

# TELL YOUR STORY

A migrant story of faith  
and hope, told in words  
and art.

Anitha's Story



Tell Your Story celebrates the journey of participants from CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) refugee backgrounds – including those currently seeking asylum. The aim is to both encourage hope and healing in participants, and to inspire faith, hope and understanding in others.

With training provided by experienced Salvation Army coaches, and with prompts/ questions provided, participants (looking through the lens of faith) use both their words and art forms to tell their stories. These are shared online and in booklet form.

# Anitha's story

My life has been a journey shaped by God's faithfulness. From my home in India to a new life in Australia, God has been with me through every challenge and blessing. Even in the hardest moments, He has worked to turn broken pieces into something beautiful. This is a story of prayer, learning and God's constant grace guiding me forward.



My name is Anitha. I was born in Tamil Nadu, in the southern part of India. While my hometown was full of people of Hindu faith, I come from a Christian Salvation Army background.

My great-grandparents were Christians, and God has been good to me, caring for me all my life. Even in hard times, He gathered my broken pieces to make a beautiful vessel.

**Below:** In my hometown, there is a famous Thanumalayan Hindu temple. The original structure of the temple was built around the 9th century by the Chola dynasty.





**Left:** I was born in the southern part of India, Tamil Nadu, in a very small town called Karkadu Suchindrum

“For a brief moment  
I forsook you,  
but with great  
compassion I will  
bring you back”

**Isaiah 54:7**

### **God’s answers to prayer**

I married in 2015 to a very good man who was, and is, part of The Salvation Army. He is a great blessing in my life. For many years, his job was demanding and required him to travel frequently. When we were newly married, this was very hard. My husband and I prayed for a good job so that we could live together.

For two years, we waited for God’s answer. I was reminded of Isaiah 54:7:

*“For a brief moment I forsook you, but with great compassion I will bring you back”.* For us, this verse came to life.

In 2017, my husband got a job in Gladstone, Queensland, Australia. This job was a big blessing from God, so my husband, my lovely daughter and I moved from India to Gladstone. It was a big change, and many troubles came our way, but we have a good Lord who helped us.

### **New land, new challenges**

When we first migrated to Australia, I had mixed feelings. I was very nervous and lacked confidence in this new country.

I struggled a lot, but God’s words and promises in the Bible comforted me:

*“And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate to help you and be with you forever – the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept Him,*

*because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you know Him, for He lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you” (John 14:16–18).*

### **Comfort and guidance**

The Holy Spirit provided guidance, peace and comfort. I found immediate peace and hope in Jesus through reading the Bible and getting involved in the church.

God led us to The Salvation Army Gladstone Corps and we’ve been here for five years now. The church has been a big blessing. At first, I didn’t have any friends in Gladstone, but the people at the church welcomed and encouraged us.

I didn’t know how to drive, but church members helped us with transportation. Every Tuesday, I took my daughter to the Mainly Music program at the church.

**“IT ALL SEEMED IMPOSSIBLE TO ME, BUT GOD STRETCHED AND SHAPED ME.”**

My pastors helped me to grow spiritually, trained me for ministry and provided opportunities to serve God. It all seemed impossible to me, but God stretched and shaped me.

I completed culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) leadership training organised by my pastors. Now, I’m involved in Kids’ Church, worship





and many other aspects of church. I love Kids' Church, as I can teach the kids about God, as well as practical life skills, social skills and personal development.

My husband is also involved, including with the music team.

## “I can do all this through Him who gives me strength”

**Philippians 4:13**

### **All things possible through God**

God can make impossible things possible: *“With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible”* (Matthew 19:26). Being involved in God's ministry enriches my faith, helps me lead others more effectively and allows me to grow closer to the Lord.

I rejoice that I have opportunities to spread the good news of Jesus Christ through the activities I'm involved in at church and in the community. By God's grace, I was also selected as a member of the Gladstone Council Advisory Committee to serve the community.

I want to encourage friends out there who may be on a similar journey as new migrants. Don't worry! God is looking after you! Jesus says: *“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them”* (Matthew 6:25–31).



Things may not happen quickly, but God offers strength and divine support. *"I can do all this through Him who gives me strength"* (Philippians 4:13). Trust in God's strength to carry you through any challenges.

### **Do not lose hope**

I would say to anyone reading this: you can always pray and give thanks to God.

Never underestimate the power of prayer and do not be anxious about anything. God has a unique calling for you and He will equip you for the work He has for you (Ephesians 2:10; Philippians 4:6). Your perseverance will yield fruit in God's perfect timing. Do not grow weary of doing good (Galatians 6:9).

### **Inspiration from the Bible**

In the Bible, I really admire David's character. I am inspired by David's life experiences. David was born in Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, the youngest of seven sons. He tended his father's sheep – a job usually reserved for the least esteemed of the family or its servants. His life was filled with much happiness and much pain. He was a warrior and a king, but he was also a penitent man.

David's story mirrors many of my life experiences.

**“DO NOT  
GIVE UP AND  
MAY GOD  
BLESS YOU!”**





I was born and brought up in a very small village and from a poor family. God chose me like David. He was a humble shepherd, the youngest and least significant in his family. I felt God raised me up like he did with David.

*“He raises the poor*

*from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes, with the princes of his people”* (Psalm 113:7).

**“He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes, with the princes of his people”**

**Psalm 113:7**

When David was young, he used his free time talking with God. I used to do this too. I did not have many friends, but I always talked with God. I lived in a small village in India where Hinduism was the dominant faith. However, my village was surrounded by Christians – godly people.

Growing up, I went to kids’ programs at church, read the Bible and participated in many Bible-related workshops. God had a purpose in all of this. God was preparing me for something greater. God’s calling in my life (and in every life) is unique and special.

### **Facing and defeating ‘giants’**

David volunteered to face and fight a giant, Goliath.

## **“THE BATTLE BELONGS TO GOD. GOD GAVE DAVID AND THE ISRAELITES VICTORY OVER GOLIATH.”**

In my life, I don't face real giants, but I still face 'giants' – overwhelming challenges, fears and obstacles. Like David, I trust in the strength of my God to overcome these big challenges.

David carried five smooth stones in his pouch that can be thought of as representing faith, trust, courage, obedience and praise. Whenever we face big problems, we can always use the 'five stones' to overcome them. Whenever we face any kind of giant in our lives, we can carry these five stones with us wherever we go and receive victory.

In the end, David only had to use one stone. He achieved God's purposes, because he understood that with God, victory was certain.

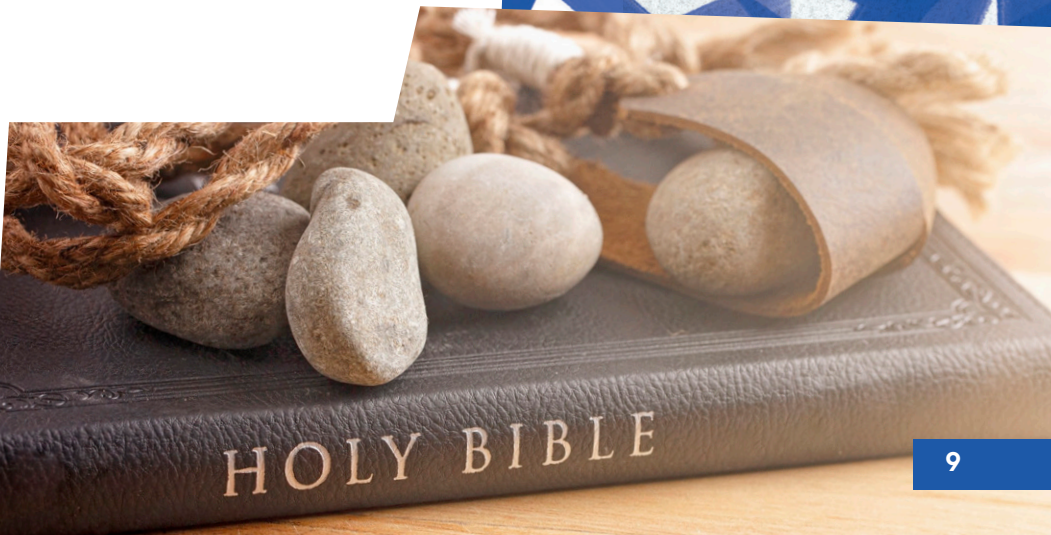
### **Keep going!**

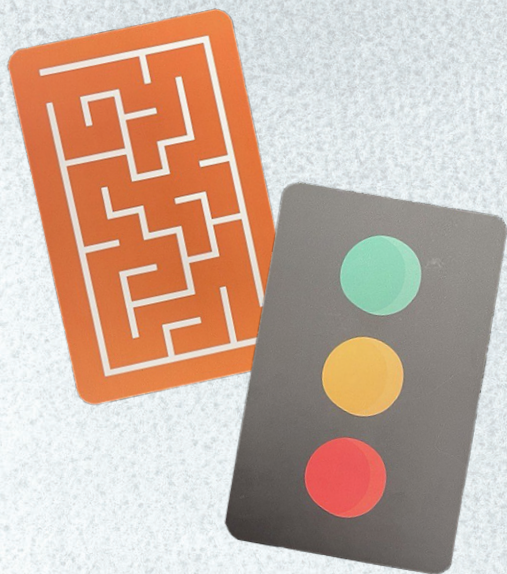
I'd like to encourage anyone reading this to have self-confidence and conviction. With God, you can do anything. Do not underestimate yourself or believe any challenge is too big to handle. When we underestimate ourselves and our own capabilities (empowered by God), we end up achieving less.

Believe in God and do not look at physical appearance – your eyes can deceive you. (Goliath looked big and powerful).

The battle belongs to God. God gave David and the Israelites victory over Goliath.

God's mighty power is greater than any 'giant' you will ever face. The victory belongs to God when you step out in the name and power of Jesus.





## My story through cards

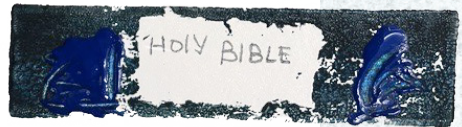
Card storytelling is an activity where participants use image cards to represent and share their life story.

I chose these cards to show that in my younger years, I wasn't always sure which path to take. But I learned as I matured that God becomes our guide as we trust in him.

The Bible even says that Jesus is the way.

With God, there are times to stop, times to wait and times to go.





### **My story through clay**

This is an image in clay that represents 'emotion'. It is a 'circle of life'.

The white ball in the centre represents a mother's womb, symbolising how we arrive in the world, pure and new.

The purple sticks represent our exploration of the world and the curiosity that drives us to look around and seek understanding.

The green and black circles show that the world contains both good and evil. The green circle stands for prosperity and happiness.

The pink circle symbolises God's arms, protecting us with his mighty power. God sees and watches over us, always.

### **My story through stamps**

Stamp storytelling is an activity where participants carve soft wood to create images that represent their life stories.

As I reflect on the cross, I seek God's miraculous power. My dark side is hidden by Jesus' pure white light. Inside the balls of fire, I can see the shadow of God's face.

I place my trust in God and his true words from the Bible



**BELIEVE IN GOOD**