



JUNIOR SOLDIER RENEWAL DAY 2021 – TRANSFORM

KEY SCRIPTURE

“Don’t copy the behaviour and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect” (Romans 12:2, New Living Translation).

New Living Translation (NLT)

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KEY IDEAS

Don’t copy – we need to be aware of our behaviours and avoid copying those around us. Instead, we follow the model that Jesus set for us.

Be transformed – God’s work in us changes the way we act and who we are. We see an example of God’s work of transformation in the life of Saul.

God is transforming us – God’s work of transformation is an ongoing process rather than a single act. We can partner in this work by preparing ourselves for change.

PREPARATION

Two weeks before:

- ☐ Print eight copies of the 'Transforming Saul' script. Choose participants and ask them to be familiar with the script (they might still need to use the script for the performance). Organise a rehearsal time prior to Renewal Sunday.
- ☐ Invite one of the Junior Soldiers to pray that everyone present will experience God's transformation. They can use the scripted prayer included or write their own prayer.



Dear Jesus, thanks that you have a plan for our lives. You see who we are and who we will become. Please keep on changing us to be more like Jesus every day. Help us to work with you, doing all we can to prepare ourselves for the changes you will make in us. Amen.

- ☐ Check that all of your Big Buds will be attending. Arrange for others to pray with the Junior Soldiers if some will be absent.

YOU WILL NEED

Presentation slides:

- ☐ A 'Transform' theme slide – the 'Transform' logo is included
- ☐ "Don't copy the behaviour and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect" (Romans 12:2, New Living Translation).
- ☐ [The Junior Soldier Promise](#) (Note: A [Chinese translation](#) of the promise is available on the toolkit if this is helpful for your community.)
- ☐ Audience prompts for the Story in Action if you would prefer not to use cardboard

For activity 1 – whole congregation:

- ☐ A leader, dressed as an exercise instructor, to lead the activity
- ☐ Upbeat music

For activity 2 – slime:

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Table | <input type="checkbox"/> Clear school glue (Elmers brand is recommended) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bowl | <input type="checkbox"/> Baking soda |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spoon | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contact lens solution | |

Visit Elmers.com and choose one of their [slime recipes](#). We recommend practicing making the slime at home, beforehand.

For the Story in Action – Transforming Saul:

- ☐ Torch
- ☐ A couple of backpacks or suitcases
- ☐ A handful of confetti
- ☐ Signs for audience participation (these may be on cardboard or projected)
 - ☐ Gasp
 - ☐ Oh
 - ☐ Knock Knock
 - ☐ Cheer
 - ☐ Clap



For activity stations

- ☐ Upbeat background music

For station 1 – faces:

- ☐ Table (if you have a large group set up multiple tables)
- ☐ Printed copy of the instructions
- ☐ Print copies of the templates on light cardstock – faces and blank circles
- ☐ Scissors (or pre-cut the individual circles)
- ☐ Markers
- ☐ Craft sticks
- ☐ Glue or tape

For station 2 – paper testimonies:

- ☐ Table
- ☐ Printed copy of the instructions
- ☐ Pens
- ☐ Print copies of the templates

For station 3 – playdough:

- ☐ Table
- ☐ Printed copy of the instructions
- ☐ Tubs of playdough



For God is transforming us:

- ☐ Four red envelopes
- ☐ Print the responses or write them on slips of paper and place one inside each envelope
- ☐ Tape the envelopes under seats around your space
- ☐ Optional: you might like to have an apple seed and apple to show as you speak about this cycle of transformation
- ☐ Prepare responses to help everyone to understand how we can prepare for God to transform us

For renewal segment:

- ☐ Reflective background music
- ☐ Copies of the renewal cards
- ☐ Pens

BE TRANSFORMED!

1. Don't copy

ACTIVITY 1 – WHOLE CONGREGATION

Leader to run onto stage energetically, dressed as an exercise instructor. (Instructor could wear colourful exercise-wear, e.g. fluorescent headband and leg warmers.) Upbeat music to play. Leader to ask congregation to stand up and copy what he/she does. Leader to do simple actions, e.g. clapping, hands in the air and waved from side to side, two steps left and two steps right, etc.

I hope you are all feeling warmed up now.

It was good to see you all copying the actions and dance moves.

You did very well!

I want to ask you a question this morning – have you ever found yourself copying the way people around you **talk** or **act**?

Maybe you hang around people who complain a lot and you start complaining a lot too.

Or maybe the people on a YouTube channel you watch are constantly getting new toys, and you start wanting new toys all the time too!

For those who are a bit older ... Maybe you copy unhealthy language.

Or perhaps you are influenced by how others prioritise their time.

No matter how old we are, it can be very easy to get swept up and behave the same as the people we see around us.

But this is not how God wants us to live. The verse that we are focusing on today is Romans 12:2. Let's read it together:

(Show the verse on the screen)

Romans 12:2 says: *"Don't copy the behaviour and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect."*



2. Be transformed

What does the verse say? Don't copy but let God **transform** you. God wants us to **be transformed**.

I wonder what ideas come to your mind when you hear the word 'transformed'?

Invite responses.

Maybe you think about a Pokémon evolving? Maybe you think about a Transformer toy? Or have you ever caught a tadpole and watched it grow into a frog?

This morning we are going to watch something transform before our eyes. I need three children and one adult to help.

ACTIVITY 2 - SLIME

On this table, we have some glue, some contact lens solution and some baking soda.

First child to pour glue.

Second child to pour baking soda and mix thoroughly.

Third child to add contact lens solution.

Adult to mix.

Once mixed, stretch the slime out for the whole congregation to see. You might like to let a couple of the children feel it.

Did you see how the ingredients transformed into slime?

God wants to do this kind of work in our lives. He doesn't transform us into slime!! But he is transforming us in new and amazing ways.

The Greek word for 'transformed' is **metamorphoó**.

Does this word sound familiar to you?

It's kind of like the word 'metamorphosis', isn't it?

During the process of metamorphosis, a caterpillar is **transformed** into a butterfly. The caterpillar becomes a whole new creation. It used to be a worm-like creature that could not get off the earth, but after being transformed it becomes a beautiful butterfly that can now fly!

God wants to transform us like this. He wants to transform us in ways that help us to live our best lives.

Our Bible verse for today was written by a man who knew a lot about being transformed by God. Let's listen to his story.

STORY IN ACTION

Use the script provided to bring to life the transformation of Saul to Paul. Have different members of the congregation play different characters in the story. Invite the whole congregation to join in by following the cues on the signs or screen.

Wow, what an amazing transformation! Saul changed so much that he was like a new man. People even started calling him by a new name. He became known as Paul.

ACTIVITY STATIONS x 3

God changed Saul and he is changing us too. I wonder how God is changing your life?

There are three activities for everyone to choose from for the next 10 minutes as you think about how God has changed you. You might like to chat about it with the people around you as you do the activities.

Explain the activities.

Play some upbeat music and send everyone to the activity stations.

Give a 'two minutes' warning after eight minutes.

Station 1: Faces

Choose two faces that represent what you were like before and after God changed you.

(e.g. Scared, then peaceful OR mean, then friendly). You can use one of the printed faces or draw your own. Glue the faces back to back, with the paddle-pop stick in between.

Station 2: Paper testimonies

Take one of the A5 sheets. In a few words – describe what your life was like 'before' and what it is like 'now'.

We have provided some real-life examples from other Salvation Army people.



e.g.

BEFORE I was always scared at night time. **NOW** I sleep peacefully.

BEFORE I was a bully. **NOW** I help people who are bullied.

BEFORE I had a bad temper. **NOW** I am super calm.

BEFORE I was very selfish. **NOW** I want to care for others.

BEFORE I was mean to my sister. **NOW** I encourage her.

BEFORE I was holding a grudge. **NOW** I have forgiven.



Station 3: Playdough creations

Take a tub of playdough and shape it to show how God has transformed you.

Okay everyone, it's time to return to our seats. Please take your paper or creation with you.

Raise your hand if you'd be happy to share about what you made?

Allow about six people to stand and show their creation or paper, reading it out or explaining what it means.

3. God is transforming us

Isn't it exciting to hear about how God has already transformed us?

You know what's even more amazing? God doesn't just transform us once.

Let's take another look at Romans 12:2. Read it with me again.

(Show the verse on the screen) Romans 12:2 says: "Don't copy the behaviour and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect."

When we connect with God, we discover that God can change or transform us. But that is never the end of the story because God is transform**ing** us.

God wants to transform us again and again and again, making us more like Jesus.

From the youngest to the oldest and from the newest Christian to the most experienced Christian, God is transform**ing** us.

Think about a seed. When the seed is planted it grows a shoot. The shoot then becomes a green stem and grows leaves. The plant flowers. The flowers become fruit. The leaves change colour and fall off ... The plant is constantly changing or transforming.

Optional: show an apple seed and an apple to illustrate some of these changes as you speak.

For the seed to change and grow it needs certain things. Can you name some of them?

Good soil, water, sunlight, oxygen etc.

We can prepare ourselves for God's changes in our lives.

How can we prepare for God to transform us?

Well, there are some answers under your seats!

There are four red envelopes, placed randomly under chairs in this room. Have a look under yours. See if you can find one of the envelopes.

Leader to approach those who have found the envelopes with a cordless microphone, giving them the microphone to read it out (or they can nominate someone to read it for them).

Envelope 1: Reading the Bible.

Leader to expand on how this helps.

Envelope 2: Praying.

Leader to expand on how this helps.

Envelope 3: Spending time with other Christians.

Leader to expand on how this helps.

Envelope 4: Asking the Holy Spirit to fill your life.

Leader to expand on how this helps.



OPPORTUNITY FOR RESPONSE – JUNIOR SOLDIER RENEWAL SEGMENT



Ask the Junior Soldiers to stand and read the promise together.

"I know that Jesus is my Saviour from sin. I have asked Him to forgive my sins, and I will trust Him to keep me good.

By His help, I will be His loving and obedient child, and will help others to follow Him.

I promise to pray, to read my Bible, and to lead a life that is clean in thought, word and deed.

I will not use anything that may injure my body or my mind, including harmful drugs, alcohol and tobacco."

Thinking about this promise and how God is transforming you, I invite you to pray with your Big Bud and sign your Renewal card.

Invite others to come forward and pray.

Invite one of the Junior Soldiers to pray that everyone present will experience God's transformation. They can use the scripted prayer below or write their own prayer.

Dear Jesus, thanks that you have a plan for our lives. You see who we are and who we will become. Please keep on changing us to be more like Jesus every day. Help us to work with you, doing all we can to prepare ourselves for the changes you will make in us. Amen.

Let's read our verse together one more time.

(Show the verse on the screen) Romans 12:2 says: "Don't copy the behaviour and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect."

Today, we have colour changing straws for the children. As you see the colour change, remember that God continues to transform your life.

THE STORY IN ACTION - TRANSFORMING SAUL

Adapted from Acts 9:1-19 (CEV)

You will need:

- ☐ Torch
- ☐ A couple of backpacks or suitcases
- ☐ A handful of confetti
- ☐ Signs for audience participation (these may be on cardboard or projected)
 - ☐ Gasp
 - ☐ Oh
 - ☐ Knock Knock
 - ☐ Cheer
 - ☐ Clap

Participants:

- Narrator
- Saul
- Mate 1
- Mate 2
- Mate 3
- Jesus
- Ananias
- Sign holder (if signs are on cardboard)

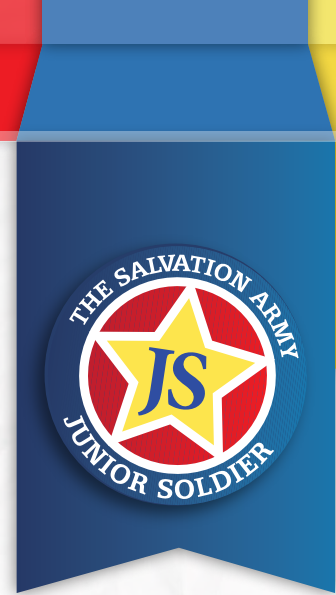
NARRATOR:

This is a true story. If you want to read it again, you can find it in the Bible, in the book of Acts. We want you to be involved in the story too. So, when you see a sign appear, please join in by responding. Let's have a practice.

(Sign holder shows the 'Cheer' sign – let the audience respond. Have a second practice with 'Gasp'.)

Now let's get started ...

Once upon a time, not long after Jesus died and rose again, a guy called Saul was on a quest. His quest was to arrest and KILL all the friends of Jesus.



SIGN HOLDER:

GASP

NARRATOR:

Saul didn't realise that Jesus was really the Son of God. He copied what other people were saying and thought that the friends of Jesus were being disloyal to God by following Jesus.

SIGN HOLDER:

OH

NARRATOR:

He was so sure that this was the right thing to do that had asked for permission from the authorities and he was on his way to Damascus to get the job done!

(Saul and his mates enter carrying backpacks. They are walking along the road together.)

SAUL:

Let's go! Let's get those friends of Jesus. I want every single one of them in prison or dead! (Friends cheer and encourage him.) I have the arrest warrant ready – they don't stand a chance.

(Jesus enters from the other direction. Saul can see Jesus, but his mates cannot. They can hear what is being said but they don't see Jesus or the light. Jesus comes close to Saul and shines a torch into his face.)

SAUL:

(Puts his hand over his eyes.) Oh! Hey! What's happening! (Falls to the ground. His mates are looking around confused.)

JESUS:

(Keeps the light shining in Saul's face.) Saul! Saul! Why are you so cruel to me?

(Mates react in surprise to the voice. They can hear what is being said but still cannot see anything.)

SAUL:

(Tries to see past the light.) Who are you?

JESUS:

I am Jesus. I am the one you are so cruel to. Now, get up and go into the city, where you will be told what to do. (Turns off the light and exits.)



SAUL:

(Stands up with his eyes closed. Opens his eyes and realises he is blind.) *Help me! I can't see anything! I'm blind!*

SIGN HOLDER:

GASP

MATE 1:

What just happened?

MATE 2:

Did you hear that?

MATE 3:

Why can't he see?

(To Saul:) *We had better get you into the city like he said.*

(Mates lead Saul offstage.)

NARRATOR:

Saul's mates led him along the road to the city of Damascus.

MATE 1:

(Saul's mates lead him back onstage.) *We're here.*

MATE 2:

This is where we will stay until we can get you some help.

MATE 3:

Maybe after some food and rest you will feel better.

SAUL:

I can't rest. I need to pray. I need some answers. (Kneels and begins to silently pray. His mates huddle in a corner and quietly whisper.)

(Ananias enters and knocks on the door.)

SIGN HOLDER:

KNOCK KNOCK



MATE 1:

Who's there?

ANANIAS:

It's Ananias. I have a message from God for Saul.

MATE 2:

(Opens the door.) This way.

(Leads Ananias to Saul. The other mates join them.)

SAUL:

(Raises his head but is still blind.) Who are you?

ANANIAS:

I am Ananias. I am a follower of Jesus. Saul, the Lord Jesus has sent me. He is the same one who appeared to you on the road. He wants you to be able to see and to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

SAUL:

(Stands up, rubs his eyes and drops some confetti as if it is falling from his eyes.) I can see!

SIGN HOLDER:

CHEER

SAUL:

I've been so wrong. I realise the truth now. If Jesus has the power to do this then he must be God, just like they say he is.

NARRATOR:

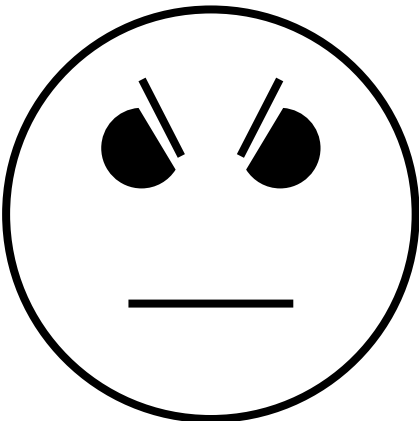
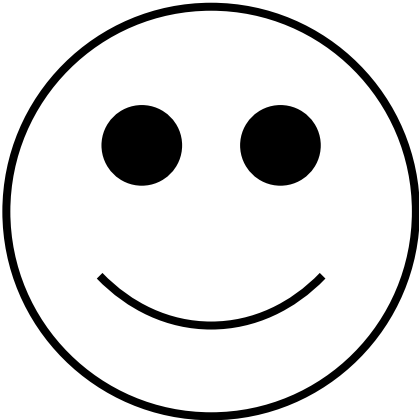
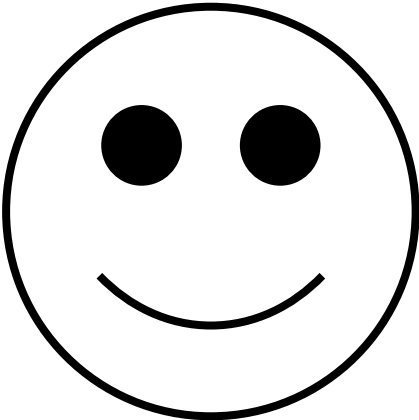
Saul stayed in Damascus for several days, learning everything he could about Jesus. He started a new quest – to tell everyone in the world that Jesus is God and convince them to follow Jesus.

SIGN HOLDER:

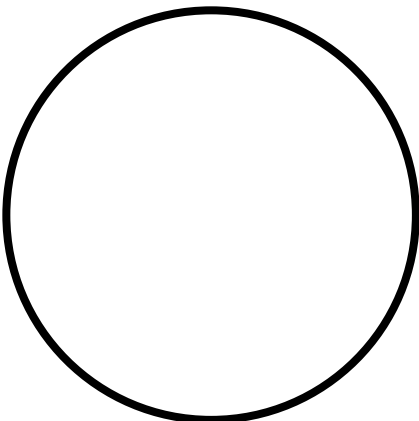
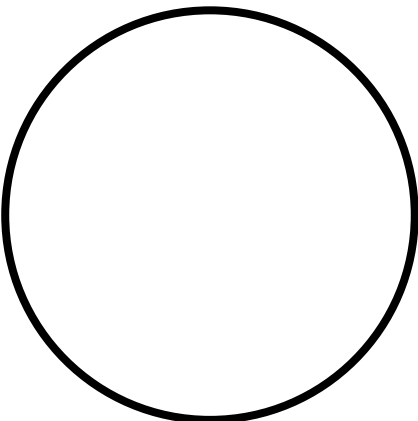
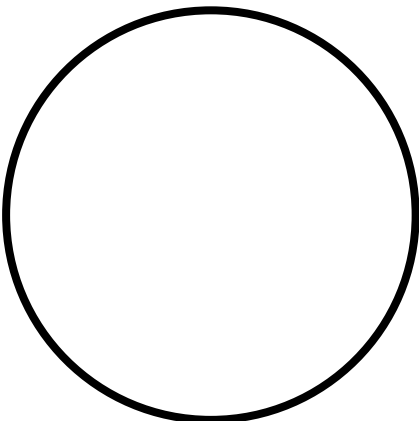
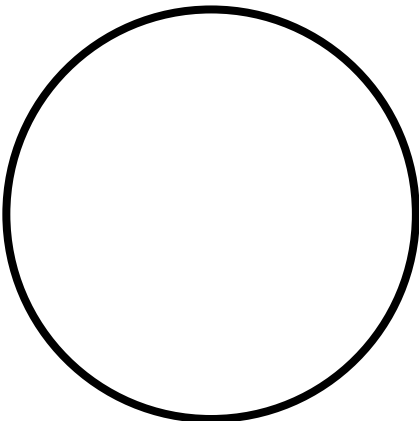
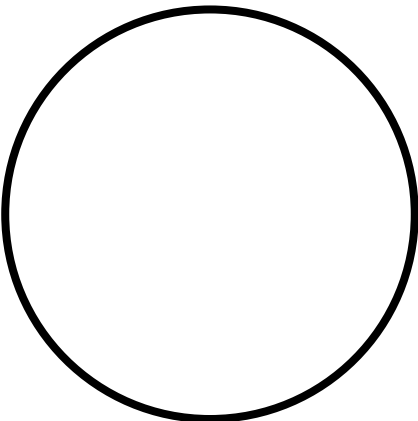
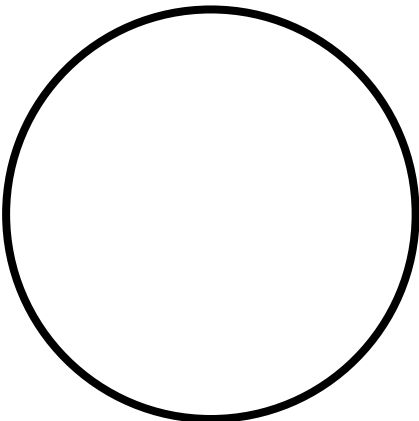
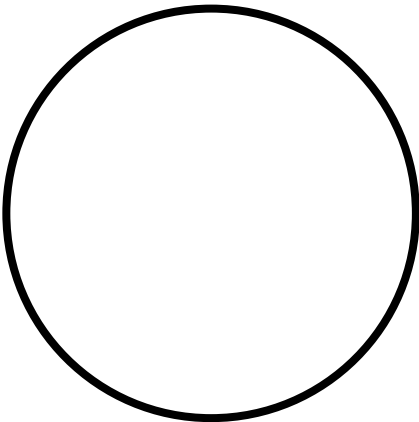
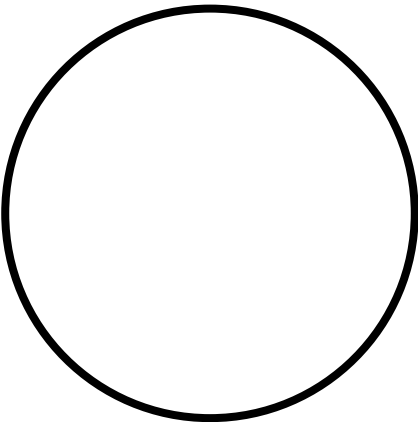
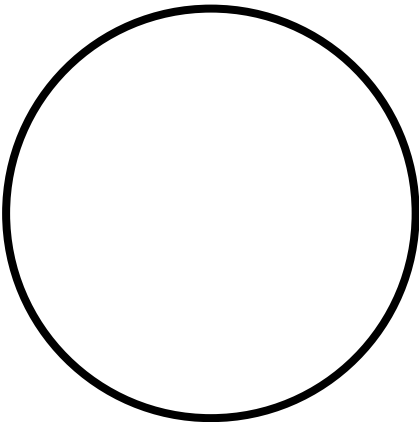
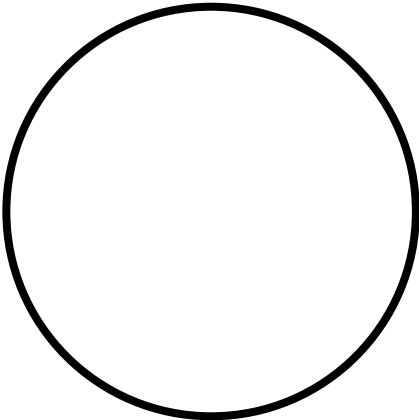
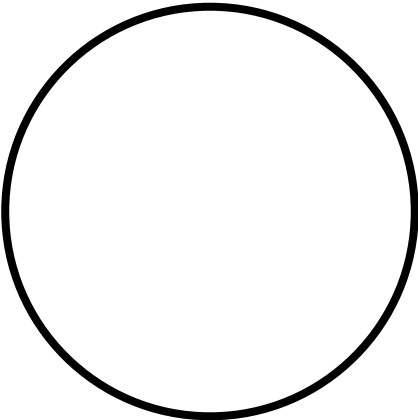
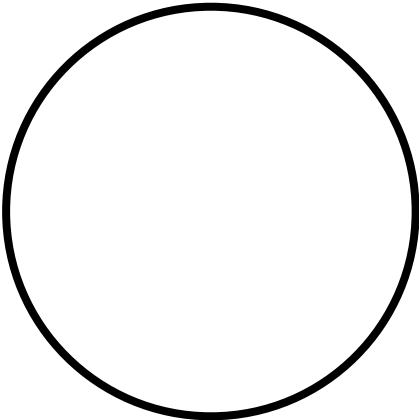
CLAP



Station 1 templates



Station 1 blank templates



BEFORE
TRANSFORMED
NOW

BEFORE
TRANSFORMED
NOW

READING THE BIBLE

PRAYING

**ASKING THE HOLY SPIRIT
TO FILL YOUR LIFE**

**SPENDING TIME WITH
OTHER CHRISTIANS**

STATION 1 - FACES

Choose two faces that represent what you were like **before** and **after** God changed you. (e.g. Scared, then peaceful OR mean, then friendly).

You can use one of the printed faces or draw your own. Glue the faces back to back, with the paddle-pop stick in between.

STATION 2 - PAPER TESTIMONIES

Take one of the sheets. In a few words, describe what your life was like 'before' and what it is like 'now'.

We have provided some real-life examples from other Salvation Army people. It's important to remember that sometimes change happens slowly – step-by-step.

BEFORE I was always scared at night time. NOW I sleep peacefully.

BEFORE I was a bully. NOW I help people who are bullied.

BEFORE I had a bad temper. NOW I am getting better at staying calm.

BEFORE I was very selfish. NOW I remember to care for others more often.

BEFORE I was mean to my sister. NOW I try to encourage her.

BEFORE I was holding a grudge. NOW Even though it's not always easy, I try to forgive.

STATION 3 - PLAYDOUGH CREATIONS

Take a blob of playdough and shape it to show how God has transformed you.

Think about:

- As a Christian, how is God changing you to be more like Jesus?
- What difference does knowing God make in your life?