

## Winter & Spring Overview

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### Leaders Notes

Themes from February to March (More months coming soon)

Please note Bible stories and themes may occasionally differ from this overview.

### February – Share the Good News

'The followers went everywhere in the world and told the Good News to people. And the Lord helped them.' (Mark 16:20 ICB)

The aims of the sessions are:

- to help children understand what the Good News is and how it affects us
- to explore ways to practically share the Good News

At the heart of The Salvation Army's mission is a passion to share the good news of Jesus Christ far and wide. This is not an optional extra. The Salvation Army only does what it does because our inspiration and vision come from people's ongoing relationship with Jesus. We know the difference our relationship with God makes in our lives and we don't want anyone to miss out.

In this month's *Explore It* material we want to start to unpack the mission priority of 'Share the Good News' and this actually means in the life of a child. Firstly, we will look at what is the Good News - and how it affects our lives and what it means to follow Jesus. We will also look at it means to live out the Good News of Jesus in practical ways in homes, schools and communities. Exploring Gospel stories where people encountered Jesus and their lives were turned around will help to unpack these themes.

'Preach the gospel at all times - use words if necessary.' Anon (often att to St Francis of Assisi)

In the sessions there could be moments of practical application where the children can think through what act of kindness they could do to live out the Good News.

# Explore It



Youth and  
Children's  
Ministries

Date	Title	Bible Reference	Content
Session 1 6 February	What is the Good News?	'Jesus said, "The right time has come. The kingdom of God is near. Change your hearts and lives and believe the Good News!"' Mark 1:15 (ICB)	In this opening session let's explore what the Good News of Jesus is - the fact that we can be in relationship with him and that is what he wants for each of us. This session can be used to help children understand what it means to have a relationship with Jesus - it may be a good space to give opportunity for children to decide to follow Jesus for the first time.
Session 2 13 February	The Good News shared with Zacchaeus	Luke 19:1-10	We look at how Jesus reached out to Zacchaeus - where others would have turned away. Whom do we turn away from today? How can we be a bit more like Jesus at these times? If Jesus came for tea - who should be round our table?
Session 3 20 February	The Good News shared with Bartimaeus	Mark 10:46-52	This story could be used to help children imagine themselves in the story, looking at each part as if they were that person. We look at how Bartimaeus's life must have been turned around through his encounter with Jesus.
Session 4 27 February	The Good News shared with children	Mark 10:13-16	We look at the importance that Jesus placed on the life of a child. They were put front and centre, going against the customs at that time. Explore with children their role within a church community, the impact they can have there. Look at how God can use each child - never mind their age - to share the Good News, to make a difference in this world.

# Explore It



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## March – Serve others without discrimination

The aims of the sessions are:

- To learn about the Self-Denial Appeal and how we can support it
- To consider ways we can serve others
- To understand that our faith in God is shown by serving others

The Salvation Army responds to people without discrimination. God calls us to be with the people we serve. In 'being with' people - as against 'doing for' people - together we find solutions and make progress because we are all made in the image of God. We are called to share love in a too often loveless world. 'Love God, love others' inspires every aspect of our work.

### Love in Action

This month is based around love in action, starting with the Self-Denial Appeal, looking at how we can make a difference in the international Salvation Army. We examine how our money is used and the importance of children helping to contribute to this.

Weeks Two and Three look at two different Bible stories and the practicalities of love in action. Week Four is Mothers' Day and looks at love in action across the generations.

Date	Title	Bible Reference	Content
Session 1 6 March	Heart to Change the World	Matthew 25:35-40	Look at how Self-Denial Appeal started - people challenged to go and do something. Look at our Mission Partner countries. Ask the children to think about how life may be different for children in developing countries, exploring what we might want or need. Revisit some of the videos that might have been used in the lead up to the appeal. Explore how God calls us all to be generous, not just our parents. What can we do as children to support work in developing countries? Explore with the children what they spend their money on - do they know where products come from - this can help to change the world.

# Explore It



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<p><b>Session 2</b> 13 March</p>	<p>The Good Samaritan</p>	<p>Luke 10:25-37</p>	<p>Unpack the story of the Good Samaritan, looking at how the Samaritan responded when he discovered the man who had been beaten up, Develop the point around who is my neighbour, who is part of my friendship group, who is sat around 'my table'.</p>
<p><b>Session 3</b> 20 March</p>	<p>The Feeding of the Five Thousand</p>	<p>Mark 6:30-44 James 2:17 (<i>The Message</i>)</p>	<p>This session is to help children understand that faith in God should be expressed in serving others. It can help them to think of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• different ways to serve others in their communities,</li> <li>• how they can serve God today.</li> </ul> <p>You could refer back to early Salvation Army history, and also other stories of people in history who put their faith into action.</p>
<p><b>Session 4</b> 27 March</p>	<p>Mothers' Day</p>	<p>2 Timothy 1:5</p>	<p>In this session we now turn to what does love in action look like at home, and look at greater connections across the generations. How can we practically show love to our mum/grandmother/carer? We consider how we can learn about Jesus from our family (being mindful of those children who are not from a Christian home) but also looking at how we can share our faith with our family; the importance that we can all learn from each other.</p>