



Homelessness
Week 2023

SIMS
METAL

It's time
to end
homelessness:

together,
we can



Leaders notes

Homelessness Week 2023 | 7-13 August

What time is it? This is a question we ask ourselves every day. In Australia, in 2023, it is time for action; it is time for advocacy; it is time for hope. It is time for Australians to come together to end homelessness within our well-resourced land. It is time for every person in Australia to have a safe and secure place to live.

Homelessness Week is a national event held annually in August. The theme for The Salvation Army in 2023 is, "It's time to end homelessness: together, we can". Homelessness is fundamentally caused by structural issues such as poverty, low income, and a lack of safe, affordable housing.

During Homelessness Week, and throughout the year, The Salvation Army partners with National and State Homelessness and Housing peak bodies and government agencies to find sustainable solutions to end homelessness. When we work together and communities invest in social and affordable housing, we can end homelessness.

How does The Salvation Army support those who are experiencing homelessness?

We believe that our first point of contact with people who are experiencing homelessness is critical. Meeting every person with dignity and respect establishes trust and encourages ongoing connection and engagement. Partnerships with other service providers and effective case management are important factors as we support them towards a more stable future and empower them to achieve an accommodation outcome.

Salvos homelessness support services operate under the Homelessness Stream model of care and include:

- Support measures to:
 - » Prevent homelessness
 - » Find and maintain suitable tenancies
 - » Address barriers to housing options
- Planning and support, including:
 - » Access to crisis accommodation
 - » Transitional housing and refuges
- Longer term accommodation options



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Data from the 2021 census:

122,494 people were estimated to be experiencing homelessness on Census night in 2021

Females made up **44 per cent** of people experiencing homelessness

Nearly a quarter (23 per cent) of all people experiencing homelessness were aged 18 years and under

The number of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people estimated to be experiencing homelessness increased from **23,437 in 2016** to **24,930 in 2021**

Rates of homelessness per 10,000 increased in Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania from 2016 to 2021

An average of 18,300 children were housed in specialist homelessness services in 2021 (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2021)





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Suggested Scripture

For everything there is a season, a time for every activity under Heaven.

Ecclesiastes 3:1 (NLT)

Say no to wrong. Learn to do good.

Work for justice. Help the down-and-out.

Stand up for the homeless. Go to bat for the defenseless.

Isaiah 1:17 (The Message)

“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Enter, you who are blessed by my Father! Take what’s coming to you in this kingdom. It’s been ready for you since the world’s foundation. And here’s why:

I was hungry and you fed me,

I was thirsty and you gave me a drink,

I was homeless and you gave me a room,

I was shivering and you gave me clothes,

I was sick and you stopped to visit,

I was in prison and you came to me.”

Matthew 25:34-36 (The Message)

Anyone who sets himself up as “religious” by talking a good game is self-deceived. This kind of religion is hot air and only hot air. Real religion, the kind that passes muster before God the Father, is this: Reach out to the homeless and loveless in their plight, and guard against corruption from the godless world.

James 1:26-27 (The Message)

What can I do?

Advocate for social change

[Write a letter](#) to your local member of parliament about one or more of the following:

- An increase in social housing stock and case management support
- An increase in family and domestic violence programs and policies
- The introduction of solutions for rental availability and pricing
- Addressing the general cost of living crises in Australia

Visit [Everybody's Home](#) and sign the Federal Government petition for increased social housing or for information on how to make your voice heard on homelessness issues.

Volunteer

Share the love of Jesus in practical ways by volunteering with local homelessness services in your community.

Donate

It's time to end homelessness. [Donate now](#) to help people experiencing homelessness.

Learn more at salvationarmy.org.au/homelessness-week



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Prayer points and interactive prayer stations

These prayer points could be included in your meeting or added to your newsletter.

Alternatively, set up prayer stations and invite people to spend time praying at each one.

- Pray for those Australians who are experiencing homelessness — pray for their safety, their health and their speedy connection with safe and suitable housing:
 - » **Prayer station:** provide candles and matches or battery-operated candles. Invite participants to light a candle as they pray.
- Pray for those who are on the frontline working to connect individuals with suitable housing options:
 - » **Prayer station:** prepare postcard-sized cards with the names (and photos, if possible) of those people who are working in homelessness services in your local area. Invite participants to pray by name for these workers then write their own name on the card. After the meeting, send these cards to the workers, letting them know you have been praying for them.
- Pray for those who are responsible for creating and implementing policies that impact those who are most vulnerable in our communities — pray for a commitment to increase social housing:
 - » **Prayer station:** provide building or LEGO blocks. Invite participants to add to the building as they pray.
- Pray that Australians will be positive, determined and creative in the quest to end homelessness in our nation:
 - » **Prayer station:** provide printouts of the floorplan of a house (see page 5) and pens. Invite participants to write in each room of the house a word that represents their prayers for our nation.
- Pray for your self — that in every interaction you will demonstrate the love and compassion of Jesus:
 - » **Prayer station:** provide small cards cut in the shape of a house (see page 6). Invite participants to write the words, “It’s time to end homelessness” on the card. On the other side of the card, invite them to write one thing they will do to be part of the solution.



