

BEDLINGTON SALVATION ARMY NEWSLETTER

# OUTLOOK

JANUARY 2026 - ISSUE 34



The Salvation Army  
Bedlington Band

Christmas Ensemble Music

**Majors Carrie & Philip James  
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# Message from the Corps Officers

**Sunday Worship...Morning Service at 10am.**

**Sunday School at 10.45am.**

**Corps Officers : Majors Carrie & Philip James**

HAPPY NEW YEAR

2025 was a mixed year for many of us. There were some real achievements as well as hurts and challenges. Within our fellowship, we said goodbye to some faithful saints, we were pleased to welcome new faces, and we had some changes in our leadership team. As usual, December was very busy. The public as always were very generous, and we provided Christmas presents for 140 children who might otherwise have gone without.

The Band were in great demand, and their ministry was much appreciated, reminding people of the true meaning of Christmas. At the Council's invitation we led community carol singing in the Market Square, which was well attended and a good time was had by all. Then on Christmas eve they even ended up on TV and Keith was interviewed about our work. (He is now available for autographs and guest appearances.) So thank you all for all you have been and done in 2025. But now Christmas is over and the New Year has begun.



I wonder what it holds in store? Our theme for Covenant Sunday this year was "Break Ground, Bring Hope" with the text from Hosea 10:12 Sow for yourselves righteousness, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unploughed ground; for it is time to seek the LORD, until he comes and showers righteousness on you.

We are challenged to let God remove anything that gets in the way of us being the disciples he would have us be – to break up your unploughed ground - and to continue to make a difference in our community – to

experience and share those showers of righteousness. This year will continue to seek how better to reach and serve our community and we will see more changes to our leadership team. And it would be great to welcome more new faces into our fellowship. What difference will you let God make to your life this year?

In his song Lord though the years, Timothy Dudley-Smith concludes with a prayer we could all share for 2026 Lord for ourselves; in living power remake us - Self on the cross and Christ upon the throne, Past put behind us, for the future take us: Lord of our lives, to live for Christ alone.

God Bless You, Carrie and Philip

# **BEDLINGTON CORPS ARCHIVE**

We are preparing an update to our corps history in anticipation of our 150th anniversary in 2028.

We would greatly appreciate your assistance by sharing any old photos or memories you have about the Corps.

If you loan us any physical items, we promise to return them once we have finished using them.

If you are willing to help, please speak to either Jill Moore or Daniel Mercer. Alternatively, you can email us at [Bedlington@salvationarmy.org.uk](mailto:Bedlington@salvationarmy.org.uk).

Thank you!

# Message from the CSM

2 Corinthians 9 v 8

“And God is able to Bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all you need, you will abound in every good work”

As we stand on the threshold of a new year, I find myself reflecting on the journey of the past twelve months. Just as you may have, I've navigated through a tapestry of experiences—moments of joy that lifted my spirit, alongside challenges that tested my resilience. The mix of triumphs and trials has prompted me to contemplate how I can approach the coming year with fresh perspectives and renewed intentions. In this spirit, I aim to embrace the wisdom that encourages us to look forward rather than dwell on what has been. After all, there is a profound encouragement in faith, urging us to let go of the past and stride confidently into the future. Hebrews 12 v 1-2 “.. let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles . And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith.”



As we embark on the journey of a race, it's essential to focus forward, propelling ourselves with determination and purpose. If we attempt to move backward, fixated on past events and burdens, we will find our stride faltering and our progress hindered. Therefore, I commit to this mindset, and I sincerely hope you will join me in this endeavor. In these challenging times, it's easy for our hearts to harden against the weight of the world's troubles. Yet, I believe wholeheartedly that God offers us the gift of transformation,

awakening within us a capacity to embrace all that He has in store. As we stand on the threshold of this New Year, let us pause to seek God's guidance earnestly, asking Him to grant us a fresh heart—one that has been cleansed through sincere confession and the grace of forgiveness. In turn, let us invite the Lord to renew our spirits, invigorating us with the strength and resolve to advance boldly in His name.

Jeremiah 29 v 11 “ “For I know the plans I have for you “declares the Lord “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future”

God Bless You

Jill

100<sup>TH</sup> CORPS ANNIVERSARY

BEDLINGTON CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

Issue No. 1

16th April 1978

Price: 59p



## A CENTURY OF EVANGELISM

1878 - 1978

## "IN THE BEGINNING"

It was during the summer months of the year 1878 that the "Christian Mission" later that year renamed "The Salvation Army", "opened fire" in Bedlington. During this period intensive campaigns in the north of England resulted in the establishment of several Corps so that we share Centenary Celebrations with several other Corps in the Northern Division. An extract from the Christian Mission Magazine issued in November 1878 refers to the introduction of the Salvation Army to the people of Bedlington as follows:

## BEDLINGTON

Still further north? Yes, further north. We like the pitmen and we will fly the standard within sight of every colliery in the kingdom, God helping us. But there was another attraction in Bedlington besides the fact of its being the centre of a network of coal mines, and that was a newly built unoccupied theatre. This was seized and the doors thrown open on Sunday with an entire change of performance, Brother Borrill, the Happy Gardener being the chief actor.

The first meetings were a success and the work has been taken up and is being pushed forward by Sister Mary Smith with energy, victory after victory having been obtained.

Read the following scrap of intelligence "On the 9th we had a wonderful meeting, for we had a number of valiant soldiers who were heroes for the devil, but now they are heroes for the Lord, their experience was something wonderful".

One man said "I thank God that he has spared me, for I was a great sinner, I was so bad, I was too bad to live with. I used to go out and spend all my wages and my family used to go hungry for a fortnight, but thank God friends, I am now restored to my right mind".

Another man said, "If any man has a right to thank God it is me, for the devil I used to serve, was a bad master. I was a drunkard, a gambler and a card player and I would go to the theatre and play the fool to please the people and then for my services in that 'army' they sent me to Morpeth Prison for my wages

Friends, it is a poor place to go to get fat. Now the people tell me I am going wrong in my mind, But Hallelujah! I am now getting right, for praise God, I never was so happy in all my life. Christ has made me happy and you can think what you like, but Christ for Bill". Our sister is fighting bravely and waking up the whole countryside. The place is very poor and any help will be very welcome and may besento:

Mary Ann Smith - Salvation Army.

This report gives some indication of the early days in the history of the Corps and the very difficult conditions prevailing at that time.

## "THE YEARS BETWEEN"

The converted theatre was to be the centre of Salvation Army activity in the town for almost a century. The poverty referred to in the early days was to continue for many years and the Corps had great difficulty in raising money to maintain its work. The mining community lived through times of almost constant depression, with short-time working and extended strikes continuing until the mid 1930's.

The Corps History Book confirms this situation and tells of the great financial burdens experienced during this period with expressions of great concern and disappointment by succeeding Officers because they were unable to improve the Corp's financial situation.

However, there were good reports of the spiritual progress of the Corps over the years and of many happy times, especially during Corps Anniversary celebrations, when all the neighbouring Corps united for these special occasions and great times of fellowship and blessing were experienced. The Corps continued to maintain a good standard despite the occasional "ups and downs".

During the first half century of the Corp's activities there were several individual "characters" who played an important part in the history of the Corps. These were men whose lives had been completely changed and whose witness to their former associates brought many of them to Christ. The local officers during this period were obviously men and women whose commitment and devotion to the cause of Christ was of a very high standard and we salute the memory of those who "blazed the trail".

The strength and character of the Corps during the past fifty years and its ability to maintain a very high standard of Salvationism has been due in no small measure to the unity of purpose achieved as the "Family Corps" has been developed.

One of the most outstanding examples of this unity of purpose in recent years has been the acquisition of a completely new suite of buildings, phase one of which was opened on 2nd May 1970 followed by the completion of phase two on 31st October 1976, at a combined cost of more than £63,000. Every soldier of the Corps contributed to the successful achievement of this project. "All though the years His providence has led us"

## "THE ARMY OF TODAY"

We now live in an affluent society and enjoy all the consequent benefits. Most of us enjoy a very good standard of living with our own well-furnished homes and cars. A very different situation from that of our early-day salvationist.

The Corps has likewise benefited from changing times. We now have a suite of new buildings which provides excellent facilities for both worship and service to the community. During the last twelve months the Corps has embarked upon an "outreach" programme which has included regular Sunday afternoon visits to six hospitals in the area and occasional visits by some of the patients to the Salvation Army Hall where they have been entertained to tea and enjoyed an evening of music by the Band and Songsters.

An intensive recruitment drive has resulted in many young people being linked up with our Sunday School and its related activities - Youth Club, Band, Singing Company and B.P. Sections, all of which are well organised and cater for the needs of the young folk of today.

It is envisaged that the spiritual and social outreach of the Corps will play an important part in the life of the community and that many people, of all ages, will be introduced to a better way of life as a result of this ministry.

The Corps has never been in a better position to meet the challenge of the day and with God's help we are determined to expand the influence of the Gospel in the area of operations and in so doing, consolidate and extend the work of the Salvation Army as a spiritual force in Bedlington.

# Review - Toy Appeal

This review is written by our Community Manager Arleen Thompson for the Corps Council meeting on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2026

On Monday 15th December 2025, the Christmas Toy Appeal worked well, and the changes I implemented improved things compared to last year. That said, after I'd written my debrief and reflected there are still a few tweaks that would help. It's an ongoing venture that changes every year!



Thanks to those who moved all the toys from the loft and room 3 and erected tables after the Sunday morning meeting I was able to come in and make an immediate start, having myself already put in place all the paperwork for checking families, labels for tables with stats attached and individual labels for each child's bag. We prepared toys for 148 children and helped 62 families.



As usual I was here at the crack of dawn as I woke early with it all already ticking in my head. This meant that by time the team arrived at 9am tables were in the right places and labelled ready to begin sorting. We used Rooms 1 and 2 for the bags once they were packed and they had each labels on the wall at intervals, again with stats attached so every referrer had a spot and their bags were easily identifiable.

Sorting, packing and storing flowed easily, with a team of experienced volunteers helping at each point. We enjoyed fellowship over a buffet lunch made by Keith and Colin before finishing the job. At this point, after a quick phone call to check on need, several bags and boxes of toys were collected by Major Philip and a couple of volunteers to help with the shortfall at Newbiggin. Also, a large amount of Teaching Aids were collected by Whitley Memorial C of E Primary SEND dept.

With the exception of 2 families, all parcels were collected on Tuesday between noon and 2pm and I was helped as always by John Nichol. The 2 others were eventually collected, but one, despite agreeing several times to collect didn't appear until 23rd December!

# Community Update

The Food Bank is seeing its usual stream of requests, with the vast majority coming to us directly and bypassing the referral system. Donations from the public, facilitated by Morrison's are still our relied upon source for most of the stock. We have a few regular donators who pop in with bags or boxes of items, but not as many as we have in the past. We also regularly receive baby items such as food and nappies from Wansbeck Valley Food Bank who always have too many to use themselves and drop off items once a fortnight. These are stored separately in the cabinet in room 1 to allow easy access for those in need in the Little Lambs groups as well as being offered to those with babies coming for food parcels. Before Christmas we had a huge donation from Sunny at The Oval Convenience store, who arrived with a van load he'd bought at Booker. The Atlas electronic system is being used to track all service users and is working fairly well.

Little Lambs continues as two groups; both are full with 25 children in each. At the Christmas break we anticipated some children moving onto to nursery, but no-one did! The volunteer team are working with each other to ensure toys, snacks etc are in place. They are also doing their own shopping, another weight lifted from me.

Lunch Club is steady, with 54 people registered and we are regularly serving 45+ meals. The Christmas Lunch fed 47 people, with the members of the Over 60s who don't usually come along, joining us for lunch before the carol singing afternoon provided by some of the band. The menu continues to be as varied as we can, with corned beef pie and broth day being added into the rotation. Broth was something we did at a reduced price as a fill in for a couple of occasions where we were the volunteer team was depleted, but turned out to be a firm favourite. When it was announced last Wednesday that this week would be broth, there was a cheer from the dining room.

Thankful Fridays varies in numbers from week to week but everyone enjoys coming together when they can for coffee, fellowship and "Christian teacakes". Numbers are falling, with the majority of visitors being Corps members. This is one to look at for the future. At present I won't make any changes, but this is an area that needs reflection and prayer if we are to move it forward.

Mind Active continue to meet every other Tuesday for their Activity Day, with shared lunch and live entertainment, as well as the last Tuesday of the month for their Dementia Friendly Movie Afternoon. They provide a fabulous community service and fill a gap in our programme that we haven't the capacity or skills to do ourselves. Participants are all up singing and dancing along with the music and the atmosphere is amazing. If anyone would like to come along and witness them all in action, you would be made very welcome.

# Review - Christmas Carolling

This year's carolling program by the band embraced a remarkable 21 diverse engagements, kicking off back in November with the much anticipated Daft as a Brush Christmas light switch-on and culminating in the town of Morpeth on Christmas Eve. Throughout the programme, the band delivered a heartfelt musical ministry, spreading cheer in various locales—from paying delightful visits to elderly residents in care homes, to brightening the spirits of children in local schools, and engaging with the community amidst the hustle and bustle of busy supermarkets and lively market squares.



The band dynamically split into two enthusiastic groups, affectionately named the Holy Band and the Ivy Band. True to tradition, each ensemble performed for approximately 90 minutes, showcasing their beloved carols and brightening the atmosphere with classics like "Jingle Bells," a tune we joyfully played perhaps ten times for the delighted children strolling past.



This endeavour could not have been achieved without the unwavering commitment and hard work of our dedicated band members and collectors, who persevered through rain-soaked weather and early morning start times. We wish to extend a special acknowledgement to the senior band, which took on the majority of the carolling responsibilities, demonstrating their tireless spirit. Our deepest gratitude goes to the enthusiastic volunteers who devoted their time and energy, making this fulfilling ministry not just a possibility but a cherished reality, creating profound, lasting impacts on the lives of those we serve.

The community's response to this year's carolling initiative was overwhelmingly warm and positive. The heartfelt appreciation from the public was reflected through the generous donations we received, which far surpassed our expectations. The fundraising activities, in particular, were a resounding success, empowering us to expand our outreach efforts. Furthermore, the community's generous contributions significantly bolstered our Toy Appeal, ensuring that countless children experienced the joy and wonder of receiving a gift during this festive season.

# THANKFUL FRIDAY

Every Friday

10:00 - 12:00

Hartford Road West NE22 6HU



Tea  
Coffee  
Toasted Tea Cakes  
Biscuits



The Salvation Army is a Church & registered charity 214779 in England and Wales and SC009359 in Scotland

# Review - Youth Band

The Corps was thrilled to welcome the North East Divisional Youth Band last November. The event was a vibrant celebration, showcasing not only the immense talent of our young members but also highlighting the impressive contributions of our very own songster brigade. The atmosphere was filled with music and enthusiasm for all who attended.

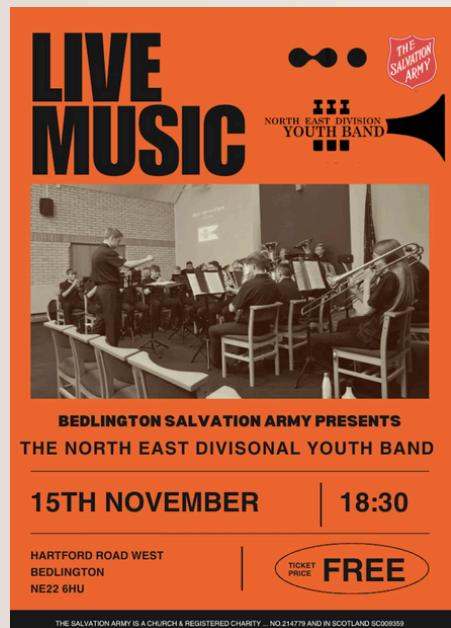
The concert opened with a confident and uplifting start from the band, setting a spirit of praise with Stephen Ponsford's All Creatures Praise, followed by the warmth and lyricism of The Lord is Gracious, arranged by Olaf Ritman. After a brief prayer and words of welcome, the band continued with Sam Creamer's The Kingdom is Theirs, maintaining a sense of joyful proclamation.

A particular highlight of the first half was the cornet solo Share My Yoke, played by Samuel Tasker, whose sensitive playing was well supported by the band under the arrangement by Ivor Bosanko. The Bedlington Songsters added variety and charm to the programme, before the band returned with a powerful rendition of How Great Thou Art and the energetic exuberance of Paul Sharman's Amazed!, bringing the first half to a rousing close.



Following the interval, the band launched into Andrew Hedley's The Rescuers, full of character and drive, conducted by the band's principal cornet for the night, Joshua Warrington. The audience was invited to join in the congregational song Lord for the Years, creating a shared moment of reflection and participation. Another appearance from the Bedlington Songsters added warmth and continuity, leading into a smooth piano solo played by another member of our YP, Grace Lightley. Andrew Garcia's Radiance followed, showcasing the band's dynamic control and rich ensemble sound.

After a short thought, the programme moved towards a strong and thoughtful conclusion. You Encircle Me by Hans-Lennart Raask, arranged by Erik Silfverberg, was delivered with sensitivity and depth, while Sam Creamer's Promises reaffirmed the concert's themes of faith and assurance. The evening concluded with Paul Sharman's Righteousness, Peace & Joy, a fitting and uplifting finale that left the audience encouraged and inspired.



TERRITORIAL YOUTH BAND AND CHOIR PRESENT

# Youth makes Music

**20 FEBRUARY 2026, 7PM**

Join us for an energetic festival of music from the talented and enthusiastic young people of The Salvation Army  
Territorial Youth Band and Choir courses 2026

Lighthouse Arts & Entertainment, Kingland Road, Poole BH15 1UG

Tickets - £14.30\*, ages 16 and under - £8.25\*

Book from [www.lighthousepoole.co.uk](http://www.lighthousepoole.co.uk) or phone 01202 280000

\*including booking fee

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# Corps Updates in 2025

## Appointment Changes

Neil Lightly: Deputy Band Master Now Appointed Band Master

Stephen Burn: Deputy Band Master

Anne Young: Over 60's Secretary

Jill Moore:Appointed Corps Sergeant Major

David Wearmouth: Corps Mission Secretary

## Retirements

Paul Rice - Retired as Member of Band & Songsters

Brian Storey - Retired as Band Master

Ann Charlton - Retried as Over 60s Secretary

## Dedications

Lily Nichol - Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June

Benny Walter Doyle - Sunday October 19<sup>th</sup> 2025

Christian Kozlovsky - Sunday November 23<sup>rd</sup> 2025

## Promoted to Glory

Anne Greenacre - January 2025

Hilda Storey - March 2025

Vikki Fergson - December 2025

## Live Streams

**If you're unable to join us for worship at Bedlington Salvation Army, don't worry!**

**You can still be a part of our community by watching our services live or catching up on past services every week. Visit our Facebook or YouTube channels to stay connected and engaged with our vibrant congregation.**

# Weekly Programme

## **SUNDAY**

**Morning Service** 10.00am

**Sunday School** 10.45am

## **MONDAY**

**Home League** 12.30pm

**Monthly—see monthly plan**

## **WEDNESDAY**

**Little Lambs Toddler Group** 9.15-11.15am

Children up to 3yrs must be with an adult.

Call Arleen to book a place.

**Seniors Lunch Club** 12.00pm

Two Course meal for Over 60s. £5

Please call Arleen to book a place

**Over 60s Sunshine Hour** 1.30—2.30pm

All welcome (if you're over 60)

## **FRIDAY**

**Little Lambs Toddler Group** 9.15-11.15am

Children up to 3yrs must be with an adult.

Call Arleen to book a place.

**Thankful Friday** 10am-noon.

Free refreshments & all welcome

# Corps Calendar In January & Febuary

## January 2026

**Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup>**

**Home League - Burns Day Celebration**

## Febuary 2026

**Sunday 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Youth band rehearsal @ Sunderland Millfield - 6pm**

**Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup>**

**Ladies fellowship - Talk - 7:30pm**

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup>**

**Exploring Vision Day @ Newcastle City Temple - All Day**

**Sunday 8<sup>th</sup>**

**Youth Chorus Rehearsal @ Chester-Le-Street - 6pm**

**Thursday 12th**

**PCC Meeting - 7pm**

**Monday 16th - Friday 20th**

**Territorial Youth Choir / Territorial Youth Band held in Bournemouth**

**Wednesday 18th**

**Men's fellowship - Archery - 7:30pm**

**Wednesday 18th & Friday 20th**

**No Parent and toddlers (half term)**

**Sunday 21st**

**Guest leader for worship tbc - 10am**

**Tuesday 23rd**

**Home League - Musical afternoon**

**Saturday 28th**

**North East Division Fun Day @ South Shields**