

WOMEN In touch

Fact Faith Feeling

Beside still waters...

Reaching out to youth at risk

The places you'll go!



Discipling:

helping young people
engage with God

Mentoring – a two-way street

It is great to greet you again through this Team Talk column. I wish I could visit you all in person, but that is not practical.

In this issue, I want to share with you my thoughts on mentoring for women of all ages. I believe mentoring for women is a two-way process – the older women mentor the young women and the young women come alongside and encourage the older women.

One definition of a mentor is “a brain to pick, an ear to listen, and a push in the right direction”. I also read that, “mentoring is the third most powerful relationship for influencing human behaviour, after marriage and the extended family”.

Not everyone has a mentor as such, but I value the women who have strongly influenced my life. My mother, of course, was the first person in my life who epitomised Christianity. Although she had poor health due to a severe heart condition, she was not one to complain and was most generous and loving in every way. Even if she could not go to church herself due to poor health, she always encouraged my sister and I to attend.

I have not had a mentor as such, but there have been godly women in my life at various times who have greatly impacted me. In fact, many women come to mind and I am grateful to God for placing them in my life for a particular season.

I think that having a generous spirit is one way we can nourish the lives of other women – giving them time, a listening ear, encouragement, praying for them and offering practical assistance when possible.

Across the generations

Older women are also able to offer advice on how to be a good wife, mother, home maker and how to build strong families. Sharing ideas and tips is a great way to build relationships with younger women. There are also opportunities to encourage younger women on how to face and handle difficulties and challenges. Wisdom is gained through life's experiences and this is a great asset for younger women to draw upon from an older woman in her life.

Older women should always model godliness and devotion to the Lord – a woman who walks closely with Jesus.

Younger women can also be a great encouragement to older women. Sometimes I feel that we do not express appreciation often enough to older people for their example, experience and wisdom. I believe that if young women took time to compliment



an older woman or say they are praying for them, that it would be a real encouragement to them and open the door for a great friendship to develop. I think there are a number of lonely older women who would greatly appreciate the contact with younger women in prayer, friendship and encouragement.

Women, we are in this together – it's a two-way street.

Successful mentoring means I have someone whom I can trust – a confidant. I can be myself and see progress in my life because of sharing the journey with someone I trust.

God, of course, is our best mentor. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God”.

Take time to thank God for people in your life who take an interest in you, who encourage you and pray for you.

Grace and peace.



Commissioner Jan Condon
Territorial President of Women's Ministries

About this issue – from the editor's desk

At the end of a recent youth camp I attended (as a helper, obviously!) several young people shared the impact that the camp had made on their relationships with God, their approach to problems at school and their overall focus on life. I was moved by the depth of this impact and the willingness of the young people to share so openly.

Worship and prayer had been a key focus of the weekend, as had small group discussions, focused teaching, lots of fun, and a genuine caring atmosphere. The kids were encouraged, affirmed and valued. Constantly.

And they responded. The expression “life-changing” can sometimes sound almost ordinary because we hear it so often, but for these youth, what God did in their lives that weekend, has changed them.

But, and it's a big but, change is a process and these young people, and so many like them who are maturing, or new, in their faith, need ongoing support and encouragement. None of us can walk our life's journey alone, especially spiritually, and for the majority of young people, extra guidance and support in a challenging world is critical. Many need to be discipled. Many need a mentor. And thankfully, it's happening!

In this issue of *Women in Touch* we focus on discipling and mentoring. Three youth pastors share the different ways God has led them to help young people engage with Jesus, and then in turn disciple others. They also suggest ways in which we, as women of all ages and

walks of life, can come alongside a young, or not-so-young person, and be part of the discipling and mentoring process.

Also in this issue, we look at a couple of websites that can help us change our lives from a social justice perspective. Try the survey on page 16 and see how many planets it takes to sustain your lifestyle – you might be surprised! And browse the websites featured on page 9 and see what you can do to stop the sexualisation of young girls in popular culture.

The sexual exploitation of women and girls is happening on our very doorsteps. Take a look at Captain Sandra Pawar's story on pages 14-15, and see how she used something simple to build a ministry for young women in strip clubs and brothels.

I hope and pray you are both challenged and encouraged by the articles in this issue and find a message of help, hope and affirmation within its pages.



Simone Worthing
Editor

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Discipling:

Helping young people engage with God



Photo: Shairon Paterson

Girls' group grows through a wing and much prayer

Rachel Unicomb shares how supporting and investing in a couple of girls from youth group has developed into a growing and dynamic ministry

“Let’s wing it,” we said. That’s how it all started.

My sister Kylie, a friend and I were living together and doing ministry at our local Salvation Army church when we recognised a need to support some girls in our local youth group. Over many years people had invested in us and run small groups and Bible studies to help us in our spiritual growth and we recognised the need to support other girls in this way, too.

While I was busy trying to plan how we could run something for them, what it would look like and how to get the most people there, Kylie simply invited two of the girls over to hang out and play some guitar with us.

We didn’t have a plan (as much as I would have liked one!), we didn’t know exactly where we were going with it and we’d never done it

before so we weren’t really sure what we were doing.

Spiritual growth

Four years later, we have a group where we regularly have 12-15 girls attending and we’re in contact with up to 25 girls in any one week. Each week we meet and do a whole variety of things including relationship building, supporting each other, reading our Bibles and doing SOAP (Scripture, observation, application, prayer), talking about hot topics, sharing news, following up people who aren’t able to be there, discussion, accountability, music and worship, games and acts of service. No week looks the same as another.

Over the years the girls have grown spiritually. They are taking responsibility for their relationship with God, learning

to pray and read the Bible for themselves and work out how to apply it to their lives. They want to be kept accountable and keep others accountable and some are taking on leadership roles in our youth ministry.

Looking back, it’s hard to pinpoint what happened or work out a strategy or plan for discipling teenagers. Each person is different; they have a different journey, different experiences and a different story.

As much as I would like to give some kind of plan for discipleship, it hasn’t been that way for me, but there have been some significant things I’ve learned along the way.

Relationships are key!

At the end of the day, if you don’t have real, honest and genuine relationships with the people in the group, there’s only so far it can go.

Jesus’s whole method of discipleship with his disciples was doing life together in relationship each day.

Young people want to belong

Most young people struggle with low self-esteem and are always striving for acceptance. School can be a tough environment and many young people feel judged, get bullied or don’t

A defining moment ...

We often hear the terms below spoken of and written about in the context of reaching out to others and receiving help ourselves. Major Belinda Spicer gives some clarity on these terms, mentioning some overlapping areas of the processes involved, as well as distinct differences in both their nature and application.

Discipling:

Discipling is about growing people to be faithful followers of Jesus, to experience his love, grace, forgiveness and freedom according to the Word, and to serve him with thankful hearts.

Discipling is a relational process focused on loving, teaching, modelling, praying, encouraging, equipping, empowering, releasing and, when necessary, discipline.

Coaching:

Coaching is a structured two-way

process in which individuals develop skills and aim to achieve defined and desired competencies through assessment, guided practical experience and regular feedback.

Mentoring:

The mentoring process focuses on attitudes, values, vision and the whole person. The process is often sustained over time, and the approach is based on relationship, trust, questions and offering perspective and is often undertaken with a trusted and experienced adviser.

Counselling:

Counselling provides a constructive, confidential and caring environment in which to address blockages in a person’s life that maybe hindering their growth. This is undertaken by a qualified professional who provides a therapeutic framework that enables people come to conclusions using their own resources. It can be both short or long term.



Rachel Unicomb, Community Worker The Village, Earwood Salvation Army

on to grow and spent years in relationship with them.

When it was time for Jesus to return to heaven, he left his disciples with a huge challenge – to go and make disciples of all nations.

The disciples, rising to the challenge, have changed the course of human history by beginning a movement that has resulted in the millions of disciples that follow Jesus today. It is such an exciting privilege to be a disciple and to be involved in discipling others.

What Jesus did with 12 disciples was massive – I’m excited about what he can do with millions and excited to be part of that!

feel like they can be themselves for fear of what people will think.

Over the years in our group, we developed a culture where everyone is accepted and belongs. It’s not about what you wear, who your friends are, what school you go to, who your family is – everyone is accepted and everyone is worth loving.

This is the way we interacted with the girls when the group first started and now the girls own that. They’re the first ones to welcome a new person into the group. Together we celebrate milestones, shed tears and laugh. Everyone is valued.

You have to be REAL

Young people can spot a phony a mile away! But huge rapport is built when you’re genuinely honest and journey through life’s up and downs together.

Discipleship is a long process

It’s not quick. It’s not always easy. It’s a bigger commitment than just a weekly Bible study or small group. But the long term result is kingdom-building!

Jesus journeyed with his disciples for a number of years – he did life with them, taught them, challenged them, spurred them



Photo: Shairon Paterson

Coming alongside...

For 15 years, Emma Mather has been sharing life with young people aged 12-17 who don't really know God or, initially, don't want to get to know him

What we bring to the table is a space where young people can build positive relationships with each other and come to have a trusting relationship with the leaders.

From youth group, we identify those who potentially want to know a little bit about God and we run a variant of Youth Alpha. We then invite them to become part of a Life Group where they share life with us and we share life with them.

Though the Life Groups can be hard work at the start, the ongoing investment in each of the young people on a personal level reaps rewards.

We have had the opportunity to come alongside hundreds of young people over the last 15 years and have seen many young people become equipped for what life has to throw at them.

We complement the family unit by presenting and demonstrating life options to each of the young people based on biblical teaching.

While some may measure success by the number of young people that become soldiers in The Salvation Army, we simply get excited when a young person makes a life choice in a positive direction based on where they are at in their own spiritual journey.

For example, I mentored and discipled a girl over ten years who recently came to me and shared her disappointment in the life choices her brother had made. Thinking on that moment, it would have been only five years ago that I would have pictured her being in the same situation if we had not invested in her life at the church.

I am sure that the Spirit of God, though it may not be obvious to some, influences her on a daily basis.

Emma Mather
Youth Leader, Tarrawanna Corps

The impact of knowing someone cares

Youth pastor, Kelly Edmunds, shares her love of seeing young people choose Jesus, grow in their relationship with him and in turn become disciple makers



Above: Kelly Edmunds (left, standing) enjoys some fun times with her Life Group; and below, second from left.

A great passion I have when working with young people is discipleship. I love being involved in their walks with Jesus, and witnessing them grow into the people that God has called them to be. One of the most rewarding aspects of my job is to see teenagers become aware of their full potential in Christ and choose to follow him for the rest of their lives.

Being discipled

From my own experience in being discipled as a young person, I see the great need and importance of discipleship. When I was a teenager, I was discipled by a youth leader who took the time each week to meet with me and a group of girls. Together we talked about what it meant to follow Christ on a daily basis and how Jesus has called us to make disciples and live out the Great Commission in our lives.

From this experience, I understood what it meant to live as a committed follower of Jesus, not just on a Friday night or Sunday morning, but as a lifestyle that was evident in every area.

Even before I had made the decision to be a Christian, I loved that someone older was taking the time to really know me and care about who I was and what I had to say.

My youth leader took the time to answer all my questions and opened her life for me to be a part of and share.

After I made the decision to follow Jesus, I continued to be discipled by my youth leader who walked alongside me and was part of my journey in knowing who Jesus was and the purpose he had for my life.

Discipling others

From this experience, I was encouraged that the discipling process doesn't stop here, but that I must make disciples of others and see other people enter into a relationship with Jesus.

There are so many benefits in being involved in discipling young people. I love seeing them grow spiritually and live out what God has called them to be. I am always challenged by the questions they ask me and love that we can do life together.

Discipleship should have a flow on effect,

building up people to disciple others and so on.

Jesus showed how to be a disciple maker. He had his small group of 12 disciples who would follow him and learn from what he did. Jesus also had a smaller group of three – John, James and Peter. He spent time with and invested in them.

We can model a similar process of discipleship by having small groups where we learn from one another and encourage others in their walks with Christ. From these small groups, we can disciple people individually and invest in them to be disciple makers and in turn make disciples of others.

“Small groups allow you to get to know the other members well and really be involved and grow together,” said Keira, a member of my small group.

“It's good as an accountability thing to not only keep you on track but also feel supported.”

Invest in teenagers

Teenagers won't often be the ones to ask someone to disciple them. We need to come alongside our young people and invest in their lives so that their generation will be people who are disciple makers for Christ. Our young people need this support and encouragement.

It means the world to a teenager when someone takes the time to listen to them and invest in their lives. I want to encourage you to see the potential of our young people, and choose to be a part of discipling others.

If we make this a priority, we will see our young people rise up and we will witness a generation of disciple makers and future disciples to come.

Kelly Edmunds
Youth Pastor, Auburn Corps



Reflections

Better than chocolate

"It's so, so ... more-ish!" the 12-year-old boy said, leaning forward eagerly in his seat, his voice excited. "More-ish?" I repeated, slightly puzzled. "Yes, once you start reading it you can't stop."

It was Corps Cadets and we were talking about the Bible. His 13-year-old sister leapt into the conversation and asked, "Is it really sin when your parents tell you to turn the light out and go to sleep but you keep reading the Bible?"

I was excited by these comments. It's not every Christian I know who gets passionate about reading the Bible, but here were these young teenagers being enthusiastic about the Word of God and sharing what they had read in it. I love the enthusiasm of these young people, listening to them talk about how God is at work in their lives and hearing them pray freely and openly for each other.

As the kids left, I continued to ponder the comment, "It's so more-ish". Is this how I see God's Word? I think of other things I find more-ish: chocolate, jelly beans, potato chips, and so on. Is my enthusiasm for God's Word greater than my enthusiasm for such things?

God gave Ezekiel his written Word, a scroll filled with laments and woes, but it was sweet in his mouth (Ezekiel 3:3). David wrote, "Taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8) and he experienced this goodness in all sorts of circumstances.

Yes, I can see that God's Word is "more-ish" – there is something in it that draws me back again and again. I always discover more than I can take in at first glance. There is something within that written Word that deeply satisfies the longings of my soul, and yes, I too have found when I sit down for just a few minutes to read a chapter or paragraph, something draws me on to read just a little more – I want more!



Photo: Shaikon Peterson

Whether it is sin or not to keep on reading when your parents have told you to go to sleep is a question for another time!

Major Jo-anne Brown
Corps Officer, Calamvale

Recipe



Kings' Crowns

- Sheet(s) of frozen puff pastry
- Pasta sauce or salsa
- Beaten egg
- Grated cheese
- Finely chopped chicken or ham
- Mushrooms, corn, onion or capsicum

Cut pastry into squares and place into muffin tray to form a cup. Into pastry case put one teaspoon pasta sauce or salsa, pinch of grated cheese, and your choice of two-three teaspoons of filling. Top with one-two teaspoons beaten egg. Bake in a hot oven 15-20 minutes. The pastries look like little crowns when baked.

Recommended Read!



The Power of Praying for Your Adult Children

Stormie Omartian
Harvest House Publishers, 2009

This book is the latest in Stormie Omartian's series on the power of praying and follows *The Power of a Praying Parent* (1995). It is full of wisdom, insight and personal reflections designed to provide fresh direction on praying with the power of God's Word over your adult children and their:

- Career choices and sense of purpose
- Marriages and other vital relationships
- Financial struggles and emotional trials.

Stormie journeys with us in this book by addressing the unique concerns we are so often faced with as parents with adult children. From the beginning, she speaks to the hearts of her readers by focusing on "seven things every parent of an adult child needs to know". You need to know:

1. It never ends.
2. You can't fix them.
3. God can change everything.
4. You must stop blaming yourself.
5. You have to forgive.

6. There is only one perfect parent
7. You can wholeheartedly say, "For this child I prayed".

The layout of each chapter makes this book one to be studied and prayed through, and is practical and user-friendly. A beautifully written prayer with scriptures that bring comfort and promise concludes each chapter.

I love that this book is for all parents (Christian or not) and serves as a great gift for a Mum who is yet to know Jesus and the difference he can make to her parenting.

Stormie writes, "When we take our concerns to the Lord – trusting that God hears our prayers and answers them on behalf of our adult children – it means our prayers have power to effect change in their lives ... and that gives us a peace we can find no other way."

As a mother of five children (three of them adults) I will never stop praying for them! This is a wonderful book – a must read for every parent.

Major Belinda Spicer
Mission Leader, Greater Liverpool Corps

Free gift copy!

For an opportunity to receive the free gift copy of this book, simply send your name and email address to simone.worthing@ae.salvationarmy.org

Women online

<http://shelovesmagazine.com/>

This site is a constantly updated collection of stories, hopes, dreams and ideas from "women who love" around the world. Topics include prayer, grace, abortion, justice, relationships and taking action.

Major Danielle Strickland, Canada and Bermuda Territory, is a regular contributor.

<http://collectiveshout.org/>

Collective Shout is a grassroots campaigns movement against the objectification of women and sexualisation of girls in the media, advertising and popular culture.

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Murleen Surch, Gold Coast Temple Corps, who has won a copy of *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* for her comments below, on Philip Yancey's book, *What's So Amazing About Grace* (Zondervan, 1997):

"To be honest, I was guilty of belonging to a faith with preconceived ideas of what was right or wrong, born of a religious or judgemental attitude to life. The age of law versus the age of grace.

Philip Yancey turned all these thoughts upside down with his passionate look at what grace really means and its life changing power in our lives. He tackles some difficult and divisive issues within the Christian faith – forgiveness, revenge, racism and the Gay community, to name just some. Yancey had thoroughly researched so many historical events and in his gentle way wrote a book which managed not only to convict me, but also change the way I viewed Christianity."

I really only love God as much as I love the person I love the least.

Philip Yancey,
What's So Amazing About Grace



Photos: Shairon Paterson

Taking mentoring one step deeper

As The Salvation Army, we are committed to “growing saints, saving souls and serving suffering humanity” which undoubtedly says that we are in this for the long haul. Mentoring Christian women is often about “the long haul” and this has to do with discipling them and being committed to helping them discover and reach their full potential in Christ Jesus.

years. Deeper mentoring is intentional, focused and makes way for being challenged by questions that undergird the relationship in order to allow for greater outcomes for the mentee.

The preparation I make prior to a mentoring session is absolutely vital and differs from person to person. Some of

“Deeper mentoring is intentional, focused and makes way for being challenged...”

the women I mentor are long-term and their mentoring is based on deeper, tougher questions.

This is fine because our relationship is long-term, we trust each other implicitly, and I have sought God in my preparation.

Throughout Scripture, God asks us some tough questions too, out of love. I know he desires me to be stretched and to develop for Kingdom purposes. This is sound provision for me as I continue to mentor and raise up Kingdom women – this is “Growing Saints”.

Deeper issues

Often, deeper mentoring can lead toward disclosure around deeper issues. Although I am qualified and operate as a counsellor, my mentees are not my clients. There is a vast difference, and integrating the two will change the context of what can be achieved.

From a corps officer’s perspective, if I enter into a mentoring appointment with one of my mentees and it is clear that she is deeply troubled, I will communicate my intention to change what I had prepared for mentoring. I will pastor her and re-schedule our mentoring. I will suggest that she think about undertaking counselling if that be the case.

Caring is primary, and the best care that a mentor can provide for her mentee is to create good boundaries around the mentoring relationship.

Deeper mentoring is based on relationship, and the essential components listed above. These relational elements are based upon that which flows between mentor and mentee, between the mentor and God and the mentee’s relationship with God.

Major Belinda Spicer
Mission Leader, Greater Liverpool

Recommended Read!
Discipling, Coaching, Mentoring, Bryn Hughes, Kingsways Publications, 2003



My mentoring journey...

My mentoring journey began before I even knew what mentoring was. I was an inexperienced youth leader needing to develop my spiritual maturity. My corps officer took me under her wing. She met with me regularly to discuss how I was going and to encourage and challenge me.

When I became a student at the School for Youth Leadership, I really discovered what mentoring was all about. I was paired with a mentor who I respected and admired. We met regularly and talked about the areas of my life in which I needed to grow. I was challenged to step out of my comfort zone to go further than I’d gone before.

My mentor also affirmed and encouraged me in my strengths and the good things that I was doing in order to grow and develop...

Most importantly, God was at the centre of our mentoring relationship. It was in his presence that we discussed my strengths and weaknesses and it was his guidance for my life that we sought.

Finding a mentor

After finishing the School for Youth Leadership, it was my responsibility to find a mentor for the next season of my life.

Identifying an appropriate mentor can be a challenge. For me, the most important thing is to feel comfortable with my mentor. For a mentoring relationship to work you need to be able to share the good, the bad and the ugly, so trust is crucial.

I also looked for someone I could respect, and for someone who was further along in their spiritual journey and who had characteristics and qualities

that I admire and wanted to develop in myself.

I prayed and asked people who know me well if they had any suggestions. Several times the same name came up and so I approached this person to ask if she would consider being my mentor.

After she had accepted, we talked about expectations, agreed on boundaries and worked out when and for how long we would meet. We also had an easy out option – if after a few months it wasn’t working for either of us, we could stop without any bad feelings towards each other.

Fortunately this wasn’t necessary and we have had a very good relationship from which I have been encouraged and affirmed.

Having a mentor is a bit like having a coach and a cheer squad to help keep me focused on my spiritual and personal growth. When I’ve had a big success or am in need of a kick start or a listening ear, she is there to celebrate, challenge or comfort me.

It is great to know that I have someone who is walking the journey with me and praying for me at each step.

Lieutenant Katherine Mills
Assistant Corps Officer, Long Jetty
Assistant Director, School for Youth Leadership

Editor’s note: For more tips on how to choose a mentor, see Claire Hill’s article at <http://salvos.org.au/more/whats-new/2011/04/05/leadership-get-yourself-a-mentor/>

Mentoring’s impact Becoming an individual

My experience with my mentor began several years ago. It took me some time to work out just who I would ask as I was looking for someone to walk with me in my personal and work life.

My mentor was a senior officer who I looked up to. At the time I wasn’t feeling terribly effective in my ministry and the development of it. I had ideas but no real idea of how to make them work within the system. So I looked for a senior woman officer who I thought would be able to help.

I saw her regularly for three years. During our meetings we would look at how I was doing personally and during this time I grew a lot in the way I looked at life, interacted with different people and responded in different situations.

We looked at my ideas and how I could work with them. She rarely told me what to do. In every area it was more about giving me confidence in myself and my ideas.

Occasionally she would be direct and specific with me, but those times were rare. It was more about getting me to think of the possibilities and how to implement them or to think differently about the topic under discussion.

As I look back over that mentoring relationship, I realise how much I grew in confidence in myself and my abilities. It gave me confidence to stand up for what I believe in, to step out on my own without having to ask permission for everything I did, and in my own knowledge and abilities.

I learned to trust myself more because of this relationship. This process has helped me become more of an individual.

Major Lynn Whittaker, Divisional Community Welfare Services Secretary, Central & North Queensland Division

Everybody has a story...

Reaching out to youth at risk

Sherene Hicks had never planned on a career in welfare, but 18 years on, she is still serving youth through The Salvation Army

“When I finished university, I wasn't sure what I wanted to do and certainly didn't want to pursue any kind of career that involved my economics degree, and I had thought about welfare previously,” Sherene explained.

Starting out at the Newcastle City Mission, Sherene quickly came into contact with The Salvation Army when she moved to Sydney in 1994. After spending a few years at The Salvation Army Street Outreach Service (SOS) in Darlinghurst, Sherene moved to The Salvation Army Oasis Youth Support Network in Surry Hills for a few more years.

Sherene moved to Brisbane for a change of scenery in 2001 and landed a job at The Salvation Army Youth Outreach Service (YOS). She has been there ever since.

Building meaningful relationships

Based at Fortitude Valley, part of Sherene's role as manager of YOS is to look after all five sites, including Stafford, Lawnton, Caboolture and an accommodation program in East Brisbane.

“Every day is different,” Sherene said. “But it's all about seeking to build a meaningful relationship with a young person, and providing activities and programs for those young people aged 12 to 20 who are at risk of homelessness or who are homeless or in need of support.

“We help young people get to a point where they have a sense of hope and are motivated about their future, can see the potential within themselves and are able to work towards achieving some of their goals.” Sherene spends much of her time supporting staff, connecting

with community and Salvation Army services, advocating for young people and building connections with sponsors.

She speaks fondly about the wide range of activities and programs YOS offers, including individual support through case management, Alternate Delivery Education programs, the Youth Connection program, transitional supported accommodation, community drop-in centre, street outreach, driver education, anger management program, health and fitness, life skills and personal development activities. YOS also provides opportunities for student placements and volunteering.

“We have a very broad range of clients, from those who have been homeless on the street to those who are living at home but they and their families are struggling,” Sherene explained. “They might engage in one or many of our programs to find the support that they need in their life at that particular time.”

Daily challenges

Working alongside a team of 22 members, Sherene says there are many challenges she faces on a regular basis. These include discovering creative ways to work with young people who don't see hope for their future due to their life experience; and working out how to best support the staff who work on the front line with young people helping them see their potential.

Despite the challenges, Sherene says she finds it a privilege to work for a Christian organisation, and particularly empathises with the ethos of The Salvation Army.

“I like what William

Booth sought to do – serve suffering humanity; getting alongside people, taking people where they're at, accepting and loving them for who they are and bringing them a sense of hope that leads to transformation,” she said.

Sherene emphasises that there are many rewarding aspects of her role, but she particularly enjoys working alongside a committed and passionate team and partnering with other organisations as well as Salvation Army services.

“I really enjoy connecting with other service providers, community members, other parts of The Salvation Army and as a collective, advocating for the needs of young people or working as a broader team to meet the needs of young people within our community.

“I think it's really important for The Salvation Army to connect with community and relevant agencies so we can have a community response.

“Building these connections is essential, inspiring and motivating in figuring out how we can better work together to fulfill the mission and message of The Salvation Army.”

For more information, visit salvos.org.au/youthoutreachservice



Beside still waters ...

Captain Robyn Collins officially retired, but felt she still had something to give. She now works three days a week at Still Waters, introducing the women there to Jesus

“I am what you call a 'retread' – an officer active in retirement,” Captain Robyn laughed. “It's a ministry I love and the fields are absolutely white for the harvest.”

As well as her weekly *Faithworks* group, Captain Robyn also mentors the ladies, prays with them, helps them get established in the faith and is forging links between Still Waters and the Gold Coast Temple Corps just up the hill. Many ladies attend the weekly meetings, as well as other groups such as Women of Worth, craft and Mainly Music.

“It's all part of One Army One Mission,” she said.

Captain Robyn spends many hours getting to know the ladies. She tells them about *Faithworks*, encourages them to ask questions about God and lets them know she is there for them.

“One lady had been in a terrible domestic violence situation and was too scared to come out of her room,” Captain Robyn explained. “She asked if she could see me and told me her story. I asked if she would like me to pray with her and she said yes. After that she said it was like God was there with a big spade digging her out of a hole.”

This lady began attending *Faithworks* and asked about being born again. “I led her to the Lord and now she goes to the Temple and takes others with her,” said Captain Robyn. “Her face, which was so drawn and sad, now just glows.”

Once the ladies accept Jesus, Captain Robyn gives them a Bible and reading material. “I am really

going through Bibles!” she laughed.

Soldiership preparation classes for young people at the corps have also been a focus for Captain Robyn. She invited the ladies from Still Waters to her recent classes and five attended. She ran the first two classes separately with the ladies, and then joined them with the young people.

“Four completed the course and there has been a lot of growth,” she said. “They have all moved out now but they are keeping the faith.”

Psalm 23

For Captain Robyn, working at Still Waters has given her a whole new understanding of Psalm 23. “I've known this Psalm since I was a child but here I've seen its impact in a different light and its become so real,” she shared.

“I tell the ladies that God has brought them here for a reason. They can step out of the world they've been in, and God can bring

Debbie's story...



I had been living on the streets before I came to Still Waters. I was depressed and feeling lost and totally unloved.

I knew people ran groups here and I'd heard about Captain Robyn's *Faithworks*, so I decided to go. Just the way she was teaching us, talking

about the Bible, about Jesus and who he was, just started my tears flowing. Captain Robyn prayed with me and now I go to *Faithworks* every week.

I pray, read my Bible and Psalm 23 every day and have a lot more faith than I ever did. I didn't realise how big and how strong God really is.

I have started to hum, sing, smile and enjoy the days. Captain Robyn is my mentor. She teaches me how to understand the Bible and how to have a relationship with Jesus. I have to learn within myself that it's not scary; that Jesus has the love and power and he has given me a second life, he's given me a go.

I just can't believe how different I am now. I know I am here for a reason and I'm as happy as!

them into greener pastures here and they can get their lives back on track.

“The waters are still, not stagnant or poisonous and they give life. They have been brought here to restore their souls.”

Still Waters offers 12 weeks of emergency accommodation for 20 women, a one year medium term hostel for 16 women and seven crisis family units for mothers and children.



Cupcakes, strip clubs & brothels

— serving the sexually exploited

Australian, Captain Sandra Pawar, developed a passion for serving women who have been sexually exploited or trafficked during her internship with Oasis Youth Support Network in Sydney. She is now based in Atlanta, USA, reaching out to women in strip club, brothels and on the streets



Captain Sandra, now an officer of the USA Southern Territory, completed her social work internship with Oasis Youth Support Network in Sydney, Australia, in 1998 and worked there for eight months in 1999.

"I met some amazing women, young girls and even young boys caught up being sold and exploited and my heart just broke for them," she explained.

"That time totally changed my life and my passion for ministry and made me understand that someone was not a prostitute, but they were being prostituted. Looking at it that way makes a big difference."

One incident in particular made a deep impact on Captain Sandra. She met a young girl at an Oasis long-term residency who was fresh faced but totally broken. She had run away from home, arrived in Kings Cross and come to an overnight shelter at Oasis.

"That night, some of the young guys

staying at the shelter pimped her out and she was devastated," Sandra said. "She was broken, ashamed and wanted to go home."

The girl returned home and Sandra thought that was it.

A few months later she saw the girl again, on a street corner. She had a pimp behind her, was stoned, skinny and looked sick.

"That was the first time I had seen the process, from a fresh faced, innocent young girl to a sick, drugged up young lady selling her body to survive," said Sandra. "It broke my heart and gave me the passion I have today to something about this issue."

Strip club ministry

Captain Sandra now serves with her husband, Captain Ashish Pawar, as the Administrators and Corps Officers of the Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Centre in South Atlanta, Georgia.

"I started off here as an assistant and was

really looking for God to give me a ministry of my own as well," she explained.

During the 2009 Christmas season, Captain Sandra kept driving past a local strip club and felt God telling her to pray outside the club and to go in and build relationships with the women.

"It started with some Easter baskets and a prayer walk and then continued with a regular Friday prayer walk and cupcake delivery," she said. "I still would not say I have relationships with these girls, but I have a relationship with the clubs and I keep praying for relationships to be built with the women."

"God has done some amazing things, and even though it has taken two years, I really am beginning to see some fruit from our prayers."

Captain Sandra and her team have continued their prayer walks, including a regular walk from midnight to 2am where they also hand out hot chocolate and talk



The team is praying for the girls in places such as these.

Captain Sandra joins National Anti-Trafficking Council

Australian, Captain Sandra Pawar, an officer of the USA Southern Territory who traces her passion for social justice to her work experiences in Sydney, has recently been asked to join The Salvation Army National Anti-Trafficking Council. This council is made up of representatives, both officers and lay people, from each of the territories in the USA.

Lisa Thompson, National Liaison for the Abolition of Sexual Trafficking, leads the council.

"I am really excited to be on a council with people so passionate and informed about this issue," said Captain Sandra. "This is something I have prayed about for a long time."



This growing ministry began with the delivery of Easter baskets.

with the women working on Metropolitan Parkway, one of the top five places in Atlanta for prostitution.

The prayers for more relationships to be built, and Kingdom change to happen, continue.

"We have also been building partnerships with other groups working with both the women in the strip clubs and underage girls who are being exploited," Captain Sandra said. "This has been exciting and a real blessing in terms of just having support and encouragement. Seeing that we are all in this together is so important."

The cupcake baking has also continued and again this Easter the team delivered gift bags to two clubs.

"This was a great ministry moment," Captain Sandra exclaimed. "Slowly but surely we are building relationships in these clubs and I love it."

Future plans

Captain Sandra is currently working on hiring someone full time to work with women who have been trafficked, exploited or who are involved in the sex industry.

There are also plans for "Haven Atlanta" — a house opposite the Kroc Centre that the team would like to open as a resource, counselling, and drop-in centre for the women.

"Both these projects are in their early stages but we are hopeful and a lot of work

has been put into making them happen," she said.

"Personally God has been opening doors all over the place. I am now the prayer coordinator for Street Grace here in Atlanta; I am on the Anti-Trafficking Council for the USA Southern Territory, and now also The Salvation Army National Anti-Trafficking Council.

"I am excited about these opportunities and really see God allowing me to move in my passion."

For Captain Sandra and her team though, the greatest challenge is the "what next?"

"We build these relationships with the girls, love them, we show them Christ and some then want to leave the industry but we don't have anything for them to go to in terms of a job, a house, or financial help," Captain Sandra explained.

"Right now we have a young lady who has been coming to church and desperately wants to leave the industry but she does not have a job and that is hard.

"She can make \$500 a night stripping. What is she to do?"

Captain Sandra would like to use the café at the Kroc Centre and teach culinary arts to the women and employ them to run the café and cater meals in the kitchen. "I'd like to have job centres for women and young girls, and more shelters too," she added.

"That is my dream. I am not sure yet how to make it happen!"

How to help

Captain Sandra has some suggestions for women (and men!) who would like to help The Salvation Army's ministry with trafficked women and those in the sex industry.

"You can start simply," she explained. "Pray and ask God to guide you. Take what you're good at and use it. I like to bake cupcakes, so I bake cupcakes and deliver them. It does not have to be anything big, just show love any way you can."

"I think these women just need to see that people care about them. Be consistent and non-judgemental."

To read a team member's account of delivering Easter baskets to strip clubs with a girl who used to strip at the clubs and now goes to church, go to *Holy Week in unholy places* by USA South Cadet Sharon Autry at <http://www.practicehospitality.com>

Simone Worthing Editor

Captain Sandra and her husband, Captain Ashish, live in Atlanta, Georgia, with

their daughter, Priya, 14 months, who accompanies her Mum on some of the prayer walks. Captain Sandra is the daughter of Commissioners Barry and Raemor Pobjie (Ret.).



Social Justice Snapshot

What's your ecological footprint?

Check out wwf.org.au and find out!

Do you forget to turn off the light when leaving a room? How often do you drive to the shops when it's only a ten minute walk away? How often do you throw your rubbish on the ground or forget the recycling bin exists?

Recently I took an ecological footprint test and was shocked when I received the results. Apparently, if everybody regularly consumed the same amount of resources as I do, we would need 2.8 planets.

Could I really be this bad? When I thought about it I realised a few things. I don't own a bike. I don't grow my own herbs or vegetables and I buy lots of food products that produce a large amount of waste.

What can I do?

This confronting test has challenged me to change some of my lifestyle patterns:

- Grow my own herbs on my small apartment balcony.
- Either purchase a bike or walk to places that I don't need a car, train or bus to access.
- Before I put something in the bin, consider whether it could be recycled.
- Turn off lights and power points when not in use.
- Take shorter showers.

What's your ecological footprint? You might actually be surprised at how much your daily actions are harming the environment. Visit <http://www.wwf.org.au> to take the ecological footprint test today.



Oh, the places you'll go!

In her regular column, Lieutenant Vanessa writes about trusting God with the future.

I love getting a good pedicure! For me there's nothing quite like relaxing and reading a book while getting my feet massaged and toenails painted. I love staring at my feet afterwards and admiring how cute they look.

There's a Dr Seuss book titled *Oh, The Places You'll Go!* It's quite a clever book that talks about the journey of life and new adventures.

I remember one day being at the beach with my mentor and her family. I was admiring my feet which had been pedicured a few days earlier. While looking at my feet I asked her, "Do you ever wonder the places your feet will go? What ground they will walk on? What they will do?" She chuckled and replied, "That's a bit deep for a relaxing adventure!" and we laughed together.

A couple of years on from this conversation, I still find myself asking the same questions: I wonder where these feet will go? What opportunities will they walk into? What fears will they want to run away from?

At age 16, I had plans to become a lawyer. My feet were staying in the city! These feet were certainly not going to become the feet of a Salvation Army officer! I'm now 25 and my feet are not in the

city. In fact they are a long way from home – 2,534 km away to be exact! I've had to learn to trust God with the future. If I think too much about what the future might hold for me, I get a little overwhelmed.

We try and map things out and plan what our lives will look like. We all do it, don't we? It might look something like this: "At 18 I'll go off to uni and do this, or I will work here, I'm going to travel here, there and everywhere and I'll definitely be married by the time I'm 30!"

We may have ideas of the places our feet will go, but God's plans for our feet may be very different. Dr Seuss' book starts with this, "Congratulations! Today is your day. You're off to great places! You're off and away!"

My prayer for you as you read this is that you'll know that today is your day! It's your day to trust God with the future. You will be off to great places! Following God is certainly not boring! Oh, the places we'll go!



Lieutenant Vanessa Kohler Team Member, Far North Queensland Hub

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What's on your mind?

Nat Rickwood
How strong is your vow to God?
 I'm sure most of you have heard of the recent movie *The Vow*. However, some of you will be surprised to hear that it's based on the true story of a Christian couple.
 Whether you're single, married, or everything in between, this story challenges you to think about how strong your vow to God would still be if something you loved dearly was suddenly taken from you.
 Check out *The Vow: The Kim & Krickitt Capenter Story* (B&H Publishing 2000) and be encouraged by one couple's vow to God.

2 hour ago · Like · Comment

Young Women In Touch likes this.

View all 7 comments

Everybody has a story ...

A new perspective

After spending three weeks on a mission trip in Kenya, Sarah Dillon, 21, from Kilbirnie Corps in New Zealand, says God gave her a new perspective of herself

everything you know to be "normal" and "good" and forced to see what you might think of as "bad" as simply "different". Maybe Christian surfer, Bethany Hamilton sums it up best in her film, *Soul Surfer* when she describes her time in Thailand as "getting a new perspective".



When I think of my January, I think of a particular pair of shoes. They're not heaps special, just a regular old pair of Converse sneakers. These shoes had seen a bit of wear and tear in their time, volunteering at my local Family Store and at youth camps. These shoes really changed though,

More confidence

God used this mission team to give me a new perspective of myself. Last year was an incredibly hard year for me as my self-esteem and confidence were pretty much zero. It's hard for those levels to stay down when God's constantly challenging you to do new things – whether

"It would be hard to spend time in a developing country without getting a new perspective on the world."

when they spent last January halfway around the world, as part of a mission team in central Kenya.

It's difficult to sum up the mission team experience in words. I mean, God's working in our lives every day, right? He encourages us, challenges us, loves our socks off. I think there's something pretty unique that God does when you step up for mission; when you're taken away from

that be leading a meeting with a Swahili translator, bringing word or prayer for a family in the slums, or simply using a *jambe* [hoe], and giving you the strength to do them well. This, combined with constant encouragement from my team and leader, meant I travelled home with way more confidence in myself, and a way healthier sense of who I am in Christ!



It would be hard to spend time in a developing country without getting a new perspective on the world. Pre-Kenya, God had already challenged me heaps on stuff like buying Fairtrade products and how I use my money. It changes everything, though, when you see with your own eyes how simple decisions you make back home can affect your friends in developing countries. The word "need" has a different meaning for me now. I'm called to live way more simply.

Changed perspective on Jesus

In just two weeks in Kenya, Jesus changed my entire perspective on *him*. I met him in the smile of little Joshua and in an African sunrise; in a single bed where a mother and seven children slept, and in the markets of Thika. When visiting schools, when painting churches. When we danced with joy and when we wept over poverty. My God is bigger than ever before.

With all these perspectives changed, I'm now back at home looking at that darn pair of shoes. These shoes changed an awful lot in Kenya. They're battered, dirty and pretty beat-up. But I know as much as they changed, God changed me too and I hope it's a lasting change. I hope I won't forget. I hope I'm changed for good.

Sarah Dillon Kilbirnie Corps, New Zealand

WHY CAN'T I FEEL GOD'S PRESENCE?

There have been times in my Christian life when I have struggled to feel God's presence.

I remember one particularly lengthy experience of this when I was about 19. Despite pursuing God as urgently and creatively as I knew how, I couldn't feel him at all.

I found this more than confusing.

Doesn't the Bible say, "Come near to God and he will come near to you?" (James 4:8)?

Isn't he supposed to be everywhere? What did I do wrong to make him leave me like this? How can I be sure that he is real or that he loves me when I can't even feel him?

I'm not sure when it happened (it wasn't quick!), but at some point I realised that I was placing too much emphasis on what I could feel. I believed that God is the master of the universe – the Creator and King of all, and I realised that this truth alone makes him deserving of my worship and service.

When I can feel him really close to me or have a strong sense of him at work in or around me, it is a massive blessing! But my faith isn't dependent on that.

I recently came across this diagram that I wish someone had shown me when I was 19! It's commonly used by the evangelistic group Campus Crusade for Christ. It explains the relationship between fact (God and his Word), faith (our trust in God and his Word), and feeling (the result of our faith and obedience) (John 14:21).



The thing at the back of the train marked "feeling" is called a caboose. If you try to pull a train with a caboose, it won't work. The train won't go anywhere. In the same way, we as Christians shouldn't rely on our feelings to determine whether or not God or our Christian experience is real. Our feelings aren't always reliable.

Singer and songwriter Brooke Fraser wrote and recorded a song called *Faithful* in 2006. The lyrics suggest that at certain times in her life, Brooke has felt how I have felt. The first verse and chorus go like this:

*There's distance in the air and I cannot make it leave
I wave my arms 'round about me and blow with all my might
I cannot sense you close, though I know you're always here
But the comfort of you near is what I long for.
When I can't feel you, I have learned to reach out just the same
When I can't hear you, I know you still hear every word I pray
And I want you more than I want to live another day
And as I wait for you maybe I'm made more faithful*

A young girl sits in a darkened space, looking away from the light. The light is still there, trying to shine on her, just as God is still close in the darkness. Sometimes we just can't see him. The space is foggy, just as our thinking can also be a bit hazy when we're feeling down. Photo and caption: Shairon Paterson

I feel God plenty close at the moment, but I still find those lyrics super helpful.

If you're struggling to sense him close right now, even if you're already seeking him out, I want to encourage you. This experience won't stretch on forever. And the fact that you can't feel him right now doesn't mean you've done something wrong or that God doesn't like you as much as those who can feel him right now.

Maybe choose to worship him anyway. Choose to go to church or life group anyway. Choose to position yourself to grow as a Christian anyway. Like Brooke, I suspect that when we choose to "wait" for God or to serve him irrespective of our feelings, it can take us deeper in our relationship with him. It just might help us develop greater faithfulness and spiritual maturity.



Claire Hill
Territorial Mission
Coordinator – Youth

This article first appeared in the MORE website. See <http://salvos.org.au/more/whats-new/2011/03/22/why-cant-i-feel-gods-presence/>

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Reviews

Live At the Banks – Will Reagan and United Pursuit

It's rare these days to listen to a whole CD from start to finish. Instead of buying albums, we purchase singles – iTunes has definitely changed the way we listen to music.

But once in a while it's nice to take the iPod mix off and listen to a whole album. *Live At the Banks* by Will Reagan and United Pursuit is definitely one of those albums you can listen to the whole way through.

Recorded live, all eleven tracks are repetitive and simple but still produce raw, passionate worship. This is achieved through the band's minimal use of instruments. Each song is vocally driven and is accompanied

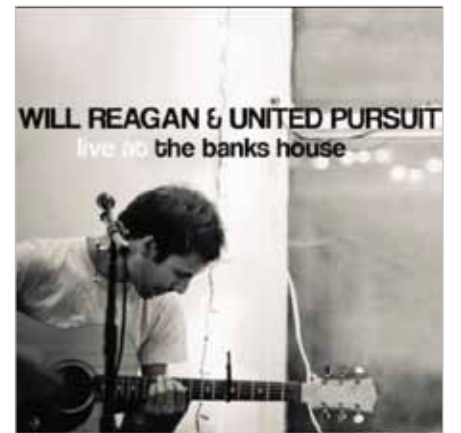
by either an acoustic guitar or piano, and sometimes drums and a violin are added in.

While repetitious songs are often criticised, let alone a whole album devoted to repetition, Will Reagan and United Pursuit use their repetition affectively. The lyrics are powerful – they reflect the heart of God.

Many of the tracks don't noticeably finish. You find yourself enjoying a track so much that it's easy not to realise you are already halfway through the next song.

The simplicity of both the lyrics and music provide a space to reflect upon God. You don't need complicated lyrics or accompaniment to hear the voice of God. Sometimes less is more – it allows us to solely focus on him.

The use of a cappella in a few songs also enhances the simplistic nature of this album. It is quite powerful listening to a



group of unified voices without musical accompaniment.

You can purchase *Live at the Banks* on iTunes for \$16.99.

Website Review – Relevant Magazine

Investing in a magazine subscription is a commitment. You dish out the money in advance and have the expectation that you will be entertained for a whole year – or as long as your subscription lasts.

If you would like to try before you buy, then a website is a great way to figure out if you will like a magazine.

Relevant magazine is a Christian

magazine that has just a little bit of everything and its website is a sample of some of those great bits and pieces.

You've got your standard features section that addresses theological issues, worship, mission, church, politics, technology, relationships and just general life topics. Recently the website featured an article about why Christians should care about autism, a piece on whether pastors should speak up about politics and another story about why the fear of lust shames both men and women.

There's also a section containing responses to current events happening in our world – both significant and trivial. In April, *Relevant* published a small news piece on how the *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* film has inspired McVitie's, a cookie company in Great Britain, to create a

lickable elevator!

And there are also plenty of reviews of Christian bands, music, films and books including a review on *The Hunger Games* and a look at Desperation Band.

Plus, there's a forum section if you have the desire to debate an issue with a couple of Christians.

Relevant also has a section devoted to podcasts and its own RelevantTV channel. This channel contains live performances from bands all around the world, including Kari Jobe's live performance of her song *Find you on my knees*.

Relevant magazine doesn't seem to be aimed at one particular audience – which is actually an advantage because there's something for everyone.

If you would like to check out their website visit, relevantmagazine.com



RELEVANT GOD. LIFE. PROGRESSIVE CULTURE.

CONGRATULATIONS

Where I find You – Kari Jobe CD winner

Congratulations to Mieke van Rooyen, 17, from the Ulverstone Corps, Tasmania, who has won a copy of Kari Jobe's *Where I Find You!* Well done, Mieke!

FREE GIFT COPY!

For an opportunity to receive the free gift copy of Hillsong United's new DVD and a two-CD Deluxe Edition compilation, *Live in Miami*, simply send your name, age and email address to simone.worthing@ae.salvationarmy.org

Patchwork ministry is “Easyas”

South Queensland Division

Laughter, friendly chatter, the whir of sewing machines and colourful quilts draped around the room provide a warm welcome to all those who come to Patchwork Easyas, an growing ministry first established on the Gold Coast.

The care and concern of the women is evident, not only for each other, but for those in the community who are struggling. Dozens of bright cushions for Queensland flood victims are piled up in one corner of the room, and another delivery of gorgeous baby quilts for the special care nursery at the local hospital is packed and ready to go.

Ministry beginnings

Sandra Hiles, senior soldier at the Gold Coast Temple Corps and founder of Patchwork Easyas, has established three ministries in Queensland in conjunction with local corps officers – at the Gold Coast Temple Corps in 2003, Palm Beach Elanora Corps in 2005, and at Stafford Corps in 2006.

The ministry has also extended to Victoria, with Patchwork Easyas beginning at the Dandenong Corps in 2010.

Sandra first became a part of The Salvation Army in 2002, at the Gold Coast Temple Corps.

“My then corps officer, Major Julie Alley, had a craft ministry, but I’m not very good at cutting and glue,” Sandra explained. “I said I could do patchwork, so Major Julie asked me to show a few corps ladies as a trial. That exercise was so successful that we decided to continue as an outreach ministry. Margaret Gordon, who now assists me with Patchwork Easyas, was one of the first ladies game enough to give it a try!”

Community outreach

As well as teaching Patchwork to beginners, or working with ladies who are already experienced, each Patchwork session includes a short devotion and prayer.

“The women all know who we are and who we represent,” said Sandra. “This is an essential part of the ministry and makes us different from other patchwork groups.

“We know that we want them to come so we can tell them of Jesus and save them, but they think they are coming to learn patchwork!”

“Most of our women – over 80% – are non-Christian. Patchwork quilting is basically a tool to reach out to the community to save souls and tell them of God’s glory. But it is also a lot of fun.”

Most of the women who attend the groups have finished work or are



The Gold Coast ladies make gorgeous baby quilts for the special care nursery at the local hospital.

working part time, and are financially able to buy the fabric, wadding and other supplies.

Worldwide target

Sandra is passionate about patchwork ministry and is now focusing on expanding Patchwork Easyas worldwide – through a website currently being developed at salvospatchworkeasyas.com.

“Don’t worry, it’s Easyas,” she said, reassuringly!

The website will feature two password protected areas – one for officers and leaders, and the other for members. The site will include 30 tutorials on various aspects of patchwork quilting such as choosing fabric and cutting; training ideas, a leader’s forum, fundraising information, and detailed instructions and document templates needed to run the ministry.

“We will add anything else we can think of to help you make your Patchwork Easyas ministry a success and to God’s glory,” Sandra said.

For more information, contact Sandra@salvospatchworkeasyas.com



Margaret Gordon (left) and Sandra Hiles displayed the Patchwork Easyas ministry at the Captivated conference in Brisbane in February.

Patchwork’s personal impact

- Everyone helps each other with learning and ideas and there is so much laughter and caring in the group. I enjoy the retreats and bus trips too. **Margaret**
- I love the friendships I’ve formed here. I am now also going to The Salvation Army morning meetings at the Temple here. **Helen**
- I’ve really enjoyed learning to quilt and the friendships here are just amazing. **Narelle**
- I enjoy getting ideas from everyone and learning how to sew. I just love the camaraderie. It would be great to see some young people learning these skills before we die and take them to heaven with us. **Monica**
- I just love the companionship here. It’s a beautiful group to belong to. **Judy**
- The best parts of the group are the good ideas that come from it, and the wonderful friendships made. **Terri**

Mainly Music blessing blitz!

South Queensland Division

The Caloundra Corps Mainly Music team, led by Major Pam Grainger (Ret.) recently joined with local businesses to provide a “blessing blitz” for a young family whose mother has terminal breast cancer.

“For five years, this young mum has been bringing her children to our Mainly Music,” said Major Pam. “Her eldest is at school now, her second child has just graduated from Mainly Music, and she now attends with her 3-year-old, although it’s becoming more of a struggle.”

The Mainly Music team wanted to do something special for this mum and her children to give them some joy and happiness at a sad and difficult time.

“Our fabulous team wanted to show Jesus’s love, and we did it because ‘Christ’s love compels us’, (2 Cor. 5:14), as the sign in our office says,” said Kathy Hughes, Caloundra Corps Administrative Assistant.

While the family was away for some much-needed time together, the team planned to give each of the children’s rooms a makeover.

“We made a few phone calls to local business and department stores and the response was overwhelming,” said Major Pam. “We were able to obtain beds, mattresses, bedding, cupboards, soft furnishings, toys and toy boxes, mirrors, and the list goes on.”

In just one day the team completed the makeovers of the bedrooms, giving each of the rooms a different theme according to that child’s interests.

“We were able to be home when the family returned and seeing the children’s faces light up was a great reward,” said Major Pam.

“The children couldn’t wait to show each other their new rooms and mum and dad gave a big thank you through their tears.”

Prayers for this family are, of course, continuing. “We also pray for our Mainly Music team as they continue to show Jesus in our programs and interactions with the families that participate,” said Kathy.



Each bedroom makeover was themed according to the interests of each child.

Women’s rallies focus on Philippians

ACT & South NSW Division

Wagga Wagga and Northside Corps hosted two women’s rallies on 1 and 2 May. The theme for each rally was “Whatever is true, whatever is lovely, whatever is pure, think on these things”, taken from Philippians 4:8.

Captains Debbie Friend, Darlene Murray, Ros Brooks and Divisional Director of Women’s Ministries, Lieutenant-Colonel Jan Cairns, shared from God’s Word on each of these three principles.

During the rallies, delegates watched the Women’s Ministries Territorial DVD on the 2012 fundraising project – health and medical flip charts for Africa.

Major Jacquie Warrington, Manager, Canberra Recovery Services Centre, shared her powerful testimony of God’s grace and guidance throughout her life; and Lieutenant Karen Harrison, Bega Corps Officer, led worship and sang.

“I thank God for the leaders and all women involved in ministries throughout our division and I pray that each will have been encouraged in their faith because of the time spent with God, and each other, in these rallies,” said Lieut-Colonel Jan.

Territorial Women’s Ministries Project 2012

Health Education Flip Charts for Africa

Based on ten sets of “Facts for Life”

- HIV / AIDS
- Malaria
- Nutrition and Growth
- Diarrhoea and Hygiene
- Coughs and Chest Infections
- Injury Prevention
- Safe Motherhood
- Immunisation
- Birth Spacing and Contraception
- Breastfeeding

These will be used in Home League meetings, youth groups, men’s meetings and other community health training sessions in Africa.

Target: \$110, 000



Q&A - Commissioner Marie Willermark

Commissioner Marie Willermark, Territorial Commander for the Sweden and Latvia Territory, has a unique role as leader of two diverse nations. She speaks to *Women in Touch* about the challenges and joys of serving the Lord in these lands



Commissioner Marie enjoys the fruits from her little garden.

Can you give us a brief overview of The Salvation Army in Sweden and Latvia?

Sweden is a country in Northern Europe with 9 million inhabitants. The Salvation Army has around 5,000 soldiers and adherents and 140 active officers. We run centres for rehabilitation, families, youth and children. For several years we have worked on integrating corps fellowships and social ministry as well as looking at closing small corps with no local leadership, and opening new corps plants.

Latvia is a small country of 2.1 million inhabitants on the other side of the Baltic Sea which previously belonged to the Soviet Union. There are ten corps and three outposts. There are 15 active officers, eight second year cadets and two first year cadets. Corps fellowship and social ministry is very much intertwined. Here is the Region's English web site: <http://www.pestisanasarmija.lv/?lang=en>

What are the major areas of ministry in your role as territorial commander?

My first ministry is to stay in a personal relationship with God in order to be sensitive and obedient to his presence in my own life, in other people and in the practical circumstances of The Salvation Army mission.

The outcome of that is to lead and listen to the leadership team, the cabinet, so we all contribute with our gifts and leadership responsibilities.

Another important area is meeting leaders in our local corps and centres and considering their opportunities and challenges. My ministry is also to build relationships outside the Army, to understand what happens in our society and how God wants to use The Salvation Army to serve his purposes in this world.

What are the areas of ministry you are most passionate about?

Releasing the God given potential in every believer, young or old. That we, through prayer and confidence in each other and in God,

understand opportunities that the Holy Spirit leads us to and then go for it.

I am challenged by and interested in meeting people where they are, not waiting for them to turn to us. I try to connect to people outside the church sphere through my blog (in Swedish). I also enjoy slowly building natural relationships with neighbouring families where I live.

What is the relationship between Sweden and Latvia and how do you work together as one territory?

Latvia has a regional commander and quite a large degree of independence. Sweden gives a major contribution to the Latvian budget and that sets a general framework. There is regular interaction with our cabinet, mainly between the chief secretary and regional leaders.

The Latvian officers came to the Swedish congress last year and we are encouraging people to visit Riga for the Latvian congress this (northern) summer. There is also interaction between Swedish and Latvian corps.

Being a TC of two countries means you probably travel extensively. How do you create "sanctuary" in your life – protected time with God – amidst all the travel and the subsequent disruption it brings?

I don't apologise for setting days off, spending time at home and just slowing down. My fundamental attitude is that all of life belongs to God and I serve him in rest as well as in action.

Practically, this means I use worship music to come before the Lord and just "know" that he is Lord and good and is worthy of all praise and that he holds me and the Army and the world in his hands. I make time every day for reading the Bible and other literature and then just live with a heart turned to God during the day.

After winter, I very much enjoy spending time in my little garden. The process of sowing, planting, weeding, caring and enjoying the fruits is simply wonderful and very relaxing.

You served for several years in Ukraine, part of the Eastern Europe Territory. What were some of the highlights of that experience?

It is just life changing to live with people and in a country that comes from a different historical context. It makes me re-focus my perspective on issues like faith and culture, on managing difficulties and on what can be considered as reasonable expectations of life.



Akalla Centre, Stockholm. Here, women (only) can learn Swedish, get support and be part of and contribute to fellowship.



Swedish classes at Akalla Centre, Stockholm.

The highlight I think is to have seen young people develop into mature Salvationists and leaders. And that is still going on. Other highlights are travels, visiting corps and meeting lovely people and hearing their testimonies.

Personally, I also very much enjoyed making friends with other Scandinavian people living in Kiev and singing in our Nordic Choir.

What are some of the greatest needs in Sweden and Latvia?

In Sweden, as in the Western world in general, there is a growing power gap in society. The affluent get richer and more families and individuals end up in poverty and resigned to their circumstances. We also suffer from the effects of a secular society – a focus on image and the superficial that causes depression and makes people easy targets for costly lifestyle products.

In Latvia, the greatest need is to relieve general poverty. Politically, the country needs healing between Latvian-speaking and Russian-speaking people, and political stability.

What are some of the most difficult challenges you face in ministry?

Making decisions that will have an impact on the Army's work for the next decades. Shall we invest in a new property for a corps or for a centre? Does this serve the purpose God has for the Army in the next 20 years, or is it the other option?



The "Children's House" in Sarkani village, Latvia. Renovated by The Salvation Army, it is the only house in the village with running water, a shower and a toilet.



A new bilingual corps in Haparanda, on the border with Finland.

What are some of the deepest joys in your ministry?

Dedicating and praying individually for 40 teenagers who have completed their two week confirmation camp and at the final ceremony declare that Jesus is Lord of their lives.

Commissioning cadets as they give their lives to serve Jesus and make finding the lost their purpose in life.

Praying and talking with people until they find peace with God and his will for their lives.

What can our readers be praying about for The Salvation Army in Sweden and Latvia?

Thank him for the candidates, cadets and officers who give their lives to be available for God in the Army.

Pray for local corps and centres, and that God's Spirit will influence the unsaved to hunger for God's word and to desire to be born again.

Pray for soldiers and volunteers to open their hearts and homes for building relationships with each other and with newcomers.

Pray that our young believers will influence their generation with a living, creative and relevant faith.

If you could choose a handful of people from history to be your guests at a dinner party, who would they be?

Catherine Booth, Stevie Wonder, John the Baptist, Jane Austen, Commissioner Clive Adams (TC Norway) and Mary Magdalene.



Halmstad Corps where many international students worship during their university studies.



*When the world has fallen out
from under me
I'll be found in you, still standing
When the sky rolls up and the
mountains fall on their knees
when time and space are through
I'll be found in you*

**Brooke Fraser,
Shadowfeet,
Albertine**

