



## Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2021

Sunday worship on is on  **YouTube**

The easiest way to find the link to the YouTube meeting each Sunday is to find the link on the Corps web page. Type.....

[www.salvationarmy.org.uk/ramsgate](http://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/ramsgate) and select **Church on YouTube**

You can also find us by searching on YouTube and on the Ramsgate Facebook page.

**But we want to still “meet together”** and share our thoughts and prayers and testimonies. It will give a chance to share how God has spoken to us during the meeting – and allow us to encourage each other.

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/8651865167>

**Ramsgate ZOOM 8651865167**

And you can **ring into Zoom by phone!** If you ring 02034815240, followed by 8651865167# then you will hear the meeting! Calls charged at the normal UK rate.

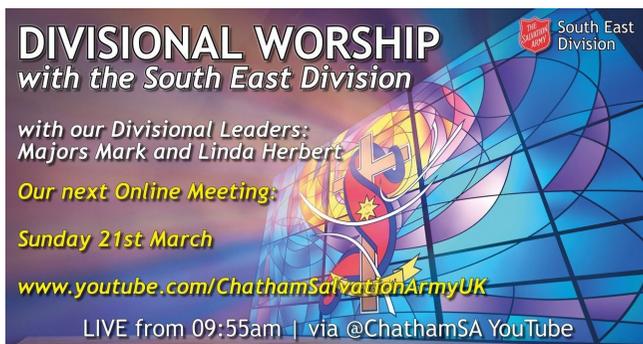
If you have no internet we are providing each week’s service on a DVD which we will deliver to you. Please let us know if you **do not want** a DVD each week. Also tell us if you **need help** watching the DVDs we are sending



# What's happening next week at Ramsgate Salvation Army?

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> 9.55 am

Divisional Worship at Home on YouTube



The link to the divisional service will be in the normal place on the Ramsgate Salvation Army web page

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> 11.15 am

ZOOM fellowship

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> 12 noon

ZOOM Youth Group

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> 4.30 pm

ZOOM Children's Church Kids Club  
(up to 11 years)

Monday to Friday (6.30am-9am)

Breakfast Drop-in (street homeless only)

Tuesday to Thursday. Heather is on a three-day training course.

Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> (10am - 12 noon)

Food Bank

Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> 7pm

ZOOM Bible Study

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> 7.30 pm

ZOOM Fellowship

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> (10am - 12 noon)

Food Bank

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March

ZOOM Worship at home - PALM SUNDAY



There is a full day of activities on Fortress Radio.

<https://www.fortressradio.online/listen-now.html>

And don't forget Songs of Praise Sundays at 13.15pm



**Maggie** is available with the constant prayer line where you can call or text for prayer. You can contact her on 07840 753 603

Daily Hope offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line.



## **One Year On**

One year ago, this weekend, we stopped meeting together on a Sunday. Rather like most broadcasters, we are going to share what we wrote last year in our first church at home newsletter – it was mothering Sunday and we included some songs and prayers that we might follow through together. There was no ZOOM, no YouTube or DVDs or activity packs for the children. I really don't think we had any idea just how long it was going to last.

I wrote.....

*This is the first weekend - possibly since the start of the Salvation Army - when we are unable to meet together and worship as one family. So, each week we will provide ways for us to be "Church at Home" and share together. This week it will be this newsletter. But we hope in the weeks to come to use other means and will help you with new technology to join in.*

*Hopefully by now you have had either a text or call from us to explain what Salvation Army Head Quarters have asked us to do.*

*Simply, we have stopped Sunday Worship and other activities where large numbers of people will be together in the hall. Of course, since this decision was made the government have also made schools, restaurants, cinemas, pubs and clubs close.*

*So, the Church has to be in line with what everyone else is doing.*

*A prayer.*

*Living God,*

*In our hour of need we turn again to you, for we have nowhere else to turn.*

*We put our faith in you,*

*because you have proved your faithfulness time and again.*

*We thank you that you are not distant from us.*

*but have drawn near, in your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.*

*He understands our worries and our fears. Help us to respond as your children now.*

*We pray for this pandemic spreading across our world, remembering all who have lost loved ones and praying for those seriously ill at this time.*

### **Birthdays**

Kay Tocci      Sunday 21-March

Brian Lamb      Saturday 27-March

### **Prayers please for**

Continued prayers for the family and friends of **Captain John Garbutt** who was promoted to Glory last Saturday (13<sup>th</sup> March). His funeral will be Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> April at 1pm. I will share more details later.

For **Sheila Wilcox** who had a fall this week and continued prayers for **Jean Mayton** in a nursing home in Westgate-on-sea. Prayers too for **Joyce Hill** who whilst making some progress is still short of breath. She waits for test results.

For **Melvin Harris** still in Canterbury Hospital.

For **Ann** and Fred – neighbours of Jason. Anne has returned from hospital and is awaiting test results. We pray for good news and God's peace for them both.

We continue to pray for **Grant** and **Al** and **David** and **John** McCairn all waiting for medical treatment. For Tracy's dad **Ivan**. Continued prayers for **Paul**, son of Hazel, who has one more treatment session and for **Archie**, Lisa and Scott.

**Chris**, a friend of Gay, who is unwell at this time. For the peace and healing that only God can give.



Some good news for those in the shelter. Thanet Council have secured funding to extend until end June. The winter provision will end as planned 31<sup>st</sup> March,

however there will be support within the shelter for a further 12 weeks. We thank God for this – and for the opportunities to provide the educational and nurturing support we had planned to start in November. Tracy has completed the second of a 12-week trauma awareness course with some of the guests. Pray that more will join and it will lead to a greater understanding of some of the factors leading to homelessness and other challenges in life.



I have never considered placing endorsements in the newsletter but want you to consider using Andrew if you need a taxi. Andrew has been providing support for the Food Bank, the Winter Shelter and some Corps work. He is a great Christian man, a member of St Luke's and I have no hesitation in recommending him to you.

You may have seen his recognisable white Electric "London" Cab around the area. Once you meet him you will never want to use any one else again!!

#### Andrews Taxi Service

Licensed Hackney Carriage based in Thanet, providing a professional, safe and courteous service. I cater for local and long distance journeys.

Call or text **07 563 563 563** or visit my website at [www.taxi563.com](http://www.taxi563.com).



If you need any help with completing the Census (for Sunday 21<sup>st</sup>) Please call Carl on 07900497326



# Holy Week

We start on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March celebrating **Palm Sunday** on YouTube and ZOOM.

We continue **each evening** of the week (Monday to Thursday) with a short ZOOM reflection each evening at 7pm

On **Thursday** we will consider that last Passover meal also at 7pm by ZOOM

On **Good Friday** we will have a YouTube service at 10.30 am and will open the hall for worship at 10.15. We will then share with a ZOOM meditation at 11.15am.



We will need to space the seats to provide the recommended 2M distance. We will have to wear masks and are not permitted to sing. But if you would value being able to worship over the Easter weekend in the hall then this will be possible. Please feel under no pressure to come to the hall. We will ensure that you can join in Easter worship **from home** if you feel this is the sensible and safe thing to do.

**Easter Sunday** there will have a YouTube service at 10.00 am and will open the hall for worship at 09.45

We will then share with a ZOOM meditation at 11.15am.

## Thoughts from Major John.

### Friendship with Jesus

I was listening to a Christian broadcast recently on the topic of friendship. The speaker made the statement that true friendship is becoming a rarity, another perhaps obvious observation was that friendship takes time. People are rushing all the time, but friendship takes time.

Aristotle said, 'Wishing to be friends is quick work, but friendship is a slow ripening fruit.'

Friendship with Jesus takes time. My mind turned to some of the lovely songs in our song book which speak about friendship with Jesus. Perhaps the most well known is 'What a friend we have in Jesus' (795 SASB). Friendship is a two way relationship and we need to invest time to it if it is to deepen and grow. A song which is not in our present song book (345 SASB 1986) expresses so well this friendship...

I've found a friend, O such a friend!  
He loved me ere I knew him;  
He drew me with the cords of love,  
And thus he bound me to him.  
And round my heart still closely twine  
Those ties which naught can sever;  
For I am his, and he is mine,  
For ever and for ever.

### Time to Smile

A mother said to her little boy pestering her for a baby sister or brother; 'Maybe someday, but we can't afford one yet'.

One day the boy comes rushing home from school to say, 'Mum, hurry up and get your coat on. They are having a sale at our church, it says on the notice board 'Children Free'.

A small boy, seeing a funeral procession going up the street, asked his mother what it was. She told him: 'It's someone who has died on their way to heaven'. A little later he saw a similar procession coming in the opposite direction down the street. He said: 'Hard luck on that one, Mum!'

A Sunday schoolteacher was exploring her children's understanding of God.

She asked, Alfie, who is God?

Alfie furrowed his brows and thought for a moment or two about the question. Suddenly his face lit up, and with a smile said: 'I think God is the man who saved the Queen!'

### Quiz

1. Where would you go to visit the Sea of Tranquillity?
2. Cape Horn is the southern tip of which continent?
3. Who wrote the children's story 'Matilda'?
4. Which 1990's tennis champion was named after tennis great Martina Navratilova?
5. Which group of people first developed central heating?

### Food

1. Which vegetable shares its name with a fruit drink?
2. Which village in Leicestershire gives its name to a classic British blue cheese?
3. What is the most common colour of an aubergine skin?
4. Mangetout and sugar snaps are types of what?
5. Ciabatta bread originated in which country?

<b>Quiz</b> 1. Moon 2. America 3. Roald Dahl 4. Martina Hingis 5. The Romans <b>Food</b> 1. Squash 2. Stilton 3. Purple 4. Peas 5. Italy
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**RAMSGATE TRAM PLUNGES OVER THE CLIFF. (From the archive of David Richards)**

In an extraordinary and chilling accident on the Madeira Walk a tram carrying five passengers and a conductor left the rails, crashed through a fence and plunged onto unoccupied land at the rear of the Queen's Head public house. The driver, Mr. L W Lloyd, was hurled onto the roof of a disused building. He sustained severe injuries but the passengers and conductor escaped with little more than bruises and shock.





He took my sins and sorrows,  
He made them his very own;  
He bore my burden to Calvary  
And suffered and died alone.

When with the ransomed in Glory  
His face I at last shall see,  
'Twill be my joy through the ages  
To sing of his love for me.

## **Prayer**

Jesus, your love for us is amazing. Your sacrificial love is beyond our comprehension and for this we say, 'thank you'. You love us as we are, but you call us to be more than we are, drawing us deeper into your love day by day, and for this we say, 'thank you'. You loved us so much that you did not abandon us when you left this earth. You promised us the constant companionship of the Holy Spirit and for his daily work of strengthening and sustaining us we say, 'thank you'. Today, in our worship may we hear your voice with clarity calling us into the new thing you want to do, both in us and through us. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

It's a full calendar year now since we first went into lockdown. The pandemic has stopped us from meeting together physically – we miss it greatly, but the pandemic hasn't had the power to holt our church life or our ministry to our communities. It's made us think differently – searching for new ways – looking for new opportunities – and the resourcefulness of our corps throughout this division is something we celebrate today.

But before all of this, conversations had already started around the division about new ministry opportunities and people had already stepped into some of those Spirit led callings.

Three Roma Salvation Army Fellowships, in Chatham, Gravesend and Margate started a few years ago. They now are now fully-fledged corps with Pioneer Leaders. In Dover the process has started again and a just a few Sundays ago 32 Adherents were made and 2 Junior Soldiers. God is doing amazing new things. Today we want to share with you just a snap shot of two other new ministries that are emerging around the division and to do this we have invited Major Sarah Butler who with her husband Matt are the corps officers at Bognor Regis Corps. Sarah also looks after the Fresh Expressions across the division. So, let's hear from her just now.

## Fresh Expressions

Major Sarah Butler

Hi, my name is Sarah Butler, and I am the Divisional Mission Enabler for Fresh Expressions alongside my main role as Corps Officer in Bognor Regis with my husband, Matt. I have two teenage children, Sam and Elise and have been an officer since 2004. In that time, I have served as Divisional Youth Officer whilst planting a new expression of Salvation Army in Barry in Wales and then helped to develop a new Salvation Army in Carmarthen in West Wales. After that, we were moved to Glasgow to restart the work in Glasgow City Centre which also involved a brand-new building project. And then I was moved back to my home division here in the South East, I'm originally from Tunbridge Wells and Chatham. In my ministry I have seen many wonders of what God is doing and it's been my passion to get involved with whatever God is up to in our communities, either with school's work, or working with local councils to support homelessness and developing family support work. Through this, I have been able to introduce people to Jesus and see the amazing transformation He can bring. My hope for our division is that we reach out and spread out to new areas of ministry, in new places, in new ways and that everyone can feel they can be missionaries for Jesus wherever they find themselves every day.

I'm excited to introduce you to Major Lynne Clifton and some of her team from Sheerness, Hannah and Olive and let you hear a little bit about what God is doing through them in Sheerness.

Hannah: Hi everyone, from Sheerness Salvation Army! I'm really excited to be sharing with you today. I'm introducing two members of our team, Olive and Lynne, my Mum, and I'm gonna give them some quickfire questions about our Fresh Expression, just to give you a bit of an insight into what it's all about. So, Mum, first of all, would you be able to tell us a bit about how you came to be serving in this fresh expression?

Lynne: For me, it was a really clear sense of God calling me to the Isle of Sheppey and a sense of being drawn to come and minister, and I wasn't sure what that was all about, first of all. So, it was when I was in Maidstone and just on my days off used to go across to the island, go prayer walking and just sensed God speaking to me. I spoke to our Divisional Headquarters Team about that, and they sent a team of prayer warriors over to come prayer walking with me as well. We listened together and really sensed that God had new things that he wanted to do on the Isle of Sheppey, which we got very excited about, and still are! So

that was kind of how the Fresh Expression was launched: off the back of those prayer meetings.

Hannah: Yeah. Brilliant. Olive, would you be able to answer the same question, please?

Olive: Yes, certainly. I was really, really thrilled to bits when I was invited to be part of the team for Sheerness Fresh Expression. As most people know, I'd been the YPSM at Sheerness for many years, and was so sad when the corps closed. But I was delighted when the Divisional Commander invited me to come to be part of the Fresh Expression Team. I found in that first year it was lovely to introduce Lynne to people and to particularly get involved with the schools, and we have a lovely relationship with the academy, and we have been working in community lunches with them, but the biggest excitement is working with youth and the wonderful time we had when we had Guvna B, the rap artist who came, and I was able to have a team of people in the prayer room praying and supporting that time that was going on at the school with the children. My passion is for prayer, and so I'm always delighted when most days, Lynne will ring me up and say, "Olive, I've got a name for you. Olive, we need this one to be prayed for", and it's really my joy to support Lynne in her enthusiasm, added to my enthusiasm. To pray, work together as a team.

Hannah: Yeah, that's wonderful. Mum, would you be able to give a bit of an insight into your vision for the next steps for Sheerness Salvation Army?

Lynne: Yeah, well next steps really follow on from the previous steps. We continue, as Olive said, trying to seek God's will for the Isle of Sheppey, just sensing what he's leading us into. We've got a few exciting projects on the go at the moment. One is a community supermarket on a double decker bus which we're working with on the island with some other organisations. We're hoping to get that on the road by September, which would be really exciting as a follow on from the food bank ministry we've had during lockdown where we've been able to come alongside people in need, pray with them, talk with them, give them bibles, all sorts of amazing opportunities God's opened up there, so we feel this is a really exciting next step. The top deck will be kitted out like a cafe so that we can chat with people, and there will be all sorts of new opportunities. there, on the move around the island. That's one. We're also hoping to really develop the street based youthwork idea of things, as lockdown restrictions ease. We're so excited. We've got a new team member joining us very soon, a man called Charlie, who has come to us through the government's Kickstart scheme for

employment, and we're really excited that he's gonna be on our team and looking forward to getting going in new areas of ministry like that. But watch this space for all that God's gonna do on the island!

Hannah: Yeah, that's wonderful. If anyone who's watching would like to get involved in praying for this Fresh Expression, we have a monthly email newsletter with prayer requests, updates on what's going on and other bits of news that you're very welcome to be part of, so email [sheerness@salvationarmy.org.uk](mailto:sheerness@salvationarmy.org.uk) if you'd like to receive that monthly newsletter. You can also follow us on our social medias @sheernesssa. So yeah, any questions you have we're happy to answer. So thanks for listening to us today, and we hope you have a really lovely rest of your day.

Sarah: And now I am going to introduce you to Jon and Beth Munn who run the Fresh Expression in Faversham.

Beth - Hi, I'm Beth and I'm here with my husband Jon and we are just going to share with you a little bit about our ministry. We Pioneer 'Faversham Salvation Army' Fresh Expression or Pioneer Plant – it has many different names. We are married and we are a team. Our team is very small, but we just thought it would be funny to share with you how we do life at the moment it's on zoom (like everyone else!)

We have a ministry and a passion for the people of Faversham. God spoke to us very clearly that that's where we were meant to be. After many prayer-walks and wise counsel with friends and family and people who we consider to be pillars in our lives we felt that and discerned that this was what God was calling us to do - to be in this place and to pioneer a new ministry.

So, it's different it's not your typical church; there's no building we work out of many different spaces but that was God's clear vision for Faversham and while it's been a little bit on hold [we trust] God has a clear vision for where he wants us to go in Faversham.

Jon - I think one of the things for us was talking about vision and something that propels us is digital media [ministry] even before the pandemic we saw a big need for taking the church and taking the gospel online and so big thing for us was always about creating an online church presence. We've done this through focusing on our podcast called 'At the Table' so go listen to that it's

on Spotify and Apple Podcasts. [Our digital ministry] Is just about creating a space where people will receive the gospel online.

Beth - Our vision is continuing to grow, and we have many different aspects that we do. Jon shared a little bit about our online ministry, but we also have community development ministry. I run a project called 'Community Wardrobe' which is a sustainable and financial resource for at the moment, school uniform but we've also moved into winter-wear and we're hoping to develop into other aspects of supporting the community, with sustainable means of providing clothes and other items that they may be in need of.

[we also believe] God's vision for us at Faversham is to develop and grow online ministry. We have been praying into finding a space to be able to do that - so your prayers for that would be incredible. We want to build a space that we and other churches and you-guys (reading/listening) can come and work on digital ministry.

We also have really big plans for 'Community Wardrobe' [we want] to take that on-the-road essentially and just continue that what God has set his heart on us for Faversham it's people. When the pandemic restrictions lift, we're hoping to go back to being on our market stall; with the sofa and some food and drink and just connect with the people- no matter the weather; windy, rainy but connecting with the people where they are. And this is in the town, in the market stall being where the people need to hear the Word of God and the love of God and receive that. And that's really God's vision [for Faversham] to be in the market stall, connecting with the people online and finally supporting our community with projects like 'Community Wardrobe'

Jon- So come along follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and/or YouTube. Come along for the journey. Thanks for listening thank you and if you ever want to hear more, we are always available to talk - we condensed that really quickly, but we'd love to share our story with you more if you would like to hear it. God Bless and thank-you so much for listening.

## **News about Ebbsfleet**

There are so many things for us to be excited about in this division. God is at work in corps that have been established for many years. He is as work in the new areas that we have just heard about, and over the past 18 months we as a

Division have been thinking about and praying about whether God is leading us to the new town of Ebbsfleet.

We have had discussions in different forums where we have shared prayer about this, we have prayer walked the area Ebbsfleet and this morning we want to broaden the knowledge of this wider throughout the division. For a moment or two now we invite you to sit back and watch the video about the area and pray and we give an open invitation to you to share with us anything that you feel God might be saying to you about this possible venture.

Song                      Hear the call of the Kingdom

Hear the call of the Kingdom,  
Lift your eyes to the King.  
Let His song rise within you  
As a fragrant offering,  
Of how God rich in mercy  
Came in Christ to redeem.  
All who trust in his unfailing grace.

Hear the call of the Kingdom  
To be children of light.  
With the mercy of heaven,  
The humility of Christ.  
Walking justly before Him  
Loving all that is right.  
That the life of Christ may shine through us.

King of Heaven we will answer the call.  
We will follow, bringing hope to the world.  
Filled with passion, filled with power to proclaim  
Salvation in Jesus' name.

**News Feature**

**The Divisional Food Hub**

**Major Chris Sands**

We look forward to hearing from any of you who may have felt God speaking to you about Ebbsfleet, feel free to email us or pick up the phone to chat. The ways to contact us will be found on the screen at the end of our time together. But now we move to reflect on this past year. Since early last summer, some of us from the division have been involved in the receiving and distributing of food

from the Divisional Food Hub. The project was set up by THQ in conjunction with Morrisons and between May and December, initially our Foodhub was based at Tunbridge Wells corps for receiving this, but since Christmas we moved to Gravesend corps.

In the early months, on a weekly basis, corps were able to place an order from a shopping list of 12 items over time this was then expanded to 20 items.

On a Friday, a lorry from Morrisons would arrive in the car park at the hall and once unloaded into the hall, the team would set about putting together the orders from each corps. Tins of baked beans, potatoes, vegetables and soup. Packets of rice and pasta, cartons of orange juice, milk and boxes of cereal, along with the notorious tins of corned beef, were carefully counted out and loaded back onto trolleys. Some corps came to collect, others were loaded on to the Divisional Van which I then had the joy of delivering to corps.

The Foodhub was set up with the sole purpose of serving the local corps, making life easier for them to meet the demand of requests for food parcels and at a time when it was difficult to find some food items in supply.

As time has gone on, some corps foodbanks have closed after the initial high demand for the provision of food has decreased. Some corps now have been able to work in conjunction with shops directly or have partnered with other groups. For others, food is still in high demand and new ways of working will need to be established but over this next week the work of the Divisional Foodhub will close.

Today we would like to thank all those at corps level who have worked to provide relief for those who have needed it. We would also like to say a big thank you to all those who have helped in anyway with the work of the Divisional FoodHub. It really has been a great example of team work.

To conclude, I would like to remind you of the words of Jesus in Matthew Chapter 25. Jesus said, that those who 'feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, care for the sick and visit those in prison would be seated with him in glory'. He went on to say that 'whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine you did for me'.

Jesus emphasized the importance of this caring ministry and underlined that it doesn't go unnoticed. From DHQ we say thank you to each and every one of you who has been involved in this work. What you have done is appreciated.

Here's our next song, 'Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord' and then Stephen Windsor our Regional Accountant and Corps Treasurer from Deal Corps will read to us from Scripture.

Song

Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord

Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord  
We will wait upon the Lord, we will wait upon the Lord  
Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord  
We will wait upon the Lord, we will wait upon the Lord  
Our God, you reign forever  
Our hope, our Strong Deliverer  
You are the everlasting God  
The everlasting God  
You do not faint  
You won't grow weary  
Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord  
We will wait upon the Lord, we will wait upon the Lord  
Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord  
We will wait upon the Lord, we will wait upon the Lord  
Our God, you reign forever  
Our hope, our Strong Deliverer  
You are the everlasting God  
The everlasting God  
You do not faint  
You won't grow weary  
You're the defender of the weak  
You comfort those in need  
You lift us up on wings like eagles

The Bible Reading

Matthew 9: 35 - 38

CT Stephen Windsor

The Message

Major Mark Herbert

Good morning. It's great to be on your screen again today. If this is the first time you have connected with us, you've couldn't have chosen a better day to join us. I am excited by today's message and believe that you will be too.

In this series of Divisional worship gatherings, we are looking at four verses of scripture, that if acted upon will change your life, and that of your Corps and community:

Stephen Windsor read the verses a few moments ago. Stephen is the Corps Treasurer at Deal, but he also works for The Salvation Army as our Regional

Accountant. I am deeply grateful for his financial guidance into the Division but even more so because his advice comes with an understanding of the Mission. I'm disappointed Stephen that you didn't wear one of your bright ties, but I guess as a Liverpool supporter you are currently in mourning.

Here are those Bible verses again:

35 Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and illness. 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37 Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. 38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.'

These meetings planned under the heading of 'Sow What?'

We will reap what we sow but we also know that whatever we sow takes time to be ready for harvesting. In addition, we need to remind ourselves we have a generational God – 'I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and all who followed'. In the same way, in our Salvation Army context – 'Great the heritage they left us'. 'Sow what?' asks the question, 'What will our legacy be?' To babies born in our Corps, to children who find Christ in our Corps. For people of all ages, 'Sow What?'

Last time I introduced you to a new word, it is not a rude word, but it is a made up one – APEST. We have a God who sends us into the world, and we go as Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Shepherd and Teacher. If you move the letters around you get the word 'PASTE'. APEST is the paste, the glue that holds our ministry and service together.

A – Apostle (Let's do this)

P – Prophet (Don't forget this)

E – Evangelist (Can I tell you this?)

S – Shepherd (Are you OK with this?)

T – Teacher (This is what this means)

This morning for a few moments, the question is, 'What is your harvest field? Where is the Lord of the Harvest sending you to connect and serve? Do you see the question asked in a different way in verse 38?

Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.'

It is getting near that time. The time we have been trying not to think about. It's the time that many of us can't avoid. Here's the question that describes that time: 'After 12 months, will my uniform still fit me?' The one reason I am not moving about is that I have had to cut my jack right down the back and stick it together with gaffer tape to give me more room.

Will your uniform fit? More importantly, the question needs to be asked of our Corps ministries – in a different world, will our programmes still be relevant? Will they be fit for purpose? The mission hasn't changed, but maybe the model has.

In 1996 the Government of Honduras built a bridge across a river to connect with a new bypass. In a country known for hurricanes it was constructed to withstand everything nature could throw at it. And it did. It survived a massive hurricane. This bridge was the only thing that survived.

Slide with photo of bridge:

However, one thing that did happen was that the river changed course. It no longer flowed beneath the bridge. The lesson speaks for itself. The bridge became a bridge to nowhere.

This is a once in a generation opportunity for us to think again, to pray again, to ask the Lord of the harvest again, what the harvest field is? For us to reach the people that no one else is reaching, we have to do the things that no one else is doing.

The harvest is a sign of new life.

We've spoken about Fresh Expressions a little this morning. Get used to hearing this phrase. It describes new ways of reaching out into your community. A couple of weeks ago, 53 people from across the Division connected into a Divisional conversation about this. Please contact Major Sarah Butler, the CO at Bognor, but she is also help us with Fresh Expressions. She will be delighted to listen to your visions and dreams. There is an awakening about what God might be stirring in the South East:

We've heard about some of what is happening already but there are many more examples: Sparkles – the Toddler Church at Tunbridge Wells; The new work at Dover; Church on the Run at Folkestone and something similar at Worthing; A Lego club; Ebbsfleet is on our hearts and minds. We are wanted there and

seeking to make that happen. An arts centre in Faversham including recording studios, would be amazing and realise a dream; Do you see the vision of the double decker bus that literally is Church on the move, spoken about by Hannah, Lynne and Olive? It could be a mixture of 'On the buses' and 'Summer Holiday,' or am I just showing my age?

At our Mission Board this week, Major Linda Perkin, our full time chaplain at Gatwick airport, spoke about the range of chaplaincy opportunities there are across the South East. If God has been poking you about this kind of ministry, make contact with her – she will be pleased to hear from you.

What does the harvest field look like for you and your Corps?

It's time to ask the Lord of the harvest where the harvest field is. If we want to reach the people that no one else is reaching, then we have to do the things that no one else is doing.

I want to remind you that nothing done in the name of Christ is insignificant. One life obedient to God's call has amazing implications. Don't be limited by those people around you. You are building for eternity. God has picked you out, his eye been upon you, shaping you, forming you, bringing you to this place, so you can be used by him. What you are going through now is God preparing you for the next chapter of your life. Be who you are. You can do nothing about your gender or age or experience. Use them for God's glory. Don't make excuses. Serve with what you have, nothing is insignificant if it is done for the significance of God. Never underestimate the difference small acts of service can make in the hands of the Lord of the Harvest.

In a context in which we have spent so much time managing risk, and we're all fed up with wearing face masks, keeping a social distance, queuing to get into shops and having to wash our hands after going to the toilet, to talk about taking risks be may an even bigger challenge.

The anxiety about something going wrong does creep in. What we have been through does put us in preventative mode. But it is now time to take some risks – to think about what God is stirring you to do. We can't fail. The only failure is to do nothing. It is too risky to take the risk to believe that doing the things that didn't work before will somehow work now.

A Corps which pitches its tent without constantly looking out for new horizons, which does not continually strike camp is being untrue to its calling. We must play down our longing for certainty, accept what is risky and try something new.

Fear comes into it. What are you afraid of? For me it is snakes. There are over 2,000 specifically recorded fears.

But, if you waited to do something until you were no longer afraid, you wouldn't get much done. –You would still be wearing armbands in swimming pool; You would still have stabilisers on bike; You would still be standing at the altar.....wondering whether this was a good idea to get married or not! Fear is never a good reason to not follow God.

We must not make decisions based on fear.

If what you see is all there is to see you will never see all that there is to see.

Perhaps for you it is not fear but the loud voice in your ear which may be that of the critic. The Holy Spirit is stirring something within you, and you start speaking to others about it and they don't listen, or they tell you we don't do that sort of thing, or we've tried it before.

Don't allow those voices to stop you; don't allow them to undermine your vision, or your value or your calling or your confidence – I urge you to put more faith in what the Lord of the Harvest is saying to you than the critic.

Don't let them intimidate you, or shame you, or dismiss you or minimise you or define you. The Lord of the harvest is the one who is sending you.

I love how Ernest Hemmingway describes the critic. He said the critic is the person who watches the battle from a high place then comes down and shoots the survivors.

It's time to thrive again.

I'm not insensitive to the reality that as I gave some of the many examples from the Division about Fresh expressions, of the way Corps are effectively reaching into their communities, you may be saying, 'It's not happening where we are'.

It is easy to compare your Corps with others where things are going well. Comparison is a joy killer; it will rob you of your hope and you will lose heart. The harvest is seasonal, it is not all year round. If as a Corps you are in the winter, when everything feels cold and hard, hang in there. Wait and serve and worship and wait and serve and worship and 'Ask the Lord of the harvest'. In other words – Pray.

We should have great expectations for what is to come because we have a great God and our faith and hope is anchored in his character. One of the great promises of God is that he is with us. He is more than just with us, he is waiting for us. He is in the harvest field. Waiting. He is in your life, in the life of your Corps and community. Waiting. Waiting for you to ask

Ask: Pray to the God of the harvest. Prayer reminds us that we are not in control and keeps us close to the one who is. We pray boldly, about the things we believe deeply.

So, what does all this mean? For you? For your Corps? Please don't hear this message as permission to do stupid things. Common sense is not a superpower. Nor is any of this difficult. It is more straightforward than following IKEA instructions.

As God begins to stir something within you, ask yourself these questions, then sign up for Forge our Fresh Expression Training programme and make contact with Sarah Butler:

- 1) Is it a prompting from God – Test it – find an Apostle to help you
- 2) Is it scriptural – God will not contradict his Word – find a teacher to guide you
- 3) Is it wise? If it is of God – it will not involve unwise actions – find a Prophet to speak into your life
- 4) Is it in tune with your own character? – Does it align with your gifts, skills, passions, experience? – find an evangelist who will help you tell your story
- 5) What do the people who you most trust say about it? - Find a shepherd to listen to you

The Lord of the harvest is with you, is for you, loves you is waiting for you. So, above everything else, trust in the Lord who longing for you to bring the harvest in.

And to God alone be the honour and the glory.

Song

I the Lord of sea and sky

I, The Lord of sea and sky,  
I have heard my people cry.  
All who dwell in dark and sin,  
My hand will save.  
I who made the stars of night,  
I will make their darkness bright.  
Who will bear my light to them?  
Whom shall I send?  
Here I am Lord, is it I, Lord?  
I have heard you calling in the night.  
I will go Lord, if you lead me.  
I will hold your people in my heart.  
I, the Lord of snow and rain,  
I have borne my people's pain.  
I have wept for love of them, they turn away.  
I will break their hearts of stone,  
Give them hearts for love alone.  
I will speak my word to them  
Whom shall I send?  
Here I am Lord, is it I, Lord?  
I have heard you calling in the night.  
I will go Lord, if you lead me.  
I will hold your people in my heart.  
I, the Lord of wind and flame  
I will tend the poor and lame.  
I will set a feast for them,  
My hand will save  
Finest bread I will provide,  
Till their hearts be satisfied.  
I will give my life to them,  
Whom shall I send?  
Here I am Lord, is it I, Lord?  
I have heard you calling in the night.  
I will go Lord, if you lead me.  
I will hold your people in my heart.

Song

Thine is the glory

Thine is the glory,  
Risen, conquering Son;  
Endless is the victory  
Thou o'er death has won.  
Angels in bright raiment  
Rolled the stone away,  
Kept the folded grave clothes  
Where thy body lay.

Thine is the glory,  
Risen, conquering Son;  
Endless is the victory  
Thou o'er death hast won.

Lo! Jesus meets thee,  
Risen from the tomb;  
Lovingly he greets thee,  
Scatters fear and gloom;  
Let his Church with gladness  
Hymns of triumph sing,  
For her Lord now liveth;  
Death has lost its sting.

No more we doubt thee,  
Glorious prince of life!  
Life is naught without thee;  
Aid us in our strife;  
Make us more than conquerors  
Through thy deathless love;  
Bring us safe through Jordan  
To thy home above.

The Lord Bless you And keep you  
The Lord make His face shine upon you  
And be gracious to you  
The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you  
And give you peace, Amen



## CANDIDATES DEPARTMENT

I want to share some details around the Candidates Unit Livestream of Exploring Leadership Day being held on Sunday 21 March and invite you to join us online for this day. The theme for the day is Be Willing.

We are excited to have Commissioners Bronwyn and Lyndon Buckingham with us from International Headquarters as our guest speakers. We're also blessed to have other guests joining with us for this special day. The day will be in two parts:

### MORNING WORSHIP at 10am

Commissioners Bronwyn and Lyndon will unpack the 'be willing' theme for us and will challenge us to consider our personal response to this call. We're looking forward to hearing and seeing others who will be participating in the morning worship including the Nexus Youth Choir (West Midlands Division), Adam and Karen Barber (Edinburgh Gorgie, East Scotland Division), Karl and Lauren Westwood (Bromley Temple, South London Division), the Transformers group from Anglia, Central East and Herts & Essex Divisions together with Elliott Chappell from Regent Hall (North London Division). We're thinking the meeting will last around 75/80 minutes.

### VOICES: questions and conversations at 2pm

Ann Howlett-Foster (Cambridge Citadel, Central East Division) and Major Steve Smith (Divisional Mission Enabler, Severn & Somerset) will be hosting a facilitated question and answer session in conversation with a diverse cross-section of spiritual leaders from various expressions of Salvation Army ministry. The Buckingham's will participate in this session together with a number of others serving in spiritual leadership within the territory. The VOICES conversation will last for no more than 90 minutes.

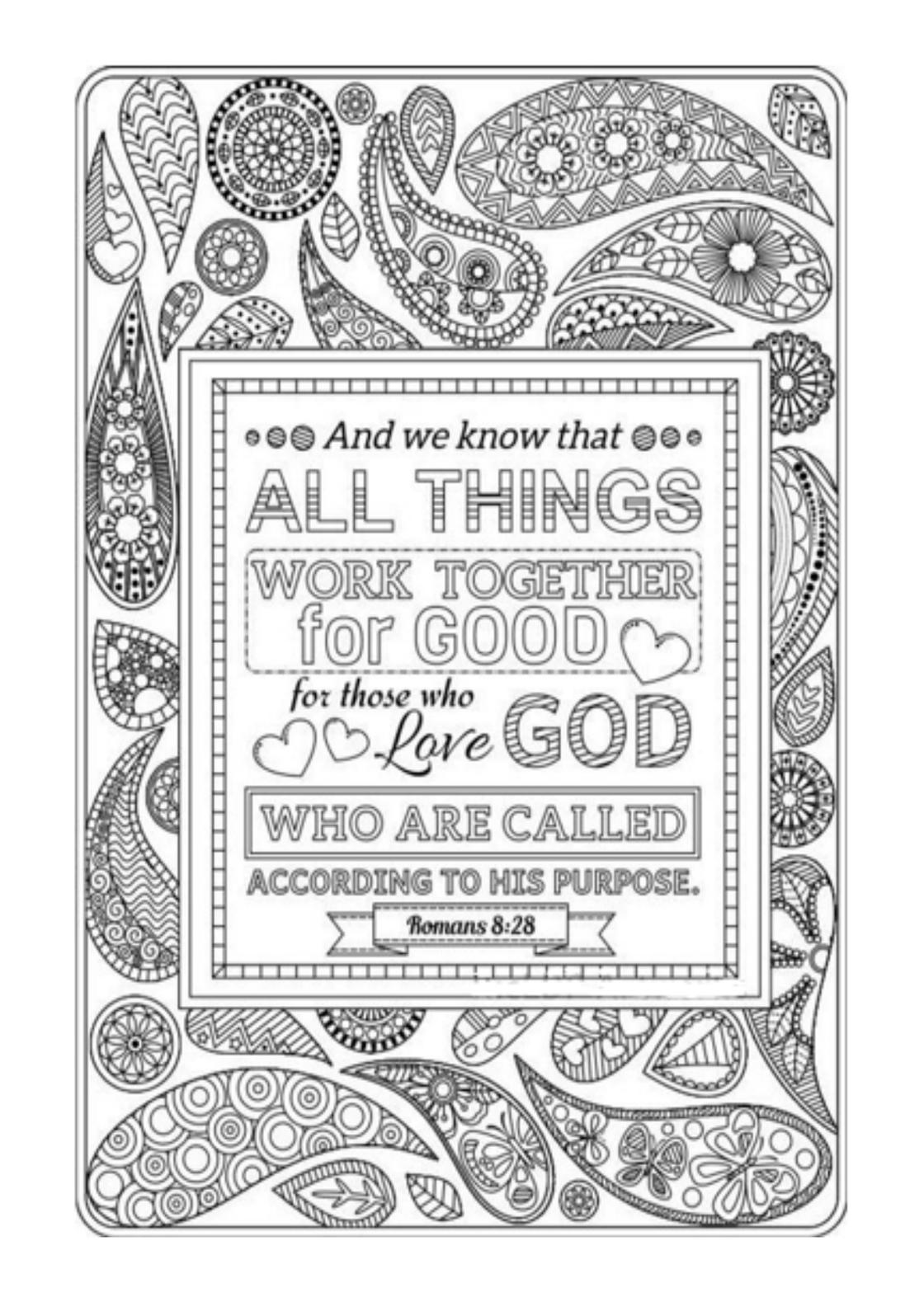
The Livestream itself can be accessed via the link below:

[www.youtube.com/williamboothcollege](http://www.youtube.com/williamboothcollege)



Here I am, **wholly available** –  
 as for me, I will **serve** the **Lord**.  
 The **fields** are **white** unto **harvest**  
 but oh, the **labourers** are so **few**;  
 so Lord I **give** myself to **help** the **reaping**,  
 to **gather precious souls** unto You.  
 The **time** is right in the **nation**  
 for works of **power** and **authority**;  
 God's looking for a **people** who are **willing**  
 to be counted in His **glorious victory**.  
 As **salt** are we ready to **savour**,  
 in **darkness** are we ready to be **light**;  
 God's seeking out a very **special** people  
 to **manifest** His **truth** and His **might**.  
*Chris Bowater (born 1947)*

AUTHORITY	NATION
AVAILABLE	PEOPLE
DARKNESS	POWER
FEW	PRECIOUS
FIELDS	REAPING
GATHER	SALT
GIVE	SAVOUR
GLORIOUS	SERVE
HARVEST	SOULS
HELP	SPECIAL
HERE I AM	TIME
LABOURERS	TRUTH
LIGHT	VICTORY
LORD	WHITE
MANIFEST	WHOLLY
MIGHT	WILLING



••• *And we know that* •••

ALL THINGS

WORK TOGETHER

for GOOD 

*for those who*

  *Love* GOD

WHO ARE CALLED

ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE.

*Romans 8:28*