



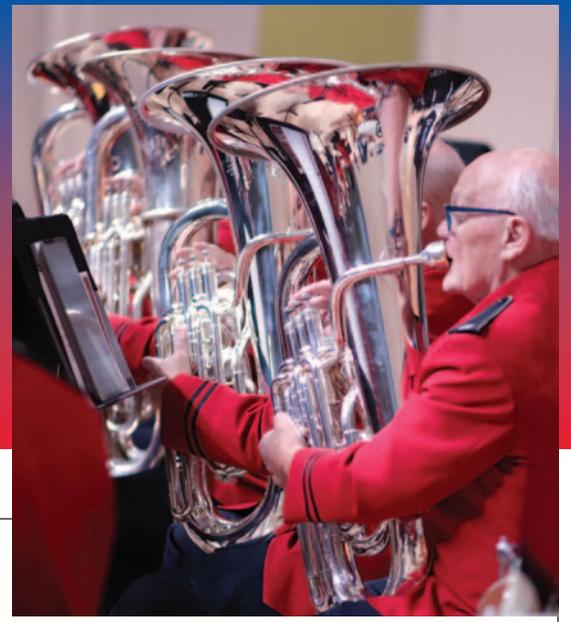
Central Connection

The Salvation Army / USA Central Territory
News and Views from the Midwest

"We are all one body, we have the same Spirit, and we have all been called to the same glorious future." Eph. 4:3,4 (NLT)

Volume 56, Number 1

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Concert brings warmth to a snowy evening

by William Himes

As the song goes, "Oh, the weather outside is frightful!" This was certainly the case on Saturday, November 29—the snowiest November day on record in Chicago—as nearly nine inches blanketed the area.

But the Chicago Staff Band (CSB), guest artists Boston Brass, and an audience of several hundred were undaunted as they made their way to the warm acoustics of Edman Chapel on the campus of Wheaton College to enjoy the annual *Sounds of the Seasons* concert.



Led by Bandmaster Brett Tolcher, the CSB kicked off the program with *Valasia Variants*, a warm and energetic work by UK composer Tom Davoren.

Next, the CSB launched into an exciting new work, *More than a Hero*, creatively cast in the style of a video game soundtrack (tipping a hat to the likes of John Williams and Hans Zimmer), written by staff bandsman Andrew Wainwright. This epic piece immediately



won the hearts of listeners of all ages as it featured the familiar children's choruses "Yes, Jesus loves me" and "My God is so big."

Excitement continued as the famous brass quintet Boston Brass

came on stage (José Sibaja and Jeff Conner on trumpet, Chris Castellanos on horn, Domingo Pagliuca on trombone, and William Russell on tuba). They presented three contrasting pieces which quickly

demonstrated their mastery: *Galop* (Shostakovich), *Wachet Auf* (Bach) and *Verona Porteno* (Piazzolla). Equally impressive, all of the music was performed from memory! It's no mystery why this is the third appearance of this amazing quintet at this concert.

Continued on page 8



Photos by Cathleen Himes

Justice is served

by Kayleen Ruthberg

The Oakbrook Terrace, Ill., Corps has launched a Gospel Justice Center with the mission to provide affordable legal guidance and compassionate counsel to neighbors in need, reminding each person that they do not have to face their legal struggles alone.

The Gospel Justice Center is supported by Administer Justice, a national legal aid ministry dedicated to equipping local churches to offer the help of a lawyer and the hope of God's love. Through this partnership, The Salvation Army can extend practical assistance and spiritual care in a setting that reflects Christ's compassion and justice.

To spread the word of the new program, the corps sent flyers to Pathway of Hope clients and social service agency partners and distributed them at the corps' food pantry and events

like Angel Tree interviews.

Appointments can be made online or if someone local calls the Administer Justice hotline they can be connected to the corps for an appointment. A one-time \$30 co-pay covers the entire process.

The Oakbrook Terrace Corps hosts the Gospel Justice Center on the fourth Saturday of every month from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., staffed by trained volunteers from the corps and the surrounding community, including licensed attorneys.

When a client arrives, they are welcomed by an intake specialist and a hospitality team that ensures a warm, supportive environment, including childcare when needed. Clients then meet with an attorney and a client advocate who help develop a clear plan of action and connect them to other community resources. Before leaving, clients are offered prayer and



Captain Enrique Coreano, Major Deb Sjogren, Dana Kalafut, Captain Chrissie Coreano, Lindsey Mitchell and Bryan Seiler at the opening of the Gospel Justice Center at the Oakbrook Terrace, Ill., Corps.

follow-up support to ensure they continue to feel encouraged and guided through their next steps.

"I had the privilege of serving as a Client Advocate during our first Gospel Justice Center," said Captain Chrissie Coreano, who leads the Oakbrook Terrace Corps with her husband, Captain Enrique Coreano. "It was a blessing to

walk alongside a client and help them understand the next steps in their legal journey. But the most powerful moment came when we prayed together. That is what Kingdom-building ministry is all about, and it is what The Salvation Army is all about—meeting people where they are with love, dignity and faith."

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No fear this year

by Lt. Colonel Dan Jennings
Territorial Secretary for Personnel

This past fall, my neighborhood—and maybe even yours—was filled with children in costumes, eagerly collecting candy and treats. When the roads were crowded with monsters, robots, wild animals, and other characters, it could lead to some scary situations. The subdivision directly next to where I live is called Sleepy Hollow. Needless to say, they fully embrace Halloween and even arrange for an appearance of the "Headless Horseman." However, we understand that it is not real. This is an exercise in make-believe. If we were to confuse somehow the characters who wear costumes and go from house to house with something to fear, there would be serious issues to address.

One such issue was being addressed by the author of Proverbs, who writes, "The sluggard says, 'There is a lion in the road! There is a lion in the streets!'" (Proverbs 26:13). The writer employs hyperbole to shine light on lethargy and the paralyzing effects it can have on us.

We can poke a bit of fun at our sluggard, who is worried about a lion being on the road. We can relate this overall principle to other things that we may be facing as well. While we may not be imagining lions just outside of our house, we can create imaginary situations that can grind us to a halt. This is most prevalent where fear and lack of motivation overlap.



You may be considering a new initiative or starting a new course. It can be tempting to start imagining all the ways that these things might fail. This is a classic characterization of what fear is: "an unpleasant and often strong emotion caused by anticipation of danger." (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

As we begin this new year, there are opportunities to try some new things. Why not try something that stretches you? If you have some anxiety about trying something new, here are three things you can do right now to help you move past fear and try difficult things:

1. Don't be a sluggard – This is to say, try not to be lazy. Laziness is good at making excuses for us. There are enough real dangers in this world that we do not have to dream up lions in the streets.

2. Become good at discerning the difference between real and perceived danger. There are some things in this world for which you should have a healthy respect and fear. Conversely, other things cause unreasonable fear. As you become better at understanding the difference, your ability to try hard things will increase.

3. Picture success as you try something that may be difficult. You may find that it was worth your effort. You may also find that it is less frightening than you initially thought.

All God's creatures

As he spoke a blessing over the four-legged guests during a Sunday worship service, Major Steve Koehler, Kansas City Citadel, Kan., corps officer, gently rested his hand on each animal. They appeared to be listening intently.

The prayer asked the Lord to bless each pet with "health, joy and safety" and that their lives might be filled with "play, rest and love."

For Major Steve, conducting the corps' first pet blessing service was an honor.

"Our pets are like family in many ways," he said. "They add value to our lives. Those in attendance were full of smiles during this special day."

Major Charlotte Koehler, who leads the corps with her husband, Major Steve, added, "The service was about more than just saying a blessing over our pets. It was about how pets are a living, breathing reminder of God's presence—they teach us love, patience, joy, and trust—they point us toward the heart of our Creator."

Carolyn Wood, a corps member, was thrilled to bring her 3-year-old Pomeranian, Treasure. "In all my life, I have never been able to take my dog to church with me," Carolyn said. "I just felt the blessing in my heart as he prayed for Treasure."



Major Charlotte said, "I couldn't help but reflect on verses of scripture about God's creations big and small and how He loves them all."

The sermon that day was on whether pets go to Heaven. In a refreshment time after the service, people joined in the discussion, including sharing about pets they have loved and lost.

"Everyone thought it was a meaningful time together," Major Charlotte said.

The pet blessing service was just one in a series of outreach events planned by the corps to reach out and welcome people in the community to the corps for worship and other programs.

The corps is planning to host Messy Church to offer a welcoming creative space and intergenerational fellowship for neighborhood families with activity stations set up in the chapel or gym. Another Sunday will highlight older adult ministries, especially geared to welcome residents from Booth Manor, who are connected with the corps through the monthly luncheon and fellowship program New Beginnings. A second pet blessing will probably take place in October 2026, near the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi.

"This year, we're reaching out, engaging our community, and inviting everyone to belong," Major Charlotte said. "Because true belonging happens through real relationships."



Major Steve Koehler blesses a husky while its owner, Lucas Grisham, joins in prayer.



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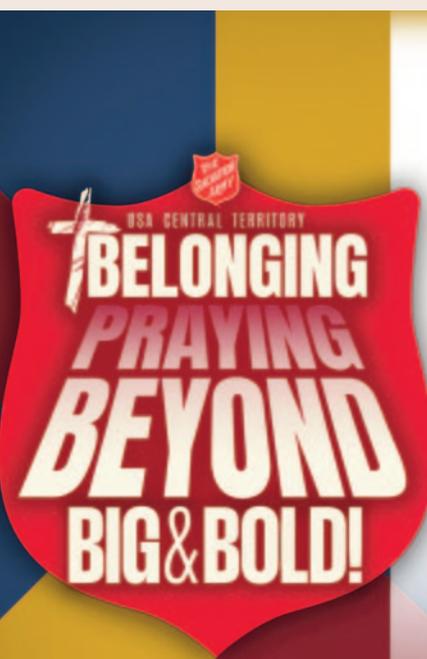
JANUARY

This year we are asking you to *pray beyond yourself*. To *pray big and bold* prayers for your neighbors, community, city, our nation and the world!

Each month we will share historical, revolutionary prayers.

To begin, let's look at how Jesus taught us to pray from Matthew 6:9-13 (ESV). The word "our" has been bolded to emphasize this prayer is beyond ourselves. It is corporate. It is global! Let us pray:

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."



For weekly prayers, see your corps officer or visit salarmycentral.org and click on the action box.

Taking all the right steps

For Majors Mauricio and Melisa Gutierrez, the course of true love began with a broken leg.

Mauricio, a resident of Punta Alta, Argentina, had traveled 20 miles to attend a folk-dance festival in Melisa's hometown of Bahia Blanca.

Melisa, a member of a folk-dancing troupe, was without her usual dance partner, due to his broken leg. Local residents knew Mauricio was a fine folk dancer and encouraged him to step in and dance with Melisa.

"We were a good couple on the stage," Major Mauricio recalled. "Then Melisa's sister, director of the group, asked me to come to their family's corps each week and practice dancing."



Majors Gutierrez work with Peter Kim on their corps' music programs.

After visiting the Villa Delfina Corps several times, Mauricio—who had left the Roman Catholic Church at 14—decided to recommit his life to God and join The Salvation Army.

He also decided he wanted to be with Melisa forever.

"I came to the corps to folk dance, and I found Jesus—and a wife!" Major Mauricio said with a broad smile.

Married in 2007, the couple began their officer training in 2008. They spent one year at the Central Territory's College for Officer Training (CFOT) before returning to Argentina for their second year and commis-

sioning as part of the "Prayer Warriors" session.

Mauricio and Melisa served as corps officers in various places in Argentina and spent four years at the South America East Territorial Headquarters as secretary for business administration and youth and candidates' secretary, respectively.

Their international service as corps officers at the Chicago La Villita Corps began in February last year.

"God heard our prayer," Major Melisa, a third-generation Salvationist, said. "When we were at CFOT, it was our desire to someday come here again and return all that the Central Territory gave to us."

About 70 members attend Sunday services, and about 25-30 families receive weekly help from the food pantry at the La Villita Corps, according to Major Mauricio.

"We also provide pastoral counseling and work with the families in Pathway of Hope," he added. "We lead prayer meetings and Bible studies, and we pray that our corps' impact on the community will continue to grow."



They are excited to have incorporated some sort of music and/or dance program at each corps where they have served. Major Melisa now teaches sacred dance at La Villita.

"God gave us the gift to teach artistic things," Major Mauricio said.

The majors and their daughters, Priscila, 14, and Keila, 12, are enjoying life in Chicago. In the warmer months, they love to go to the park, the girls ride their bikes and Major Mauricio fishes in a small lake close to their home. In the winter, the family enjoys working together on indoor projects like building Lego sets and making chocolate treats.

While they don't know if down the road they will be called back to Argentina or another country to serve, they trust God's plans and timing.

"We are so blessed because of the plans of God," Major Mauricio said. "Wherever He wants us, we will go. We are ready to serve."



Majors Mauricio and Melisa Gutierrez, and daughters Priscila and Keila, with General Lyndon Buckingham and Commissioner Bronwyn Buckingham at the Belonging Congress

Musically speaking

by Natalie Shiels

Anyone who spends time around The Salvation Army can tell music and the arts are important to our ministry. It can be a way to connect with people, to share the gospel, and most importantly, to worship. And through a new Youth Arts Advisory Board (YAAB), it can provide a place for young adults to belong, be heard, develop as lay leaders, and "speak into" decisions which impact them.

Working in collaboration with the territorial music and creative arts ministries department, YAAB consists of nine young adults from five divisions who meet four times a year to discuss music programs throughout the territory. Their goal is to contribute to the decisions made about music programs on behalf of youth and young adults who participate in events like Central Music Institute (CMI) and Resonate. Each member is also a part of a territorial music group such as the Territorial Youth Band or Chorus, Territorial Worship

Collective, Central Territorial Staff Songsters or Chicago Staff Band.

YAAB discusses a wide variety of topics, such as how to make CMI better and more accessible, how to engage with divisional music programs, and how to further develop the musical influence across the Midwest. Board members do not take this responsibility lightly. They feel empowered to lead and represent their divisions to the best of their ability.

Over the last two years, YAAB gradually has become more student-led. Members have brought creative ideas to the conversation, led meetings, and expressed their desire to be more involved in leadership roles for territorial music events. YAAB strives to make positive changes to these kinds of programs in order to bring more people into these spaces and to create a better environment for community building and spiritual development.



Finding community and calling

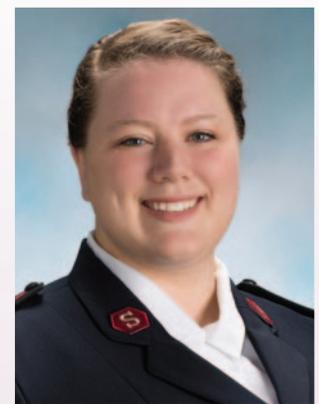
by Lt. Melissa Christiansen

As a college student, I never could have imagined how a summer job would change the course of my life. I signed up to work at a Salvation Army camp mostly because I loved kids and wanted a meaningful summer experience. What I didn't realize was that God was orchestrating something much bigger—He was introducing me to a community and a calling that would shape my future.

That summer was more than just long days and campfire songs; it was holy ground. I encountered the love of Jesus in a tangible way through the people I served alongside. Majors Scott and Jolinda Shelbourn, divisional youth secretaries (DYS), weren't just supervisors; they were mentors, encouragers, and examples of servant leadership. They saw potential in me I didn't yet see in myself, and they took time to invest in my spiritual growth. Through their words and example, I began to understand what ministry could look like.

Fast forward 11 years. I now serve as a DYS myself. I'm reminded of that first encounter with The Salvation Army and the impact it had on my life. Now, I have the incredible privilege of pouring into the next generation, the campers who come eager to encounter Jesus and the staff who are discovering their place in God's story.

There's something powerful about watching a young leader grow in confidence, faith and purpose. I see so much of my younger self in them: the same excitement, uncertainty,



openness to God's leading. To walk alongside them, encourage them, and witness how the Lord is working in and through them is one of the greatest joys of my ministry. At our recent divisional young adult retreat, it was great to have several summer staff members in attendance and engaging with the teaching and fellowship.

Being a DYS is more than a position. It's a calling to invest in people, to create spaces where lives are transformed, and to help others see how God can use their gifts for His glory. I'm profoundly thankful for this ministry and the opportunity to give back in the same way others once poured into me. God is faithful, and it's a privilege to be part of His ongoing story of transformation through camp and youth ministry.



To learn about becoming an officer, visit salarmycentral.org/candidates

How I *belong* and help others belong



Lt. Luke Hursh
Salina, Kan.

What do you do?

I am the corps officer with my wife, Patricia, in Salina, Kan.

Who helped you belong and how?

My parents, who are officers, showed me that ministry is not always easy but it's rewarding.

What books are you reading?

The Fast Walk and Fire Within, 31 Life Lessons on Evangelism, Discipleship and the Gospel

What pushes you beyond your comfort zone?

Having conversations with people I don't agree with and being able to keep my sanity.

What's your superpower?

Giving

What's on your bucket list?

Sitting down with the General one-on-one and talking about the Army's future.

What one word sums up your testimony?

Resilience

If you could have dinner with one person in history, who would it be and what would you be eating?

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, imprisoned German theologian and anti-Nazi dissident. Dinner with him would be rich with wisdom on standing firm in faith and acting justly in a broken world. The meal could be simple, like bread and soup.

Simply following Jesus

Encourager. Prayer warrior. Anchor.

This is how people describe Jackie Fulcher, a soldier at the Battle Creek, Mich., Corps.

Recognizing her joyful dedication to sharing the love of Christ and leading others as they walk with Him, she received the Territorial Award of Excellence for Spiritual Life, an honor she humbly accepted at the Belonging Congress.

For Jackie, she's simply following Jesus. "I love people," she said.

A fourth-generation Salvationist, Jackie has been involved in just about every area of lay ministry for over seven decades, including serving in the kitchen, praying with visitors in the social services office, volunteering during the holidays, and leading teen Sunday school class and corps cadets.

"I love seeing the kids grow in their spiritual walk," she said. "To see just how much they change over the years. Several have become officers, others have become ministers in other churches, some still attend the corps."

Currently Jackie serves on the corps council and leads women's ministries. She continues to play a vital role in the spiritual health and development of the corps and stops by every day to walk the halls for exercise, attend senior activities and help wherever she's needed.



Participating in a cardio drumming class at the corps



Jackie with her granddaughter Captain Melinda Tripp

"Jackie takes care of herself physically and spiritually," said Captain Mika Roinila, who leads the corps with his wife, Captain Grace Roinila. "She exercises, knows her Bible, is an example to others."

"When we have a prayer request, it goes to Jackie first," added Captain Grace. "She gives us ideas for how we can pray for people and came up with a schedule and list for daily prayers for different groups."

Jackie's spiritual leadership encompasses not only those who are part of corps programs but those who turn to it for help. She is keen to listen, share her faith, and quick to pray for them. Even during her own seasons of loss and pain, she is focused instead on their needs and well-being.

"People see love in Jackie's life," said Captain Grace. "She always gives the time to people that they need."

ALL WE NEED



A podcast focusing on spiritual health

Each month a guest joins Territorial Commander Commissioner Evie Diaz to discuss the Central Territory's priorities of spiritual life, youth or leadership development.

Season II, Episode I: A Conversation with Territorial Priorities Taskforce leaders Lt. Colonel Darlene Harvey, Major Debra Pascoe and Major Ronnie Amick

Listen and subscribe through your favorite podcast app.

His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. — 2 Peter 1:3 (NIV)

Called Higher, Deeper, Lower

My Journey at the International College for Officers

by Captain Josh Polanco

A Legacy of Leadership

Since its founding in London in 1905 as the International Staff Training Lodge, the International College for Officers (ICO) has shaped generations of Salvation Army leaders. I was humbled to represent the Central Territory last summer at ICO alongside 29 delegates from 16 nations. Before attending, I wondered how I could be gone so long or if I'd fit in. But with the guidance of officers who'd been there and encouragement from my divisional commander, I surrendered my questions and insecurities to Jesus. I'm so glad I did because from the moment I boarded my flight to London, I sensed God preparing me for a deeper work within my heart. My prayer was simple: *Lord, let Your work be done in me—in this time, for Your glory, and for the sake of others.*

The ICO Program

When I arrived at Sunbury Court, I knew God would stretch me but couldn't have imagined how wide-ranging and personal it would be.

Each day followed a sacred rhythm. We began with morning prayers, followed by teachings on leadership, ethics and theology. At other times, we entered quiet spaces: retreats, journaling, small group conversations about our walk with God and our calling.

Some of the most powerful moments came when delegates shared "God's Way with Me," recounting their salvation, sanctification and calling. Their stories revealed the beauty of God's work across cultures. I was the last to share "God's Way with Me," which I had prepared weeks prior to ICO, but changed when God revealed Himself again to me at ICO through my own story.

It happened during a day of prayer and fasting. I was in the conference center for my scheduled prayer time when God gave me a vision of what my officership would be going forward. In my early days of leadership,



God had given me a vision that took 10 years to fulfill—a call to plant a youth ministry on the South Side of Chicago, which eventually gave birth to the Blue Island Corps. That vision directed my steps and gave meaning to my calling.

On August 18, 2025, the Lord and I had a conversation. I recorded these words in my journal:

"Lord, I want to know You."

He responded, "You know Me if you know My Son."

"I want to feel You."

"You feel Me when you feel My Spirit," He replied.

"I want to be with You."

He said, "I am the Great I Am—Ever-present."

I felt His loving presence and offered myself anew and fully to God.

Then I asked Him to give me a vision like the one for Blue Island which had once driven me with determination and purpose.

"Healing for the Nations"

God took me back to my origin story. As images of painful moments flooded my mind, the Lord spoke: "I allowed you to experience pain so you would know how I feel about the world. I healed you from your pain and trauma so you would know that healing is possible—to give you a vision of what could be. The nations struggle to receive My love and salvation because of their wounds. I am calling you to be an agent of healing for the nations."

This vision resonates with my desire to see others heal and reach their full potential in Christ.

There also were lighter, celebratory moments at ICO, such as cultural

nights and field trips to International Headquarters and London's East End where our Movement began. We visited and led worship at the Portsmouth Corps. These outings reminded me I am a part of something much bigger.

We had self-managed time as well. Sometimes I prayed or journaled; at other times, I just rested. Even in these moments, God was shaping me.

Assignments kept me busy working on the session photobook, playing in the worship band, leading morning prayers, offering appreciation to our lecturers, praying before meals, and working on personal goals.

Before ICO we were encouraged to set personal goals.

My first goal was spiritual formation. I committed to practicing spiritual disciplines and writing down what God was teaching me. Studying Colossians, the Lord impressed upon my heart: "I am calling you higher, deeper, and lower."

Higher

"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God." —Colossians 3:1–3

Personal practice: I will begin my day with worship and the Word before work.

Deeper

"So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ."

—Colossians 2:6–8

Personal practice: I will guard

against hollow philosophies and cultural or mission drift by anchoring in Scripture, spiritual practices and Christian community expressed through corps life.

Lower

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others." —Philippians 2:3–4

Personal practice: I will choose humility over status, people over platform, presence over performance.

This word from the Lord reshaped my view of leadership, not climbing higher but going lower—a journey of surrender, depth, and humility.



My second goal was developing a leadership philosophy. From prayer and reflection came "My Personal Leadership Rule of Life." It's a framework shaped by what I experienced at ICO and the Spirit's nudging. It centers on servant leadership, integrity, emotional intelligence, and keeping the gospel at the heart of everything.

My third goal was to work on my writing skills. I committed to writing three sermons or devotionals during ICO. Through this, I remembered how much I love to write, and my desire to write a book was reignited.

A Life Reoriented by Calling

ICO was a sacred reorientation of heart and life. I arrived with expectations of learning and rest and left with a renewed sense of calling, deeper spiritual rhythms, and a leadership philosophy rooted in surrender.

God's invitation to lead is not a call to climb, but a call to descend—into deeper intimacy, greater humility, and fuller obedience. *Higher, deeper, lower* is not just a phrase from my ICO experience but the compass for my life and ministry. May my leadership reflect the heart of Christ and my life bear witness to His transforming grace.



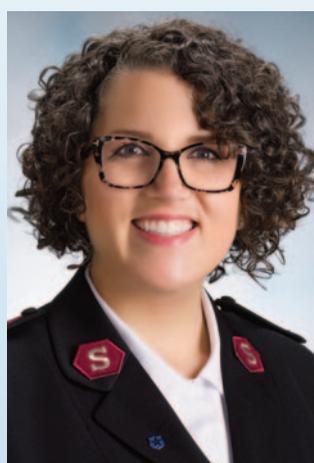
International College for Officers Delegates

Session 264

January 14 – February 23, 2026

Major Jeff Carr

Corps Officer
Dearborn Heights, Mich.



Major Rachel Stouder
Divisional Spiritual Life Secretary
Wisconsin and Upper Michigan
Division



Thanks for the laughs!

For nearly 30 years Bob Swanson has drawn *Mustard Seeds* for Central Connection. Since 1997, we have appreciated his talent, creativity and cleverness with this cartoon, which has given a light-hearted look at our Army, helping us not to take ourselves too seriously, and often making us laugh out loud. As Bob retires *Mustard Seeds*, it is with warm affection that we thank him and share a few favorites of the more than 300 cartoons he's drawn.

--Mustard Seeds--



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The Salvation Army

PRAYER CENTRAL

USA Central Territory

February Prayer Calendar



--Mustard Seeds--



--Mustard Seeds--



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--Mustard Seeds--



My Prayer List

Day

Bible Reading

Pray for The Salvation Army

1 Sunday	John 10-12	Albert Lea, Minn., Corps
2 Monday	2 Timothy 1:2	Virginia, Minn., Corps
3 Tuesday	Numbers 10-12	Tanzania Territory
4 Wednesday	1 Chronicles 20-24	Pittsburg, Kan., Corps
5 Thursday	Psalms 105-107	North Platte, Neb., Corps
6 Friday	Proverbs 22	Alma, Mich., Corps
7 Saturday	Joel	Des Moines, Iowa, ARC
8 Sunday	John 13-15	Olathe, Kan., Corps
9 Monday	2 Timothy 3-4	Pekin, Ill., 360 Life Center
10 Tuesday	Numbers 13-15	South America West Territory
11 Wednesday	1 Chronicles 25-29	Sioux City, Iowa, Corps
12 Thursday	Psalms 108-110	Rockford Temple, Ill., Corps
13 Friday	Proverbs 23-24	Waukegan, Ill., Corps
14 Saturday	Amos 1-4	Lincoln, Ill., 360 Life Center
15 Sunday	John 16-18	Indianapolis Eagle Creek, Ind., Corps
16 Monday	Titus	Midland, Mich., Corps
17 Tuesday	Numbers 16-18	Germany, Lithuania and Poland Territory
18 Wednesday	2 Chronicles 1-5	Indiana Division
19 Thursday	Psalms 111-113	Williston, N.D., Corps
20 Friday	Proverbs 25	Alpena, Mich., Corps
21 Saturday	Amos 5-9	Bloomington, Ill., Corps
22 Sunday	John 19-21	Cadillac, Mich., Corps
23 Monday	Philemon	Chicago LaVillita, Ill., Corps
24 Tuesday	Numbers 19-21	Sri Lanka Territory
25 Wednesday	2 Chronicles 6-10	Columbus, Ind., Corps
26 Thursday	Psalms 114-116	Dekalb, Ill., Corps
27 Friday	Proverbs 26-27	Fargo, N.D., Corps
28 Saturday	Obadiah	Oshkosh, Wis., Corps

Go to www.salarmycentral.org

click on the spiritual life development icon.

CSB Sounds of the Seasons Continued from page 1

With the vast heritage of Salvation Army music publications, some pieces can become so old, they are new. Such is the case with Ray Steadman-Allen's *In Quiet Pastures*. Published 75 years ago, it remained a "Sunday morning classic" for years with its musical message of faith in three featured songs: "Trust in God," "Shepherd, hear my prayer" and "At peace with God." Hearing it again was like meeting an old friend after a long absence. The music still connects; as it ended, the audience responded in reverent silence.

Territorial Commander Commissioner Evie Diaz connected the band's meditation with a devotional that contrasted "the bleak mid-winter" with the reality of Immanuel, "God with us." This led quite naturally to the CSB's concluding item in



son. As the music calmed, José returned to flugel, with the piece ending as it began in quiet contemplation.

The mood quickly changed with Kenneth Downie's exuberant march, *Christmas Angels*, full of the rollicking festivity and fleeting references to "Angels we have heard on high."

Boston Brass returned for their second set featuring two contrasting Christmas melodies: an easy-going swing setting of *Frosty the Snowman*, followed by a beautiful chorale-like setting of *Silent Night*, inspired by a Pentatonix rendition, arranged for quintet by Chris Castellanos.

Yuletide celebrations continued as the Boston Brass and CSB joined forces in *The Grinch: A True Crime Story*, written and narrated by tubist William Russell. Set in a New Orleans street jazz style, this delightful



tale was possibly the most popular item of the evening, receiving extended and well-deserved applause.

Richard Phillips' setting of "Who is He?" offered a vivid contrast with its tran-

quil yet fervent sounds, further demonstrating the CSB's versatility and range of expression through sacred music.

Boston Brass and the CSB finished with *Christmas Bells are Swinging*, featuring "White Christmas" and "It came upon the midnight clear" in a driving, big-band swing, arranged by J.D. Shaw and adapted for the CSB by former bandmaster, Dr. Harold Burgmayer.

This annual concert would not be complete without a sing-along and despite the snowstorm's impact on those traveling from a distance, there were plenty of intrepid locals who joined in singing "Silent Night," skillfully arranged by former CSB member Gerry Shoults.

As they sang the final verse, CSB alumni came to the stage to join in a final tradition: singing of the band's *Choral Benediction* [led by the composer and former bandmaster William Himes]. Written 39 years ago, it has always been the band's wish for its audiences:

May you feel God's love within you, even as we part this hour.

May His presence guide your living, may you sense His strength and power.

If storms of life should buffet you, or stress and fear increase,

May God's arms of comfort hold you and surround you with His peace.



the first half, *Holy Forever*, by Marcus Venables, a Canadian Salvationist. A colorful and dynamic work, it is based on Chris Tomlin's worship song of the same name and was made all the more effective through video support of CSB multimedia specialist Emily Aukes.

After intermission, the CSB returned to accompany José Sibaja in the trumpet/flugel solo, *O Holy Night*. Set in a light rock style with subdued, close harmonies, it soon opened up as he picked up his trumpet, soaring in the stratosphere made famous by the late Maynard Fergu-



Promoted to Glory

Lt. Colonel Lois Harvey

Lt. Colonel Lois Harvey was promoted to Glory on October 31, 2025. A talented pianist, she used her gift to glorify God and minister to others. She loved studying the Bible and was a positive and cheerful presence.



Lois was born on August 29, 1940, in Calumet, Mich., to Rueben and Dorothy Kumpula. Her family eventually moved to Detroit where they attended the Brightmoor Corps. She accepted Jesus as her Savior at Echo Grove Camp.

At the corps Lois met and fell in love with Clarence Harvey, and they were married on February 7, 1959. Called to fulltime service, they entered the School for Officers' Training as part of the "Great Hearts" session and were commissioned in 1960.

For 36 years the Harveys served in corps and divisional, territorial and national headquarters appointments, including leading the Kansas/Western Missouri and Eastern Michigan divisions and serving in the territorial and national community relations and development departments. During her officership, Lois provided exceptional leadership to women's ministries and auxiliaries. The Harveys retired in 1996.

Most recently, Lois used her talent in playing piano at the assisted living community where she lived since 2022, providing accompaniment to the choir and for the worship services she and Clarence started.

Lois was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Clarence; brother, Carl; and grandson, Brandon. She is survived by her children, Rae Lynn, Lt. Colonel David (Lt. Colonel Darlene), and Scott (Denise); seven grandchildren; six great-grand-

children; sister, Colonel Dorothy (Colonel Jeff) Smith and brother, Bill (Darlus) Kumpula; as well as many nieces and nephews.

Major Wilma Velazquez

Major Wilma Velazquez, 102, was promoted to Glory on November 3, 2025. Wilma's life was devoted to her family and to serving others in Christ's name.



She was born on September 26, 1923, in Kokomo, Ind., to Chloe and Jesse Mills. She grew up attending church, accepted Christ in her youth, and answered the call to become a Salvation Army officer at age 19. Commissioned in 1944, she served as a corps officer until 1950 when she married Israel Velazquez. They were married for an amazing 75 years and had four children.

Together, Wilma and Israel led corps in Iowa, Adult Rehabilitation Centers (ARC) in Indianapolis, Detroit and Chicago, and then served at the ARC Command. Her gift of hospitality created a welcoming and caring environment. She was comfortable talking with people from all walks of life and made them feel at home. She also was musically gifted and loved to sing and play the cornet and piano. Though she eventually lost her eyesight, she played piano until her last days.

She is survived by her husband, Israel, and children Maribeth (Robert) Swanson, Denise (Larry) Stilwell, Jessica (Brian) Swan, and Jon (Rhonda) Velazquez, along with seven grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents, siblings Alberta Hall, Charlene Harvey, Delbert Mills and grandson Christian Stilwell.

Congrats!

We salute the following officers who retired in 2025

Majors Mark and Susan Anderson
Major Gary and Captain Karen Felton
Majors Curtiss and Sandra Hartley
Majors Ronald and Laura Key
Majors Mark and Valerie Nance
Majors Marcelo and Monica Orbe
Major Vicki Steinsland
Major Alan Wurtz
Majors Charles and Betty Yockey

list as of November 12, 2025