

Junior Soldier Renewal Day 2015



Hand In Hand: Encouragement in our Faith!

PURPOSE: For the Junior Soldier to explore and understand that encouragement is important and that when Christians get together they can encourage each other in their faith.

‘When we get together, I want to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours.’

Romans 1: 12 (New Living Translation)

Consider and Prepare

Intro:

Junior Soldier Renewal Day is scheduled on the Territorial calendar for **Sunday 21st June 2015**. Your corps may choose to celebrate on this day with a special worship service or include the renewal day segment on a different date or in another setting. The important thing is that all Junior Soldiers have an opportunity to renew their promise and be supported and encouraged by the wider Corps family in their discipleship journey.

Context:

This year’s theme is ‘Hand In Hand: Encouragement in our faith and the aim is to assist the Junior Soldiers (as well as the wider congregation) to recognise the importance of encouragement in our walk with Jesus.

The theme of ‘encouragement’ comes from the section in the Junior Soldier Promise that states, ‘Will **help others** to follow Him.’ In a world that offers so many distractions that can divert us from our life with Jesus, it is easy to get side tracked and each of us need help, wisdom and encouragement to continue to follow Jesus. This section of the promise is closely linked with the philosophy behind Big Buds and the fact that we each need people in our lives that will encourage us.

This week for the Junior Soldier in the Boundless International Bible Reading Challenge, the scripture is Romans 1:1-17 and this is where we pick up our theme verse for this year’s renewal: ‘When we get together, I want to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours.’ (Verse 12)

Today we want to help the Junior Soldier as well as their Big Buds (Prayer Pals) explore and understand that it doesn't matter what age we are, we can each be an encourager to someone in their faith. The Junior Soldier can be just as encouraging to their Big Bud as the Big Bud can be to the Junior Soldier.

The Renewal Day notes include message outlines and other suggestions for a celebration service as the Junior Soldiers renew their promise and, possibly, where new Junior Soldiers will be enrolled. We have also included some family resources that will support the teaching and help reinforce it in a number of environments the Junior Soldiers interact in.

On the day your corps has scheduled Junior Soldier Renewal Day, opportunity should be given in corporate worship for Junior Soldiers to consider their promise and renew it in a public way. We encourage you to include this segment in response to the message so that once the Junior Soldiers have renewed their promise the rest of the congregation can be involved as well.

Read:

Below is the extended scripture passage that will help us to focus on this year's theme.

Romans 1: 1-17 (New Living Translation)

Greetings from Paul

This letter is from Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, chosen by God to be an apostle and sent out to preach his Good News. God promised this Good News long ago through his prophets in the holy Scriptures. The Good News is about his Son. In his earthly life he was born into King David's family line, and he was shown to be the Son of God when he was raised from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit. He is Jesus Christ our Lord. Through Christ, God has given us the privilege and authority as apostles to tell Gentiles everywhere what God has done for them, so that they will believe and obey him, bringing glory to his name.

And you are included among those Gentiles who have been called to belong to Jesus Christ. I am writing to all of you in Rome who are loved by God and are called to be his own holy people. May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

God's Good News

Let me say first that I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith in him is being talked about all over the world. God knows how often I pray for you. Day and night I bring you and your needs in prayer to God, whom I serve with all my heart by spreading the Good News about his Son. One of the things I always pray for is the opportunity, God willing, to come at last to see you. For I long to visit you so I can bring you some spiritual gift that will help you grow strong in the Lord.¹² **When we get together, I want to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours.** I want you to know, dear brothers and sisters, that I planned many times to visit you, but I was prevented until now. I want to work among you and see spiritual fruit, just as I have seen among other Gentiles. For I have a great sense of obligation to people in both the civilized world and the rest of the world, to the educated and uneducated alike. So I am eager to come to you in Rome, too, to preach the Good News.

For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes—the Jew first and also the Gentile. This Good News tells us how God makes us right in his sight. This is accomplished from start to finish by faith. As the Scriptures say, "It is through faith that a righteous person has life."



What you will need:

For 'Display/Setting the theme'

- Toys from the movie *Toy Story* if can find them! (borrow from families within the Corps)
- Other toys
- Stack of bibles

For 'Introductions to the theme'

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zIYOJ_hSs0o – “Toy Story – You've got a friend in me - lyrics “

For Children's story/ Interactive message/ illustrations...

- A copy of *Toy Story 1* DVD

For 'Prayer Segment'

- Coloured strips of paper to make a chain (similar to a Christmas paper chain)
- Pens or textas
- Staplers or stick tape
- Or sticky notes

For 'Message/Sermon'

- 22 boxes (shoe boxes) covered with paper ready to have different words of encouragement written on them.
- Thick black texta and thick red texta
- Whiteboard and marker, butchers paper OR multimedia screen.

For 'Renewal Segment'

- Small pieces of white cardboard
- Renewal Day item (highlighter hand)
- Renewal Day cards for both the Junior Soldier and the Big Bud.
- Pens
- Enough room in the hall

Renewal Day Items

The Renewal Day items for 2015 include one item per child:

- One “hand highlighter” (with the Junior Soldier logo and verse printed on the palm)
- A Renewal Day card for the Junior Soldier (with space for the Junior Soldier and Big Bud to sign).
- A Renewal Day card for the Big Bud (with space for the Junior Soldier and Big Bud to sign).

These Renewal Day items are provided to the Junior Soldiers to help reinforce the message that they have explored on their renewal day beyond the church walls. These items along with the Home & Beyond section will help to continue the conversation after the service in a variety of places.

Display/Setting the theme suggestions

Create a display that includes items listed that will be referred to during the service. The movie *Toy Story* is being featured so a display of toys (particularly from the movie) would be fitting. Stack some bibles to represent the importance of scripture. It would be great to have a variety of different looking bibles displayed (small, big, antique).



Options to create your service

In these notes we have provided you with a children's story/interactive message to introduce the theme, some prayer ideas, a sermon outline, details for the renewal segment and some 'Home & Beyond' suggestions. You might like to choose from these suggestions or use them all. We have placed the suggestions in order of where we might place them in the meeting, including the renewal segment as a response to the message, not only for the Junior Soldiers but for the whole congregation to be involved in and have an opportunity to respond to.

You will need to encourage all the Junior Soldiers and Big Buds to bring along their Bibles for the Renewal Segment. You may wish to spend some time talking with the Junior Soldiers beforehand encouraging them to choose a special verse from their Bible that they can share with their Big Bud on the day.



Introduction to the theme

To introduce the theme of encouragement at the beginning of the meeting it is suggested that you play the theme song from the *Toy Story* movies, 'You've got a friend in me.' If you download it from YouTube the words will come up on the screen. We recommend this version as it has graphics as well as words. (If you use the clip directly from YouTube and use a legal copy of the DVD rather than locating it from another source this will not infringe on any copyright law.)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zlYOJ_hSs0o –
"Toy Story - You've got a friend in me - lyrics"

After you have played the song talk about the three Toy story movies.

- *Have you seen any of the movies?*
- *Who is your favourite character and why?*
- *What is your favourite part of the movies?*

Tell the congregation that:

'In a moment we are going to watch some segments from the first Toy Story movie.'

Children's story/ Interactive message/ illustrations...

Below is the outline for an interactive message. It is important for the children to stay sitting amongst the congregation so that all are engaging together, you might like to encourage the younger children to sit up on an adult's knee if they cannot see during this time.

For this activity you will need:

- A copy of the first Toy Story movie.

As you are talking about the movie, you may want to hold up the toys.

SCRIPT:

'For those of you who have not seen any of the Toy Story movies, they are about a group of toys that belong to their owner, a kid named Andy. The toys come alive but never in front of any humans. The main toy characters are Woody (a cowboy) and Buzz Lightyear (a space ranger). The toys are very loyal to each other and there is a real sense of community within Andy's room. The toys see their job as not just being played with by Andy but most importantly 'being there for Andy'.

*'Now in the first movie Buzz arrives as a new toy to the playroom. He is under the opinion that he is the 'real' Buzz Lightyear and that he can save the galaxy with his flying ability, special karate chopping action and arm laser. He doesn't realise that he is **just a toy**. Woody and Buzz's relationship at the beginning is strained as Woody becomes very jealous of Buzz's friendship with their owner Andy.'*

'Half way through the movie Woody and Buzz end up at the Sid's house, who is the boy that lives next door and is very mean and destroys toys. Woody and Buzz attempt to escape and get back home.'

'Let's watch what happens when Buzz realises he is just a toy not the real Buzz Lightyear.'



Start from chapter 17 (44:05) and play through to part of chapter 18 (45:35), then part of chapter 19 from 46:46 to 48:31 – Buzz realising that he is just a toy and his reaction.

'Poor Buzz, he is so sad and down. Let's watch how Woody encourages Buzz and then Buzz encourages Woody in return.' (Watch chapter 23 from 54:28 to 57:18.)

Make a point about how Woody encouraged Buzz then Buzz encouraged Woody when he needed it. They encouraged each other.

LINK:

Ask the congregation:

- *I wonder if there are times in your life when you need encouraging.*
- *How do we encourage each other when we play sport? (Cheer, barrack etc.)*

SCRIPT:

'There are many people in our lives that can encourage us, teachers, parents, friends and family. They are all in a different part of our lives and play different roles in encouraging us.'

- *How would our teachers encourage us? (wait for some responses)*
- *What about our parents? How many of you can hear you Mum or Dad encouraging you from the sideline when you play sport? (wait for some responses)*
- *I am curious, how do you think our friends and family encourage us? (wait for some responses)*

'As friends of Jesus, we also need encouraging in our faith and as we walk with Him. Sometimes it is hard to be a Christian and we need each other to be supportive and encourage us along when it gets hard.'

'At this stage of the service you may wish to interview a teenager/young adult and their Big Bud or a person who has helped them, about how they have encouraged each other over the years.'

'Today we are going to explore the verse from the bible that says, 'When we get together, I want to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours.' Romans 1: 12 (New Living Translation)

Prayer Suggestions

For the prayer segment you will need:

- Coloured strips of paper to make a chain (similar to a Christmas chain)
- Pens or textas
- Staplers or stick tape
- Or sticky notes

'We are going to have a time now where we think about the people within our church (corps) who spends time encouraging you.'

Ask some Junior Soldiers to hand out the coloured strips of paper and pens/textas. Ask the congregation to write down their name on their strip of paper. Pass the sticky tape or stapler down and ask each person to add their strip of paper to the chain. Arrange for some volunteers to link all the chains together to make one big chain. Using some children, display the chain right across the front of the congregation.

If you have a large congregation and making a chain may be problematic, use sticky notes instead of making a chain and ask some volunteers to create a display with the sticky notes in some part of the building. You can purchase hand shaped sticky notes from Coles supermarkets to keep with the hand-in-hand theme if you wish.

Explain that not only are we linked together in this chain, we are linked together as friends of Jesus. We have the common bond, we have the common love for Jesus and we have the same goal in life – to worship and love God.

Pray together as a community, who are linked together in this way, encourage people to thank God for the person whose name they have written down on their strip of paper. 'Thank God that you have that common bond with them and ask God to help you be a person that will encourage and support other people within the church family.'

Have someone finish this segment in prayer for the whole congregation.

Message/Sermon

Sermon purpose...

For the congregation to explore and understand that everyone needs encouragement during their walk with Jesus and to explore different ways of encouraging each other.

For this segment you will need:

- 22 boxes (shoe boxes) covered with paper ready to have different words of encouragement written on them.
- Thick black texta and thick red texta
- Whiteboard and marker, butchers paper or multimedia screen.

SCRIPT:

'When I think of encouragement I think of the words that we use that can be very powerful in how they make people feel. If we use positive words towards other people that make them feel happy, encouraged, loved, wanted and needed, it can help build up a person's self-esteem.'

'Everything we say has the potential to either heal or harm. Our words can destruct or construct, be positive or negative. Words are very powerful – words can build us up or tear us down.'

'Today we are going to spend some time looking at the effect that words have on us.'

Encourage the congregation to shout out some words/phrases that we use to encourage each other. Have a couple of Junior Soldiers write down the words/phrases on each box and start building up a tower. When you get to about 5 words, ask for a word that can tear us down. Write this word on a block and add them to the tower. Ask another child to come and knock the tower down.

'Wow, look what happened. One word that was added to the tower had the power to destroy all the good words that had been used to build up the tower.'



Start building the tower again. Use the 5 positive blocks to get it going and then add another 5 positive words. Again ask for two more negative words, add to the tower and bring the tower down again.

'Wow, this is terrible, every time we build up the tower with positive words, along comes a negative word and it collapses under the weight.'

Start building the tower again, using all the positive blocks and add another 10 blocks. Then add another negative word. This time the tower stays strong.

'In our lives, the power of our words of encouragement is an important way of how we are shaped as a person. Sometimes it only takes one negative word/phrase to bring us crashing down.'

'We are going to spend some time looking at ways that we can encourage each other. It says in Romans 1:12, 'When we get together, I want to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours.'

'Earlier we saw how Woody and Buzz from Toy Story encouraged each other. Now remember the toys in Andy's room see their job as not just being played with by Andy but most importantly 'being there for Andy'. The toys worshipped Andy and would have done anything for him.' Their common thing was Andy. Our common link is God.

'Our job isn't to be a play thing for God but to be there for him, available to God, be prepared to do anything for God.'

'We can't do this on our own, God sent his Holy Spirit to help us but it also helps if we have other Christians around encouraging us.'

➤ *I wonder do you think you need to be a certain age to be encouraging towards each other.*

Talk about the fact that it doesn't matter what age you are, you can still encourage each other.

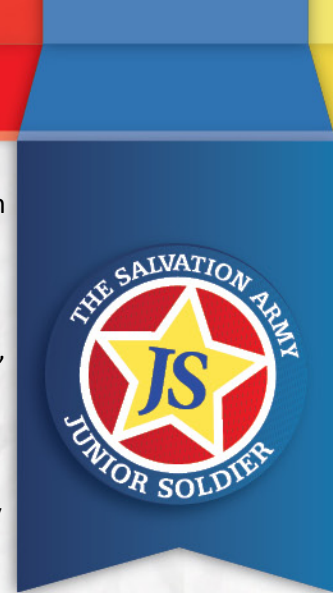
Ask the congregation to share ways that they can encourage each other. (Send a card, letter or email – with a verse of scripture or words of encouragement.) Write them up on a whiteboard, butchers paper or multimedia screen.

'Let's take some time to investigate the relationship between the Junior Soldier and their Big Bud. In the Bible there were many partnerships who encouraged each other in their Christian faith. Look at Paul and Timothy. Paul spent a lot of time teaching, training and encouraging Timothy in his faith. Paul was the Big Bud to Timothy. Look at Jonathon and David, they had a unique friendship and stuck by each other.

'Ruth and Naomi were a lovely example of encouragement. They both formed a true friendship and encouraged each other on many occasions. When Naomi's husband and sons died and she wanted her daughter in law Ruth to go back to her own family, Ruth refused to go. Ruth travelled back to Bethlehem with Naomi and didn't complain at all. She was a good encourager and friend to Naomi.'

'Jesus and Peter - Peter along with James and John spent extra time with Jesus. Jesus encouraged Peter to become the 'rock' and Fisher of Men that he is referred to in the Bible. There are many examples in the bible about people encouraging each other in their faith. All of these duos encouraged each other at different times of their lives. It is just not the Big Bud that needs to encourage their Junior Soldier it is also up the Junior Soldier also. It doesn't matter how old you may be you still need that encouragement in your walk with Jesus.'

'Remember what it says in Romans 1:12, 'When we get together, I want to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours.'



Renewal Segment

What you will need:

- Small pieces of white cardboard
- Renewal Day item (highlighter hand)
- Renewal Day cards for both the Junior Soldier and the Big Bud.
- Pens
- Enough room in the hall

It would be good to have the Junior Soldier promise words on a PowerPoint slide. Have one or all of the Junior Soldiers read/say the promise together before signing their renewal cards.

Invite the Junior Soldier and the Big Bud to come up and sign their cards together.

When this is finished state:

'Today we have explored the theme encouraging one another. One of the ways we can receive encouragement is to share scripture with each other and to help remember these verse, it is a great idea to highlight them in your bible.'

As a reminder today each child today is going to receive a gift that is a highlighter in the shape of a hand. On the hand is printed the scripture verse for today, Romans 1:12, 'When we get together, I want to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours.'

The hand also has 5 fingers in 5 different colours. This highlighter can be used to highlight verses of scripture in your Bible. The highlighter is also shaped in a hand because as you and your Big Bud walk through your faith together you will hold each other's hand to support each other.'

Give each child a hand highlighter. Allow time for the Big Bud and the Junior Soldier to show each other verses in their bibles that mean something to them and they have highlighted. They may wish to use their highlighter now to highlight each other's verse in their bibles or they could write the scripture verse on the piece of white card and do it later.

Give some time for the Junior Soldier and Big Bud to pray together.

Finish this segment off by encouraging the children to use their highlighter to highlight, circle or underline verses in their bible that are important to remember and will encourage them. They may even want to ask other people in the church or their family for their special verse and then highlight it in their (the Junior Soldiers) bible along with the person's name so that the Junior Soldier can look at the verse and know that it means something special to someone else.

Pray, as a congregation, for the Junior Soldiers and Big Buds will remember to encourage each other and that we can receive a lot of encouragement from reading the Bible.

Sending out/ Benediction

Romans 15:5-6 New Living Translation (NLT)

⁵ May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ Jesus. ⁶ Then all of you can join together with one voice, giving praise and glory to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

OR



The Message

May our dependably steady and warmly personal God develop maturity in you so that you get along with each other as well as Jesus gets along with us all. Then we'll be a choir—not our voices only, but our very lives singing in harmony in a stunning anthem to the God and Father of our Master Jesus!

Finish the service by playing the song, 'You've got a friend in me'

Home & Beyond

Supporting and growing our Junior Soldiers beyond the church environment is really important. This section helps to provide some activities that will help to continue the conversation about temptation and the tools that are available to each of us when we find ourselves in these situations. Please encourage your children and families to participate in one of the activities below and continue the discipling process.

Encouragement Scriptures

- As a family look up the following scriptures. Using your new hand highlighter, highlight the verses in your Bibles. There are five verses so you may wish to highlight them in the five different colors. You could encourage your family to do the same.

Hebrews 10: 24-25

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Proverbs 16:24

Romans 15:4

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

- Arrange with your Big Bud to send a weekly text message or email to each other with a scripture verse to encourage each other or a prayer request.
- You may like to write a card to another person from your Corps (church) and encourage them. Thank them for the work that they may do in the Corps or for being a great influence on other people in the Corps.



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