priorities and is a good example to the kids.”

Throughout the pandemic, Maricssa has stayed connected with the corps youth and worked with them to complete their corps cadet lessons along with other activities such as the corps mini-vacation Bible school. She currently leads a teen Bible study and discussion group each week.

Going the extra mile

Kansas City Blue Valley, Mo., Corps youth leader Maricssa Meras is dedicated to spreading the gospel and discipling children and teens of the corps. Working while studying early education, this college student has a lot on her plate, but she keeps her involvement at the corps a priority.

In addition to teaching corps cadets and leading other youth programs, she volunteers to serve community meals and assists with events like school supply distribution.

“Maricssa is very responsible,” said Major Lex Giron, corps officer. “She always goes the extra mile.”

Maricssa says she wants to provide the same comfort and opportunities for youth that she experienced growing up in the corps.

“Going to the corps made a big difference in my life,” she said. “It was a safe place for me, so instead of getting into trouble I was involved at the corps.”

The desire to take up a leadership role came after a powerful experience at youth councils in which Maricssa felt the Lord calling her to step up.

“Maricssa used to be very quiet, but she began to speak up and take leadership,” said Major Lex. “She has good priorities and is a good example to the kids.”

Throughout the pandemic, Maricssa has stayed connected with the corps youth and worked with them to complete their corps cadet lessons along with other activities such as the corps mini-vacation Bible school. She currently leads a teen Bible study and discussion group each week.
Congratulations!

We salute these officers who have achieved certificates and degrees, enriching their lives and ministries as of May 31, 2020.

**Major Carole Caddy**
Certificate in Life Coaching (Marriage & Family)
Parrott Institute at Olivet Nazarene University

**Major Valerie Carr**
M.A. Leadership
Asbury Theological Seminary

**Major Michael Cho**
Emerging Leadership Program
Arrow Leadership Institute

**Major Jim Curi**
Certificate in Life Coaching (Marriage & Family)
Parrott Institute at Olivet Nazarene University

**Captain Aubrey DeBaar**
B.A. Ministry (Christian Education) Nazarene Bible College

**Captain Cassandra DeJesus**
Master of Organizational Leadership
Trevecca Nazarene University

**A/Captain John Gantner**
Certificate in Kroc Center Leadership
Booth University College

**A/Captain Tracy Gantner**
Certificate in Kroc Center Leadership
Booth University College

**Major Curtiss Hartley**
M.A. Communication
(Strategic Communication)
Regent University

**Lt. Robyn Hubbard**
Certificate in Life Coaching (Marriage & Family)
Parrott Institute at Olivet Nazarene University

**Captain Mary Kim**
Executive Leadership Program
Arrow Leadership Institute

**Captain David Martinez**
Emerging Leadership Program
Arrow Leadership Institute

**Captain Heather Montenegro**
Emerging Leadership Program
Arrow Leadership Institute

**Major Valerie Nance**
B.A.S. Practical Ministry
Olivet Nazarene University

**Captain Samantha Nolan Jones**
B.A.S. Practical Ministry
Olivet Nazarene University

**Major Jenny Ortmann**
Certificate in Higher Education Teaching
Booth Center at Harvard University

**Major Johanna Pook**
Certificate in Kroc Center Leadership
Booth University College

**Major John Pook**
Certificate in Kroc Center Leadership
Booth University College

**A/Captain Grace Roinila**
Certificate in Kroc Center Leadership
Booth University College

**A/Captain Mike Roinila**
Certificate in Kroc Center Leadership
Booth University College

**Major Joindal Shelborn**
B.A. Ministry (Leadership & Ethics)
Nazarene Bible College

**Major Cyndi Shields**
M.A. Theological Studies
(Practical Formation)
Asbury Theological Seminary

**Captain Kristina Sjögren**
Certificate in Life Coaching (Marriage & Family)
Parrott Institute at Olivet Nazarene University

**Major Tricia Teube**
Certificate in Life Coaching (Marriage & Family)
Parrott Institute at Olivet Nazarene University

**Captain Julie Trapp**
Master of Business Administration (Leadership)
Olivet Nazarene University

**Captain Dan Voss**
B.A.S. Practical Ministry
Olivet Nazarene University

**Captain Christopher White**
Master of Ministry
Olivet Nazarene University

**Captain Robert Whitney**
B.S. Business Management
Olivet Nazarene University

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

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Similarly, we recognize the following individuals who have achieved certificates and degrees:

- **Wiley and Heather Gladney**
  First-generation Salvationists
  Fox Cities, Wis., Corps • Wisconsin/Upper Michigan Division
  Majors David and Shanda Minks, corps officers

- **Madyson Lyon**
  First-generation Salvationist
  Traverse City, Mich., Corps • Northern Indiana Division
  Lts. Matthew and Haylee Winters, corps officers
  Majors Jeff and Dawn Russell, former corps officers

**Newly accepted candidates**

**Shannon and Justin Bluer**
Both first-generation Salvationists
Petoskey, Mich., Corps • Western Michigan/Northern Indiana Division

**Envoys Greg and Bethany Irwin, corps administrators**
**Spiritual Gifts**
Justin: Discernment • Serving • Giving
Shannon: Mercy • Giving • Teaching

**Ministry Passion or Experience**
Justin: Missions • Preaching/Teaching
Shannon: Worship • Children/Youth

**Spiritual mentors**
Justin: Envoy Greg Irwin, Jeff Fitch
Shannon: Captain Miranda Duskin, Darlene Laubrich

**Wiley and Heather Gladney**
Both first-generation Salvationists
Fox Cities, Wis., Corps • Wisconsin/Upper Michigan Division

**Madyson Lyon**
First-generation Salvationist
Traverse City, Mich., Corps • Northern Indiana Division

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Working toward a brighter future

Did you know Salvation Army corps from over 130 countries around the world participate in offerings for World Services/Self-Denial? International Headquarters distributes that money to help keep The Salvation Army going wherever it is at work.

This concept of sharing with others in need is addressed throughout the Bible. One example is found in Acts where the disciples heard a se-

vere famine would spread over the entire Roman world. Acts 1:29-30 (NIV) records, "The disciples, as each one was able, decided to provide help for the brothers and sisters living in Judea. They did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul." The disciples personally contributed to help alleviate the coming famine. We follow this example when we give to World Services/Self-Denial, helping to address issues like hunger, poverty, education and health care.

"Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain." — Isaiah 40:4

Through this year’s territorial World Services emphasis, each division will have the opportunity to learn about Salvation Army projects or programs related to the goal of developing meaningful work which leads to a brighter future as individuals experience increased dignity and independence and poverty is alleviated.

You will see an example of your World Services dollars at work as you learn how The Salvation Army is ministering in your Partner in Mission location. In the coming months you will receive more information. It will be exciting to see how each corps and division gets involved!

This year we also will be focusing on our personal and corps goals for World Services/Self-Denial. Each person and corps is challenged to set a World Services/Self-Denial goal. Consider the amount given to World Services from offerings and fundraisers last year and challenge yourselves to get involved at an even deeper level. As we consider our own stewardship, we will experience our own bright future of living generous lives.

"And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken." — Isaiah 40:5

By working toward achieving the goal of developing meaningful work and our own World Services/Self-Denial goals, we are working together toward a brighter future. May our giving glorify the Lord.

The territorial world missions department is here to support you with program resources, videos, bulletin board materials and fundraising ideas. Visit centralmissions.org.

Why every corps needs a missionary sergeant

by Captain David Martinez

Think of a ministry or program at your corps that is successful and long lasting. It was probably started or led by a soldier. While corps officers can develop an effective ministry, if it depends on them it will often end with their change of appointment. However, ministries with soldier leadership stand the test of time. World Services is no exception.

Having a World Services goal of any size can be both daunting and a blessing. Of our three corps appointments, our current one, Dearborn Heights, Mich., has the largest World Services goal by far. Yet, the size of the corps’ congregation is not the determining factor for successful World Services fundraising. All three corps have been relatively similar in size. The desire of the congregation has not been the challenge either as they’ve all had enthusiasm for supporting overseas ministry. I’ve found the difference in the ability to raise the World Services goal is a spokesperson who provides passion and works hard toward this ministry.

Accomplishing the World Services goal in our present corps is only possible because we have a missionary sergeant. Since 1973 Bev Herivel has filled this role. As part of her ministry, she has created a World Services Committee of corps members who work alongside her. With Bev’s direction, Dearborn Heights has raised over $1 million for World Services in the last 20 years.

Supporting overseas work is a selfless ministry. Most of us will never get to meet the recipients or see the impact of our giving. Still, Bev said, “I’m amazed at the privilege of relationships and opportunities that I’ve encountered as missionary sergeant.”

Do you have the gifts of empathy, compassion and administration? Does learning about other cultures and countries interest you? Are you a storyteller? Have you ever been the recipient of support and now you’d like to help others? Then pray about the possibility God is calling you to spread the gospel to the ends of the earth by becoming your corps’ missionary sergeant.

Want to learn more? Talk to your corps officer. And if you’re a corps officer who is overwhelmed by all the responsibilities you have, take time to pray about a missionary sergeant for your corps.

Leadership

A free virtual missionary sergeant training event will be held on November 7, 2020. Contact the world missions department for more information or for additional program resources. Visit centralmissions.org or email missions@usc.salvationarmy.org.

2021!

Learn Serve Experience a broader perspective

Join with other Salvationists, ages 18-28, next summer in the Summer Mission Team leadership development and discipleship program. Build friendships and go deeper in your relationship with the Lord as you partner with Salvationists in the Midwest or overseas.

Qualifications and application at centralmissions.org/smt2021

Application deadline is February 17, 2021.
A Conversation with Major Steve Harper

With the Racial Justice Summit around the corner, we are honored that Major Steve Harper, one of the territory’s first African-American officers commissioned in 1971, shares some of his story, including experiences with racism, helping us understand a little better what it might be like to walk in someone else’s shoes.

Growing up, were you keenly aware of racism? How did it affect you?

My first clear memory of racialized language was after we had shopped for school clothes downtown in Kansas City. I was just 5. We ran to catch the city bus to go home. I had the hand of my younger brother; my older sister held our younger toddler sister, and my mother held the youngest who was less than a year old. We had a bunch of packages, some of which my mother put on the seat behind the driver to get the fare from her purse. The driver yelled, “Get to the back of the bus!”

Even as I recall it, I remember being mad. I was more angry about the way he talked to my mother than about having to get off the bus. At the end of the line when we got off and walked home, I was still angry. My mother calmed what was wrong, and I told her I didn’t like how the bus driver spoke to her. She replied that he was only doing his job, and he could do his job if others complained. It was just the way of life.

After I finished second grade, a year after Brown v. Topeka Board of Education, we moved to a school district that required us to integrate the local high school. It was unpleasant. Because of my age I was moved back a grade even though my mother petitioned for me to take a competency test. My little sister, who was in kindergarten, was injured when another kid pushed her out of a swing on the playground. I felt bad because I was supposed to be watching out for her. I walked her over to a teacher, who looked at my sister crying and turned her head away. After repeated trips to see the school, my mother moved us to another already integrated school which had both Hispanic and African American students. It proved a much better experience.

In high school all the teachers were white; the few black staff who weren’t had been transferred by the time of my locker search. One day as I read my locker I was told by a guidance counselor. He asked if I had plans after graduation, and I told him I wanted to go to college. He looked at my file and said, “You should work at the post office like your mother.” I never went back to see him.

However, one of my favorite teachers asked the same question. When I told him about my experience with the counsellor, he was angry. Shortly after that, I got a note on my locker changing my senior schedule to include the necessary classes for college. Marion Woolis always will be my favorite teacher. He was one of the few who sat classes alphabetically, not all the black students in the back. He would also call on black students who raised their hands to answer questions.

When did you come to Christ and was your decision induced or promoted by what was new in churches?

My mother always sent us to church, but it was not until I started attending The Salvation Army that I saw a practical expression of service to God. I was invited by two brothers, who were white, during high school. The younger brother and I shared the same classroom and core classes; all of us were in band. They invited me to play on the corps basketball team, but before I knew it, I was playing a bass drum on the first corner.

I accepted Christ at camp during an altar call. I don’t remember who preached or even the subject, but I found myself kneeling at a metal folding chair. When I looked up, my first look was a kneel around me. The corps people embraced me and congratulated me. It was an all-white congregation.

I wrote a short essay on a personal experience I had with racism and how I saw it as a challenge in my life. It was accepted by the corps, and I was encouraged to become a soldier, so I joined a recruits’ class.

Did being African-American give you pause when it came to the decision to become an officer?

I would not call it a pause, but I watched and listened in my little corps, Kansas City Bellefontaine, where there was a consistent message of God’s love and that God could use me in The Salvation Army.

I also went to a great source in decision-making, my mother. She didn’t know much about the Army, so I took it upon myself to help her understand. By this time, she had prepared us for a world that might not accept us. Her final words to me were: “Don’t forget where home is.” She was reminding me of how I was raised to be persistent and steadfast.

When did you receive your calling to officership?

I received my call to officership at a church camp where I remember they asked, “What are you going to do with the rest of your life? God needs you. The Salvation Army needs you.”

When did you receive your ordination?

I was a single black male first-year cadet. I was promoted that June, and a married single black lieutenant commissioned that June, and a married single black lieutenant commissioned that June. I was told by the divisional command to start inviting the corps. I proceeded to do just that, recruiting out to the majority about corps programs and letting them know we had a game room and a basketball court in the parking lot.

After a couple of weeks, no one had shown up. So, during Sunday school I walked across the street where a large family I had invited lived. They said they had come over, but the front door was locked. I discovered some soldiers had locked the door to keep “them” out. I reported this to the corps officers who expressed shock and anger. We decided next week I would walk across the street and bring the family to Sunday school. I think I was more acceptable because I was an officer and played the drums—they had a 20-piece band and needed a percussionist—but the family across the street was different. Soldiers complained so much, eventually the corps officers were moved. Later, I was, too.

How do you feel The Salvation Army identified, invested in and used your skills and talents?

I believe leaders thought Diane and I were able to work across racial lines. I hope it was because it did not matter who we served but whom we served.

We had two appointments to all white corps. Well, the Sunday before we arrived at one white corps, I was promoted and I was appointed to an urban white corps in a neighborhood that had been dissected by an interstate highway that was to be built. The corps was in the smaller portion.

The neighborhood was white, but we sensed tensions related to a burgeoning new white suburb. It was a poor to working-class neighborhood, and they were not happy when it was announced their new corps officers were black. When someone used the “N” word, one of the corps leaders yelled out to defend us. She knew me from earlier ministry to her family in a big way, and we were well loved. Her word helped turned things around. It gave us a chance. In time, the corps congregation accepted us, and we were well loved. We were able to reopen the community center and share my mother’s passion of people of color from the community.

Wow, it speaks again to our responsibility as individual believers. Were there individuals who believed in you and you considered advocates?

Although my mother died young at 57, she always trusted because her advice was always marked by love for us.

Colonel Tom Lewis was like a mentor to me.

The younger brother and I went to a great source in apologizing for something he said to me more than 50 years ago. Once he re- counted what happened, I assured him I didn’t remember it and told him I always consider the source. A close friend is available more leery, certainly more than a stranger.

What do you feel needs to happen in our member to fully reflect God’s Kingdom and most effectively fulfill our mission in unity?

If I knew what needed to happen, I’d shout it from the mountaintop. What I am confident of is this should not be based on some snappy slogan or flashy motto. That would seem to be a “throw- ing money at the problem.”

Some difficult self-analysis must take place followed by a sincere heartfelt plan that is simple and includes input from both leaders and “the least of these.” We must recognize that the changing of the largest ship in the ocean will take some time.

Any other thoughts you’d like to leave us with?

What is the mission? The song “Banners and Bonnets” about The Salvation Army by Meredith Willson asks if you can love the unloved in the Spirit of the Lord. I’d sign up all over again if we commit to serving the least among us.
New International Positional Statement on the Death Penalty

General Brian Peddle has approved the publication of a new Salvation Army International Positional Statement (IPS) on the death penalty. A positional statement is an articulation, crafted with careful and prayerful thought, of the official viewpoint of The Salvation Army. Each IPS is put together by the International Moral and Social Issues Council, which is comprised of Salvation Army officers and soldiers from all over the world.

As well as stating the position, each document expresses the scriptural and theological grounds for the statement and the underlying principles. Officers and officers representing The Salvation Army are expected to speak consistently with the stated position, which is available to view by the public. It is understood, however, that individual Salvationists may hold different views on some subjects and acceptance of the official position is not essential to membership.

The IPS on the Death Penalty recognizes that the subject is controversial, but puts forward a clear and strong position, stating: "The Salvation Army affirms the responsibility of government to create and sustain justice, and while it recognizes that this includes punishment, The Salvation Army calls for the end of the use of the death penalty."

Acknowledging The Salvation Army's worldwide experience of ministry with offenders, victims and their respective families, the statement adds: "The Salvation Army, in recognizing the need for there to be consequences for criminal acts, advocates that such consequences should allow for the rehabilitation of offenders. The Salvation Army uncompromisingly stands for life."

The full statement—including context, biblical exploration of the issue and suggested practical steps—can be accessed alongside all current positional statements at sar.my/ips. Translations are being added when available.

Report by International Communications

---Mustard Seeds---

REMOTE HOLINESS MEETING
GOOD MORNING CHURCH...
Returning to worship in person as pandemic wears on

by Camerin Mattson

COVID-19 has changed everything— including church. For months all the worship services in the Metropolitan Division were held virtually. Worship music, sermons and Bible studies have reached corps members on their couches or at their kitchen tables via the internet. But as government restrictions for public gatherings eased, some corps have been able to resume in-person meetings. While services aren’t quite the same, many are finding hidden blessings in the time apart and new perspectives on why they gather in the first place.

Gathering Carefully

In addition to wearing face masks and social distancing, when people come to the Chicago Temple, Ill., Corps on Sundays they have their temperatures taken before entering the sanctuary and answer a brief questionnaire. They’re encouraged not to linger or mingle after the service. Major Clara Braddock, Temple corps officer, notes that all these precautions impact the community feeling she usually encourages and enjoys at the corps.

“It isn’t ideal to test people before they can enter the building. It’s very sterile,” she said. “It isn’t easy greeting people and not hugging or seeing their faces. It isn’t easy singing and praising God and not seeing the joyful expressions on faces. But these are the times we live in, and until there is a change, we have to do this in order to minister.”

Some corps have gotten creative. “We’re using an ‘offering truck’ to maintain social distance during offering time,” said Lt. Leta Marin of the East Chicago, Ind., Corps. One of their staff drives a remote-controlled truck around the spread-out rows of church attendees to collect any offerings. It’s COVID-appropriate and entertaining.

Mixed Feelings

The first Sunday back after months apart was momentous for corps. “Our first Sunday was a joyful opportunity to see our corps members and friends together as one body again,” said Major Marcello Orbe, Belvidere, Ill., corps officer. To be able to worship as an in-person congregation again is a blessing, and it was a grateful moment to see person,” said Katrina Baiocchi from the Kalamazoo, Mich., Corps. “I loved the openness of the schedule and the fact that it was free of cost. Regular CMI wouldn’t have been feasible for me financially or scheduling wise... Virtual CMI has been worth it and has definitely been a highlight of my COVID experience.”

Virtual CMI Clinicians

Leaders in their fields joined students from around the world to make virtual CMI 2020 a great success. Our thanks to the following instructors:

Brass
Owen Farr
Chris Jaudes
Chad Russell
Hallie Southall
William Russell
Lamar Withers
Aaron VanderWeele
Cathie Kneeben
Paul Woodward

Voice
Ronda Atwater
Major Margaret Davis
Eric Dina
Shalini Danielson
Simon Gough
Kris Sinclair

Praise Team
Randy Bonifield
Adely Charles
Shalini Danielson
Simon Gough
Kris Sinclair

Percussion
Andrew Boynton
Nathan Cole
Chris Hofer
Bill Quick

Dance & Drama
Joseph Frost
Caitlin Jackson
Erin Morgan
Kelley Thorburn

Surprise Blessings

As difficult as time apart has been for corps congregations, it’s come with some surprise blessings.

The Des Plaines, Ill., Corps realized they had new people watching and participating in their worship services since they were available online. “It actually enlarged our borders and made the different ministries available for people even from different countries,” said Envoy Florinel (Ody) Giraklo, associate for Hispanic ministries.

Cecilia, a woman in their congregation, had been praying for years for her grown daughter Patricia who lives in Mexico City. Patricia watched the services via Facebook and accepted Christ. “The family is very excited and feels blessed with this new life in Christ,” said Envoy Ody.

Lessons Along the Way

Everyone is aware the future is uncertain. Some experts predict a rise in flu and COVID-19 cases this winter that will necessitate sheltering in place. Through it all, Salvationists are keeping their eyes open for the lessons to be learned.

“I hope that people come away with a better sense of what the church is,” said Captain Xavier Montenegro, Metropolitan divisional program secretary. “The church was never a building; it was always people.”

Virtual CMI Clinicians

Leaders in their fields joined students from around the world to make virtual CMI 2020 a great success. Our thanks to the following instructors:

Brass
Owen Farr
Chris Jaudes
Chad Russell
Hallie Southall
William Russell
Lamar Withers
Aaron VanderWeele
Cathie Kneeben
Paul Woodward

Voice
Ronda Atwater
Major Margaret Davis
Eric Dina
Shalini Danielson
Simon Gough
Kris Sinclair

Praise Team
Randy Bonifield
Adely Charles
Shalini Danielson
Simon Gough
Kris Sinclair

Percussion
Andrew Boynton
Nathan Cole
Chris Hofer
Bill Quick

Dance & Drama
Joseph Frost
Caitlin Jackson
Erin Morgan
Kelley Thorburn

Surprise Blessings

As difficult as time apart has been for corps congregations, it’s come with some surprise blessings.

The Des Plaines, Ill., Corps realized they had new people watching and participating in their worship services since they were available online. “It actually enlarged our borders and made the different ministries available for people even from different countries,” said Envoy Florinel (Ody) Giraklo, associate for Hispanic ministries.

Cecilia, a woman in their congregation, had been praying for years for her grown daughter Patricia who lives in Mexico City. Patricia watched the services via Facebook and accepted Christ. “The family is very excited and feels blessed with this new life in Christ,” said Envoy Ody.

Lessons Along the Way

Everyone is aware the future is uncertain. Some experts predict a rise in flu and COVID-19 cases this winter that will necessitate sheltering in place. Through it all, Salvationists are keeping their eyes open for the lessons to be learned.

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