



Newcastle City Temple Connected

Reimagining Church Together

Dear Friends

Last Wednesday I had my day mapped out - (or so I thought!) but with just a couple of unexpected phone calls followed by a couple of emails, requesting my assistance, changed all that and I found myself doing a million things (ok perhaps a slight exaggeration!) which I had not planned to do. As I finally got to take Caleb for his 'longer' walk of the day, my mind was drawn to reflect on Lily Sampson's words;

'As the varied way of life we journey, come the plains and then the mountainside,
Come the days of joy when birds are singing , and the world is fair and sweet and wide;
Then a deeper joy comes, overflowing, from the everlasting throne of love,
And all other joy is but an echo, from the ever-blessed heights above'

SASB 531

As we walked I delighted to hear the shrill sound of the birds singing in the hedgerow and trees - a sweet sound that I have become much more attuned to over these months of 'lockdown'. One of the things which is evident in scripture, and in the Psalms especially, is how attuned the writers were to their surroundings; Psalm 121 for example speaks of the assurance found beyond the gaze of the hills upon which the eyes of the pilgrims were drawn as their made their way up to the temple courts in Jerusalem.

'I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help!' (Palm 121:1 KJV)

'There are shadows on the earthly pathway, where, at times uncertainly, we tread;
In perplexity we halt and linger, till our faith again is upward led.
For the heights of truth are ever calling, and celestial radiance from afar
On our pilgrim way is gently falling, for our comfort where the shadows are'.

It would have been so easy throughout these past 14 months to lose heart, to lose hope, to lose faith - but as many will testify throughout this time God has been speaking powerfully to His people, drawing people closer to Himself.

Last week I was pleased to read via social media of someone who after years of questioning, has finally responded to the call to serve God as a Territorial Envoy (Non-Commissioned Salvation Army Officer); today in our worship we will be observing Candidates Sunday under the theme of 'Be willing' ... On Wednesday - whilst my day didn't go the way which I had planned - what a busy but blessed day it was. On May 25th I will celebrate 20 years of Officership - and when I entered the training college in 1999 that hadn't been part of 'my 'life's plan' either; but Scripture reminds me that 'our ways are not the Lord's way's';

**"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,"
declares the LORD. Isaiah 55:8**

But you know what, I'm convinced that God always knows best! Therefore I urge you dear friends
"Commit everything you do to the LORD. Trust Him, and He will help you." (Psalm 37:5 NLT)

'In the days of peace and golden sunshine, in the days of joy, or days of woe,
There is confidence in Him who holds us; There is light to guide us here below.
And beyond await the heights of rapture, where all earthly joys, transcended fade
In the glory of the Saviour's presence, in the home eternal He has made.

Have a great week!

Every Blessing
Major Liz Hancock

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Reimagining Church - Let's Worship Together

SUNDAY 16th May 2021

Theme: CANDIDATES SUNDAY - BE WILLING

Bible Text: Luke 22:39-42



Suggested Songs: The Saviour of Men (SASB 626), I will offer up my life (SASB 371)

Suggested Band Piece: All that I am <https://youtu.be/v2dYGS8SyZg>

Suggested Songster Piece: All for thee <https://youtu.be/HZ8KmEJQppM>

Today (Sunday 16th May 2021) is the day upon which Salvationists are encouraged to observe Candidates Sunday. It is a day to focus on calling and vocation. To consider God's calling on our lives and what that calling might mean... what it might look like...where it might take us.

Let us be in no doubt that The Salvation Army needs Officers and Territorial Envoys (non commissioned Officers) - people who are willing to sign up and step out into a new ministry with God. Candidates Sunday provides the opportunity to encourage and challenge those who are sensing that God is speaking to them about a specific calling He has on their lives - and it provides us all with the perfect opportunity to pray for those to whom God is speaking in this way.

The theme for this year is '**Be Willing**' - it flows from the prayer we see Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, just hours before His crucifixion. He's on His knees, He's struggling with the reality of what He knows He has to do, and yet He manages to say these words to His Father in prayer.

'But no matter what, your will must be mine' (Luke 22:42 - The Passion Translation).

As I looked over the material which had been prepared, to help resource Officers, this year - and as I looked at the most recent statistics on our membership throughout The Salvation Army in the United Kingdom Territory, with the Republic of Ireland, I thought about the Calling of the First Disciples in Mark 1:16-20;

As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow Me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." And at once they left their nets and followed Him.

Going on a little farther, He saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat, mending their nets. Immediately Jesus called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed Him.

And there was another scripture which I was drawn to. Whilst Matthew and Mark describe the calling of Simon & Andrew from their occupation as fishermen - John describes an earlier encounter. In John chapter 1 we learn that Andrew had been a disciple of John the Baptist, and that he first encountered Jesus in the wilderness where John was baptising and verse 35 tells us;

The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. When he saw Jesus passing by, he said 'Look, the Lamb of God! When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus... and they spent the day with him...Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who had heard what John said and who had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him 'We have found the Messiah' ... and he brought him to Jesus'

You may recall the old gospel song by Charles Austin Miles 'Win them one by one'

If to Christ our only king
Men redeemed we strive to bring,
Just one way this may be done—
We must win them one by one.

*So you bring the one next to you, and I'll bring the one next to me;
In all kinds of weather, we'll all work together, and see what can be done;
If you'll bring the one next to you, and I bring the one next to me,
In no time at all we'll have them all, so win them, win them, one by one.*

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Reimagining Church - Let's Worship Together



Continued...

Whilst I appreciate the value of Candidates Sunday and fully support the call to encourage people to respond to God's calling upon their lives; when I look at the declining statistics in terms of our membership (Soldiers, Junior Soldiers & Adherents) is it really any wonder that the numbers of active officers is in such steep decline!

These are the comparable figures, according to The Salvation Army Year Book, in the United Kingdom Territory with the Republic of Ireland;

2001

Corps 772 (Plus 23 Outreach units, 58 Outposts, 93 Social Service Centres, 10 Red Shield Clubs & Annexes)
Officers 2883 (1542 Active / 1341 Retired)
Cadets 77 (Inc. 1st year, 2nd year & Distant Learning)
Senior Soldiers 39,832
Adherents 11,618
Junior Soldiers 8,066

2021

Corps 629 (20 Societies & Outposts) -18.5% based on corps only
Officers 2286 (974 Active / 1312 Retired) Plus 62 Envoys - 33%
Cadets 41 (Inc. 1st year, 2nd year & Distant Learning) - 47%
Senior Soldiers 22,642 - 43%
Adherents 8,305 - 28.5%
Junior Soldiers 2,684 - 67%

When Andrew first encountered Jesus, the news was too good to keep to himself, so he went off and found his brother Simon – and he led him to Christ.

If you get nothing else from these thoughts which I share with you through this bulletin, I want you to remember what Andrew did. 'Just One' Andrew went out and sought the one person he loved most, and he brought him to Christ. This was no major evangelistic campaign, just the simple process of just one – leading just one to Jesus. Take some time today to pray for the one person you wish to bring to Christ

***If you'll bring the one next to you, and I bring the one next to me,
In no time at all we'll have them all, (let's) win them, win them, one by one.***

The late General Albert Orsborn understood the need for us to **be willing** to lead others to Jesus;

1. The Saviour of men came to seek and to save
The souls who were lost to the good;
His Spirit was moved for the world which He loved
With the boundless compassion of God.
And still there are fields where the laborers are few,
And still there are souls without bread,
And still eyes that weep where the darkness is deep,
and still straying sheep to be led.

3. It is not with might to establish the right,
Nor yet with the wise to give rest;
The mind cannot show what the heart longs to know
Nor comfort a people distressed.
O Saviour of men, touch my spirit again,
And grant that Thy servant may be
Intense every day, as I labour and pray,
Both instant and constant for Thee.

2. O is not the Christ 'midst the crowd of today,
Whose questioning cries do not cease?
And will He not show to the hearts that would know
The things that belong to their peace?
But how shall they hear if the preacher forbear
Or lack in compassionate zeal?
Or how shall hearts move with the Master's own love,
Without His anointing and seal?

Chorus

*Except I am moved with compassion,
How dwelleth Thy Spirit in me?
In word and in deed
Burning love is my need;
I now know I can find it in Thee.*

SASB 626



Continued...

I was reintroduced to Christ, by a friend at university who simply invited me to join her at her church one Sunday morning. We've long since lost touch, but I often wonder where I would be today had it not been for Julie - and her willingness to be used by God to reach out to me.

A number of years ago on Candidates Sunday the question was posed '***If not you then who? & If not now then when?***'

Last week we celebrated Christ's Ascension; and we recalled 'The Great Commission' (Matthew 28:16-20), and recognized how Christ has called each one of us for service in the world.

Candidates Sunday is relevant for us all. Jesus has called each one of us to be His disciples and to ***be willing*** to do whatever it is that He calls to do.

In Luke 22:39-42 (The Passion translation) we read;

Jesus left the upper room with His disciples and, as was His habit, went to the Mount of Olives, His place of secret prayer. Here he told the apostles, 'Keep praying for strength to be spared from the severe test of your faith that is about to come.'

*Then He withdrew from them a short distance to be alone. Kneeling down, He prayed, '**Father, if You are willing, take this cup of agony away from me. But no matter what, Your will must be Mine.**'*

In the final moments before being handed over to be crucified Jesus was found earnestly praying to His Father about His forthcoming betrayal and crucifixion.. Jesus had called His weary disciples to be earnest in prayer as well - so that they would not fall into temptation. And as the appointed time for the work of redemption drew ever closer, Jesus is found on His face pleading to the Father: if you are willing, remove this cup from Me.. nevertheless, He submissively continues.. not My will, but Yours, be done.

The Father always hears the prayers of His only begotten Son, and had there been an alternative way to secure the redemption of mankind, God would surely have interjected...but on this occasion the heavens remained silent - for there was no other way.

As the Easter hymn proclaims;

There was no other good enough to pay the price for sin - Only the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ - where the floodgates of God's wrath were to be poured out on His innocent Son, could satisfy the righteous requirement of a holy God.

Throughout His life Jesus had learned obedience by the things that He suffered - and so He was able to pray in spirit and truth: not My will, but Yours, be done.

May we be earnest in prayer so that we will not fall into temptation.

May we learn obedience by the things that we go through in life, so that we too may be enabled to pray in spirit and truth: ***But no matter what, your will must be mine***

A Prayer

Heavenly Father I pray that I may maintain a close and intimate fellowship with You so that I may be ready and willing to pray not My will, but Yours, be done. in Jesus name, AMEN.

Source: <https://dailyverse.knowing-jesus.com/luke-22-42>

Jesus willingly fulfilled the will of The Father for you and for me... will you ***be willing*** to do what Jesus asks of you?

**Take my life and let it be, consecrated, Lord, to Thee.
Take my moments and my days, let them flow in ceaseless praise.**

**Take my will and make it thine, it shall be no longer mine;
Take my heart, it is thine own, it shall be thy royal throne.**

SASB 623 v1&5

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Reimagining Church - Let's Worship Together

Continued...



The **Candidates Fund** offers financial assistance for cadets during their training at William Booth College. Your gift will support and make a difference to those who are responding to God's call.

Please use any of the following options:

Cash - via your Corps Officer or Corps Treasurer

Cheques can be made payable to 'The Salvation Army' and sent directly to **The Candidates Unit, William Booth College, Champion Park, London SE5 8BQ**

Or alternatively a donation can be made by **Givt** or **Just Giving**, by scanning the appropriate QR Code below



Givt



Just Giving

On behalf of the Candidates unit, and those will benefit from your giving. Thank You

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THE WEEK AHEAD

Tuesday 18th May 11am - Coffee Morning via Zoom

<https://zoom.us/j/94036559399?pwd=TkZmSS9jWtNzTGU1NW5mY2JoNFIRUT09>

Meeting ID: 940 3655 9399 **Passcode:** Coffee

Tuesday 18th May 7pm Major Liz's House Group (Spirit LYFE Session 3)

<https://zoom.us/j/97310952190?pwd=U2krZTRXeFd4KzNNbkZYeGIDMk1iUT09>

Meeting ID: 973 1095 2190 **Passcode:** Lyfe

Thursday 20th May 7pm - RS Heather Stubbs's House Group (Spirit LYFE Session 3)

Sunday 23 May 10am - Pentecost Sunday Morning Worship via Zoom

<https://zoom.us/j/97311064719?pwd=VXJxWEFBVGU1WFpPSjk2UUFWNWlvdz09>

Meeting ID: 973 1106 4719 **Passcode:** Worship

THY KINGDOM COME 2021

Thy Kingdom Come is a global prayer movement that invites Christians around the world to pray for more people to come to know Jesus. Christians from more than 170 countries and 65 denominations have taken part. **Thy Kingdom Come** runs between Ascension and Pentecost, and therefore will be taking place from 13-23 May. Further details can be found via the following link:

<https://www.thykingdomcome.global>

I still have a few copies of the complimentary **Thy Kingdom Come** prayer journals available if anyone would like one.

