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Champions of the Mission commissioned to 'go into all the world'

By Lerisse Smith

It was a simple yet profound message.

A rallying call to 'go into all the world and preach the gospel' stood at the heart of this year's Ordination, Commissioning and Sending Out service of the *Champions of the Mission* session, held at Camberwell Corps in Melbourne on Sunday 24 November.

Being commissioned into full-time service as Salvation Army officers were Sameeha Deepesh, Colette Albino, Michellie Higginbottom, Sam Higginbottom and Auxiliary-Lieutenant Alex Robinson.

The momentous occasion was marked by a celebratory atmosphere of worship, inspirational messages and multimedia presentations interwoven with sacred and deeply meaningful moments – and a call for all to gather, grow and go.

"We should be the most excited people on planet Earth," said Commissioner Miriam Gluyas, Territorial Commander.

"We have got Jesus, and we've got good news, and it's not to be kept to ourselves; it is to be shared. Gather, grow and go!"

Family and friends of the cadets gathered at Camberwell along with Eva Burrows College's Officer Formation training staff to celebrate the five new

COMMISSIONING



Commissioner Miriam Gluyas conducts the Commissioning ceremony for the Champions of the Mission session at Camberwell Corps in Melbourne on Sunday 24 November. All photos: Kim Landy.

lieutenants appointed to serve in various communities around Australia.

Captain Kylie Herring, Officer Formation Leader at Eva Burrows College, reflected on the team's journey with cadets Michellie, Sam, Sameeah and Colette during the past two years of formation.

"This is such an exciting day for you – and for us, too," she told the cadets.

"We've had the privilege of journeying with you during this period of formation. We stand proudly alongside you today as you are commissioned and ordained as Salvation Army officers, and you become our colleagues." ►

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Sam then reflected on his personal journey with the congregation.

“Well, I must say, there is a part of me that is still quite shocked to be standing here and doing this today,” he remarked.

“Especially as I consider my journey that has unfolded from growing up in Bendigo to beginning ministry in WA as a youth worker, and then continuing on to Darwin, working with those who are most vulnerable in our community, and then stepping into corps ministry in Katherine and now, the past two years in officer formation in Brisbane.

“I began this journey of being a cadet, looking for that little secret or trick that would give me all of the confidence in the world, hoping that finally, those nerves and butterflies that arrive when I have to stand in front of a couple of people would finally disappear. Or when I’m faced with the challenges of ministry, I would finally be able to respond with confidence rather than uncertainty and doubt.”

Sam said participating in the officer formation space had been an absolute privilege. He was incredibly grateful to that leadership team, the other officers, and the people willing to invest in, pray for, and support him over the past few years of his journey.

“This time of officer formation offered me space and the support to grow and develop myself,” he added. “But more importantly, it developed my understanding of who I am in God, that I don’t need to do anything in my own strength, and I am confident in who I am in God because he can do all things through me.”

The cadets have been located in the Western Australia, Queensland and Victoria divisions for the past two years. Two more *Champions of the Mission* cadets will be commissioned in March next year in the Queensland division.

Welcoming the cadets on their placements has included the Salvation Army divisions, the local corps and social and community expressions.

In the college’s new training model, the local placement officers and supervising staff have also become training partners and provide cadets with diverse learning opportunities.

“They act as our eyes and our ears on the ground, giving us feedback on how they have experienced our cadets,” Kylie explained.

“They observe their maturity, their God, self and others awareness and the posture that they bring to learning and growing their ministry skills and



Cadet Sam Higginbottom speaks to the congregation about his journey to become an officer.

capacities and how they are working to integrate their learning into their ministry practice.”

Additionally, Kylie conveyed at the commissioning service how the cadets had learned about the Local Mission Delivery concept, observing plans in action at both the local and wider levels, plus staying curious and open and always seeking to deepen their understanding of their corps community.

The importance of Local Mission Delivery and going out to preach the gospel to all the world was also emphasised by Chief Secretary Colonel Winsome Merrett, who shared that our local communities were increasingly reflective of the whole world into which we were sent as God’s people.

“As followers of Jesus, I think it’s much easier to see how you and I can reasonably fulfil this instruction of Jesus to go into all the world,” she said.

“It is no longer something for the exceptional few or those who can learn another language. In many ways, it’s easier today than ever before to go into all the world because representatives of all the world live among us in our communities. Living as the people of God in our communities where the diversity of the world is increasingly represented gives us one way to fulfil this mandate of Jesus, to go into all the world to preach the good news about Jesus.”

As the service drew to a close, Miriam encouraged everyone that God was calling his people to be leaders in The Salvation Army movement.

“My God is not silent. He must be calling people because he needs us to stand up and be counted in these days,” she said.

“But he needs all of us to be ministers of the gospel. To some of you, he’s saying, ‘I want you to stand up and lead in these days.’ We have some amazing younger people in The Salvation Army and some amazing older people. It’s not too late!”



Dr Dean Membrey and Dr Paul MacCartney at The Salvation Army Project 614 Corps in Melbourne.

Is there a doctor in the house?

By Lauren Martin

A five-day-a-week health clinic specialising in mental health and addiction issues is about to begin operation from within The Salvation Army's Project 614 mission in inner-city Melbourne.

The Salvation Army Project 614 Corps has partnered with cohealth and the state government to develop the service, allowing community members who access Project 614 assistance and services to see a doctor. They will also be able to access mental health services.

Cohealth is a not-for-profit community health organisation that already provides essential health services in Melbourne and the east coast of Tasmania.

Cohealth Doctor Paul MacCartney said he and fellow Doctor Dean Membrey met Salvation Army Project 614 Corps Officer Major Brendan Nottle a while back and discussed the benefits of working together.

"We do have a number of clients in common, so Brendan invited us down. We checked out the café, and as Dean and I were walking out, we thought, 'This is a place where we ought to come and set up a medical clinic.' We could see that there was a need, and we felt like we could do some good work there.

"We mentioned that to Brendan, and once you mention something to Brendan, things start to happen!"

Fast forward a few months, and the clinic is about to become a reality. The project has been funded through the Victorian government's Statewide Action Plan to reduce drug harm.

"We are pleased that the government has recognised the need to provide this type of health service at a location like Project 614, and we are very grateful that their support has helped our vision come to life," said Dr Dean Membrey.

The Victorian Government has recently appointed Dr Paul MacCartney as the state's first Chief Addiction Medicine Adviser. This role will lead work within the health system to ensure more people get the necessary care. Despite the role, which will see him guide the development of Victoria's first-ever Alcohol and Other Drugs strategy to address drug harm over the long term, he will continue to practise on the frontline, including working at the new clinic at The Salvation Army Project 614.

"It's amazing," said Brendan. "Health, mental health and addiction are really significant issues that we see every day. It goes to the heart of us being a Salvation Army because [having] those services [here] is literally going to help save lives."

Dr Paul said the clinic will be Medicare-based, allowing people who experience financial stress to access essential healthcare for free.

"Our speciality is in doing addiction work, and we know that for a number of people who come here [to Project 614], that is an issue for them, but also being able to link people up to the other services that are attached to this site already. We are excited that there are Centrelink workers here and NDIS are here as well.

"And we know that for people to access those services, people need a doctor's signature, so if we can help to be part of that team that's looking after people, that's what we're really looking forward to."

NEWS

Bush tucker garden bears fruit at Riverside Salvos

By Anthony Castle

Riverside Salvos is collaborating with community foster carers and Aboriginal educators to host the Minya Windas bush school in Gawler, South Australia.

Minya Windas is a program that connects Aboriginal children to Aboriginal cultural experiences through bush play, traditional house building, and arts and crafts.

Children in the program are now connecting to Country by exploring the new bush tucker garden, established in the Salvos community garden.

“We asked for people who were interested in helping and experiencing community together while looking to grow vegetables and herbs for our commercial kitchen,” explains Rick Mierisch, coordinator for the Riverside Salvos community garden. “The kitchen feeds those doing it tough, and the garden helps supply the kitchen.”

The community garden project at Riverside Salvos is coordinated by Rick and Mandy Mierisch, particularly made possible by grants awarded last year. The garden builds an intergenerational community, involving those aged five to 80 from different parts of the Gawler area.

“Minya Windas were meeting on a Thursday, and when they saw what we were creating, wondered if they could have some space,” says Rick. “We created some raised garden beds for them. They started to plant bush tucker foods and harvest them as part of their cultural learning.”

The name chosen for the community garden is Purruna, meaning wellbeing and life-giving in the Kurna language. The name has been engraved onto a beautiful Blue Gum slab, with a new mural made by the children at the bush school placed to form an arched entrance leading into the garden. This project was coordinated by Minya Windas program creator Violet Buckskin. The mural was recently unveiled at a ceremony with over 100 people in attendance, including friends and family, council members and the local mayor.

“We asked if we could call the garden Purruna, and Violet and Jess were happy with that,” Rick says. “The mural is complimentary to the Purruna sign. Minya Windas wanted to put some of their Aboriginal culture there as well, and together, they blend beautifully.”



Coordinator Rick Mierisch with gardener TK in the Riverside Salvos community space.

The Minya Windas bush school, which means Little Owls, provides storytelling from Elders and ongoing carer support for Aboriginal children in foster care. The bush school first came about because foster families wanted to ensure that the Aboriginal children in their care could maintain a connection to their culture. Led by coordinator and Cultural Educator Jess Karpany and a team of Aboriginal educators, and Kurna Elder Claudine Buckskin, the children participate in yarning circles, cooking and games.

“We have two patches in the community garden,” explains Jess. “We are growing pigface and chocolate lily, native guava, native raspberries and finger limes. Most of those have been donated by our partnership with Bunnings. We explain to the children that before there were shops to buy food, Aboriginal people moved from place to place to access bush food, and that’s what we’re doing here, to show them a snippet of sustainability.”

The bush tucker foods will be harvested and support the work of the community garden, with produce being used for the Salvos cafe. Minya Windas have also submitted a grant application to fund a yarning circle that will continue to build an inclusive space for community-building. This will benefit the community through its accessibility to other community groups and members.

RSDS marks 125 years of 'serving those who serve'

By Kirralee Nicolle

The Salvation Army's Red Shield Defence Services (RSDS) celebrated 125 years of service to military personnel with a dinner, book launch and Last Post ceremony at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

The events, held on 7 November to coincide with this year's Remembrance Day commemoration, brought together Defence Force personnel, Salvation Army leaders and family members of RSDS servicemen and women.

Robert Adams, Senior Last Post Ceremony Project Officer, opened the Last Post ceremony held in the Commemorative Courtyard. He spoke of how the 'Sallyman' and 'Sallyma'am' roles, as they came to be affectionately known, were first filled in 1899 during the Second Boer War, when Salvation Army



Lindsay Cox and Major Brett Gallagher at the book launch. Image: Dave Coleman Photography

co-founder William Booth directed Adjutant Mary Murray, Assistant Secretary of the Naval and Military League, to provide soldiers from both sides of the conflict with whatever support they could – often cups of tea, biscuits and a listening ear.

"125 years ago ... it became apparent to Salvation Army founder William Booth that there was a need to offer welfare to all servicemen," Robert said. "The Boer War – a conflict between Britain and the South African Republic, had Salvationists serving on both sides to provide comfort and practical aid to men of both armies, British and Boer alike. This began a tradition of The Salvation Army coming alongside the military in times of peace and conflict."

Robert explained that the Australian RSDS began its work in 1914, at the outbreak of the First World War.

"Since the First World War, the Red Shield Defence Services have been present at every major conflict, and today continue to be a positive presence in Australian military life, proudly serving those who serve," Robert said.

The Last Post ceremony included a wreath-laying, and Chaplain Flight Lieutenant Ali McKeand, who is also the RSDS Defence Veterans Ministries Co-ordinator, told the story of Adjutant William Bramwell Tibbs, a New South Wales-born Sallyman and the only RSDS serviceman to die during active service. After surviving the siege of Tobruk in 1941, ►



William Tibbs' granddaughters with Brett Gallagher at the Last Post ceremony. Image: Cheryl Tinker

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'Big-hearted Bill' as he was known, was killed at the age of 34 in a plane crash north of Rockhampton in 1943.

William's granddaughters, Kathryn, Jeanette and Vivienne, also attended the event and laid a wreath for their grandfather.

The dinner later that evening featured an interview with Lindsay Cox, author of *Cuppa Tea, Digger?* to launch his new book, a prequel titled *Still Serving*, which details both the origins and present-day work of the Sallyman and Sallyma'am. (The book is available to purchase from salvosonline.org.au/salvos-publishing)

Major Brett Gallagher, RSDS Chief Commissioner, presented current Sallyman Jason Lilley with the William Tibbs Award for Exceptional Service. Brett said Jason had served over 10 years as a Sallyman and, in that time, had demonstrated an innovative and committed spirit to serving Defence personnel in the same manner that it had been described of William 'Big-hearted Bill' Tibbs.



A Salvation Army band plays at the service inside the War Memorial. Image: Dave Coleman Photography



Attendees gathered around the War Memorial's Pool of Reflection in Canberra for the Last Post ceremony. Image: Cheryl Tinker

"This Sallyman has always shown a willingness to be involved at a number of levels on the team, representing the team on working groups, helping with policy and just being a great team member," Brett said. "He is a deep thinker, and loves to develop himself by studying, but mostly he is committed to living out his faith through serving those in Defence."

Brett said the essence of the RSDS mission was the same today as in 1899.

"[We] go and find ways that we can serve serving men and women," he said. "We provide physical comfort at some level, whether that be drinks or [food], but then that often will lead to us being able to provide emotional support for people [who] are struggling."

"That's a very big part of what we do."

Brett said the RSDS Sallyman and Sallyma'am also help build morale and, when asked, pastoral care and spiritual support.

"Although that's probably what we would call in modern-day [terms] our model of care, it's been something that we've just done organically from when Mary Murray and other officers went to the Boer War.

"It's what we've continued to do throughout our history."

STORY OF HOPE



Sally Courtney (centre, red shirt) and Paul Tanner, Alice Springs Corps Ministry Assistant, with some of the Year 9 students.

College students cook with compassion in Alice Springs

By Simone Worthing

It's not uncommon for schools to support local charities and their fundraising campaigns. What is unique and remarkable is when that support has continued for over five decades. St Philip's College in Alice Springs has been associated with the local corps Community Centre, also known as 'The Waterhole, since the 1970s.

Salvation Army staff in Alice Springs recently visited St Philip's College to present certificates to the students and discuss the huge impact the weekly meals they are making on community members living rough.

Following this, two groups of students also visited The Waterhole to see firsthand what it offers as a community centre, speak with the dedicated staff and see for themselves the difference their meals are making.

"Not only is it a costly exercise to keep up with the demand of providing so many meals, but community members also often lack any nutrition in their diet," explained Sally Courtney, Salvation Army External Communications Lead NT. "With the addition of hearty

meals made from fresh produce and meats provided weekly from St Philip's, it makes an incredible difference.

"In addition to the weekly meals, this year the students are planning to make meals and desserts to contribute to the community Christmas lunch."

History of help

Year 9 Community Service students have cooked meals for The Waterhole since 2008.

Students volunteer with college staff each year to raise money for the Salvos, doorknocking around the streets to raise money for the Red Shield Appeal.

The funds raised support essential mission services, provide meals, laundry and washing facilities, and help with access and referrals to other essential services.

The Waterhole provides bread, porridge, soups, tea and coffee daily for a minimum of 100 people, with some days providing up to 130.

St Philip's College, run by the Uniting Church, has 530 students from grades 7 to 12. It attracts enrolments from all over Australia due to its emphasis on sports, performing arts, community service initiatives and Outdoor Education programs.

Students can incorporate community service into their academic schedules by facilitating the Duke of Edinburgh program.