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Editorial Introduction

by Major Stephen Court, editor

Greetings in Jesus' name. Welcome to JAC131 - the 131st issue of Journal of Aggressive Christianity. The special focus in JAC131 is prophetic hindsight. The idea is to project ourselves a decade ahead to 2030 and then look back to 2020 to determine what was significant, what was overblown, what we did right, what we missed...

And several Salvationists from around the world took up the challenge, and addressed the issue from different perspectives, each that will edify.

Captain Thom Moffitt writes a personal letter to a soldier in 2030 (as Major Moffitt, as he is due for such a rank in 2030) that's both evocative and unsettling. It is 'The Salvation War of 2020'.

Major Ron Millar, territorial archives director for Canada and Bermuda, zeroes in on one crucial aspect of the salvation war debriefing on '2020 Evangelism Through 2030 Eyes'.

In 'What We Did When Church Was Illegal', Captain Michael Ramsay outlines some of the heroic efforts of the troops on his front back in 2020 - an accounting that is sure to inspire - and then reflects from 2030 on some of the lessons God taught us in that time.

Roy Snapp-Kolas, asking, 'How will 2020 Impact The Salvation Army Of The Next Ten Years', tackles four key issues that rose to the surface in 2020 - secularisation, LGBTQ, Racial Inequality, and 'Christian Nationalism' - that The Salvation Army must address with biblical and theological integrity.

Commissioner Joe Noland's 'The 2030 Dilemma' calls for a merger of 'Doing The Most Good' with 'Winning The Most Souls' in a blunt assessment of our 2020 record.

Captain Erik Johansson, currently invading Bulgaria (we wonder how THAT will look in a decade!), proves, yet again, that JAC is all about diversity of opinion, arguing that 2020 was, 'The Year That Changed Nothing'!

Your friendly editor has a piece called 'Prophetic Hindsight: Debriefing 2020 in 2030', which is admittedly optimistic.

And, in case you are all 2020'd out, we've got a bit of general content for you, a Drug Of Choice Study Guide by Commissioner Jim Knaggs for his book DRUG OF CHOICE: Papers on leveraging creativity in the salvation war. This will be a handy resource for your class or small group or book club that is rushing through or planning to rush through that book in coming days.

And that, along with acting on your convictions for Jesus, should be enough to get you through to JAC132, should Jesus tarry. If not, feel free to do a deep dive into the previous 130 issues in the JAC archive. And, stay close to Jesus.

Much grace.
Major Stephen Court, editor

The Salvation War of 2020

Captain Thom Moffitt

Soldier — I write to you today from a sort of exile; a place of watching and waiting. For many of us previously on the front lines, these past 10 years we have seen a season of subverting retreat, but I write to you in hope and expectation of revival and much grace; that the Lord's Kingdom will come – His will be done in this new year.

As I look in retrospect to the Salvation War of 2020, we took casualties, probably more than at any time in our history. And while these weaknesses became more evident in 2020 due to heightened circumstance of that year, I fear we were moving in that direction for almost a decade before. Now, a decade later, with 2020 vision, we realize the toll it has taken – or at least some of us do.

One could argue the economic and cultural circumstance gave permission to leaders who further separated the preaching of the gospel from meeting human need. Reconnecting the two may prove the most difficult task ahead.

There was special attention given to any one of us who spoke out against the false teachings of economic salvation and the impulse to balance power, yet I maintain whereas equality of opportunity is Biblical, equality of outcome is a false god.

Many in our ranks looked to the world's ideas and ideologies as a new standard instead of Christ, bending to the world's judgement in hopes of being accepted. We were taught by example to stop exposing flaws in other worldviews – some were shamed into recording taped confessions to that end. We abandoned objective truth for poetic truth, and before long it destroyed morale.

We got into the habit of reacting with an overtly legal social desirability bias; responding to culture with consideration of how our position would be interpreted rather than replying truthfully. General Booth's "subjugation of the world to the sway of the Lord" was all but abandoned; replaced by the idea that Christians need to borrow from secular ideologies to be better Christians. This became the new normal.

I trust you know this... that your conviction is true. If 2030 will see revival, we must get back to the "covenant" concept as the key to understanding the Bible and history and the basis of Christian living. We must rediscover the purpose of our movement and revive one of our most distinctive features; the spirit of attack – desperate unflinching assault on the strongholds of evil.¹ We must restore the word "aggressive" to our vocabulary, and be willing to stand alone, grasping the standard even in death.²

¹ The thought, borrowed from Catherine Bramwell-Booth's "Trumpets of the Lord" reads in quotation: "Never must we lose sight of the fact that the spirit of attack is one of the distinctive features of The Salvation Army. Was it not, in fact, this that brought the Army into existence? There were already churches and chapels and mission halls. There was probably more religious observance than now, an abundance of preaching, any amount of routine business of what is called Christian service. That which

Whatever treaties may have been signed, I urge you dear friend, keep advancing.³
There's still plenty of fighting to be done. Go! Win the world for Jesus!

Undaunted,
Major Moffitt

was lacking – that which gave birth to the Army – was desperate unflinching assaults on the strongholds of evil outside.”

² Frederick Booth-Tucker's idea comes from “Life of Catherine Booth, Vol. 2” and reads: “Those who are led in the fight must be prepared to see their comrades fall, and run as well as the enemy, and must be willing to stand alone, if need be, grasping the standard even in death.”

³ The original quote from George Scott Railton is from “Heathen England”: “Whatever treaties may be signed or broken, we shall keep advancing.”

2020 Evangelism Through 2030 Eyes

Major Ron Millar

There is little doubt that history will remember 2020 as the year of covid-19. Public gatherings were restricted to help safeguard the population from the spread of the virus. The church and the Army were not exempt. For the better part of a year, corps around the territory could not meet Sunday mornings to worship together as a community. Programmes normally held at the corps building were suspended. Bible studies and fellowship groups could no longer meet in their normal way. Despite these limitations, God proved yet again that He was faithful to His people, to His church, and to His Army.

If I were to fast-forward in time to the year 2030, and look backwards to 2020 through that lens, key truths emerge.

First, the gospel is more powerful than the pandemic. Evangelism is not confined to bricks and mortar. Throughout history, all kinds of events have threatened to extinguish the spread of the gospel, but it could not be done because the, “gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes.” Despite the need to close our buildings, the gospel continued to spread.

Second, personal witness helps transform lives. Countless reports have emerged of individual Salvationists who faithfully shared their faith midst covid-19. Among the myriad of these stories is a soldier of a corps who was serving as a nurse in a hospital throughout the pandemic. When fellow workers asked her how she could continue without being afraid, she took the opportunity to tell them about how her faith in Christ sustained and strengthened her.

Third, challenge breeds innovation. When one corps bandmaster could no longer hold band practices at the corps, he built a double-sided lawn sign and displayed encouraging gospel messages while he played salvation songs on his cornet. Cars slowed down, joggers stopped in their tracks, children and parents gathered for a closer look. The open-air has been reborn in a new way!!

Fourth, virtual worship is a powerful tool. Corps officers throughout the territory prepared creative worship services that broadcast throughout their community and beyond. Many have testified that these meetings reached far more people than had been attending their corps building.

We are now back in 2021. Reports continue to flow in weekly about how these proven truths are coming to life in all the corners of our Territory. May these eternal principles continue to set the agenda for our efforts to share the gospel in the years to come.

What We Did When Church Was Illegal

Captain Michael Ramsay

As I am writing this church gatherings are still illegal in British Columbia. I will write about what we are doing now but first I thought we would look at what we did the first time church gatherings were illegal, during the pandemic, in BC. It was back in March of 2020. The world was gripped by panic. I was on furlough with my family in Europe. We literally had to flee across borders and reschedule flights more than once to try to get back to our country as each terrified nation closed their borders to visitors. We, like so many others, were racing, trying to get home while we still could. We had originally flown out of the United States. That is where our car was and we couldn't get it because the US would not let us in their country. We did get home safely without it. A night or two before we arrived we were informed that almost everything in Canada and British Columbia had shut down – including Salvation Army Corps: the churches first and later the Thrift Stores and some other ministries. In our community even soup kitchens and other necessary services for people in crisis were closed due to an all-encompassing fear of the pandemic. This was the first time church gatherings were declared illegal.

My family and I spent the next two weeks in isolation. From there we helped arrange the Alberni Covid-19 Community Response. This is an organization made up of a number of agencies in our community. My wife and I also met via messenger video chats with corps council, our management teams, and key workers every morning to discuss how to implement the Army's role in the community response to Covid-19. There were a number of decisions we had to make about many things, including corporate worship, during this time.

I would be lying to you if I said that I wasn't concerned about Hebrews 10:23-25 where it says:

“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

I was more confident in this:

James 1:27 *“Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress...”* and

Matthew 25: 34-40: ... *“Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”*

“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite

you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?"

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"

We embraced our worship of the Lord through service. Because every other food service for vulnerable people had shut down we offered hot meals seven days a week delivered straight to people's homes or for pick up from the front door of The Salvation Army for people who did not have homes. Later we were able to use the Community Response Unit from Gibsons (Thank you Darrell Pilgrim and Ian Pollard and the BC EDS team!) to better serve those with undeliverable addresses. At the height of need in our community we were delivering meals to over 700 individuals every day in our community. We were confident that we were offering the true worship of James 1 and Matthew 25.

We were still bothered, however, by the fact that traditional Sunday church gatherings were illegal. We tried to 'do church' in many ways, like many others. We made videos and posted them on-line: this had diminishing returns. At first I don't think I'd ever had so many people listen to my sermons; by the end of our experiment with this, I am sure almost nobody was. We also made newsletters and mailed them or hand delivered them to our congregation members' homes. We had many end-of-driveway visits and the newsletters were a good way for people to still feel connected: this worked well, for a time. Some churches developed dynamic interactive Zoom church meeting during this time complete with break-out rooms and interactive worship. Many of our congregational members are not able to access this technology so we never did try that. I do understand that that did work well for many people for a time. The problem with Zoom over the long term, as I came to discover from the many zoom meetings I participated in with various community groups, is they lack tangible personal interaction. They miss the human element. The informal conversations are at least as important as any item on any agenda. We – like everyone else – struggled our way through this time and came out the other end as churches (like businesses and other groups) re-opened their doors in new Covid-safe ways.

We relocated our services to the Legion Hall which is quite a bit bigger than our regular worship space so we could properly social distance. We sat 2 people (who are in the same bubble) at tables 6' apart from the next table; people wore masks; we took their temperatures; we collected contact-tracing information; we had multiple Plexiglas shields and sanitized everything. It was good to meet again. We were actually safer during our newly opened Sunday meetings than we were in our re-opened store and our ever-expanding social services (which were each inspected, approved and very safe!) And then it happened.

Just before Christmas, like just before Easter, the government declared gathering for church illegal. This time it upset a lot of people in a lot of churches a lot more than when they previously declared it illegal because this time many in the churches felt targeted. Our church services were certainly not less Covid-safe than our thrift store (which is

allowed to be open), our food services and meal assembly (which is still going strong), our warming centre (which was opened during the most recent lockdown) or other things we are doing. And our church services, as they were set up, were far more safe than many restaurants, stores, pubs, and other places that are not closed in BC. The fact that the government banned church gatherings did not sit well with many people.

This was our solution: we were in constant conversations with the Health Authority as to what was acceptable for making food and for people gathering for service or other reasons (we have just opened a warming centre!). When church gatherings were opened up again we ceased preparing meals seven days a week and began taking Sundays off. Now that traditional gathering for Sunday church is illegal, after many conversations and much research, we decided to gather to make sandwiches to be served to people who are homeless and/or hard-to-house in our community. So every Sunday an approved number of our congregation members meet at the Legion, where we were meeting before, to worship the Lord by making sandwiches rather than singing. During Advent we took a minute or two to light a candle or four and read Advent Reading s. We then said a prayer and went to work worshipping our Lord through service, as we do the other six days a week. Now that Advent has come and gone, prior to commencing our worship through sandwich-making someone (fully masked) will read a short scripture and devotional thought. After making the sandwiches we then clean up, load the truck, pray, and head out to continue our worship in service.

Covid-19 has provided many challenges and many opportunities for worship and service in many corps in many communities. I know many people have risen to the challenge to serve God in these challenging times “being as gentle as doves and as wise as serpents” (Matthew 10:16) while properly “rendering unto Caesar what is Caesar’s and to Christ what is Christ’s” (Matthew 22:21) This is how we have been trying to do that in our community here. This is how our congregation has been worshipping legally while traditional church gatherings are illegal here.

This issue of JAC is looking at The Salvation War of 2020 from a 2030 perspective: What was significant? What was overblown? What did we do right? What did we miss..? One of the lessons that the Lord has driven home to me is that as we have been faithful with a little He has given us a lot of opportunities to serve on new fronts in the Salvation War. We have been blessed to be able to pray with, walk with, and share the Gospel with many new people in many new ways. And as I know Army Corps across the territory and world have dedicated themselves to being as wise as serpents and gentle as doves in fighting the Salvation War during this time, I am confident that we will look back in 2030 to the Army’s mobilization in 2020 and celebrate how He has used us to claim many victories in the battles of 2020.

How Will 2020 Impact The Salvation Army of the Next Ten Years

Roy Snapp-Kolas

The events of 2020 have brought to the far above surface issues that have been below surface or just above surface in The Salvation Army (TSA), at least in the West, for some time. The answers that are being given and will be articulated by the coming leaders of TSA in the next few years will impact the future evangelistic thrust of the movement in one direction or another over the next ten years and beyond. I offer four issues for which further responses will likely be necessary and which will shape The Army going forward.

1) **Secularization** - Charles Taylor, in his book “A Secular Age”, defines the secularism of our modern age as “a move from a society where belief in God is unchallenged and indeed, unproblematic, to one in which it is understood to be one option among others, and frequently not the easiest to embrace” (p. 31). We now live in such a world in the West. The Salvation Army, however, became prominent and respected when the West was still culturally Christian. The public at large had little trouble supporting a Christian organization that provided charity to all those in need (although the public was not as enthusiastic about TSA’s evangelistic methods at times). The last culturally Christian generation is dying off, while the increasingly secular subsequent generations are not as supportive of a Christian organization. TSA has depended on the public support to indirectly fund our evangelistic efforts. What will we do? Redirect our spiritual resources towards social services (that increasingly depend on government contracts that have become more plentiful during the pandemic)? Streamline spiritual services so as to be less expensive (this seems to be the approach advocated by Major Court)? Or, something else?

2) **LGBTQ** - While secularization has been on the move in the West since the 17th Century, it really picked up steam from the late 1960’s going forward. And, it has become associated with sexual libertinism. This sexual liberation movement has also included those expressing themselves in other than male/female relationships. These have come to identify themselves as sexual minorities that needs their rights protected and who demand equality in society. This view is now widely accepted in the West, including some (many?) among those of the younger generations that identify as Christian. However, this view is at odds with TSA requirements for soldiership and officership, which is guided more by a traditional sexual morality that understands LGBTQ sexual behavior as not God’s intent for intimate relationships. The pressure from the larger secular culture is that religious groups change their stance that more aligns with that promoted by LGTBQ advocates or be labeled as “phobic” towards sexual minorities. The Salvation Army has faced this, even though TSA does not discriminate in general hiring practices or in the delivery of services against those that identify as LGBTQ. Should TSA, however, also move in the direction of approving/allowing LGBTQ practicing persons as soldiers and officers? Or, should we continue with the traditional view? There will be a price paid either way. I will observe (as someone that holds to the traditional view) that those identified as evangelical who moved away from the traditional view also have tended to move away from an

emphasis on personal sin, salvation and holiness in their understanding of the Christian faith. I find it difficult to believe that TSA will be able to continue with its eleven core doctrines (and an emphasis on personal evangelism) if there is a move away from the traditional teaching on sexual morality. What will TSA do with this issue?

3) **Racial Equality** - Slavery, Jim Crow and systemic injustice are critically important to understand and acknowledge as part of the history of the United States. And, it must be acknowledged that this system of oppression was interwoven into a supposed Christian culture. The unrest during the summer of 2020 revealed the degree to which racism remains unresolved. This is something that everyone should be able to observe, but can be especially challenging for old white guys like myself. I want to believe that we are further along the path towards some semblance of racial equality than maybe we really are. I state this as someone who was engaged in multi-racial ministry all of my adult life and who pastored a predominantly African-American congregation for most of my ministry. I wanted to believe there were ongoing signs of greater equality, and I believe that there are signs of such, but clearly more intentional work remains to be done. I do believe that The Salvation Army in my neck of the woods had not done enough to develop soldiers and officers, even though a good percentage of our social services work is among Black Americans. I have seen some changes in this area in my years in TSA but more concerted effort needs to be directed towards this moving forward. My main caveat in regards to this is the use of Critical Race Theory as foundational for future understanding of racial inequality. Critical Race Theory (which is subsection of Critical Theory) tends towards being a totalizing hermeneutic looking for power imbalance. I know of at least one (albeit liberal) seminary (Union Theological Seminary in New York City) that uses this approach for understanding the Bible. I do not see how seeing everything through the lens of power imbalance can align with the evangelistic message outlined in TSA's eleven core doctrines. I think that this Theory can be helpful in possibly pointing out blind spots for old white guys like myself, but I would want to hold on to personal sin, salvation and holiness as critical to our evangelistic efforts (while advocating for greater equality as part of bearing witness to God's kingdom). How will TSA move forward on this issue?

4) **Christian Nationalism** - A misdirected (in my opinion) response to secularization has been Christian Nationalism. This was especially on display recently at the U.S. Capitol in an extreme form, but it has a larger, less extreme, presence in the United States. Christian Nationalism is a wedding of the Christian faith with a particular country to the point where patriotism is almost the same as one's religious faith (or maybe is one's religious faith). For reasons beyond the scope of this little writing, evangelical Christianity has become identified with Christian Nationalism in the United States. I believe this identification is overblown, especially by those who would want to reject evangelicalism no matter what, but there is enough truth to demand a response from those that would want to assert evangelicalism while rejecting Christian Nationalism. The Salvation Army is an evangelical denomination. See our Mission Statement. Also, our eleven core doctrines place us within an Evangelical Wesleyan Holiness tradition. To be evangelical is to assert the authority of scripture, the belief in personal sin, the existence of hell, the way of salvation is only through Jesus' death on the cross, the

need for repentance and faith, and the call to holy living, among other things. The Salvation Army is about those things. But, we cannot be Christian Nationalists because we want to win the world for Jesus (and we are in 130+ countries). The temptation may be to disavow being evangelical, but will with that disavowal also come a move away from our eleven core doctrines (in actual practice if not on paper)? What is the best approach to affirming that we are in the evangelical fold while disavowing any affiliation with Christian Nationalism?

The 2030 Dilemma Commissioner Joe Noland

I have recently published two books with a dilemma theme: “The Evangelism Dilemma” and “The Holiness Dilemma.” I have another about to be published: “STUCK! The Leadership Dilemma” (Available at www.bit.ly/JN-books).

One theme running through all of them is what I have termed, “The Noland Law of Soul-Saving Diminishing Returns.” The Salvation Army was created to be a salvation and holiness factory. It began on a street corner, very simply, but with astonishing soul-saving productivity.

Over time, its corporate infrastructure grew until it became a world-wide respected and acclaimed brand, integrating both a social and spiritual ethos. It was especially so during times of disaster when productivity soared, and the brand flourished.

Meanwhile, while there were certainly exceptions, this integrated ethos began to splinter, insidiously, into two separate, but not necessarily coequal parts. And the soul-saving decline was precipitous.

Fast forward to 2020 and a global disaster, unprecedented in our lifetime, the fear of death dominating its headlines. What an opportunity to re-integrate that ethos and lead the way in presenting the eternal, life-saving Gospel message.

Question? Did we rise to the occasion? During a time of extreme lockdown, social distancing and fear, were we able to harness the wave of the future, social media and live streaming, in a way to counteract those diminishing returns?

Were we able to capitalize on our Social Gospel brand in unprecedented ways during unprecedented times? Revive that unique, integrated ethos? Or was it business as usual? If not and if so, what will the future look like a decade from now? Continuing soul-saving diminishing returns? This is the dilemma we face.

On a positive note, let me applaud all those who gave Online Church the good old college try. There were some very creative moments, but mostly it was the same old, same old, except in an empty auditorium, standing behind a pulpit looking into a camera.

I would like to have seen us creatively merge our “Doing the Most Good” with “Winning the Most Souls.” And not necessarily at 11 AM on Sunday, but rather at a time when most of the people are to be got at. And, yes, we are novices at social media marketing skills, me included.

What an opportunity, now, to bring the most creative and innovative minds together, territorially or globally, to re-imagine the year 2020 for implementation in 2030. To

strategize ways of combining social media with the Social Gospel in such a way as to reverse the flow of soul-saving diminishing returns.

The Year That Changed Nothing!

Lieutenant Erik Johansson

Do you remember 2020? The year of the pandemic. The year when people talked about how everything was going to change. “New normal” was the phrase on everyone's lips, and everything, from the climate to discipleship, was going to be so much better because of all the lessons we had learned during 2020.

We all know that didn't happen. People said that the era of flying all around the world was over - instead, the first years after the pandemic, the travel industry boomed like never before! Never before had people been so keen on travelling fast, often and long distances! Experts also predicted that the era of the office was dead - everyone would keep working from home, having gotten used to it during lockdowns and restrictions. Instead offices became more popular than ever - apparently the desire for coworkers and coffee machine chatter were big in people! And they said the era of global trade was over - no more relying on goods from all over the world. Of course, the complete opposite became true.⁴ Since the vaccines that finally put an end to the pandemic were discovered by an international group of scientists, and distributed through an intricate chain on worldwide logistics, global trade agreements and free markets became the buzz of the decade!⁵

Now, in 2030, when world poverty has been eradicated, we can look back and be glad that 2020 was nothing but a little bump in the many decades of global progress that had started at the end of the 1900's.

But it wasn't only the society around us that was going to change, they said. 2020 was the year that was going to change the way Christianity, at least in the western world, operated. Gone were the days of “going to church” culture - now we were all going to *be* the church! We were going to be friends with our neighbours and embrace small groups, wards and cells. But, we all know what happened. As soon as the pandemic was over people forgot all about those things. We had a few years when music festivals, big gatherings and Christian concerts had a revival not seen for many decades. Those who didn't join that craze continued to stay at home browsing the internet for live streamed meetings from all over the world. Christians consumerism had never been stronger.

Yet here we are, with an Army that has advanced significantly since 2020, fighting in many new countries, cities, towns and neighbourhoods. So what happened?

After the first years of post-pandemic craze, we began to focus on the two things that have always been the essence of our movement: Salvation and holiness. And *that* changed things.

⁴ <https://www.spectator.co.uk/article/why-2020-was-the-fourth-best-year-in-history>

⁵ The first approved vaccine was developed by a Turkish born German, living in the USA and produced by an American multinational company with a Greek CEO.

After the General issued the challenge to every Salvationist to bring 5 new people to God during one year we realized that we needed to get to know our neighbours. The festivals, concerts and rallies - no matter how much we liked them - were simply deemed inefficient. And after the global call to Holiness we quickly realized that it's easier to be accountable in a small ward than in a big crowd - not to mention how impossible it was as a holy army to justify the costs of big buildings when we instead could meet in our homes and release more money for the actual work of bringing salvation to the world.

And today, in 2030, we see the results. The Salvation Army is soon to have invaded every country in the world, Salvationists have doubled in numbers since 2020 and we are finally getting back the spirit of winning the world for Jesus and ushering in the good times coming.⁶

What can we learn from this? Pandemics don't change people - holiness and salvation do.

⁶ <http://www.armybarmy.com/JAC/article12-83.html>

Prophetic Hindsight: Debriefing 2020 in 2030

Major Stephen Court

They say 'hindsight is 20/20!' Too early? Probably (I heard it said of a well-known, long-retired Salvationist recently that we'll be discovering the extent of his impact over the next century; but we'll stick with a 'decade' since we hope to have won the world for Jesus within the next century). But surely reflecting on the significant changes birthed a decade ago, in 2020, can still prove an edifying exercise. It's part of our 'drill / deploy / debrief' micro modus operandi. We made those decisions back then. And it is helpful to debrief on them now. And just to make sure we're all on the same page here, this is the definition of 'debrief': 'question (someone, typically a soldier or spy) about a completed mission or undertaking.'

What was the undertaking? Well, we all remember getting stomped by the pandemic. It shut down so many of our traditional spiritual rhythms and practices. For some seasons during its greatest intensity, in different parts of the world we weren't even meant to leave home except for groceries and health care appointments (and, don't forget, dog walking and exercise!). The social policy reaction to the virus was such that most of our habitual spiritual activity ground to a halt.

By necessity, we began exploring different ways of connecting, discipling, worshipping, and evangelising. And we did. Hallelujah.

What began in different local areas as tentative experimental steps into online community established a precedent and foundation for face-to-face community as social restrictions loosened. New relationships and activities on the screens transferred fairly smoothly in most instances to living rooms and cafes.

And so the transition of the nucleus of public SA activity from Sunday-at-the-building to several different times in several different places marks a seismic shift in praxis – a 'fundamental reorientation of a state of affairs.'

Yes, in 2030, we still have buildings in most SA cities in which we gather to worship at the usual intervals. And, yes, those building are still optimized when used throughout the week for food banks and family and community services and Pathway of Hope and English-as-a-Second-Language, and day cares, and more. But more and more, the basic building block of The Salvation Army structure is the Army('s) Base Network.

The rebranding of The Army's 'societies' as bases, with that simple formula 'base = cells + hubs', proved practical and fitting in that crisis season. The flexibility of the 'open' cells and the accountability of the set-membership Infinitum hubs joined together to streamline salvationism, replicate rapidly, bypass bureaucracy, and revitalize the revolution. And it continues to expand, extend, and multiply! Hallelujah!

It turns out that Jesus was not surprised by the crisis, and that He could (and can) save people, heal people, deliver people, free people, sanctify people, disciple people, speak

with people and heaps more with or without viruses, in traditional or unconventional means, inside or outside dedicated buildings (and even with or without 'official' approval, through young or aged, newly arrived or multi-generational, in any language, and more)! Glory to God!

To look back even further, the effects of pandemic are reminiscent of the effects of persecution in Jerusalem that scattered the disciples throughout Judea and Samaria (see Acts 8:1-4). And we all know how that's turning out! In modest ways, the years following 2020 reflect some of the same explosive expansion of Jesus' love as the chapters following Acts 8.

Drug of Choice Study Guide

Commissioner Jim Knaggs

From the book 'Drug of Choice' by Commissioner Jim Knaggs

No Limits Together - Commissioners Carolyn and Jim Knaggs

1. What miracles of God have you seen or experienced in your life?
 - How was your faith engaged?
 - How does it inspire you today?
2. Make a list (short or long) of how you've seen God at work in your life and ministry.
 - Thank Him for every occurrence and answer.
 - How would you like Him to work in your life next?
3. Who can you encourage to imaginatively trust God?
 - Do it and follow up with them to celebrate the unlimited presence of God in our lives.
 - Encourage them to pass it on...
4. Have you met a "practical atheist" as described in the chapter?
5. Are you able to embrace these principles?
 - determine not to be bounded by experience;
 - determine not to settle into practical atheism;
 - press in to Jesus so that we are truly enthusiastic possessed by God, inspired;
 - teach and encourage others to also be truly enthusiastic;
 - trust and obey.

"Without faith, it is impossible to please God." - Hebrews 11:6

The Holiness Dilemma - Commissioner William Francis

1. Do you believe holiness is for you?
 - How does the experience of holiness reveal itself in your life?
 - How would your friends describe your holy life?
2. List five attributes of God consistent with His holiness.
 - Which ones can be said of you (in His likeness)?
 - Might you see ways to improve your walk to be more like God? Describe them.
3. How are you seeing growth in your holy living?
 - What steps does it take on your part to grow in Christ?
 - Make a list of the things you did this week to grow in this way.
4. Validate the work of God in your life by acknowledging to Him how He is drawing you closer to Him in relationship and in living your life.

"But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: 'Be holy, because I am holy.'" - 1 Peter 1:15-16

Lean Right, Love Left - Colonel Richard Munn

1. Describe what you understand of Salvation Army radicalism.
 - List three areas where you have witnessed this radicalism.
 - How comfortable were you with The Salvation Army's position?
2. Describe what you understand of Salvation Army conservatism.
 - List three experiences you've had with Salvation Army conservatism.
 - How did these opportunities reflect your own interests?
3. Would Jesus be on the Left or the Right? Why?
4. Where do you stand?
 - Is that always true?
 - What guides you in your commitment?

"It is the "hurt" and not the "condition" that we must give our attention to. Get this right and we will get the balance right! Get this right and we will get the church right! Get this right and we will get the world right!" - Commissioner Joe Noland

A Little Greatness - Commissioner Lyndon Buckingham

1. Is creativity and innovation a gift from God?
 - If it is, how then would we honor God with its use?
 - If it isn't, how then would we honor God with its use?
2. Does the absence of innovation or creativity speak to a deficit in our faith?
3. How can The Salvation Army better promote creativity and innovation?
 - In our Mission?
 - In our Leadership?
4. Consider:
 - Take personal responsibility for your own creativity and innovation.
 - Create Innovation teams at every level of the organization.
 - Hold Innovation weekends. Invite all the creative innovators to a weekend of brainstorming, praying, thinking about how to put The Salvation Army back in its former position as a leader in mission advancement.
4. Encourage debate about what makes The Salvation Army, The Salvation Army.
5. Be prepared to stop what's not working.

"I want to be part of an Army that is clear about its purpose and rich in its diversity. I want us to celebrate creativity and innovation within the Movement. I want to be part of an Army so driven by its purpose that it embraces creativity and innovation - because it is not satisfied with diminished impact and falling rolls. I want to be part of an Army that imagines a greater impact and works boldly and creatively to achieve it." - Commissioner Lyndon Buckingham, Chief of the Staff

High Counsel - Commissioner Jim Knaggs

1. How are you leading in The Salvation Army?
 - Who's following you?
 - What leaders have influenced your leadership the most?
 - What principles of leadership (new and old) would advance the mission of the Army today?
2. How do you lead from the heart of God?
 - Is your relationship with God growing? How?
 - How is it that you know the heart of God better today from a year ago?
3. How does your example encourage others to follow God?
4. How can you demonstrate trust in your followers?
5. Consider how you:
 - Lead through the storm
 - Lead with confidence
 - Lead with discipline
6. Are you leading others to follow Jesus?

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." - John 14:6

God Beat In Time - Commissioners Vibeke and Dick Krommenhoek

1. What secular and culturally relevant forms do we creatively use today in The Salvation Army?
 - In worship
 - In service
2. Describe the importance of excellence in what we do.
 - How is this manifested in our creative endeavors?
 - What do you suppose God is looking for from us in this regard?
3. How do we measure mission effectiveness in our creative expressions?
 - Are people being drawn to Christ?
 - Does the Holy Spirit have the freedom to minister?

"For Him, only the very, very best of our abilities is good enough." - Commissioner Dick Krommenhoek

Out Of The Rubble... Revolution - Major Stephen Court

1. What changes do we need in The Salvation Army?
 - Changes where you are...
 - Changes going forward...

- Revolution?
2. Is God calling you to stay or go?
 - What will you do?
 - Can you do it with God's help?
 3. What extravagances might we do away with?
 - in The Salvation Army?
 - In our lives?
 4. How can we persevere on "the lines of aggression?"
 - Is our witness routine? How should it be aggressive?
 - Are we concerned about change? How about advancing?
 5. What does revolution for the sake of mission mean to us today?

"How would it be possible to bring about a revolution - a true revival - a grand aggressive movement of Christianity - without giving new light and calling somebody to some path in advance of all that has gone before? And what does it matter who - whether it is Peter, or John, or Luther, or Fox, or Wesley, or Booth - what does it matter, so that God does it?" - Catherine Booth

Booth-Tucker And The Fringle - Commissioner Mark Tillsley

1. How much am I willing to risk for the sake of the gospel?
 - What does that look like exactly?
 - How can I be sure it's for the glory of God?
2. How do you actualize the responsibility to evangelize?
 - Family?
 - Friends?
 - Others?
3. What gifts has God given you for His purposes?
 - How are you using them?
 - How are you developing them?
4. Who has shown you the way to creatively evangelize?
 - How are you following their example?
 - Who can you influence to be a creative evangelist?

"Let us be people who are in the business of affirmation and setting people free to be everything God intended them to be." - Commissioner Mark Tillsley

Altars In The Street - Danielle Strickland

1. How did you come to faith?
 - Describe the context of your family in this process. Did they lead you or did you lead them?

- How far back among those who lead you to Christ can you trace the gospel? Who lead them?
2. What can you do to advance the Gospel even more?
 3. Do we need a "Cultural shift" in The Salvation Army today to be more missionally effective?
 - What would that look like?
 - Who would do it?
 4. Are we seeking the least, the last and the lost with creative and innovative ways?
 - Does this mission still interest us?
 - How do we show it?

"Surely, there is still time to respond to God's call to make a way where there seems none. If ever an exodus was needed again, it is now" - Danielle Strickland

A Christmas Gecko - Major Rob Birks

1. If you knew you were to speak the final words to a person who was facing eternity, what would you say?
 - How do you know the person you just met today isn't facing eternity?
 - What other ways might we communicate the gospel without words?
2. How does your story communicate the gospel of God's love?
 - Is it solely in your conversion?
 - How is it seen in your daily life?
3. Which of Jesus' stories do you like the best? Why?
4. Does the story depend upon the storyteller?
 - If you can't trust the storyteller, how can you trust the story?
 - Is this why Christianity misses the mark when the storyteller is "unchristian?"
 - How would holiness improve the impact of a storyteller?

"Let us live The Story and create stories that tell the Good News in visionary, revolutionary, mysterious ways." - Major Rob Birks

Eras: Choice Of Drug - Major Stephen Court

1. Are you a "little Christ?"
 - In what ways?
 - Do others know? How?
2. Are you a "little creator?"
 - In what ways?
 - Do others know that you're imitating Christ?
3. How do these concepts describe you?
 - Missional
 - Strategic

- Intentional
- Purposeful?

4. How can you help others to be like Christ?

"Be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." - Ephesians 5:1-2