

Fullness of life for
all with Jesus



TIDINGS



October - December 2026
The Salvation Army, Woking

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EDITORIAL CONTACT INFO

If you would like to contribute an article, story, photograph or announcement to a future edition of Tidings, please speak to **Major Freda** or **Vickie**.



From the CO's desk

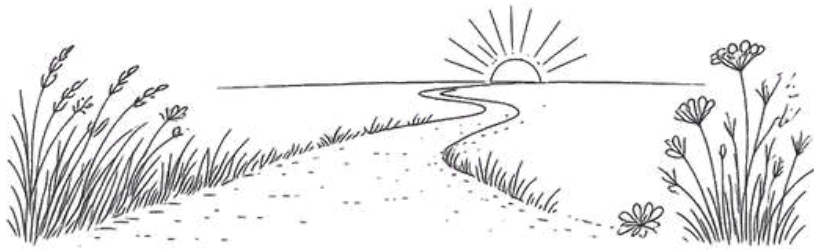
As I type from the CO's desk, I am very aware of the changing season, from the hot summer to the nip in the air of autumn. I love autumn, seeing the changes in the colour of the leaves on trees, noting all the seedheads that have formed, being taken back to my childhood and collecting conkers and sweet chestnuts.

I often feel in the autumn I pay more attention to the nature around me, the squirrels burying the nuts for their winter feed, the red berries on the bushes (are we going to have a hard winter?), the acorns on the oak trees. I love an autumnal walk just soaking up the warmth of the sunshine or even a walk in the rain – just time spent in nature.

FINDING GOD IN THE CHANGING SEASONS

I was gifted a book recently called 'Reflected in Nature' and there is a thought a week and this week's Bible verse is from Lamentations 3:22-23

'The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.'



Each day the dawn is different, each day in our lives is different. Just like our faith journey; as we walk daily with the Lord.

We can be renewed and given a fresh start when we bring our lives to him anew. Trepidation may awaken with the dawn, as we face difficult days, yet we can know that whatever unfolds God goes with us, His mercies new every morning. With the dawning of each new day, we can but trust the one who holds all our days in His hands.

Debbie

Useful Contacts

WOKING SALVATION ARMY CORPS

Corps Leader: Captain Debbie-Anne Hogarth

☎ Office: 01483 793704

🌐 Website: salvationarmy.org.uk/woking

📘 Facebook: @WokingSA

📺 YouTube: Woking Salvation Army (Sunday Service Livestream)

📍 Woking Salvation Army, Sythwood, Woking, GU21 3BE

OTHER PROGRAMME CONTACTS

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA):

Local helpline: 01252 521133 (open 08.30-22.30)

www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/

Recovery Bible Study: Jon Everett (07939 584033) or Ian Campbell

Foodbank (referral required): woking.foodbank.org.uk/

Citizens Advice: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/

Weekly Corps Programme

SUNDAY

- 9am - **AA Meeting**
- 11am - **Morning Worship**
- with Children's Church



MONDAY

- 9.15am - 11.15am - **Teddy Toddlers** (term time only)
- 2pm - 3.30pm - **Drawing Closer Bible Study**
(every third Monday)



TUESDAY

- 12.30pm - 2.30pm - **Food Bank** (referral needed)
- 7.45pm - **Band Practice**
- 8pm - **AA Meeting**



WEDNESDAY

- 10am - 11.30am - **Brunch Club**
- 1.45pm - 3.15pm - **Hearts and Crafts**
(second and last Wednesday of the month)
- 7.45pm - **Songster Practice**



THURSDAY

- 9am - 12pm - **Coffee and Chat**
- 7pm - **Recovery Bible Study**
(every other Thursday)



FRIDAY

- 10am - 12pm - **Food Bank** (referral needed)
- 10am - 12pm - **Citizens Advice** (drop-in)



SATURDAY

- 9.30am - **'Full Monty' Men's Breakfast**
(last Saturday of the month - off site)



Worship at Woking

Worship at Woking has kept us on our toes!! We've moved through the weeks with holidays, Divisional Kids' Camp and various worship leaders.

Throughout, Captain Debbie has steered us through our worship. That has sometimes been tinged with great sadness with the loss of Amanda and Jane. Presently, she is reminding us of God's creativity and our need to honour and preserve His creation, which involves our care for those affected by human trafficking and homelessness.

We have enjoyed spirited worship led by three 'old majors', John M and Freda & Ted, and then Ethan, who, although so much younger, shows leadership potential and a growing confidence in leadership. We also had a Sunday which featured the children who attended Kids' Camp.

SHARING OUR STORIES

Worship has also included meaningful testimonies from Sam Cook about music bringing him closer to God, Andrew Cox about early morning walking and running, and Chris Hadfield about craft work. Through each one we have found out more about them and how their various activities help them in their daily walk with Jesus.

THANK YOU, TEAM WOKING

As ever, we are grateful to those in the Band and Songsters who, week by week, give their time to rehearse their various contributions to worship; to Major John for his sensitive piano accompaniment; and to the members of our multimedia team who are responsible for the live streaming and for providing the visual aspects of worship.

We are grateful too for all those who join with us each week. Each one contributes to worship just by being there and showing their love for Jesus. We are blessed.

Grateful thanks to Team Woking – each and every one of you!!!!!!

Freda

If you would like to find out more about The Salvation Army's work supporting people affected by modern slavery and homelessness, please follow the links below.



salvationarmy.org.uk/modern-slavery
salvationarmy.org.uk/homelessness

Intergenerational Ministry

DIVISIONAL INTERGENERATIONAL WORKER SHELLEY GALLAGHER

Shelley Gallagher, our Divisional Intergenerational Worker and worship leader on 9th August, introduced us to Intergenerational Ministry – bringing people of all ages together as a family, as a corps.

OUR CORPS FAMILY

Part of our worship centred on Keith, Kleith, Sammi, Lilia and Ariana, our five children attending Divisional Kids' Camp with Captain Debbie. We were given a bookmark with their names on it to help us as we prayed for them whilst they were away.

Using the story of the Israelites crossing the Red Sea in Exodus 14, Shelley reminded us that being part of a family means feeling that we belong, that we are needed, that we can learn, and that life can be full. How important it is to demonstrate this to everyone who is part of our Corps family, no matter their age. As a church, we are family, doing life together!

Our worship included good singing, contributions from the Band and Songsters, and music which was particularly appropriate as we reflected on the recent loss of Amanda. We concluded with the hearty singing of the real oldie, 'Tell them in the east and in the west'.



THE FOUR FOUNDATIONAL BELIEFS OF INTERGENERATIONAL MINISTRY

I belong

We can all have a place in the church, no matter what our age or ability is.

I am needed

Being a church is a whole-team effort; we can all do something and feel needed.

I can learn from everyone

When we truly believe we can learn from anyone, we become more of a family again – we can listen to what others know or understand.

Life is fuller when shared with people of different generations

Sharing life and love together naturally – how God intended us to be, to share together in prayer and worship.

A Year with Terrain

By Ethan Mushati

*Who is God, and who am I?"
It is a question most of us will
ask at least once in our lives.*

A deep desire to encounter Christ on a more personal level led me to cast my net wide for opportunities to pause, reflect and discern where I fit in. That search brought me to Terrain. In the midst of college, work and the natural rush of life, I initially wrestled with deliberately carving out time to stop. Yet, as the weeks unfolded, **I discovered that God was not waiting for an empty calendar; His presence met me right in the rhythm of the everyday** – washing dishes, walking to college and riding the bus. Looking out the window at the changing skies and looking across the aisle at the faces of fellow commuters, I saw a quiet, living ministry of presence, love and community.

CHANGE AND SUFFERING

The themes we explored over this past year could not have spoken more directly to my life. Having relocated to the UK just over two years ago, the theme of Change hit deep. Looking at Matthew's Gospel, Jesus' Beatitudes revealed that faith is not an inflexible checklist of rules, but an evolution of the heart – a life wholly immersed in Christ, loving our neighbours and welcoming the stranger. Like the first disciples, we were challenged to step out

of familiar bubbles into the unknown, living in that fruitful space of high challenge and high support.

Alongside Change came Suffering. Deep in the trenches of hardship is where a certain resilience is forged. We are reminded that collective suffering often brings us together as the body of Christ; we gather because we carry scars, needs and burdens. It is precisely in those vulnerable places that God avails Himself through the people who surround us – Love incarnate, carrying the weight alongside us.

FINDING JOY IN SERVICE

Through this journey, I also discovered that joy is something entirely distinct from temporary happiness. **Joy is the quiet, enduring aftermath of a life that has emerged – and is still emerging – from suffering.** Even through seasons of profound personal loss, upheaval and trial, joy carries on because it is anchored in Jesus.

Ultimately, I found that lasting joy in purposeful service. For me, service has never been seasonal, because the harvest has no season. Faith is not about trying to manage or fix one another; it is walking together as fellow pilgrims sharing the road. **Beneath every label, there is simply a person with their own scars, hopes and story.**

Having had the opportunity through Terrain to lead Sunday meetings and share in the children's spiritual journey at camp, it became clearer than ever: we are called to a ministry of love, compassion and presence in both the highs and the lows.



Ethan (far right) and his Terrain Team Mates at St Cuthbert's Cave, Northumberland

A FAMILY IN FAITH

To my fellow Terrain cohort, you were God-sent – a family that has left an indelible mark on my personal and spiritual journey. And to the wider fellowship here at Woking, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for all you have been and done as we have journeyed together in faith.

“What a privilege it has been to witness the wonderful work God is doing here.”

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES

As many of you know, it is now time for me to continue this journey closer to home at Horsham, in a community that is just a stone's throw away. My passion for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom through The Salvation Army remains central, and this move will allow me to be actively involved in practical ways that simply aren't possible from a distance. I look forward to building on my previous time at Horsham and embracing the new connections ahead.

Please know that I will continue to hold Woking in my prayers – the corps, the leadership team and especially the youth who have walked with me as dear friends, relationships that will simply continue in a new form. I step into this next season feeling joyful, expectant and deeply rejuvenated.

Christ for me, all the way.

Summer Sizzler - Part 1

BBQ AT JO & ANDREW'S

When it comes to summer get-togethers, aren't we pleased we have the Coxes – both Senior and Junior?

A SUMMER TRADITION

Mid-July and it was BBQ time – at the home of Cox Junior. Each year, Jo and Andrew open up their garden and provide delicious BBQ food at a nominal charge, with all the proceeds going to the Corps. This year was no exception.

Jo and Andrew, together with their catering team – Dave and Gwen, Martin, Freda & Ted, Margaret and Vickie – worked together and greeted those who gathered to sit, chat, meander around the garden and, most especially, eat!



L-R: Rachel, Loiuise, Caroline and Alison

There were meat and veggie options, a variety of sides, and strawberries and cream, beautifully prepared and cut by the two MiLs (mothers-in-law!), Freda and Gwen.

MUSICAL CHAIRS – WITHOUT THE MUSIC!

There was plenty of good-natured chat and banter, but foolish is the person who leaves their seat, even for a minute or two, as by the time they get back, they'll find it occupied by someone else! A real game of musical chairs, as it were – but without the music!

So, a great time together – not too hot (don't forget, we were in the heatwave period!) and with much beautiful food. No need to eat until about Tuesday!

TIME TO PUT OUR FEET UP

The best part of the day is when the barbie equipment is all cleaned and stacked away, tables and chairs sorted, everything back in the right place and the garden back to normal. Time for the Coxes and the Benneyworths to chill over a timely and well-deserved mug of proper coffee – and to start planning the Cream Tea!!!

A total of £250 was raised for Corps funds. Our grateful thanks to Jo and Andrew for being such generous and welcoming hosts.

Summer Sizzler - Part 2

CREAM TEA AT DAVE & GWEN'S

Was it only two weeks ago that we were 'noshing' at Jo & Andrew's BBQ? **Diets had obviously been thrown to the wind as we gathered for the annual cream tea, held in Dave and Gwen's wonderful garden!** Amazing how a garden can be transformed when people adept at erecting gazebos get going!



READY FOR TEA!

Gazebos done – chairs ready – lunch eaten. Now time to deal with the food! Gwen had sensibly not got up at 6.00am to bake the scones before she went to the Sunday morning meeting, as she has done for years. This year she spent a quiet morning preparing her delicious fresh-baked scones. Beautiful homemade jam by David – and an abundance of cakes from Gill G, Cherry, Freda & Gwen. Buckets of ice for chilled drinks – cafetières at the ready. All good to go.

So we gathered, some bringing their chairs, for plenty of good fun and fellowship and, of course, plenty of chatter, with a star turn from Sue S at one stage, making sure we were all awake! Again, the day was just right weatherwise – certainly not heatwave temperatures and no rain. Although the year when it did rain was so memorable and such great fun!

TIME TO PACK UP

Eventually, it was time to pack up the chairs – time to go. Time for the gazebos to be taken down and put away. Time for the Coxes and Benneyworths to chill and debrief!

Again, our grateful thanks to Dave & Gwen for generously opening up their home each year. Back in the pre-Covid days, the Cream Tea was held when the band would play at the annual service at the crematorium. Those days are now long gone, but the Cream Tea has survived.

However, this is positively the last one Gwen is doing. Dave & Gwen are happy for their garden to be used, but someone else needs to organise the food! Gwen will certainly be a hard act to follow!

A total of £160 was raised.

The Measure of the Treasure

By Yoma Martin

SUNDAY WORSHIP FOLLOWING SUMMER CAMP

'Summer Camp' – those two words bring all kinds of feelings and memories to anyone who has been fortunate enough to attend such an event. The Salvation Army has been running these camps for children for decades, and they can be life-changing.

How lovely it was that five of our young people were able to attend this year, along with many others from around our Division: Keith, Kleith, Sammi, Ariana and Lilia, along with Captain Debbie, who was on the staff.

On Sunday 6th September, we had a wonderful meeting where we found out so many things about the week – and what fun they had! Also what fun we had... hearing their stories, watching videos and singing (plus dancing!) along with the songs. They came wearing their special Camp T-shirts, which reminded us of the theme of the week: 'The Measure of the Treasure'.

PRECIOUS MOMENTS

We heard of the many precious moments that were shared. The time before bed became a special part of the day, with a prayer time where powerful prayers were shared.

We heard about favourite things! Not 'raindrops on roses'.....but water sports, swimming and wonderful food. The only thing that was not enjoyed was the last day, when they had to go home.



LEARNING, GROWING AND SHARING

There were opportunities to participate in their selected workshops. In the sports workshops, they learned about the importance of teamwork, communication, kindness and playing fair – as well as learning 'The Athlete's Prayer'. In the dance workshop, they learned about respect, discipline, gaining confidence and how to express themselves in worship. Captain Debbie led the Art workshop.

There were so many things to share, but one important scripture message has become important for all: '**We are God's treasured possession**'.

We thank God for our young people, and Chris Todd closed this time of sharing with a prayer for them.

Congratulations



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE BIRTHDAY GIRL!!!

A surprise for Captain Debbie, a birthday cake and a signed card from her friends at Coffee & Chat!

Lesley had baked a cake to celebrate Debbie's birthday the following Monday. The Thursday Coffee & Chat group wanted to let Captain Debbie know how much they appreciate her.

A very generous Lesley also made sure there was cake for the following Sunday after worship! It was delish!!!



AVON CALLING!!

As with many a respectable Salvation Army corps whilst you're sharing a post worship coffee an 'Avon Lady' can be seen distributing bags containing Avon orders!

For what seems to be forever Janet Broooks has been an Avon Lady and she recently received an invitation to an Avon celebration event.



Janet writes: "I was invited to a Loyalty Royalty afternoon tea at an hotel in Worcester on Monday 14th September to celebrate being a long serving Avon representative - 40 years. Claire came with me as my guest and we had a train journey and then a taxi to get to the event. It was a lovely afternoon tea and to be recognised with other representatives made it a truly memorable day to remember."

Well done Janet! Warmest congratulations – particularly from your customers in the Corps!!

Congratulations



Belated congratulations
& good wishes to:

Audrey & Maurice Mayes

on their

69th Wedding

Anniversary

on Monday 24th August

Dave & Gwen Cox

on their

62nd Wedding

Anniversary

on Wednesday 2nd

September.

What an amazing and
fantastic quartet!!!!

Flower List

OCTOBER

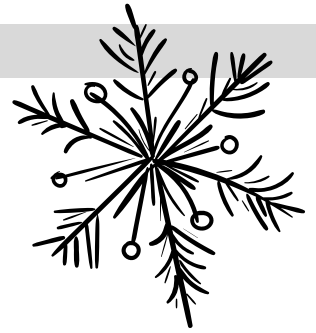
- 4th - Jan Reed
- 11th - Jo & Andrew Cox
- 18th - Kip Abbott
- 25th - Wendy & Ian Taylor

NOVEMBER

- 1st - Peter & Louise
- 8th - Rita Frankham
- 15th - Gill Gregory
- 22nd - Ted & Freda Benneyworth
- 29th - Janet & Michael Brooks



Christmas 2026



An open invitation to attend or participate in all or some of the following...

NOVEMBER

- Thursday 12th - **Coffee Shop Silent Auction** (9.00am - 12.00pm)
- Saturday 21st - **Christmas Fayre** (10.00am - 2.00pm)
- Sunday 29th - **Brunch at Bethlehem** (11.00am)

DECEMBER

- Sunday 6th - **Toy Service** (11.00am)
- W/C 7th - **Toy Parcel Appeal Week** (details to follow)
- Thursday 17th - **Christmas Coffee shop** (9.00am – 12.00pm)
- Sunday 20th - **Family Carol Service** (11.00am)
- Thursday 24th - **Christmas Eve Service by Candlelight** (5.30pm)
- Friday 25th - **Christmas Day Service** (10.30am)
- Sunday 27th - **Morning Worship** - (11.00am)
- Thursday 31st - **Bring & Share New Years Eve Lunch** (11.00am – 1.00pm)



For more details about upcoming events and activities, see the announcements during Sunday worship (also in our YouTube livestream) or the noticeboard in the café area.

Getting to Know - Alanna Luxton

COMMUNITY PROGRAMME MANAGER

Hi, I'm Alanna Luxton from Devon. I am the Community Programme Manager here at The Salvation Army in Woking.

Outside of work, my hobbies are crafting, spending time with family and friends, and making memories with those I love. I have also recently bought my first pet dog, Dinx, who is energetic and the joy of my life.

A TASTE OF LIFE IN BALI

Whilst at college completing my last year of a Level 3 Health and Social Care Diploma, I was lucky enough to be chosen to go to Bali, Indonesia, where I completed my work experience.

Whilst in Bali, we got to learn about their culture and explore the beautiful surrounding towns and villages near where we stayed in Gianyar. We stayed in a homestay with a local family, where we experienced their culture, way of living, prayer time and, of course, their traditional foods.

One of our placements was in a community supporting people with disabilities. We learnt that, in some parts of Indonesia, disability can be associated with beliefs about 'black magic' and 'karma' within a family. We learnt about the belief that having a disabled family member can be seen as a reflection of how the family lived in a past life and is now reflected in their current life.

FINDING MY PLACE IN WOKING

I am committed to my new role as Community Programme Manager because it gives me the opportunity to combine my experience and skills with my passion for helping others. I want to support programmes that have a genuine impact on individuals and the wider community, while ensuring that people feel supported, valued and included.

I have found my passion within The Salvation Army through volunteering and supporting various Salvation Army centres, including Tiverton, Camberwell and Hastings. This has allowed me to see the need for support within the community.

Most importantly, I am committed to giving my best to the role, working positively with colleagues and community partners, and helping to deliver programmes that create lasting and meaningful benefits for the people we support.



A Verse to Live By

"Trust in the Lord
with all your heart,
and do not lean on
your own
understanding; in all
your ways
acknowledge him,
and he will make
straight your paths."
Proverbs 3:5-6

Getting to Know - Yoma Martin

CHILDREN & FAMILIES MISSION LEAD

I have just started a new role at the Corps, as Children & Families Mission Lead, and have been asked to share a little bit about myself.

I think most of you will know that I am married to Major John. We arrived at Woking Corps in 2015, and it is lovely to be part of this Corps, which is such a special fellowship.

FROM TUNBRIDGE WELLS TO OFFICERSHIP

I was born in Tunbridge Wells in Kent, the older sister of two brothers. I attended The Salvation Army from childhood and was a very active member of the Corps, both as a child and a young adult.

On leaving school, I trained to be a PA and my first job was at a Public Relations Agency in London, where I worked for four years. Alongside my work and my SA life, I felt convicted that I should become a Salvation Army officer. I entered the International Training College in 1985 as part of the Messengers of Peace Session and was commissioned in 1987. It was here that John and I met... the rest is history!

THE JOURNEY SINCE THEN

Over the years, we served in several Corps appointments, followed by two Divisional Headquarters appointments for John. Our daughters, Katherine and

Imogen, were born when we were at Hillingdon Corps. They are our joy, and we thank God for them every day.

A few years later, some health issues led to me leaving officership. This was not an easy time, but I am grateful that my health improved and I started work in a local CoFE High School, first as a Teaching Assistant and then as a Learning Mentor. In 2014, John moved again and I had the opportunity to work at the SA International College for Officers, where I worked for 12 years and had the privilege of meeting hundreds of officers from all over the world.

AND SO, TO NOW...

...and so, to now. I feel it a privilege to be able to serve in the Corps in this new role. I would ask for your prayers in the coming days. Thanks for all your encouragement – it is so much appreciated.



*Favourite
Scripture
verse: '**...I
have come
that they
may have
life, and
have it to
the full**'.
John 10:10*

Amanda McLoughlin

By Alison Campbell

SEASONS OF LIFE



SEASON 1: SOUTH AFRICA

Amanda was born on 4th July 1972 into a large Christian family based in the Western Cape area of **South Africa**, and grew up with her sisters, Elsabe and Chantal. She saw her grandmother always praying, and early memories of her father singing with his guitar influenced her joy in music. In 1991, she joined the military while finishing college. From 1993 to 1995, she worked in business, sourcing artisans and artists, and homewares.

SEASON 2: LONDON

Amanda came to the **UK** in 1996 as a live-in carer in London. From 1998, she worked nights at the Wyndham and Albergy (now known as the Noel Coward)

Theatres in Leicester Square, while during the day she worked through an agency in various department stores, including Selfridges. She then joined a luxury wool business and became a national manager. She was very organised and also skilled with people.

SEASON 3: WOKING, AND A SEQUENCE OF OFFICERS IN CHARGE

By the time baby Hayley came along, they were living in Goldsworth Park. Amanda met **Ken and Wendy Clark** at The Salvation Army's new premises on Sythwood, where they welcomed her and her start-up business, 'Zebedees' music classes for children. Beginning in 2009, attendance grew into a friendship network. Hayley was never far from Amanda's sight. Being a mum and working with children brought her great joy.

Amanda saw each step as a new blessing. *"That's how it all happened; it was amazing."* During this time, as she said, *"Believing in God was turning into knowing God."*

Meanwhile, **Will and Debbie Pearson** became the corps officers, and **Jan Howlin** was the community programme manager. Corps and community programmes were in harmony, with 'Zebedees' as a joyful, regular presence. After five years, Jan returned to officership, just as Will and Debbie said

farewell to Woking. At this point, Amanda was appointed as the community programme manager.

Amanda came to church. She said, *“I would come to church with Hayley, and I would cry all the time. Every time the Songsters would sing, I would cry... Over the years, the music of The Salvation Army has been my healing balm. I used to come and soothe, and be healed – like waters of rest and peace.”*

John Martin took up the corps leadership in July 2015. He and Amanda worked in collaboration with local officers, congregation members and volunteers of all kinds, as well as neighbouring churches and the wider community. It became common knowledge that no one entered The Salvation Army space without a welcome. Amanda enrolled as an adherent. This favourite job increasingly confirmed to her that faith works through love, both inside and outside the building.

Just as Covid hit, **David and Margaret House** came as the officers. During their time, Amanda publicly committed her life to God as a soldier, saved to serve, while working courageously through relapse and treatment. *“Every day I say to God, I’m reporting for duty.”*

SEASON 4: MERCIES NEW EVERY MORNING

From Covid onwards, through local conversations with friends and

neighbours, the influence of Amanda’s faith spread through her neighbourhood. Officers **Vanessa and Xander Coleman** affirmed home and neighbourhood ministry, and they commissioned her as the corps CSM. Amanda’s heart of love for her Lord was steadfast. *“I thought God would take me around the world to serve him, but instead it has been a journey within.”* She encouraged, advised and prayed.

By the time **Debbie Hogarth** arrived at Woking in 2025, Amanda was increasingly based at home and in hospital.

John 14:23b says, “My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.” She practised being ‘at home’ wherever she was, willing to follow God’s lead: “dwelling in the shelter of the Most High... in the shadow of the Almighty” (Psalm 91:1).

Just two weeks before Amanda was Promoted to Glory, the Band and Songsters came to her home for a neighbourhood fellowship meeting. She said, *“Thank you for all the years of being with me, and supporting me and Hayley, because it’s too hard to do it alone, and we have helped each other.”*

We praise God for our faithful friend, Amanda McLoughlin, CSM, Promoted to Glory 8 August 2026.

Celebration of Life – Amanda McLoughlin

On an extremely warm Sunday afternoon, we met together to celebrate the life of our dear friend Amanda.



The celebration was led by Major John Martin, who had started his appointment as the Corps Officer/leader of Woking Corps on the same day that Amanda had started her time as Community Programme Manager. They had worked together for four years, resulting in a strong relationship. It was Amanda's request that John take her Celebration of Life and subsequent committal the following day.

A CELEBRATION OF AMANDA'S LIFE

Knowing that the time would come, Amanda had planned her Celebration.

The hall was transformed by many beautiful floral displays arranged by Amanda's family and friends. There had also been an open invitation for people to share in a buffet lunch before the service, again organised by Amanda's family and friends, some of whom had flown in from South Africa.

There were many tears, but also laughter, as Amanda's love of music and her deep faith were highlighted. We were reminded that each day Amanda would say to God, "I'm reporting for duty". Beautiful songs were sung, tributes were paid through the spoken word and in song. How brave were Hayley, Chantal and Elsabe that afternoon.

A FINAL BLESSING

Finally, at the end of an afternoon of celebration, testimony and memories, we listened as Amanda, through a previous recording, sang a final blessing over us – 'The Lord bless you, and keep you'. Amen.



Jane by Jan

by Jan Howlin

GROWING UP IN WOKING

Jane was born on 28th September 1963 to Michael and Stella Thacker in Woking. Jane and her brother Christopher grew up in a busy household. The house Jane grew up in, which in later years would be the house that Jane and Andy lived in, was an open house where everyone was welcomed. It was warm and friendly, where Lucy the cat patrolled, and was a treasure trove of curiosities, fish tanks, and all sorts of things that were either from shows that had been done or shows that were to come.

Stella and Mike were heavily involved in the Woking Amateur Operatic Society and that spilled over into their home. Jane loved to dance and studied ballet as a child. This passion and skill transferred into her performing with the Operatic Society when she was old enough. I remember one occasion when we, as a family, had front row seats at a performance of Brigadoon. It was memorable in as much as we had to look up at the stage, which made the dry ice encompassing when it came down and eye-watering when the kilts flew up!

A FRIENDSHIP THAT LASTED A LIFETIME

I need to go back a bit to 1978, when I met Jane. We had moved to Woking when I was 15 and so I joined a new school. I was placed in Jane's class, and she immediately took me under her wing. We

sat together in all the subjects we did together. I completely blame Jane for my lack of ability in Maths, as she happily chatted to me throughout that subject during the next couple of years.



I repaid her friendship by inviting her along to the Salvation Army Youth Club Disco that was held at the old SA hall in Walton Road. I had told her that there would be some very nice boys there and along she came. She met Andy and the rest, they say, is history. Jane fell fiercely in love with Andy and I'm pretty sure he felt the same.

Jane had a long wait before Andy popped the question, as he was studying hard at university. But eventually he did, and they were married on the 25th September 1987 with a lovely reception at Clandon House.

Jane by Jan (continued)

WIFE, MOTHER AND GRANDMOTHER

Rebecca and Joshua came along, and Jane devoted her time to being a wife and mother, both roles she loved with a passion. She made sure that Rebecca and Josh had all the tools and skills needed to exceed in life, and she was immensely proud of the adults they turned into. Rebecca and Connor having recently made Jane and Andy grandparents with the birth of Luca was an incredible moment in Jane's life.



47 YEARS AT WOKING CORPS

Jane started attending the SA soon after the Disco and in time became a Soldier and a Songster, eventually becoming the Cradle Roll Sergeant, and through that ministry so many babies and their families knew that they were cared for. Jane was a

Company Guard (Sunday School teacher) and worked in the Young People's Team.

Timbrels was a real love of Jane's, and learning wasn't so easy as Jane was left-handed, but through sheer determination decided to play right-handed, which she did brilliantly. I think the last time we played out as a group was the opening of the new hall at Goldsworth Park.

When the new hall opened, Jane was part of the team that provided snacks and drinks at the toddler group and was a vital member of the café team when the hall was open each day. Jane was active in many of the Bible Studies over the years, most recently Gill's.

The Lord's Prayer was very important and precious to Jane. Very often, when it was her turn to take the devotions in Songster practice, she would ask us to say that same prayer together.

Jane served Woking Corps faithfully for 47 years and took part in all the ways that God led her.

A GIFT FOR SINGING

Her love of singing remained with her to the very end. It was a gift that she made the most of within the Operatic Society and the Songsters and in the Divisional Youth Chorus. She had a huge range and could make the top notes with ease.

FACING ILLNESS TOGETHER

Jane's health deteriorated slowly over the years, and Jane and Andy faced all of that privately and with such love and care that truly reflected their vows to each other many years previously.

A STRONG CHARACTER

It would be remiss of me not to say that Jane had a strong character that some people couldn't fathom. Jane's world view was a product of her upbringing and took many by surprise if they chose to lock horns with her. This created a passionate

person who fought for those she loved and cared for without exception. I always teased Jane about being my much older friend, as she was three months older than me and I never let her forget it. But now, in eternity, she will forever be my much younger friend as I grow older without her.

I will continue to cherish the memories of growing up and sharing life with Jane, when circumstances and distance didn't prevent that. The world will be a little quieter now.

Celebration of Life – Jane Stickland

A CELEBRATION OF JANE'S LIFE

The noise level rose as friends greeted friends and family members caught up with each other. More and more chairs had to be added – and then a hush began to descend on the gathering as we waited for the start of the Celebration of Life for Jane. Karen Todd from Basingstoke Corps provided quiet and sympathetic background piano music and accompaniment throughout.

Tributes from Jan Howlin, who was looked after by Jane when she joined the same school aged 15, and Leanne, Jane's carer, showed us another side of Jane. Finally, there was the beautiful tribute prepared by Becca and Josh for their Mum, and Andy's tribute to his much-loved wife, with a montage of pictures and music precious to them and Jane.

SO MUCH TO CELEBRATE

We were privileged to be reminded of Jane's 47-year commitment to the Corps and her involvement in so many activities. We were reminded of her courage and fortitude as her illness took more of a hold, and of the way Andy and Jane dealt with it all with such grace and dignity. So much to celebrate!!!!



When Benny and Maria Met Mike

By John Hogarth

ROMANIA PART TWO...

In the last issue of Tidings, I introduced you to my very good friend Mike, who worked with 'Open Doors'. Now I want to introduce you to two more good friends, my Romanian friends Benny and Maria.

I had just returned from spending a few months in Romania when, out of the blue, I received a phone call from a friend who lived in East Ham. **"John, I've met a couple from Romania. You need to come and meet them."**

So, I travelled to London and met Benny and Maria. We talked for so long, and they shared with me how they got out during communism and the dictatorship of Nicolae Ceauşescu. This was the beginning of a wonderful friendship.

Benny and Maria shared a vision they had: to go back and open a holiday centre for those less fortunate, which included street children and many more. They would guide them in practical ways and teach them about the love of Jesus.

God had confirmed this vision to them in many ways. Benny and I came up with a plan to speak to as many churches in the UK as we could, to share their vision, calling the trip 'A Taste of Romania', with Romanian food and talks about the vision. It was a blessed time.

WHEN MIKE MET BENNY AND MARIA

We ended up in Newcastle. I met up with friends from East Ham, then I phoned Mike and explained I was here with Romanian friends and asked if he would like to come to our meeting. Of course, Mike said "yes". He had such a love for Romania and the people.

Mike and his wife Cath came along, and what we thought was going to be another evening of sharing, God took over and something very special happened.

Let me explain:

"Where are you from?" Mike asked Benny.

Benny responded, *"Hunedoara."*

Mike said, *"I was there in the early 80s. I went to a Baptist Church and dropped off some boxes of Bibles."*

"That's our home church," Benny responded. *"Maria and I were in the church that night."*

Maria went into her handbag and pulled out a small Bible and said, *"I never thought I would ever meet the man who risked his life to bring us the Word of God."*

There was not a dry eye in the room.

A VISION BECOMES REALITY

Today there are still street children in Romania, those in extreme poverty. Benny and Maria's vision is now up and running by the name of "Casa Haralui", which means "House of Grace".

Anca Biris writes:

"As the name suggests, it is a place full of grace. I have been coming here since I was little and every time it amazes me, the peace and the tranquillity it inspires."

Vasita Chriciac writes:

"It is a place blessed by God."

Ivlia Maftai writes:

"I came to a Christian summer camp where you are loaded with a lot of grace."

I've met some wonderful Romanian people who have stood firm in their faith during persecution. They have all been a blessing to me.

John



A FOOTNOTE

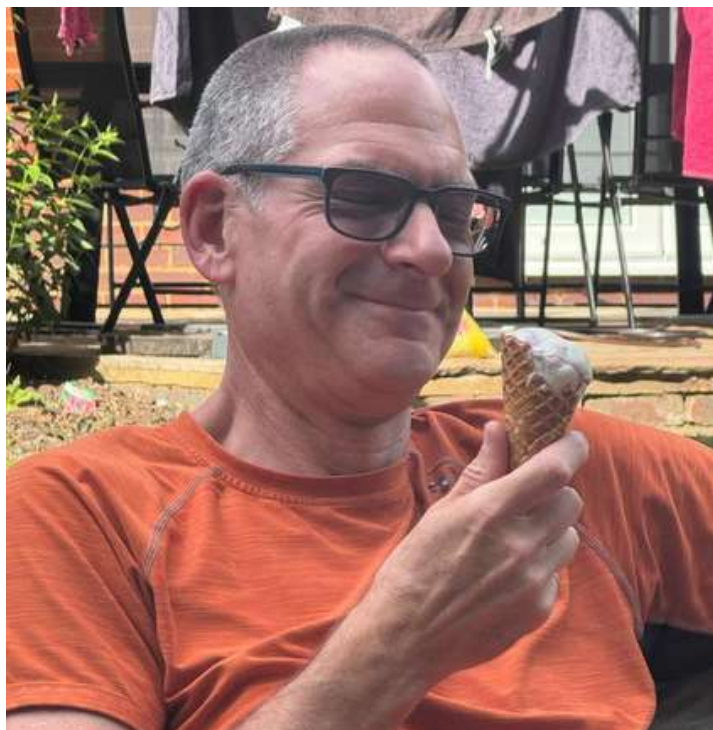
Mike now lives in a care home. He suffers from dementia, and his wonderful family visit every day and love him so much through these difficult times. There is a silence and the misunderstanding that comes with dementia, but you know what: he still talks of his love of God and is often heard singing hymns, word and tune perfect.

Benny was missing for a few days; he was discovered at the bottom of a well at home. Lots of people have different ideas about how he ended up at the bottom of the well. Was it a tragic accident, or was it the secret police, as Benny used to call them out and remind them of their evil doings? Only God knows the answer. I miss you, Benny. Rest in the arms of Jesus.

God empowers ordinary people.

My Running Journey & My Walk with God

Andrew Cox's testimony shared in worship one Sunday morning. Moments too special to have just one airing!



SAYING YES

Good morning everyone.

Being British, I think many of us find it a little uncomfortable talking about ourselves. When Debbie asked one of us (that's either me or Jo, of course) to share a testimony, I have to admit I wasn't exactly rushing to volunteer.

In fact, I only agreed after hearing Sam speak on Sunday 12th July – if you didn't hear him then I recommend you get him on catch-up via our YouTube channel! Sam, (if you're listening), you are an

inspiration to many of us. You may never fully know the impact you have on other people, but your faith and willingness to share encouraged me to also say yes to Debbie. So thank you, and please keep trusting God, speaking with your friends and following where He leads.

FINDING GOD ON THE RUN

One of the things that has become important in my life is running, or maybe I should say jogging. Not because I'm particularly fast, and certainly not because I enjoy every moment of it, but because God has used it to teach me about faith, discipline, and spending time with Him.

Jo and I are very fortunate to have woodland and open green spaces behind our house, and that is where I usually run. When I'm out there, I know there is a chance I might see one or more deer. Now, that may not mean much to everyone else, but for me it has become a gentle reminder of God's presence.

I don't always see the deer. Some days they're nowhere to be seen. But every time I go for a run (or a walk), I hope I might see them. **I don't expect it, but I hope for it because I know they're there somewhere. And that reminds me of my relationship with God.**

There are times when God's presence feels very real and obvious. Then there

are other times when we don't feel Him as strongly. Yet just because we don't see Him doesn't mean He isn't there.

Hebrews 11:1 tells us:

"Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."

When I run through the woods looking for those deer, I am reminded that faith is trusting in God's presence even when He is not immediately visible.



FAITH, DISCIPLINE AND GROWTH

Now, if I were to describe myself, I would say I am a person of discipline and duty. I like rules. I follow procedures. I'd also say that my little toe is probably the only creative bone in my body! But sometimes I wonder whether that discipline helps or hinders my spiritual life. Faith is not about ticking boxes or following a checklist.

Christianity is a relationship. However, I've come to realise that discipline can be a gift when it points us towards God.

About eighteen months ago, I had back surgery. Recovery was not instant. It required patience, perseverance, and a willingness to follow the guidance I was given by the doctors and physiotherapists. I followed the rules carefully, step by step, and eventually I was able to regain my strength and return to running.

Spiritually, growth often works the same way.

Andrew

Worship Online

Can't join us in person? Join us live on YouTube every Sunday, with the stream starting just before 11am. Or catch up at any time on our YouTube channel.

Subscribe to **@wokingsalvationarmy** to receive notifications when we go live and for new videos.



So Long - Farewell...!

This is a bittersweet issue of Tidings.

Bitter in that we, as a Corps, have suffered the loss of Amanda and Jane, two respected members of our Corps family. Neither was old, but both had suffered much. I would suspect this is the first time we have had to include two obituaries in the same issue.

However, this issue also welcomes two new team members: Alanna Luxton as our Community Programme Manager and Yoma Martin as our Children & Families Mission Lead. In a sense, we look to the future with fresh hope and optimism as they take up their respective roles. I'm not sure we've ever welcomed two new team members in the same issue either.

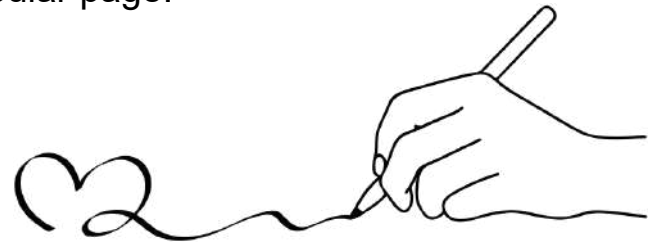
This is also a bittersweet issue as this will be my last issue collating the articles for publication.



MY TIME WITH TIDINGS

I think I took up this role in late 2013/early 2014, after I was asked by Captain Will Pearson if I would consider taking on the responsibility for Tidings. Towards the middle of 2025, both Pete and I realised it was time for a change.

I am so grateful to Pete for all his help over those 12 years – Pete worked on it for decades – it really has been great to work with him. I am also grateful to so many friends who have contributed articles over those years, and to Major Laugh, who has consistently delivered the goods and continues to be the most popular page!



It's been a privilege, I've enjoyed it - to a degree! – but of late it's become a worry – maybe I'm just getting old! I also feel it needs someone with fresh ideas and a new way of presenting it to take it forward. That's why it has been good to work with Vickie over the last couple of issues. With her advanced computer skills, she has brought a much more modern feel to Tidings with her graphics. I'm looking forward to seeing how Tidings will develop and evolve in the future!

Freda

Direct Line

Communication now is vastly different from the 1950s/1960s, when phones were not in people's hands all the time! It was a table model with a wire, a phone on the wall or a telephone box at the end of the road where you would need to press button A or B!!

We are now 24/7 available. We can make a call, send a text or, if you do WhatsApp, send a message to one person or a whole group of people – all at the same time, who can then reply and we have a WhatsApp chat!

SHARING AND SUPPORTING ONE ANOTHER

Our Corps WhatsApp Chat has been seriously overworked of late. Several birthdays with oh so many people saying 'Happy Birthday'. Then every now and again there's a request. 'Does anyone have?', 'Does anyone need?'

Most importantly, it's heavily used as a way of requesting prayer support. Sad news and bereavement, accidents, news of hospitalisation, illness, major surgery, major concerns. It's a way of informing but also a way of drawing us together as a Corps family, which helps us to become a loving and caring fellowship as we share in each other's joys and sorrows.

One thing we need to be watchful for, of course, is that we communicate with those who do not access WhatsApp, so that they don't feel excluded, and hopefully someone has contact with someone and can pass the information on. It's all about communication.

How about online worship – but that's for another time!

Blessings,
Freda

SOMEBODY PRAYED FOR ME

Lyrics by Claire Cloninger

*When my heart was so broken
that I could not pray,
When love wasn't easy to see.
Someone was there, somebody cared,
Somebody prayed for me.*

*Somebody went to the throne
of heaven,
Somebody lifted my name.
Bringing me into His holy presence,
Saying what I could not say.
Somebody showed me the face
of His mercy,
When darkness was all I could see.
Somebody pleaded the Blood
of Jesus,
Somebody prayed for me.*

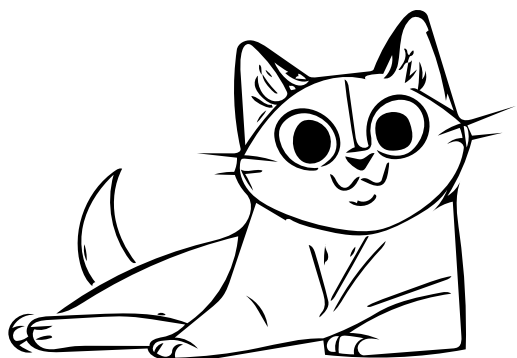
Comedy Hall - D.O.H.

(DEPARTMENT OF HUMOUR)

Furniture salesman: This sofa will seat five people with no problem.

Me: Where am I going to find five people with no problems?





Why don't we pronounce the MEOW in "homeowner"?

The man who invented "knock-knock" jokes should get a **no bell** prize !



It was Dad's turn to read Billy a bedtime story.

After fifteen minutes Mum called upstairs, "is he asleep yet?"

"Yes, finally," replied Billy.



Keep smiling,
Major Laugh

Our Vision & Mission



Woking Salvation Army Corps

OUR VISION

Fullness of life for all with Jesus

OUR MISSION

Love God • Love our neighbours • Love one another

We live this out by:



Reaching
out to
people with
Jesus' love



Supporting
believers to
grow deeper
in their faith
in God



Serving our
community in
transformative
ways