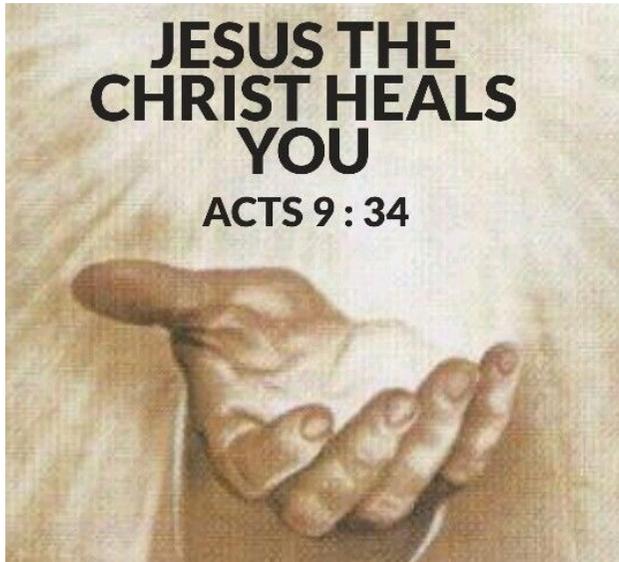




empowered

Life with the Holy Spirit

Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2021



**We meet at The Salvation Army Hall Sunday 10.00 am.**

**Also 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**

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

**Ramsgate ZOOM 8651865167**

**AND DVDs of the service** are available for those who would like them



## What's happening at Ramsgate Salvation Army?

Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup>	10.00 am	Prayer at the Hall (Join by <b>ZOOM</b> )
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup>	10.15 am	<b>WORSHIP at Salvation Army Hall</b>
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup>	11.30 am	ZOOM fellowship
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup>	12.00 noon	<b>NO</b> Sunday School
Sunday 4 <sup>th</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)
Monday 5 <sup>th</sup>		
		
		Little Fishes Toddler Group 9.30am – 11am
Tuesday 6 <sup>th</sup>	7.00pm	ZOOM Bible study Mercy Seat week 3
Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup>	2pm – 4pm	<b>“Summer in the Garden” (see page 6)</b>
Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup>		COVENANT DAY – pray for David & Maria
Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup>	7.00pm	<b>NO</b> ZOOM Quiz
Thursday	11am	Carl at Yoakley House
Friday 9 <sup>th</sup>	(10am - 12 noon)	War Cry Ministry Ramsgate
Friday 9 <sup>th</sup>	(10am - 12 noon)	Food Bank
Saturday		Wedding (friends from Armada Spacy)



There is a full day of activities on Fortress Radio. <https://www.fortressradio.online/listen-now.html>



And don't forget Songs of Praise Sunday 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.



## **Birthdays**

Jonah Barrett	04-July
Hayden Beerling	04-July
Maria Brown	05-July
Miroslav Drobul	07-July

## **Prayers please for**

For the friends and family of **Val** Rose, promoted to Glory on Wednesday. For **Josette** after her fall, for **Rita**, the sister of Anna who has cancer.

For **Gwen** Wren following her hospital treatment. Continued prayers for **Jean Mayton, Chris**, a friend of Gay, **Sam**, step mum to Hollie, **Grant** and **Al** and **David** and **John** McCairn all waiting for medical treatment. For **Archie**, Lisa and Scott. For **Paul** and **Sue Taylor**. For **Tara** and for **Angela** and **Jean S** who are all due tests and examinations and await results.

For all those suffering from **Long Covid** – which include some in our church family.

*Lord Jesus,*

*We begin this week so grateful for the amazing grace and love that you have displayed for us through your suffering and death on the cross and for your presence in our lives. The stories of Aeneas and of Dorcas remind us have power to heal and to save. You have control over the mysteries of life that we can not understand.*

*Help us have the bold faith of Peter that stated to Aeneas, “Jesus Christ heals you.” Help us expect the extraordinary through you. Would you work powerfully in and through us as you did in and through Peter? We know that we can trust you. As we trust and follow Your footsteps to share the gospel message, we pray that many would turn to You Lord. We want, so very much to see others coming to you. Help us to see ourselves in Your story of saving the world today. Many who we know need a touch from you. We lift their names to You now.*

*Teach us to pray, O Lord. At times, our prayers are just something we do as routine, or a quick ritual. Sometimes we pray as a multitask with other things. Like Peter who bent down on his knees to pray for Dorcas, help us to be*

*intentional in our prayers. When we pray, we remember that You are Lord and King, worthy of all reverence and honour and praise and thanksgiving.*

*As we bow our knees, may our spirits also humbly bow and be ready and receptive to your will. Forgive us for the times we have tried to do things in our own strength instead of trusting and following you. Make us one in our hearts with You, Lord, ready to be guided by your spirit and use us for your glory through Your name, Amen.*

The Bible commands us, “Keep on being filled with the Holy Spirit.” (Ephesians 5:18) We all need God to fill us afresh every day with His Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit, we welcome You.  
Unreservedly have Your way.  
Fall afresh on us. Amen

## **THANK YOU**

We know the last twelve months have been difficult for everyone, and we couldn't have got through it without each other. Whether it's the neighbours for checking we were okay, the delivery drivers who kept food on the shelves, the volunteers who helped get the vaccine out, or the kids for learning from home – and of course the amazing staff across our health services - we've all got somebody to say thank you to.



We are so excited to join in the national Thank You Day on Sunday 4th July this year, alongside some amazing individuals and organisations including the NHS, Royal Voluntary Service, Bear Grylls, the Archbishop of Canterbury.

We'll be saying a huge thank you to. There are some many people who deserve thanks this year, so let's make Sunday 4th July a day of thanksgiving.

For us as a corps we have so much to be grateful for and so many people to thank.

Here are just some of the things people have done to help others;

Thank you for Caring

Praying for each other

Sending gifts and flowers

Phoning each other

Shopping for others

Collecting medicines

Playing the piano over phone, Cleaning the toilets three times per day!

Taking out dogs, Making and sending cards, Writing Letters

Remembering birthdays and other special dates

Doing your best to keep connected with others, supplying jigsaw puzzles and taking these to others

Taking people shopping, Collecting donated clothes, textiles and other gifts

Taking people to medical appointments

Providing transport to other appointments, Door-step or garden visits



Visiting others when possible, Sorting clothing for our guests and recycling

Connecting through walks with others, Cleaning for others

Painting/decorating for others, Odd jobs

Remaining positive and encouraging

Patience, Giving Donations

Newsletter delivery (over 6500 packs posted – and many conversations



Fund raising, Children's packs, providing articles for the newsletter (especially the reflections, jokes and photographs) but also the other articles and history book items

Organising and running Zoom sessions for children and youth

Joining in zoom prayers, bible studies and supporting each other

Being part of the weekly quiz group, Helping others with technology

Communication online with each other, Finance Work (the books!)

Prayer support at the hall, ACES course at hall

Cleaning hall – following COVID procedures, Helping at breakfast

Working in the food bank, Delivering food parcels

Collecting food from supermarkets for foodbank

Collecting food from farms, Collecting donations for the community work

Weeding, trimming and cleaning outside the hall, Receiving and sorting donations at the hall

Admin support, Signposting and form filling at the hall, Those who have organised fundraising projects

Decorating hall, Driving work for SA and the shelter, Working in the shelter

Volunteering in Winter shelter, Cooking at Winter Shelter

Delivering food and clothing to homeless, Running support groups in Shelter (ACE course)

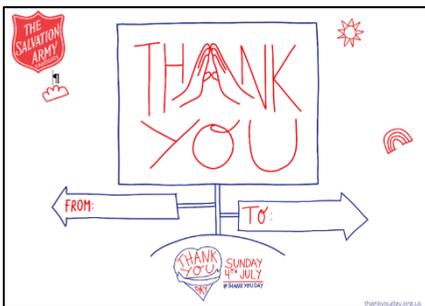
Anti-human trafficking support, OWT and Little Fishes

War-cry selling, Painting/decorating for others, Odd jobs, Building work

AND ALL THOSE IN OUR FAMILY INVOLVED IN FRONT LINE MISSION

Working as carers, NHS, Teachers, Nursery staff, Drivers

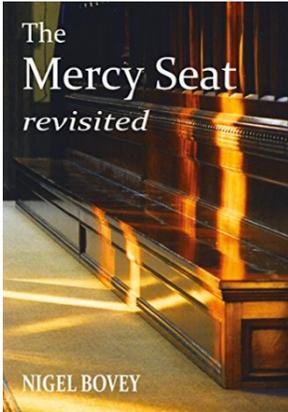
Doing your paid day job and your family responsibilities too!



In this newsletter you will find some cards. If you come to the hall there will be an opportunity to offer your thanks during the service – and if you want, we can give the card to the person you wish to thank.

If you are not coming on Sunday, we will deliver cards for you if you send them to us – or feel free to post or deliver them yourselves.

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18



## ZOOM BIBLE STUDY (TUESDAY at 7pm)

Until our Summer break we will examine the Mercy Seat and ask how we view it today.

Try and join us this Tuesday at 7pm

Major Bovey will join in a few weeks' time and we can ask him questions.



A chilly, but mostly dry Summer in the Garden last Wednesday

## COMMISSIONING SATURDAY 10<sup>th</sup> JULY



Pray for David and Maria as they come to this significant stage in their continuing ministry journey. During the meeting and on YouTube we will share a clip letting you know how you can watch next Saturday's commissioning. These are

the links – and we will put them on our web page so you can find them in the same way as our Sunday YouTube service

2pm <https://youtu.be/vXqw8HA3fmQ>

6pm <https://youtu.be/0e-QhHyBXOQ>

In the words of Charlie Brown, 'Goodbyes make my throat hurt', many of us can echo that sentiment, saying goodbye isn't easy and many of you will have experienced that lump in the throat and the tear in the eye when saying goodbye to people we have journeyed with. On Sunday Officers, Territorial Envoy's and their families around the Territory will be saying goodbye to the people they have ministered to, prayed with and shared the joys and sorrows life brings, with sadness. The last two years have brought many challenges as Officers, TE's, Corps members, friends and communities have faced the challenge of serving the community, sharing the gospel and pastoring their flock in very difficult circumstances, this has been done with grace, determination and a desire to share God's love. For all involved in the moves, officers, corps and centres this will be a time of uncertainty, what will my new appointment be like? How will we get to know each other? Children will be sad leaving friends behind, anxious about making new friends and starting new schools. There could also be a sense of excitement with new opportunities and challenges on the horizon, meeting and making new friends, seeking God's direction and discerning His plans for the future. In Joshua chapter one, verse 9 God speaks these words to Joshua, ' Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid, do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.' The Israelite nation was standing on the threshold of something new, feeling uncertain about the future but God reminds them of His presence and the promise that He is with them whatever the future holds, a promise which God gives to all those who trust in Him.

This week let's remember in our prayers all those officers, officer families who are moving, for children leaving friends and schools, starting new schools and for Corps members, Centres, friends and communities who will miss their pastor, teacher and friend.

Faithful and Mighty God we give thanks for the truth that is found in the words, "I will be with you wherever you go." We acknowledge that you are Lord of all and that you hold all things in your hands. Lord you alone know what the future holds and we pray for courage to follow your will and the plans you have for our lives, believing that you will give us your wisdom and strength. Today we pray for all those who this week will be saying goodbye to people they have journeyed

with, nurtured and grown to love and care for. We pray for the families and children leaving friends, may they know they are loved and cared for, help them to settle into their homes, communities and to meet and make new friends. Lord we pray for those Corps, centres and communities who are facing change, saying goodbye to their minister or Chaplain and preparing to welcome new leaders, we ask you to calm any fears and that they will trust you for the future. Amen

With information concerning the coronavirus and the lifting of restrictions being different across the territory, I would encourage you all to follow local government guidelines, take care and continue to pray.

We continue to remember,

Countries around the world where infection rates continue to rise.

People who are unwell and those who provide care.

People who do not have access to the vaccine, that this may be made widely available across the world.

Governments who continue to work together to manage the spread of Covid.

I would also ask you to remember in prayer our Territorial Leaders Commissioners Anthony and Gillian Cotterill, the Chief Secretary and Territorial Secretary for Leader Development Colonels Paul and Jenine Main and all our senior leaders as they continue to lead the territory and spend time discerning God's will. We also continue to pray for the ongoing IT problems we are facing at the moment and seek God's guidance and wisdom at this time.

This week as we approach national thank you day let's all give a big thank you to Miguel Fiallos and all the IT team who are working tirelessly to support our work and keep us connected during difficulties.



## Summer in the Garden

As we cannot meet in the hall for Friendship Club and Lunch club (because of the extension of the Covid restrictions) – we are opening the garden at the Salvation Army house for several Wednesdays in July and August.

You will be able to meet your friends, enjoy some food, ice cream and strawberries and we can **worship** in the open-air. Hopefully we will have some surprise guests too!

Numbers will be limited to 15 people but because we will open on many Wednesdays you will definitely be able to come – and if you want – come several times.

**Please phone Carl – or drop him a note with the days you would like to come to “Summer in the Garden”**

Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2pm – 4pm

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2pm – 4pm (only 5 spaces left)

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2pm – 4pm

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2pm – 4pm

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> August 2pm – 4pm

If the weather is bad we may need to cancel as we do need to sit outside.

**3 Brindle Grove Ramsgate CT11 8BN –**

**The loop bus stops at The Racing Greyhound – just a short walk away – Carl will provide details as required.**

## Thoughts from Major John

### Son of Encouragement

When my son and daughter in law decided on Barnabas for the name their son, I was pleased, although I haven't heard of any other little Barnabas's. This week on a thought for the day a speaker chose to speak about Barnabas. We are introduced to him in Acts chapter 4 verses 36/37. Barnabas, was the nick name given to him by the Apostles.

NIV. 'Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement), sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet.'

The speaker went on to say how his new name revealed his character, was the mark of his character. 'Son of Encouragement'.

We know he was an encourager of Paul and his companion on his first mission (Acts 13). He was also an encourager of the young John Mark.

The speaker concluded in encouraging his listeners to take on a 'posture of encouragement' and challenged us, can you be encouraging? Can you be loving?

Thinking on being given a new name, one of my favourite lines in a Charles Wesley hymn makes the prayer...

'Write thy new name upon my heart, Thy new best name of love.' (SASB 729. v5)

### Time to Smile

The scene was a boating pool at a holiday resort. 'Come in, number 9!' shouted the attendant. 'Your time is up!'

'Hang on,' said his assistant. 'We've only got eight boats!'

'Hello number 6!' the attendant shouted the again. 'Are you in difficulties?'

'Which of the Italian cities did your husband like best?'

'Venice'

'Ah, yes, Venice! All those beautiful canals and bridges and palaces!'

'Oh, he didn't care about those. What he liked about it was that he could sit in the hotel window and fish all day without leaving his room.'

Two friends were bound for a holiday in the Mediterranean.

One of them looked out of the cabin window of the aeroplane and exclaimed, 'Goodness! Look at all those people down there! They look just like ants!'

His friend peered over his shoulder and said, 'They are ants. We haven't taken off yet!

1. Dove Cottage was the home of which poet?
2. Which British surgeon was a pioneer in improving surgery hygiene?
3. Which common garden flower has the name *Dianthus barbatus*?
4. Which castle is the largest in Britain?
5. Edwin Hubble was concerned with which branch of science?

#### Leisure

1. How many balls are needed to play a game of snooker?
2. What is the national sport of Japan?
3. Where is the Jorvik Viking Museum?
4. Which toy was invented by Danes Ole and Gotfred Christiansen?
5. Where is the world's oldest toy shop?

#### Anagrams. Shakespeare Plays

SHEARING HEFT THEM TWO. TOOTHY NANA PLANED CAR. ABOUT UNMATCHING HOOD.

NOTHING.

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW. ANTHONY AND CLEOPATRA. MUCH ADO ABOUT

#### Anagrams

1. 22. Sumo wrestling 3. York 4. Lego 5. Hamleys, Regent St. London

#### Leisure

1. William Wordsworth 2. Joseph Lister 3. Sweet William 4. Windsor 5. Astronomy



#### Enjoy the quote.....

*Responding to a man who argued, "Paul said to the Corinthians it is a shame for women to speak in the church":*

Oh yes, so he did; but in the first place this is not a church, and in the second place, I am not a Corinthian; besides [she continued, looking at the man's wife], Paul said in the same epistle that it was good for the unmarried to remain so.

# Worship on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> July

## Opening Prayer

Glorious God, we come together as your people.  
We come as a praising people, singing in our hearts of your goodness;  
we come as a hungry people, longing to be fed by your word;  
we come as a praying people, bringing our needs, our joys;  
we come as a journeying people, looking for direction.  
In this hour of worship, empower us for faithful living.  
We pray this in the name of our Saviour, Jesus Christ,  
Amen.

## Song Number 271

Rejoice, the Lord is King!  
Your Lord and King adore;  
Soldiers, give thanks, and sing  
And triumph evermore:

Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;  
Rejoice; again I say, rejoice.

2 Jesus the Saviour reigns,  
The God of truth and love;  
When he had purged our stains,  
He took his seat above:

3 His Kingdom cannot fail,  
He rules o'er earth and Heaven;  
The keys of death and Hell  
Are to our Jesus given:

We soon shall hear the archangel's voice;  
The trump of God shall sound, rejoice!  
Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

## Acts 5

### Many Signs and Wonders Done

<sup>12</sup> Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. <sup>13</sup> None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. <sup>14</sup> And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, <sup>15</sup> so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. <sup>16</sup> The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

## Acts 9

<sup>31</sup> So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.

### The Healing of Aeneas

<sup>32</sup> Now as Peter went here and there among them all, he came down also to the saints who lived at Lydda. <sup>33</sup> There he found a man named Aeneas, bedridden for eight years, who was paralyzed. <sup>34</sup> And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; rise and make your bed." And immediately he rose. <sup>35</sup> And all the residents of Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.

### Dorcas Restored to Life

<sup>36</sup> Now there was in Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which, translated, means Dorcas.<sup>[d]</sup> She was full of good works and acts of charity. <sup>37</sup> In those days she became ill and died, and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. <sup>38</sup> Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him, urging him, "Please come to us without delay." <sup>39</sup> So Peter rose and went with them. And when he arrived, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him weeping and showing tunics<sup>[e]</sup> and other garments that Dorcas made while she was with them. <sup>40</sup> But Peter put them all outside, and knelt down and prayed; and turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. <sup>41</sup> And he gave her his hand and raised her up. Then, calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive. <sup>42</sup> And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many

believed in the Lord. <sup>43</sup> And he stayed in Joppa for many days with one Simon, a tanner.

### **Song Number 376**

King of kings, majesty,  
God of Heaven living in me.  
Gentle Saviour, closest friend,  
Strong Deliverer, beginning and end:  
All within me falls at your throne.

Your majesty, I can but bow;  
I lay my all before you now.  
In royal robes I don't deserve,  
I live to serve your majesty.

(After last chorus)

I live to serve your majesty.

2 Earth and Heaven worship you,  
Love eternal, faithful and true,  
Who bought the nations, ransomed souls,  
Brought this sinner near to your throne:  
All within me cries out in praise.

Jarrod Cooper

### **Now a prayer.**

Loving God, Help me to focus my thoughts, to calm my mind, to make space to sense your presence with me. Remind me that I am not alone but sharing in this act of worship with others also sitting at home alone. And all through this land, and many lands, I have Christian brothers and sisters offering their praise and worship, expressing their hopes and fears, seeking to know more of your way, just as I am. Amen.

## **Prayers of thanks and confession**

Loving God, as I look back over the past week I have so much to say thank you for: ordinary, everyday experiences, things often taken for granted.

Thank you for food and clothing, for my home and its comforts. Thank you for precious moments shared with friends or family

Thank you for technology that enables contact when we cannot meet face to face, and brings us news from around the world.

Thank you for hobbies to enjoy and the satisfaction of work well done. Most of all I want to thank you for all that Jesus has shown me: for his life sharing our human experience, for his resurrection showing that your love cannot be defeated, for the presence of the Holy Spirit here and now.

I am sorry that so often I take your good gifts for granted, so often I fail to respond to your call to live compassionately, so often I get my priorities wrong. I ask for your forgiveness, and for a real sense of your Holy Spirit to help me walk more closely in the way of Jesus. Amen.

## **Prayer for ourselves**

Dear God, I have questions for You.

You call us to speak for justice, but there is such disparity between the powerful and the powerless.

We feel ill equipped to make even a dent in the status quo.

And You say "It's not all down to you, my grace is sufficient"

You call us into relationships, friendships, communities of all sorts. We are pulled in different directions.

How can we make it work?

And You say "It's not all down to you, my grace is sufficient"

But what about dealing with people who are objectionable, arrogant, rude or cantankerous?

And You say "It's not all down to you, my grace is sufficient."

But what about treating as equal people who are different, indifferent or disrespectful?

And You say "It's not all down to you, my grace is sufficient."

But what about me - when I am reluctant to forgive, won't accommodate or consider I might be wrong?

And You say "It's not all down to you, my grace is sufficient."

Dear God help me to say, "Okay let's try it a few more times".

### **Song Number 134**

Above all powers, above all kings,  
Above all nature and all created things;  
Above all wisdom and all the ways of man,  
You were here before the world began.

2 Above all kingdoms, above all thrones,  
Above all wonders the world has ever known;  
Above all wealth and treasures of the earth,  
There's no way to measure what you're worth.

Crucified, laid behind the stone;  
You lived to die, rejected and alone;  
Like a rose trampled on the ground,  
You took the fall and thought of me,  
Above all.

Lenny LeBlanc and Paul Baloche

## Empowered Church week 4

What is the connection between the letter of acts, a resin secreting lac bug and the number 78?



Many of you will remember the 78 rpm record – made from what is the world’s original plastic – a resin secreted on trees by the insect *Kerria lacca*. The resin this bug produces is made into shellac – which was made into 78rpm records. It was rust proof (unlike the metal cylinders that Edison first used) and was easy to engrave with the grooves that would make

a needle vibrate and produce sounds.

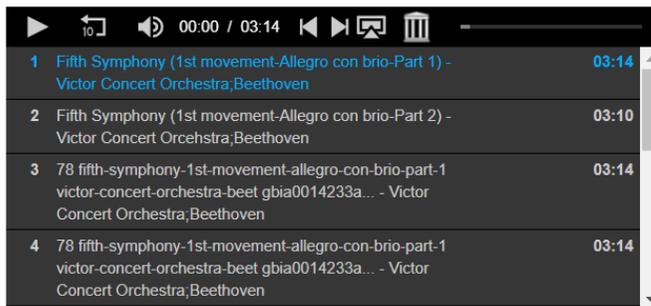
Each side of the 78 would last 3 minutes (up to 5 minutes with a 12 inch) which mean that song writers would have to make their music last 3 minutes – or the record would have to be turned over to hear the end of the song.

Can you imagine the problems that created when classical music started to appear on records. I found this entry on the internet – the FIRST movement of Beethoven’s 5<sup>th</sup> symphony (the famous dum,dum,dum,dum ....) needed five records or 10 sides

## The first movement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 (1916)

People have been enjoying those iconic opening chords since they first thundered up from the stage, so of course they were among the first recorded. Note how the piece had to be rearranged into two parts that could smoothly fit on each side of the record.

Recorded by the Victor Concert Orchestra.



Beethoven had no idea the problems he was creating for listeners but song writers from 1901 onwards understood the three-minute rule

The popular music of the day ended up being short – and – really created the music style we still have today with most pop songs being still only what you could fit onto a 78rpm 10" disc. And did you know that the rules of the Eurovision Song Competition do not permit entries to be longer than three minutes?

And if you are wondering why sermons are not like pop songs.....

So what is this all about?

Well go back 2000 years to Luke writing his account of the early church. His equivalent recording device was the scroll or the papyrus codex – This limited

him as to how much he could write – He talks about providing an *orderly account* and the gospel of Luke and the acts of the apostles written by Luke are precise and would fit into a standard scroll

So we are forced to ask the question why were some stories recorded and some not.

These two stories occur some time after the birth of the church some suggest as much as nine years after Pentecost and so we know that so much would have happened – the church was growing across Israel and the Middle East and congregations of believers were being established everywhere and this account by Luke make the point perfectly, Lydda is 30 miles outside of Jerusalem – and is the current day site of Tel Aviv airport and Joppa – which is modern day Jaffa is 10 miles further on. Joppa is where Jonah escaped on a boat to Spain instead of going to Nineveh. There are Christians now everywhere. The church is spreading rapidly – and there would be so many stories so many miracles, so much to write.

But Luke can only record what really matters.

The first miracle of the man lame for 8 years is very much like the story we encountered two weeks ago. It's such precise writing

Peter is travelling and it seems his main desire s to encourage the churches across the country – he is in Lydda and he finds a man named Aeneas, who was paralyzed and had been bedridden for eight years.

It would be good to have more detail here – what does find mean? The man was not brought to Peter and no one told Peter to go to him – this is really important as we will see later. For certain the man would have to beg to stay alive – but unlike the last story he is not in a place where Peter would pass by and see him.

<sup>34</sup> “Aeneas,” Peter said to him, “Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and roll up your mat.” Immediately Aeneas got up. <sup>35</sup>

And that is how Luke tells the story. A man so disabled that he has been on a bed for 8 years. All the physical problems that would have dealt him –

withered muscles, stiff joints, impaired balance – all gone- he got up – Immediately – and was told to roll up his bed as he was perfectly healed.

But this is why Luke told the story - All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

ALL

Miracles were showing that what the disciples were saying had to be true, this Jesus was still alive and they could see it

So what was so special about this man that his story was recorded? After all we read earlier that people were laying their sick on the floor when Peter was walking by so that his shadow might fall on them and they would be healed

The apostles performed many signs and wonders among the people. more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number. <sup>15</sup> As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. <sup>16</sup> Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by impure spirits, and all of them were healed.

Acts 5:12-16

Luke wants us to see this is happening regularly – so much - that individuals are not mentioned but crowds.

But we need to hear the story about the man in Lydda because it is the bridge for a much greater miracles that follows.

So let's look at Tabitha or Dorcas (meaning gazelle in Greek and Aramaic)

Who has a pot of these at home?



For generations pots of pins have reminded mums of this great women of the New Testament. Dorcas was probably a widow, she was not wealthy – as it says she made clothes herself – rather than getting people to make them for her – but she was very generous and helped many people and especially other widows who may receive no help elsewhere. Luke writes,

she was always doing good and helping the poor and that many people were there crying over her and so sad at her death.

Tabitha or Dorcas was not a powerful person, she was not a leader in her community, she was certainly not rich, yet she was mourned very deeply because her love had been shared with many people – from her small resources she gave much – it says people showed Peter the clothes they were wearing that Dorcas had made and given them.

What will we be remembered for I wonder?

What will people think of when your name is mentioned – and actually let's think about now!

What impact are you making now?

In our gathered service at the Salvation Army on Sunday we are going to pause a while and just think about people who are like Dorcas now. She was there at times of crisis – no doubt she wept with women who were bereaved, she provided food, a listening ear, maybe money but we do know she made and provided clothing – which helps us see how desperate things may have

been. Dorcas was someone you relied upon. A women of God in a time of crisis.

Who has been a Dorcas to you – especially in the last 15 months

We are joining with many organisations and individuals in celebrating National Thank You Sunday

Take your thankyou cards and write the name of someone you want to thank on the card – in the newsletters are many of the way in which you have all helped each other – the list is long and I know there are so many other things that have gone unseen and unspoken. Acts of kindness done in silence. We will have the opportunity to bring these to the front of the hall and give thanks o God for all who have made such a difference in the last months – I think there will be some people you will want to remember and give thanks for’ who have been there for you over many years not just this pandemic – and now is a good time to say thanks again.

We will collect these cards and send them to those who have been remembered – for those of you at home – you may want to post and deliver your card – to the person you have remembered in this time of thanksgiving

So back to Acts.

This amazing women has died – and there was much sadness- but maybe something else was happening . News had reached Joppa of a healing that had just taken place 10 miles away

“Please come at once! “it says

The urgency is due in part to the fact that burial would take place before sunset on the day of death. The round trip of 20 miles (for the messengers to reach Peter, and for Peter to get to Joppa) would have taken 8 hours or so.

‘Raising the dead was a rare phenomenon, even in Jesus’ ministry—only three instances are recorded (Matt. 9:18–25; Luke 7:11–15; John 11:1–44). In Acts, there have been none! Were they really expecting Peter to restore her to life? Or was it to conduct the funeral service?

No that was not their intention Kistemaker writes ‘ bodies normally were anointed prior to burial. Luke mentions only that the body of Dorcas was washed, and therefore he seems to imply that the Christians had a hidden motive. Having heard that Peter performed the miracle of healing a paralytic in nearby Lydda, they wanted to ask him to raise Dorcas from the dead.’

Wiersbe writes ‘There is no record in Acts that any of the Apostles had raised the dead, so their sending for Peter was an evidence of their faith in the power of the risen Christ.

They knew Jesus could do it when he was on earth and they knew he was still alive – so they trusted

And this is the core to our theme – what is an empowered church like?

What happens when we have the faith that Dorcas friend had.

This is what happens

Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.

<sup>40</sup> Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, “Tabitha, get up.” She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. <sup>41</sup> He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called for the believers, especially the widows, and presented her to them alive. <sup>42</sup> This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord. Acts 9:39-42

Acts is the same story of the kingdom of God, the rule of Jesus Christ, his ministry in the world as were the Gospels.

It is the same Lord Jesus, but not physically, not immediately, not visibly present; instead present by the Spirit.

And all the words in all the world cannot describe what a universe of difference that presence must make.

Luke’s whole interest in these miracles is to drive home his main point: that Jesus was there in Lydda and Jesus was there in Joppa, that Jesus healed the

sick and raised the dead, even if he did it by the power of the Holy Spirit and even if he used the words of his disciple.

So obvious was the fact of this divine presence that no one failed to grasp it. They turned in great number to Jesus, to the one who had healed Aeneas and had raised up Tabitha. Jesus had been there; he had shown his power and his love to them, and they had no choice but to believe in him.

Now Luke leaves us in no doubt that it isn't always and won't be usually so obvious.

Miracles were exceedingly rare, else they wouldn't have been miracles.

Appearances of the Lord, such as to Stephen and to Paul, were rarer still.

But the raising of the spiritually dead is happening all the time, as it happened here. Dorcas's was the only dead body brought back to life, but the miracle of her returning to life was the cause of a great many who were spiritually dead being raised to life, and Jesus had done it.

Do not miss the point. Jesus is here to see you, to know you, to help you, to respond to your prayers, to love you and to save you.

He is, by his Spirit, as really next to you and near to you as he was to those people who saw him and heard him during the days of his ministry.

That is the extraordinary lesson of Luke's history and the extraordinary fact of our existence in this world.

We are not alone.

We are not by ourselves.

Every moment of every day he is here with his power, his love, his truth, his care, even sometimes with his frown and his rod of judgment.

He is no less with you than he was with his disciples along the lake in Galilee or in a home in Capernaum or at Bethany with Mary and Martha or in the upper room in Jerusalem.

That fact absolutely changes the meaning of human life and, more important still, changes the opportunity that lies before every human being in this world.

The Holy Spirit is here; is present. What will you do about him? Will you ignore him or will you turn to him for help and salvation?

Today we looked at two more miracles. Of course the same pattern continues through the rest of the book of Acts. That was the life and witness of the first Christians. Signs and wonders, miracles of healing and deliverance, God speaking in dreams and visions.

And all the time people were becoming believers and being saved. Lives were being changed by the transforming power of God which can save from the guttermost to the uttermost.

God did all these things! That was the witness of the Early Church – “God did that!”

There’s a lovely phrase which sums up what we are saying. Soul Survivor used it as a theme for their summer camps and there are books with the same title. “Naturally supernatural.”

The first Christians were naturally supernatural. The Holy Spirit was at work among them in supernatural ways and all they had to do was point to what was happening and say, “God did that!”

That was the witness of the Early Church and that is the principal witness of Christians in the world today.

Not just looking back in history to the saving life and death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But testifying to events in our own lives and in our church where we can say “God did that!”

Answers to prayer. Signs and wonders.

Miracles of healing and deliverance.

Naturally supernatural. God speaking to us not only through His Word the Bible but also in dreams and visions and words of prophecy and knowledge and wisdom and discernment.

And lives dramatically transformed. God did that!

This is the ongoing work of God the Holy Spirit in the lives of ordinary Christians even today. Naturally supernatural!

Later today take a little time to reflect. What has happened in your life and in this church which we can point to and say, "God did that"? Think back and be thankful! God did that!

Every Christian needs the power of the Holy Spirit at work in our lives. We can all be naturally supernatural, if we will only let God do what He longs to do in and through us. But it was A.W.Tozer who observed that "if God had taken the Holy Spirit out of the Early Church 95% of their activities would have stopped and everybody would have noticed the difference.

But if God took the Holy Spirit out of the Church today 95% of our activities would go on as usual and nobody would notice the difference!"

We must continually open our lives to God working among us. A person can't be a Christian without the work of the Holy Spirit bringing Christ's resurrection life.

A church isn't a church if the Holy Spirit isn't at work in the people making them into the Body of Christ. We need to find out what it means to be naturally supernatural.

We all need to open our lives to the Holy Spirit – to let God work among us as He did among the first Christians.

The Bible commands us, "Keep on being filled with the Holy Spirit." (Ephesians 5:18) We all need God to fill us afresh every day with His Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit, we welcome You.

Please accomplish in me today, Some new work of loving grace, I pray;

Unreservedly have Your way. Holy Spirit, we welcome You.

Spirit of the Living God fall afresh on me. Spirit of the Living God fall afresh on me.

Break me, melt me, mould me, fill me. Spirit of the Living God fall afresh on me

### **Song Number 349**

Yet once again, by God's abundant mercy,  
We join our song of thankfulness and praise;  
Ever the light of our Redeemer's victory  
Shineth before us in the world's dark ways.

Jesus shall conquer, lift up the strain!  
Evil shall perish and righteousness shall reign.

2 O for the time of Christ's completed mission!  
Throbs of its rapture reach us as we pray;  
Gleams of its glory bursting on our vision  
Speed us to labour, urge us on our way.

3 Stretch out thy hand, O God, and let the nations  
Feel through thine host the thrill of life divine;  
Grant us, we pray, still greater revelations,  
Make of these days an everlasting sign.

Albert Orsborn (1886-1967)

## Benediction

Go forth into the world trusting with your hearts  
the wisdom God bestows upon all who seek to follow God's will.  
When called to lead, do so with humility and confidence in God.  
Be in this world a sign of Jesus' presence.  
Share compassion with all whom you encounter.  
Live wisely in God's name, and glorify God in all you do.

And may the grace, mercy and wisdom of God be our support, guidance and  
strength from this day forward and for ever more.  
Amen.

Go out from here as workers in God's upside-down kingdom,  
where the last are first and the first are last,  
where needs are met in miraculous ways,  
and there is grace enough for all!  
And may the blessing of God,  
the love of Jesus Christ,  
and the presence of the Holy Spirit  
surround you and sustain you in the coming days.



A. W. Tozer

“If the Holy Spirit was withdrawn from the church today, 95% of what we do we go on and no one would know the difference. If the Holy Spirit had been withdrawn from the New Testament church, 95% of what they did would stop, and everyone would know the difference.”

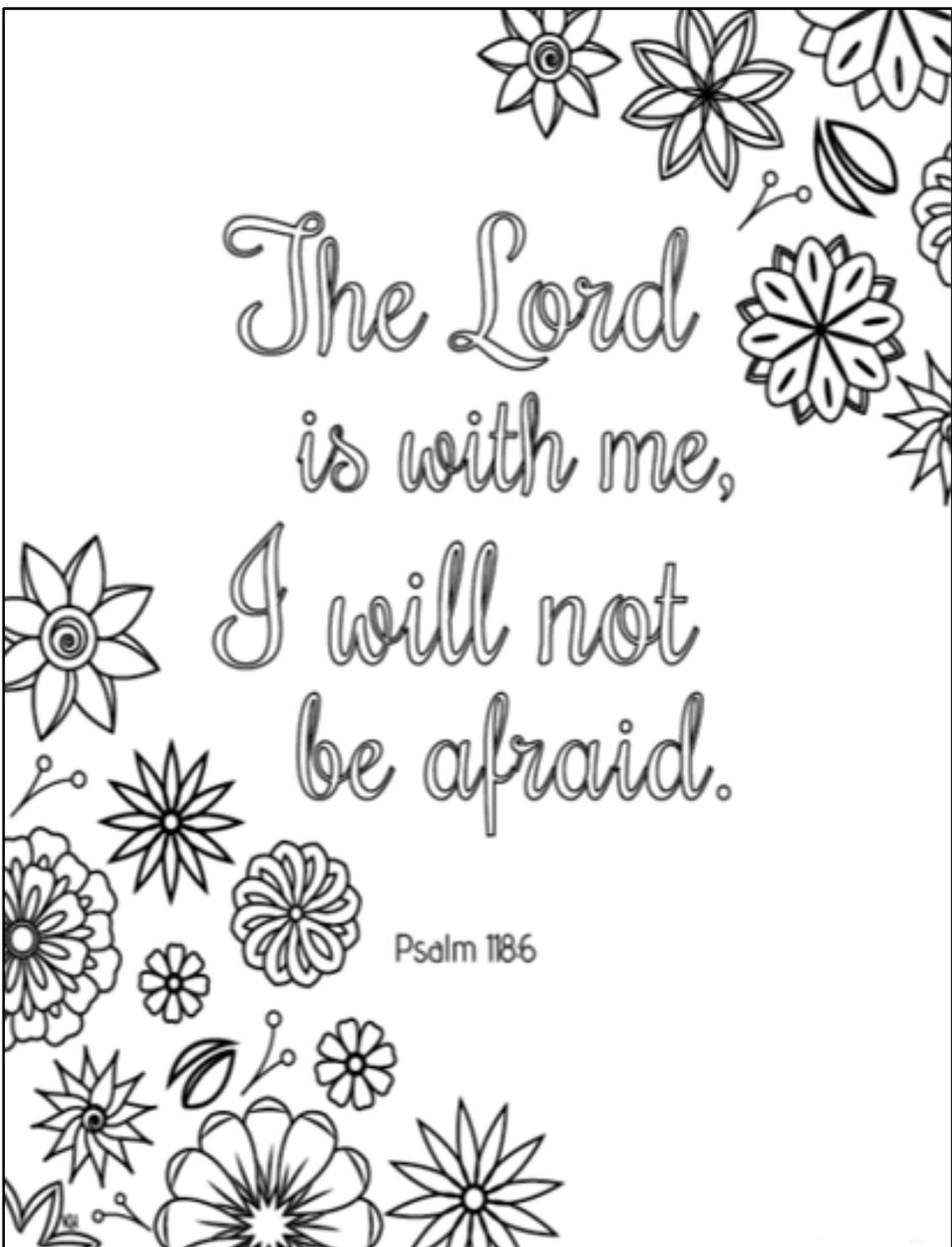
## Acts 9: 31-42

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Aeneas  
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eight years  
healing  
Jesus Christ  
Lydda  
Peter  
restored  
Tabitha

alive  
charity  
disciples  
garments  
heals  
Joppa  
multiplied  
prayed  
rise  
tunics

bedridden  
church  
Dorcas  
good works  
Holy Spirit  
knelt  
paralyzed  
raised  
Sharon  
widows



The Lord  
is with me,  
I will not  
be afraid.

Psalm 118:6



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