

“Tidings” Christmas 2024



May the blessings of Christmas
be with you today and always

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

FROM THE C.O.'S DESK

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“It’s the most wonderful time of the year!”

These words, first sung by Andy Williams ready for Christmas 1963, run through my head as we approach Advent and, at length, Christmas.

Undoubtedly, Advent and Christmas are wonderful times of the year to be a Salvationist. We have a peculiarly significant impact on the keeping of Advent and Christmas, at least in the UK, through our Christmas Present Appeals, Brass Band carolling, and Christmas Dinners for the cold or lonely.

I’ve lost count of the number of times people have told me, ‘ah, now I’ve heard the Sally Army band, I know Christmas has really started.’

AND, a pedantic inner voice wants to give an annual reminder that Christmas proper doesn’t begin until sundown on 24 December. It lasts 12 days, concluding on ‘Twelfth Night’ on the 5th January. Epiphany, the celebration of the visit of the Wise Men, follows on the 6th January.

Advent – the weeks between the 4 Sundays pre-Christmas and Christmas Eve (this year it’s 1st-24th December) – is a distinct season in the church calendar. It is a fasting season, originally lasting 40 days to mirror Lent, and a season of repentant preparation to receive the miracle of Christ’s birth. Advent also recognizes Christ’s promise to return, and gives space for us to similarly prepare for his second coming.

Our neighbours and community are desperate to connect with something real, lasting, eternal and meaningful this Christmas and Advent. While they may not care what the differences in the church calendar are, they will care about whether we – God’s people – love them with God’s love.



We are in a privileged position to impact our community and our neighbours for Christ in this season. I encourage you to make the most of every opportunity this season affords to connect with your neighbours, to share God's love, and to invite them into the wonder of Emmanuel – God with us!

Ideas to connect with your neighbours this Advent:

- **Bake Christmas cookies and**

take them around. Introduce yourself, and let them know how much God loves them.

Invite your neighbour to our Family Carol Service, at 11am Sunday 8th December, or our Carols by Candlelight at 5.30pm 24th December.

Consider writing or recording a short testimony of why Christmas matters to you, and share it on social media like WhatsApp or Facebook.

Tidings – November & December issue

This issue of Tidings has information not only about what has been going on but also about aspirations and hopes for the future of our Corps and fellowship. So much to encourage and inspire!

Vanessa and Xander our corps officers are moving to Australia in January so we will be unofficered until July when new officers will hopefully have been appointed. We ask for your prayers as we journey together as a church/corps family through these next months.

What Age Gap?!!!!!!!



Darren's son Jack had a wonderful time making friends at the Coffee Morning. In fact he invited Christine for a play date and tea at his home!!

Vanessa & Xander Issac, Asher and Gideon

Vanessa & Xander and their boys will be leaving us mid-January next year and moving to Australia. The following update was on Facebook and gives the back drop to their decision to take this step.

Little family update to share:

We will be moving to Australia in January. We will be in Perth, where Xander grew up and most of his side of the family are currently living.

For a long time we have felt that we need to spend some time closer to the family there, for the boys to get to know these relationships and that part of the world, and to be able to access full benefit of their Australian citizenship. We're really excited to (re)join our loved ones there and discover what life holds for us in this next step.

We absolutely love Working Salvation Army and are loving every minute of our time here. We have great sadness that this time is coming to an end so quickly, and will deeply miss the friends we have made here, as well as the privilege of being part of the beautiful things God is doing in this community. Our time here has truly been a gift to us all as a family, and for us both in our ministry, we've learned and grown so much here, and are confident that God 'who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion'. An

incredible team of wonderful people have this in safe hands.

We do however have a deep sense from God that now is the time to action an underlying calling that we have been carrying for many years.

We will not be taking up a new appointment with The Salvation Army at this time, and have a sense that God is wanting to do something different in us in this season that we wouldn't be able to access in the way we might have imagined life to look like. So we go with faith and expectation and lots of prayer that we find our feet and trusting that it's God that guides our paths and provides for us. Grateful for your prayer support as we find schools and get settled.

We will desperately miss family and friends here in the UK, and carry the tension of always being half the world away from the people we love the most. For the last 15 years Xander has carried the brunt of that and now it's time to share that out.

We don't envisage that this will be forever although at this point we don't have a set time frame in mind.

So much love to you all and gratitude for the ways you make our lives better, *Vanessa and Xander*

FutureShape - Sunday 13 October 2024

Corps Secretary Andrew Cox

I wonder what will be recorded in the Corps History Book for 2024? As the person responsible for entries in the history book I should know! I know for one thing, that FutureShape should feature quite a lot.

The corps as a whole has spent almost 9 months considering God's 'strategic' plan for Woking Salvation Army. It is so so important we understand and accept that it is God's plan for the future of His corps at Woking and not our plan for Woking corps. As it says in Philippians 4:14 *'We do all things through Him.'*

The songsters kicked off the meeting with the song 'Enter his Gates with Praise' where it talks about us entering His house and coming into His presence, coming before Him with thanksgiving and praise and declaring that He is the Lord of our lives and that we will sing, shout and praise His name. To me this is what FutureShape is all about – that way into the future, our corps will continue to tell others of what God can do in their lives and inviting them into a relationship with Him.

Following the Songsters, we all shared in a congregational song

from Thomas Chisholm - Great is thy faithfulness where we were reminded that God never changes, never fails us and He will always provide what we need (but may be not what we 'want'); strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow. And it is in this knowledge that we engage in FutureShape.

Five of the Corps Council/Pastoral Care Council members had volunteered to give short updates on various aspects of FutureShape and even being on holiday or on courses would not stop them updating the corps folks on FutureShape.

First to kick off was **Major (Dr.) John Martin**. Major John reminded us to 'Praise Him for all that is past and Trust Him for all that's to come' as we are reminded each time we enter the main hall with the beautiful banners that hang on opposite walls of the hall. He extended his 'thanks' to Captains Vanessa and Xander for giving the corps the opportunity to consider the future of the corps through the FutureShape process and to the corps members for their participation in the consultation that took place earlier this year. He reminded us that we were all given opportunity to consider our strengths and weaknesses, our giftings and the opportu-

nities for the future. We considered things we would like to keep and things we would like to put away, things we would like to change or things we could improve.

All responses received through the consultation were considered by the Corps Council and Pastoral Care Council and these two groups have come together and agreed on recommendations that will form the Corps' strategic plan. In coming weeks the new strategic plan will be unveiled and come into fruition where we hope it will have a transformative impact in the local community and individual lives for years to come. There are parts of the plan we can do now but some parts may take 3-5 years to implement. This plan offers a framework for strategic missional decision making for well into the future. John reminded the corps that there is nothing to fear about this strategic plan, that God is with us and our collective thoughts and decisions have been blessed by God.

Andy (via video) then reflected on what we have been able to achieve over the past 16 years since moving into our halls on Sythwood but also was conscious that there were other things we could / should be doing, and how the consultation period had allowed us to focus our thoughts on those things.

It was good that everyone had the

opportunity to be involved in the consultation and it was evident that God was already working in areas which had been highlighted through the consultation as being areas of focus we feel we are being led to develop further as a corps. Finally it is clear that God is guiding us as we move forward.

Next up was **Naomi** who spoke passionately about an area close to her heart, being that of Children, Youth and Families ministry which had been identified as an area of opportunity for the corps. We were reminded that so much has already happened; when in September 2023 we started Kids Church with 7 children, in February 2024 we started tots church and more recently in the summer we started Youth Church & youth meet ups along with the youth being the driving force behind adventure based activities such as kayaking and mountaineering. We now have 12 regular attendees across kids and tots church and an average of 6 at youth church and youth meet. God has clearly been at work already though this ministry which has been phenomenal. The FutureShape process has coincided with the way things have naturally but intentionally developed over the past year by responding to the changing needs of our corps family. Naomi reminded the congregation

that during the year we have a mix of outreach Sundays, 3 family focus Sundays and regular worship Sundays and the family focus Sunday are intended to be a bridge between the outreach Sundays and regular worship Sundays. In time it is hoped that attendance at the family focus Sundays will help families into regular attendance on Sunday mornings and be a way of folding them into the community of faith that is Woking Salvation Army. We all have a part to play in welcoming and encouraging new families into our church/corps family.

Finally, Naomi confirmed that in order to support the amazing work that is Children, Youth and Families ministry we will shortly be recruiting a part time Children & Families Mission Lead who will take responsibility for this work and build a wide volunteer team.

Alison then commented on how prayer has been a major focus for Woking corps and how the corps has prayed for the surrounding community for over 25 years. 10 Years before we even moved to Sythwood, the corps started praying for a new location and once identified, a year long prayer walk took place around the local neighbourhood. As well as praying for the local community we also started visiting those closest to the hall – as being our new neighbours.

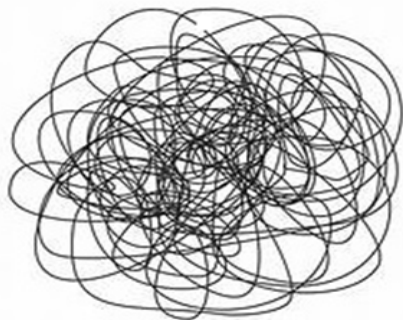
We know of our neighbours that they are doing their best to live well, that addictions affects many people/families/homes and blocks in our neighbourhood. Our building hosts 2 AA sessions every week along with a men's bible study about recovery from addiction. We therefore hope to have someone join our team to support recovery of addiction in families and prevention of addiction in young people.

Alison spoke of a healing stream flowing through us to our neighbourhood as we continue to pray and continue to invite everyone to that healing stream which is the fullness of life for all through Jesus.

The final person to share was **Amanda** (via video). Thinking of the phrase FutureShape makes Amanda initially think about the 'past'. She has been involved with the corps for 16 years and can testify to unconditional love being demonstrated through the corps. She has witnessed many people coming to the hall to give donations because of the influence of The Salvation Army in previous years and it is their way of saying thank you.

Amanda then described how she saw the Future of Woking Salvation Army. She expressed this via the following image (well something like this anyway):

November/December



Amanda commented that our Future shape / our vision is to have fullness of life for all with Jesus and this 'circle' highlights the many parts of our lives that intersect with others, from school, to work, with our neighbours, at the hospital, on the railway, when we are at Sainsbury's (other supermarkets are available) and all these overlap and these are where we can tell others of Jesus – these are where we tell God that we are 'reporting for duty' and asking Him to let us serve Him and how can I bring the fullness of life to the people around me. We need to Love

God, Love our neighbours and Love one another. We already do this so we just need to keep doing what we are already doing.

A printed document which contains the consultation process we went through, the recommendations and more information on the corps' leadership teams and Core Recovery Church, which is the process Alison referred to in her comments around hoping that a team member will join to help the additional recovery part of our FutureShape recommendations, is available.

An electronic copy of the document is available upon request.

We thank God for directing us through the last 9 months as we have consulted on the FutureShape of Working Salvation Army and we pray for his continued guidance as we work through the recommendations to fulfil His plan for the strategy of our corps.

We would like to say a big thank you to everyone for the cards, gifts and lovely messages you so kindly sent to us when we celebrated our Diamond Wedding Anniversary.

We had a lovely day celebrating with our family and friends.

We have been so blessed.

Dave & Gwen



Generous Discipleship -

Generosity is one of the values of the Kingdom of God. As disciples (followers) of Jesus, we are learning how to cultivate the values of the Kingdom of God in our lives. We try to be generous towards God with our *time*, our *talents* and our *treasure*.

Over the last nine months our FutureShape journey has helped refocus our attention on loving God, loving our neighbours, and loving one another, and as a church we want to dig deeper into those things. Over the last few weeks we have explored God’s generosity to us, and how we can be generous like him and partner with God’s mission.

Sunday 13th October marked the launch of our new corps strategy, which outlines our priorities for the next 3-5 years. The following Sunday 20th October over 70 of us shared a family meal together, with opportunity to reflect on our giving to God. Over the weekend of 26-

27th October we celebrated our Corps Anniversary together, praising God for his blessing in the past, his presence in the present, and looking ahead to the future he has planned for us. We took this opportunity to make pledges to God for what of our time, talents and treasure we will offer to him.

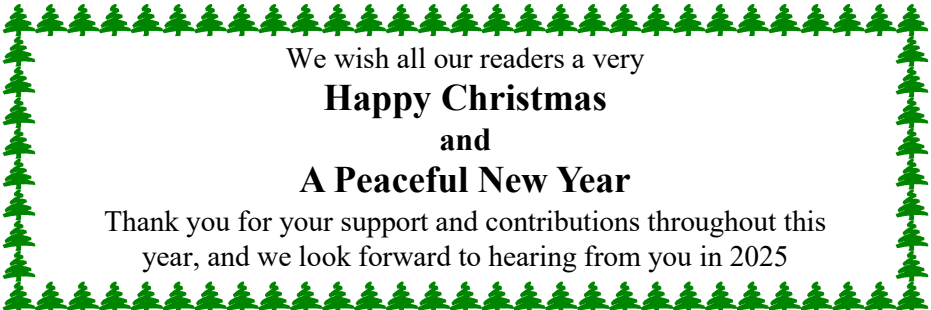
The opportunities God is presenting to us are immense, and we see His hand of blessing and guidance upon us. We want to take hold of those opportunities by faith. By considering how we might offer our *time*, our *talents* and our *treasure* to God, we can help make these opportunities a reality.

If you missed this wonderful programme there is still time to make a pledge and be counted in the new things God is doing. Ask Captain Xander if you need a pledge card, and place your completed pledge into the offering plate.

We wish all our readers a very

**Happy Christmas
and
A Peaceful New Year**

Thank you for your support and contributions throughout this year, and we look forward to hearing from you in 2025



Generous Discipleship - Worship and Corps Family Lunch -

Worship – Jenny Whitten

On arrival for this morning's meeting, we were greeted by the delicious aroma of our "Generous Discipleship" lunch being prepared.

During his ministry, Jesus would often share a meal with his disciples and so the theme of this morning's service was aptly focused around Matthew 14 :13-21, the feeding of the 5000.

Despite the recent bereavement of his cousin, John the Baptist, Jesus still carried on with his ministry despite his grief. On this occasion he was talking to a group of about 5000 men. As the sun was beginning to go down, he realised that the nearest village would be too far for the crowd to reach before nightfall. Jesus asked his disciples to see who had any food that they wished to share. A small boy came forward and offered his packed lunch of 5 loaves and 2 fishes to Jesus. This meagre meal was then shared amongst the huge crowd and there was enough left over at the end to fill several baskets. The crowd dispersed, having satisfied their hunger.

The ministry from the band was "Breath on me Breath of God" with the songsters contributing their song, "He was there".

There was an additional aroma of bak-

ing bread wafting around the hall and it was Captain Xander playing at being a baker. In true Jesus style, the freshly baked bread was shared amongst all the congregation. It was delicious!

After the service, the hall was turned into a dining area where many of us sat down and shared yet another delicious home cooked meal.

Well done to Darren and all who were involved in this pioneering event. It was a day to be remembered.

Corps Family Lunch - Gill Gregory

Following an inspiring meeting lead by Captain Xander, tea and coffee was served while the main worship hall was swiftly prepared for the Church Family Luncheon. seventy four people of all ages were seated ready to enjoy a lovely meal and conversation with



Includes Darren & his wife Emma who took the lead in cooking and organising the meal.



those who were on our table, a mixture of young and old!

Following the meal Captain Xander had prepared the theme of the day which was Generous Discipleship and what that will mean to us at Working corps.

He explained how we could all become involved in some way.

Earlier in the year there was a series of get together evenings where we were introduced to FutureShape for our corps. Since then there has been discussions and a brochure was published which explained more details, the theme of this Sunday was to introduce Generous Discipleship . This includes everyone who wishes to be part of Working Corps. Captain Xander quoted from the scriptures Matthew chapter 22 verse 34-40 “Love the Lord with all your heart, mind and strength and love your neighbour as yourself.”

Three words sum up the essence of how we are trying to live our lives, by giving our time, talents and treasure to our Lord and Saviour.



McMillan Coffee Morning

On a bright and sunny morning we joined quite a crowd of young and not so

young people who had come to join in the annual coffee morning. The atmosphere was happy with plenty of chatting, I would say, while I was there, about fifty. Everyone was welcomed and soon were buying the homemade cakes, homemade preserves and buying a ticket for a guaranteed prize on the “tom-bola” stall. There was also a jewellery stall. Coffee and tea were also readily available and most people stayed chatting and enjoying each other’s company for some time. The result of the sale will come later! Many thanks to all those who helped in any way!

STOP PRESS - A total of **£368.40** raised. Gill Gregory.

Corps Anniversary 2024

Our Corps Anniversary celebrations this year commenced with a concert by the Friary Band and followed through with worship on the Sunday led by Vanessa and Xander our corps officers. Major (Dr) John Martin and Corps Treasurer Andy Stickland both give glimpses of the time we shared together.

Visit of Friary Band -

Major (Dr) John Martin



Friary Band (who rehearse in Chertsey) are the 30th best band in the latest world rankings, and they certainly demonstrated their position with a memorable concert on 26th October, raising funds for 'The Big Connection/Collection. Under the leadership of musical director, Nigel Taken, the audience were treated to an excellent, eclectic and energetic performance. Music from classical and contemporary forms were interspersed with superb soloists, Richard and Lauren Straker (cornet and flugel), and Chris Straker (euphonium).

Particularly appreciated was the band's playing of 'Procession to

Covenant' in memory of Derrick Curtis.

This is the 3rd time in recent years that the band has given a concert, and I'm hoping for another opportunity next year!



Anniversary Worship

Corps Treasurer Andy Stickland

On Sunday 27th October we celebrated the Corps' 127th anniversary. In a packed meeting, after the Songsters blessed us with 'Humbly Bow' we recognised and welcomed two new adherents, Alison and Ever who both wanted to recognise Woking Corps as their church.

Before the children left for kids and tots church we had an energetic rendition of 'He's got the whole world in his hands' to send them on their way as they went to look at Elijah and the contest on Mount Carmel involving fire and in the kids' case, marshmallows!

The previous evening, as well as

the enjoyable concert from Friary Band, there was a celebration at Regent Hall of the life of Major Joy Webb who was promoted to Glory last year. In recognition of this, the band played the tune Share My Yoke, one of the many loved songs that Major Joy Webb wrote in her lifetime.

This Sunday was culmination of the series on Generous Discipleship that had run for the last few weeks and gave the opportunity for us to pledge the practical and financial gifts we have to enable the implementation of the Future-Shape strategy that had been presented in previous weeks.



In this context, Vanessa preached on John 12:1-8, where Mary anointed Jesus at Bethany with expensive perfume, throwing her lot in with Jesus, investing in his mission for the greatest return, the resurrection from the cross.

Not yet members meal!



On Tuesday evening 22nd October there was a special dinner, for people who have joined our fellowship and attend Sunday meetings, as an appreciation and an opportunity to share the ways of belonging that are more formalised, including Adherency and Soldiership.

Captain Xander said very clearly that the intention was not to oblige anyone, but to explain and share the pathways to membership.

We had a good time. Some who were invited were not able to attend on the

day, but those who came enjoyed sharing a meal together. Jess and Luke, with Lilia and Jamie, and Sharon sat together with Darren. The Coleman family made up a table, together with Ethan and Alison C. Chris and Dave Todd were at a table with Robin and Alison S. and Ian. Our friends from Beech Trees assisted living residence came, with carers including Ever, who responded to the invitation.

Ever White and Alison Sage were welcomed as new Adherents the very next Sunday 27th October. Praise God!



Youth & Children Update

Naomi Rothery & Captain Vanessa

Just over a year ago, at the start of September, we held the very first Kids Church, and in February of this year we were able to start running Tots Church too. We started off with 7 children (Isaac, Asher, Gideon, Lilia, Jamie, Elliott & Isaac) and have since had lots of children attend as a one-off, and 5 of those new children have become regular attenders (Nova, Prince Isaac, Poppy, Arianna & Denzil). There is a strong team of children's leaders developing and I am really grateful for all they do to help the children have a fun, happy time at Church, exploring the Bible and what life with Jesus is all about. It has been an enormous blessing to see how God has been working over the past year and a bit, and I am so excited to see what He has in store for us over the next year!

Family Focus Sundays

We have now had 3 Family Focus Sundays. These are held on the first Sunday of the month, and on the Sunday after an event like Holiday Club and Autumn Adventure. These Sundays aim to be a 'bridge' for families between an outreach event and what a 'typical' Sunday with us would be like. The Family Focus Sunday on 22nd September saw 3 new young people attend for the first time! We had a new toddler in Tots Church, a new child in Kids Church, and a new teenager in Youth Church!

Youth Update – Captain Vanessa

As our little group of teenagers is growing, we are now running a fortnightly Youth Church during the meeting, when the children go out to Kids and Tots Church, where we play some games together and look at Scripture, talk about how we follow Jesus in our daily life, and pray for each other.

On the weeks that we don't run Youth Church, we are creating a schedule of Sunday afternoon meet-ups, with opportunities to have fun together, including cooking and baking, playing sports in the park and carving pumpkins.

Please be praying for our young people as they get to know each other and God in deeper ways and becoming more connected with our Corps fellowship.

Kayaking

A minibus of teenagers went to Exeter for a day of adventure on the water along with Ian and Vanessa. Some of the young leaders helping to run the holiday club in the summer were keen to plan a follow up adventure after the springtime mountain climbing in Wales. It is wonderful to see the young people's relationships with each other growing, their leadership developing and their confidence increasing.



We used kayaks and journeyed from Exeter quay along the river and through a couple of locks. Vanessa and Zara struggled to travel in a straight line and unintentionally tacked their way along in zigzags, frequently getting stuck in nettles and brambles. Meanwhile, Hayley in her single kayak was frequently capsized by Ethan and Sam in their double canoe, ably assisted by Ian and Isaac (the eldest of the 4 Isaac's). We had to pick up and carry our kayaks over a lock, and eventually stopped for a hot chocolate and some chips to warm up - despite the glorious sunshine we were a bit chilly from the soaking!

Better progress was made on the return journey, with a team effort to capsize Sam, now in the individual kayak. We failed to capsize Sam, but were delighted that he accidentally capsized all by himself a mere five minutes later, to much delight. The braver (and younger) members of our adventure jumped in for a swim as we returned to base, and discovered a pirate festival was happening, with people in fancy dress and we made our return accompanied by a local group singing sea shanties, which really brought a festive air to the occasion.

It was wonderful to have opportunity for deeper chats while rowing together, driving and eating, as well as the playful silliness and fun that makes such a difference in getting to know each other. (V.C)

Cooking & Baking

6 young people stayed on after the worship service one Sunday to cook pasta bolognese and macaroni cheese, and to bake white chocolate





cookies, which they had chosen to make following a discussion together in the previous week's Youth Church. We all donned aprons and got to work preparing food to share together. Everyone had a job to do

and it was a joy to see the group working together as a team and the buzz of activity. The phrase 'cooking is an art and baking is a science' rung very true for this group as we had some very precise bakers, measuring every ingredient very precisely to the gram, following more of an 'artfully winging it' approach to cooking! Vanessa bought some goat's cheese for everyone to try, and one brave teenager put a whole slice in his mouth rather than trying small bites at a time, after hearing reports that, "It's better than you think it's going to be!" and instantly regretted his decision – it was a very funny reaction that got everyone

Autumn Adventure

First it was Brunch at Bethlehem, then it was Eggsperience Easter this time it was Autumn Adventure, a contemporary and different way of reminding people of harvest and thanksgiving. As before, the band played outside to let people know that something was happening at the Army!

Important things first - FOOD!!!
Brunch was bacon butties, Eggsperience was Hot Cross buns this time it was coffee and cake – all sorts and all home made!

The whole morning was all about preparation and team work. Louise

was on hand as receptionist/welcomer with a welcome bag for each child and then it was a world of activity- bird feeders – salt dough harvest loaves and so much more.

In one corner Alison C and Matt – his last Sunday at the corps before leaving for Uni the following Saturday, were playing Thank You Snap – usual rules but when two cards matched it was time to say thank you for something to do with that particular subject. Put a blindfold on and taste the fruits with Sue S - mangos, grapes, physalis, figs, dates, pineapple and others - a total fruit salad

Tots' table was all about helping the littlest of people to understand about growing and farming with edible mud – definitely a twist on the old sandpit of yester years! A craft table with cut out pumpkin shapes - by using a certain implement children could make their own design to reveal the colours underneath – all supervised by Kip!

Decorate a tree with popcorn – with a reminder that with the changes that come into our lives we can give our worries to God.

Children could make their own flour- either with a mini grinder or a pestle & mortar, this was all under the direction of Vickie and Hayley – Hayley like Matt would start Uni the following weekend.

Amanda, Hayley's mum, our newly commissioned Corps Sergeant Major led a Bible study on 'God's Provision and Abundance' in the only quiet spot in the building!

Another table with Sharon, Jane, and Jess provided an opportunity to make bookmarks with a template and threading craft – another reminder, this time that the God who feeds the birds knows our every need. Jess was also the 'David Bailey' of the morning, later producing an excellent photographic record of the morning.

Jenny and Gwen were i/c teas, coffee and cake, probably one of the busiest areas of the morning – along with Alison S who was on cake control duty! Many thanks to those who provided cakes for the morning.

As on the previous two occasions Captain Vanessa concluded the morning by using Godly Play to tell the story Ruth and Naomi. How Ruth in her poverty followed those working in the fields reaping the harvest and picked up the grains that were left. A story of God's love and faithfulness, of kindness and relationships.

Brilliant morning, a busy happy buzz about the place as families arrived and wandered about the room with some grown up trying their hand at some of the activities. 37 children plus their families and all the helpers and volunteers involved which is a pretty good result for a Sunday morning!



Sunday 1 December –
Brunch at Bethlehem 2
– See you there!!!

Fruit tasting with Sue

Comedy Hall

D.O.H.

(Department of Humour)

A man taught his dog to play a trumpet on the London underground. It only took him an hour to go from Barking to Tooting.

While on a boating trip, a tourist asked one of the divers why scuba divers always fall backwards off their boat. The diver replied, "if they fell forward they'd still be in the boat."

"I've created a new computer that's almost human," boasted Tom. "Do you mean it can think, feel and reason like a human?" asked his friend.

"No, but when it makes a mistake it blames it on another computer. "

A boss called one of his employees to the office and said,

"Rob, you've been with the Company for a year. You started off as an office clerk, one week later you were appointed to a sales position, a month after that to district manager. Four months later you were promoted to vice chairman.

Now it's time for me to retire and I want you to take over the Company. What do you say to that?"

"Thanks."

"Is that all you can say?!"

"Thanks Dad"

I'm working on a new typeface for church bulletins. I call it Baptismal Font.

Keep happy *Major Laugh*

Neighbourhood Matters!

Fifteen years ago Alison Campbell, along with Ian her husband, Janet Howlin and Peter Stickland first made visits to our neighbours in the Lakeview area opposite the hall. It's estimated that over that time Alison has visited very home. Alison was recently commissioned as our Community Care Ministries Secretary. Over those years there have been many team mates who have joined when 'Neighbourhood visits' have been made – in all weathers - to all ages – in all circumstances!

Relationships have been made, prayers offered and ongoing concern shown. Involvement by the Corps in local community events has increased and residents have joined us for various events. In December the last carolling event on Thursday 19th will see the band and a group of visi-

tors go across for the annual Community Carols in Lakeview. Mince pies and chocolates will be given out, and carols sung as Church and Community celebrate the Christmas message together.

For further information please contact Alison Campbell at alisoncam@gmail.com



Post Neighbourhood Visits debriefing. Visits reviewed and then prayer requests circulated where appropriate

Big Congratulations to

Pearl

*On the occasion of her 90th birthday on
Wednesday 13th November.*

Greetings may be sent to

Pearl Arneaud

King's Lodge Care Home, 122 Kings Ride, Camberley GU15



FLOWER LIST

November

- 3 Jess and Luke wedding
- 10 Gill Gregory
- 17 Ted and Freda Benneyworth
- 24 Peter and Louise Stickland

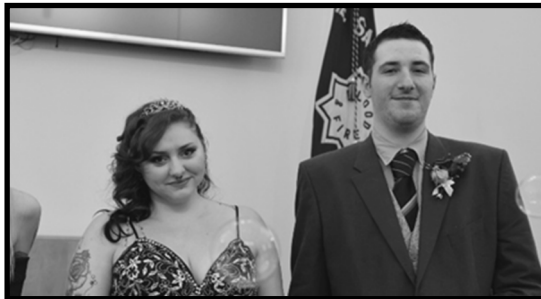
December

- 1 Janet and Michael Brooks
- 8 Vickie Hardwick
- 15 Christmas Display
- 22 Christmas Display
- 29 Christmas Display

Emergency Response Vehicle



Major Ted with Station Commander Neil Culver at the fire station.



Jess Strudwick & Luke Grant

*Congratulations to the
newly wed*

Mr & Mrs Grant

on the occasion of their marriage

Saturday 2 November 2024



Christmas Programme 2024

November

Fri 29th 18:00-18:30 St Andrew's - Goldsworth Park Band (5)

Sat 30th 11:30-13:30 Peacocks Shopping Centre Band

December

Sun 1st 11:00-12:15 First in Advent - Brunch at Bethlehem

Sun 1st 15:30-17:00 RHS Wisley Band

Sat 7th 11:30-13:00 Peacocks – Woking Band

**Sat 7th 14:15-14:45 Horsell Christmas Market Band
Court Yard – Horsell Evangelical Church**

**Sun 8th 11:00-12:15 Second in Advent – Family Carol Service
(Including Gift Day for Parcel Extravaganza)**

**Tue 10th 19:30-20:30 Woking Homes, Oriental Road, GU22 7BE
Band/Songsters**

Wed 11th 11:00-15:00 Parcel Prep (to follow on from brunch)

Thur 12th 09:00-13:00 Parcel wrapping extravaganza

Sat 14th 11:30-13:30 Peacocks – Woking Band

Sun 15th 11:00-12:15 Third in Advent

Wed 18th 15:00-16:30 Sainsbury's Brookwood Band

Thur 19th 19:30-20:30 Community Carols – Lakeview

Sat 21st 11:30-13:30 Peacocks – Woking Band

Sun 22nd 11:00-12:15 Fourth in Advent

Tue 24th 17:30-18:30 Candlelight Service

Wed 25th 10:30-11:30 Christmas Day Service

Eddi's Service

Eddi, priest of St. Wilfrid
In his chapel at Manhood End,
Ordered a midnight service
For such as cared to attend.

But the Saxons were keeping
Christmas,
And the night was stormy as well.
Nobody came to service,
Though Eddi rang the bell.

'Wicked weather for walking,'
Said Eddi of Manhood End.
'But I must go on with the service
For such as care to attend.

The altar-lamps were lighted, –
An old marsh-donkey came,
Bold as a guest invited,
And stared at the guttering flame.

The storm beat on at the windows,
The water splashed on the floor,
And a wet, yoke-weary bullock
Pushed in through the open door.

'How do I know what is greatest,
How do I know what is least?
That is My Father's business,'
Said Eddi, Wilfrid's priest.

'But – three are gathered together –
Listen to me and attend.
I bring good news, my brethren!'
Said Eddi of Manhood End.

And he told the Ox of a Manger
And a Stall in Bethlehem,
And he spoke to the Ass of a Rider,
That rode to Jerusalem.

They steamed and dripped in the
chancel,
They listened and never stirred,
While, just as though they were
Bishops,
Eddi preached them The Word,

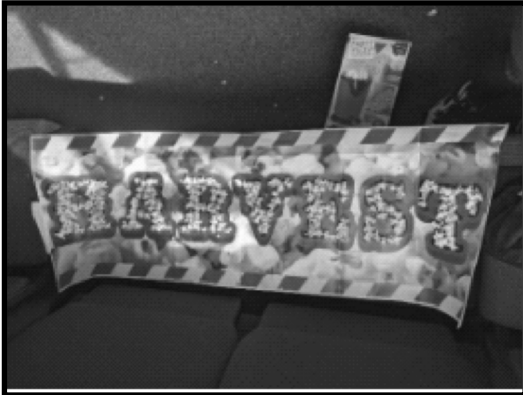
Till the gale blew off on the marsh-
es
And the windows showed the day,
And the Ox and the Ass together
Wheeled and clattered away.

And when the Saxons mocked him,
Said Eddi of Manhood End,
'I dare not shut His chapel
On such as care to attend.'

Submitted by Frances Rutherford

W@W - Worship at Woking

Celebrating Harvest and the Mercy Seat!!



Following Autumn Adventure worship was centred on Harvest and then the Mercy Seat and fullness of life in Jesus

Amazing what you can do with popcorn – the poster made by children at Autumn Adventure the week before

Harvest – Captain Xander

Equally amazing what you can do with a red apple and a kebab stick! As we entered for worship there were two magnificent floral displays created by Gill Gregory (No 1 on the Corps Roll) and Jan Reed. As usual they had worked their magic, along with some bought flowers, amazing flowers from their gardens and nestling

amongst the flowers, small red apples skewered on kebab sticks completing their displays! We were not only reminded of God’s creativity but also the giftedness of his people using his creation to also create things of beauty.

It had been requested that we bring gifts for the food bank and during the first song we queued to place our bags at the Mercy Seat. Robust singing of ‘We plough the fields’ and ‘Bringing in the sheaves’ and Penny’s beautiful playing of John Rutter’s ‘All things bright and beautiful’ during the offering time reminded us of many of the harvest traditions of old.

Above the Mercy Seat was a large poster with the word Harvest on it – it had been made the previous week at Autumn Adventure and had been liberally decorated with popcorn – it was great - until it sagged badly and began to fall during Zander’s ‘Preach’ – sermon!!! We were directed to Exo-

dus 6 and reminded that God keeps his promises. Through difficult times, through the years of slavery even when the people questioned, he was still keeping his promises. We all have desert experiences but God is there and leads us into fulness of life.

The Mercy Seat - Captain Vanessa

The following Sunday we concentrated on the meaning and place of the Mercy Seat in our worship. At the beginning of our worship Amanda, Naomi and Alison received their commissions/certificates as Corps Sergeant Major, Deputy Safeguarding Lead and Community Care Ministries Secretary respectively.

After the vigorous singing of John Gowan's song 'He came to bring us life in all its fulness', which left some exhausted and breathless, we considered what fulness was all about. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Colossians of how they had been brought to fulness. The fulness of God into Jesus and into us!!!

Throughout worship, including through Godly Play, Vanessa explained the purpose of the Mercy Seat and its use. It was good to be reminded of the significance of the Mercy Seat and the purpose of having one in every Salvation Army hall. Our Mercy Seat is well used, possibly this is because, bearing in mind our worship is live-streamed, the Mercy Seat is out of camera range so there is a confidentiality for those choosing to kneel there. It was also good that those who have recently started to worship with us are also aware of its purpose. Our closing prayer was that he would indeed Build his Kingdom here!



Direct Line

Since the last issue Ted and I have been extremely fortunate and blessed to spend time with friends in America. This all dates way back to a shared experience on 9:11. Our friends live in Lancaster County in Pennsylvania – the ‘Bible belt’ and an added interest was the Trump/ Harris Presidential election campaigns!!!

Our friends had a list of places to go to and the first on the list was the Mennonite Centre and an Amish farm. As we drove along the high-ways we would pass the horse drawn buggies and see the farmers working in the fields with ploughs drawn by four or six horses. It was there that we read the following which is centre to their way of life –

Everyone is special – no one’s any better!

in the cemetery all the headstones are exactly the same!!!

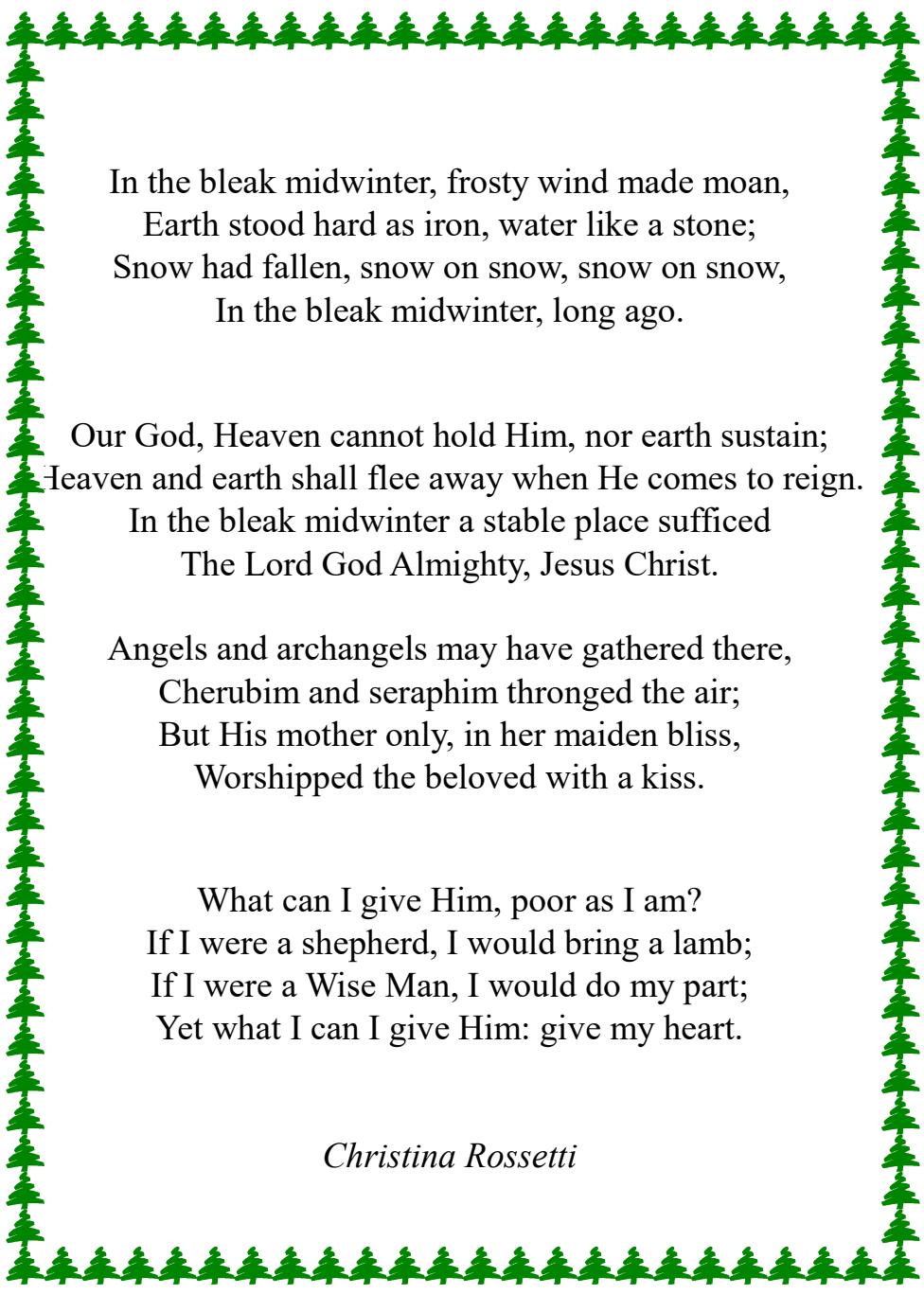
How brilliant is that when you think about prayer and praying for people.

We often ask and are asked for prayers so just wonderful to share news of answered prayer. Lucy, a young Mum was diagnosed with stage 4 cancer before her first baby, a little girl was 10 months old. After several months of chemotherapy and major surgery she has been declared cancer free, although there will be a follow up course of radio-therapy as a precaution. You can imagine the relief for the family and also the gratitude they express for the prayer support they received.

However, Amanda, Neil and Ken, who are both fighting on-going health issues are receiving care and treatment and continue to need our prayers. There are many others who need our prayers and Direct Line, our corps prayer diary can be found on our corps website, is available in hard copy or can be emailed to you if that is easier. (Woking @salvationarmy.org.uk)

Thank you for your on-going prayers.

Blessings *Freda*



In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him, nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away when He comes to reign.
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Angels and archangels may have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;
But His mother only, in her maiden bliss,
Worshipped the beloved with a kiss.

What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give Him: give my heart.

Christina Rossetti

We will be pleased to receive contributions for the next issue of “Tidings” from either members of our Corps Fellowship at Woking or from any who receive a copy through the post.

Please send all contributions to:

Major Freda Benneyworth

e- mail benworthyf@btinternet.com

or e-mail: peterfstickland@gmail.com

Please note

**The cut off date for the next issue of
“Tidings” is**

Sunday December 15th 2024

Our Mission Statement

Our fellowship exists to:-

Reach out in love and
respect to all in our
community

Encourage people to connect
to Jesus and one another.

Grow mature followers of
Jesus.