



## The URB GRY

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"Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.



### Share the Hope in 2024

Major Evama Shaijuraj, Editor

elissa Fokkema was diagnosed with a rare disease called meningococcal disease, at her age of 17. It is the fastest killing bacterial disease in the world. Not only she, but her family was baffled by this condition. But she never lost her hope and consoled her family. She was put into a drug – induced coma and it was like between life and death. Even though she woke up from the coma, the disease completely ruined her body to the worst.



Melissa had her hands and legs removed, went through many operations and skin grafts. Physiotherapists and surgeons worked on straightening her body. All the pains she suffered with confidence and braveness. After 9 months, she was discharged with artificial legs, hook like hand replacement, muscle-activated hand for another arm – but it never stopped Melissa from doing what she wanted to do. Her family was always there with prayer and faith to support her.

She learned to cook, type, work a digital camera and even play the keyboard. In 2007, she acquired a special driver's license by learning to drive a car modified according to her needs. Then she worked as a health promotion officer at the Amanda Young Foundation (AYF)

This wonderful story of Melissa reminds us of the importance of not losing hope and positivity during hard times. A tiny ray of hope that can lead miracles to our lives. Staying positive is the key to move forward during the hard times of life. Yes, being alive is the biggest gift of life!

Sometimes life is beyond our expectations or predictions. The people are feeling anxious and become panic because of big changes happening in climate, inflation, the presence of pestilences, war, terrorism, human trafficking, starvation. The list is big! In Christ we have been given this promise, 'Cast all your anxiety upon Him because He cares for you'. Yes, 'his plans for us are for prosper, not for harm'.

It enables us to hope in the face of hopelessness. It helps to remain at peace in the midst of the worst storms of life. Life always changes, but God in whom we believe give us the consistency. The realization that the God has a plan for each one of us will take us to a happy new year. God

encourage us to share this profound hope to the people those who are in desperate need. Blessings!

Have a Wonderful Year Ahead with Hope and Joy!

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## Return to God!

t feels like 2023 has just started and then ended in quick time. By the time a copy of this War Cry is in your hand, we would have already spent a few days and hours of 2024. Time does not wait for us, so how important it is for us to redeem the time to make sure we refrain from spending our time on things that do not do us any good.

Hosea was an Old Testament prophet. He had a difficult marriage. In spite of his love and commitment to his wife, she did not take him seriously and wasted her time, which not only caused heartbreak for Hosea, but her own life was becoming miserable and unfruitful. Using Hosea's own life experience, God gave him a message to deliver to his chosen people, Israel, who were also displeasing God by their unfaithfulness, yet God continually loved them, wanting them to consider his love and give him due honour. Unfaithfulness and ignoring God's love was making their own lives miserable and difficult. Continuing with their ungodly life was causing them to be defeated by their enemies.

Hosea had a message of hope and redemption, challenging them to return to God (see Hosea 14). Through Hosea, God was giving them one more opportunity to restore their relationship with him. For us, every new day, month, and year provides opportunities to restore our relationship with God, the creator and designer of our life. His words reminds us that God has a better plan and purpose to make our life fruitful (see Jeremiah 29:11).

As he challenged God's people to return to God, Hosea was also giving them advice about how to make this a reality. He advised them to take three steps of faith to return to God, and leave the rest to God.

The first step was to accept God's words — his everlasting promise. To know that it is God's desire that we consider his love for us. To know that he can make life meaningful and give a purpose to live a fruitful life. He is always there to love to forgive and make your life worthwhile. God sent his Son to save us from our sins (John 3:17). His Son Jesus Christ came to this world to give us life. Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you

rest" (Matthew 11:28).

The second step is, like King David, to come to him with true confession of sin. Not just once but often, and as we do so, we realise how we have drifted away from the truth and life that God gives to us. This requires self-examination and getting back on the track God has designed for us. It requires us to pray as King David prayed, 'Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me' (Psalm 51:10). Jesus' blood is preciously shed for our sins. When we truly confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive our sins and purify us from all our unrighteousness (see 1 John 1:9).

The third step in returning to God is with a thankful heart. We must thank him for his faithfulness and love and the peace he freely gives us. We must thank him for forgiving our sins and being willing to accept us back into his fold. We have a place in his kingdom, therefore we must be thankful and worship God with reverence (see Hebrews 12:28).

When we return to God by claiming his promises, and with true repentance and thanksgiving, we experience God's grace in our life, as Hosea indicates in his message to Israel. I have noted seven of those blessings in Hosea 14:1-9:

- 1) We experience God's compassionate heart healing our waywardness. As we open our hearts for God's power to work in us, he writes his covenant on our heart. We begin loving his words and willingly obeying him. Saint Paul has wonderfully explained this in his letter to the Hebrews 8:7-13.
- 2) We grow deeper in our faith in God. Not only that we bear fruit, but also we will provide space for others to learn from us so that they too find God. Like the cedar tree of Lebanon we send down our roots and young shoots then grow (see Hosea 14:5-6). Our lives become like the tree planted by the water in Psalm 1.
- 3) Those who return to God find everlasting shade in his love. We bear witness, as Peter did, when Jesus asked him whether he too wants to leave him as some other disciples had left Jesus. Peter told Jesus that he would not find any purpose to his life without Jesus,



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because Jesus has the words of eternal life (John 6:68).

- 4) We find all the answers to all the questions regarding God and about our own lives. Just as the Samaritan woman found when she met Jesus at the well. In her few moments with Jesus, her complete life was revealed to her. That made her to go to her village and witness to the people, "He told me everything I ever did"... Because of her witness, the villagers went to Jesus and they too experienced what the woman had told them. And so they too witnessed proclaiming, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world" (John 4).
- 5) The Spirit of God will help us to grow in faithfulness towards God. We do not want to be unfaithful like Hosea's wife, and ruin our entire life, but we want to hear God's message to stop wandering and return to him. Saint Paul, writing to the early Christian believers, suggested that by fixing our eyes on Jesus, who is the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, and who endured opposition from sinners, we will not grow weary and lose heart (see Hebrews 12:1-3).
- 6) When we return to God, we grow in wisdom and discernment. King Solomon did not desire the wealth of the world, but asked God to give him wisdom, which earned him integrity. There was no one like him in those days he became a wise ruler to his people (1 Kings 3). God's Word states, 'But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere' (James 3:17).
- 7) Those who return to God walk in God's way and are called 'righteous'. Jesus has given us the Holy Spirit, who leads us in the way of Jesus. He teaches us and guides us in his way.

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## Move on and embrace God's Plan

he Christian journey is an incredible adventure filled with faith, hope, and love. Sometimes, however, believers find themselves stuck or facing challenges that make it difficult to move forward. In those moments, it's crucial to remember that God has a plan for each of us, and part of that plan involves the concept of "moving on." Moving on in relation to the new year for a Christian involves a spiritual perspective on growth, renewal, and a deeper commitment to one's faith. It is a time for reflection, repentance, and embracing the opportunities that a new year brings within the context of one's Christian journey. As we step into another year and another opportunity to continue our spiritual journey, it is good to understand and earn the aspects involved in our movements in the new year, while sticking onto the God's plan.

#### **Letting Go of the Past**

One significant aspect of moving on in your Christian journey is learning to let go of the past. Past mistakes, regrets, and missed opportunities can weigh heavily on your spirit, hindering your progress. The word of God encourages believers, or the salvationists to release the burdens of the past and embrace the new life that God has in store. In Philippians 3:13-14 (NIV), the Apostle Paul writes, "Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus." This verse reminds believers to

focus on the future and the purpose God has set before them, rather than dwelling on past mistakes.

#### **Trusting in God's Timing**

Moving on also involves trusting in God's perfect timing. It's common for believers to feel impatient or discouraged when things don't unfold according to their plans. However, our God reassures us that His timing is always perfect. Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV) says, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." This verse emphasizes the importance of trusting God's wisdom and surrendering our plans to His guidance. Moving on requires faith that God's timing is better than our own, and He has a purpose even in moments of waiting.

#### **Seeking God's Will**

Moving on in your Christian journey means actively seeking and following God's will. It involves aligning your desires and plans with what God has designed for your life. Proverbs 16:9 (NIV) states, "In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps." This verse encourages believers to make plans but ultimately trust God to direct their paths. Seeking God's will require spending time in prayer and studying the Scriptures. In Psalm 119:105 (NIV), the psalmist declares, "Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path." The Bible serves as a guide, providing wisdom and direction for those seeking to move on in their Christian journey.

### Embracing God's Forgiveness

Moving on also involves embracing God's forgiveness and extending that forgiveness to others. Guilt and unforgiveness can become roadblocks in your journey, preventing you from



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experiencing the fullness of God's love and grace.

1 John 1:9 (NIV) assures believers, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." God's forgiveness is freely given to those who genuinely repent, allowing believers to move on with a clean slate.

Jesus emphasized the importance of forgiving others in Matthew 6:14-15 (NIV): "For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins." Forgiveness is an essential aspect of moving on in your Christian journey, both for your relationship with God and with others.

As we move on, remember the encouraging words of Isaiah 43:18-19 (NIV): "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland." God has a beautiful plan for your life, and as you move on in your Christian journey, you can trust that He is leading you toward a future filled with hope and purpose.

I and my wife Colonel Annamma Simon, along with all the national office staff, extend our warm and sincere new year greetings to all the readers and salvationists throughout the country for a wonderful life ahead with full of divine and heavenly blessings. May the Grace of Lord Jesus Christ continue to flow not only this year 2024, but throughout your lives.



## "Blessings in Christ"

ohnson Oatman wrote this chorus in one of his songs "Count your blessings, name them one by one, count your blessings see what God hath done, count your blessings name them one by one and it will surprise, what the Lord hath done". As we all entered a new year, we need to count all the blessings of the Lord, because "The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy". (Psalm 126:3). Bible tells us to "give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ

Jesus".

Charles H. Spurgeon wrote "Our thanks are due to God for all temporal blessings; they are more than we deserve. To have God for our portion is blessed, infinitely more blessed than to own broad acres of land. God hath blessed us with spiritual blessings. These are the rarest, the richest, the most enduring of all blessings, they are priceless in value".



In the first chapter of Ephesians, we find Paul giving one thanks after another ending with an outburst of praise to God for all His blessings. "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ". We serve God who gives blessings which is sufficient and abundant. It is important to sit down and count them, then you are reminded of how God has

"Praise be to the God and

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around you. All blessings are priceless gifts from our heavenly father. He chooses to give all spiritual blessings to his children. When we receive such a blessing, so others

will come to know

touched your life and those

God through us. We need to diligent to share the blessings what God has done for us.

Blessing of New Creation: To become new creation, first we must choose to let go of old ways of acting. Everything connected with that old way of life must go. Our God is an awesome God. He sent His son to earth knowing that he would be sacrificed to save us from our sins. He gives love and showers us with His grace and His mercy. He transforms us from old person to new person. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: [a] The old has gone, the new is here" (2nd Corinthians 5:17).

Blessing of Transformation: We are transformed by the renewing of our minds. "Do not conform to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is 1his good, pleasing, and perfect will. (Romans 12:2). We can see the amazing change a caterpillar goes through in



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becoming a butterfly. When we allow God to direct our thoughts, we are changed from the inside out, we become more beautiful, and we are set free to soar the new heights.

Blessing of Obedience: If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all his commands, I give you today the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of earth. (Deuteronomy 28;1) Obedience is better than sacrifice. God often rewards others—particularly those closest to us-because of our obedience. For example, when a father obeys the Lord, his entire family reaps the reward of God's blessings. Likewise, a child's obedience will bless his or her parents. His call to obedience always demands our response. However, when we live obedient lives, those who know and love us will sense the peace and joy He has given to us.

May God be gracious to you and bless you and make his face shine upon you. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is so great you will never fully understand it, and may you be filled with the fulness of life and power that comes from God". (Ephesians 3:16).



**Colonel Vanlalfela Chawnghlut**Territorial Commander, India Northern Territory

Dear brothers and sisters,

My wife and I send you our best New Year wishes. May this year be a blessings year to you and your family.

I felt the need to encourage the Indian Salvationists to 'Get Up and Stand' to be able maintain consistency in our mission. This is the need of the Indian Territories. This is the need of the mission. We need to get up to be able to support ourselves. We need to stand ourselves to accomplish God's mission. Proverb said, "United we stand, divided we fall".

There are sufficient human resource and property resource. Human resource is also financial resource. To get up and stand we need to move out from dependency. We should have courage that we can manage ourselves.

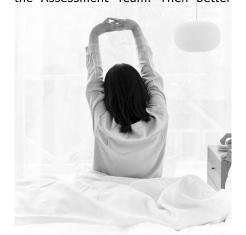
Each of us need to experience that God is the source of everything. Tithing is the key to open the floodgates of heaven where the blessings will be pouring down. Looking to the political situation of India, we the Salvationists – God's soldiers,

## Get Up and Stand

need to awake to manage ourselves from our own resources. This is possible as we are trusting in God, who is the source of everything.

Out of 6 Territories one is looking after by itself. Who will be the next? We need to delete 'self' and replace by 'together'. Together we can get up and stand. How can we work together? What is the most needful resource to get up and stand?

How can we work together? Each salvationist, family need to contribute to the Mission Fund by giving tithe to God. The Territory/Division can be assessed by the Assessment Team. Then better



strategy will come out to make the Territory to get up and stand by its own legs.

What is the most needful resource to get up and stand? We have sufficient human resource and property resource. What we are lacking is financial resource. It is just because we are not giving tithe to God. In many Territories so far we are not finding out the best financial system. Financial resource within the Territory is scattering here and there, resting and sleeping in the banks. The most needful resource to make the Territory floating is financial resource.

You and me can be one of the most useful persons to make the Territory get up and stand. So, let us have broad mind. Let us think the mission of the Salvation Army. With one accord and one mind we can make the Territory to get up and stand.

Why financial resource is very important? It is important to continue the mission of God. The purpose of the Salvation Army is to accomplish the mission of God. For that we are working together. So, there is no time to think and to concern our own Corps only. Let our mission mind cover the whole Territory.

Come on, let's get up and stand. We can do it!



## Renew your Strength

hen we enter a new year, we are expecting new blessings from God. In Isaiah 40:31 says, but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint (NIV). Whenever we wait upon Him or we trust the Lord, our strength will be renewed according to His word.

We all know that the month of January is named after 'Janus', one of the Roman gods who is depicted with double face. One face looked to the past and the other looked ahead to the future. As we have entered a new year, we have new beginnings towards the future. Also, we should remember the blessings and sufferings of the past year and how God helped us to overcome in painful situations. Last year we might become tired and weary, stumbled, and weak. Here is a word for you. 'Renew your strength' in this new year (Isaiah 40:31).

This Isaiah 40 was written when the people were in Babylon as captives. Isaiah sent the message in a letter to give them some encouragement.

#### Who will renew their strength?

...those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. A very good promise to the suffering people. It is the promise to us, a powerful promise! In verse 30 we read weariness, fainting, and collapsing. In verse 31 we read flying, running and walking. What a great change! The reason for this change is 'to have hope in the Lord' or 'wait for the Lord'.

God can give strength to us when all our strength runs out. Even the strongest people get tired and weary. But no matter how weak you are, anyone who 'waits' or 'trusts' in the Lord will be strengthened. The Lord gives us supernatural strength to overcome the problems and unfavourable circumstances surrounding us when we trust in Him.

#### How will they renew their strength?

They will soar on wings like eagles: Isaiah was giving the image of an eagle to the Jewish people. The eagle flies from the trees to the sky to above the clouds. It can

fly as high as 10,000 to 20,000 feet. It never afraid of thunderstorm or heavy rain or any natural disasters. If a thunderstorm begins, it can break through the clouds and fly above those storm clouds.

When the eagle's strength goes down in its 40th year, it renews its strength, and it lives 30 more years. Thus, the eagle has the longest lifespan of its species. It can live up to 70 years. In its 40th year, the eagle's long and flexible talons can no longer grab a prey which serves as food. Its long and sharp beak becomes bent. Its old-aged and heavy wings, due to their thick feathers, stick to its chest and make it difficult to fly. Then, the eagle is left with only two



options: DIE or RENEW This process of renewal takes 150 days (5 months). For this the eagle has to fly to a mountain top and sit on its nest in the rock. There the eagle knocks its beak against a rock and plucks it out. Then the eagle will wait for the new beak to grow back, after that it will pluck out its talons. When its talons grow back, the eagle starts plucking its old-aged feathers. And after this, the eagle takes its famous flight of rebirth and lives for 30 more years!

Like eagle, the people those who hope in the Lord will fly from low place to the higher places. They have to renew their strength. The minds and spirits of the Jews in the captivity were low in estate. They faced many challenges. The sadness, the depression and the discomfort weakened the Jews' physical, emotional, spiritual and psychological strength. Isaiah tells them to wait on God who will exchange their weariness for energy so they can soar like



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eagles.

#### 2. They will run and not grow weary:

This is possible because they wait on God and He renews their strength. With renewed power, they will run and not grow weary. The Jews had experienced an incredible amount of stress when they were exiled. In this verse, God promised that they would receive the physical strength they needed to do the tasks in the exile, and they would not grow weary. Those who wait on God, putting their complete hope and trust in Him, they are strengthened in every way to run the race of life.

3. They will walk and not be faint: God also promised that they would receive the kind of mental strength they would need to face everything in our life. When we face trials, we believe that God has forgotten us. When life is comfortable, we become self-sufficient and stubborn and have no need of God. We are forgetting God, but He is still faithful to be with you. Isaiah 40:29 says, He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.

Dear readers, in our hard times, we feel that we don't have the energy to do anything. Like the Jews in captivity, we become weary and fall. Wait in the rock which is Christ. Let us renew our strength by removing unwanted worries, unpleasant old memories, negative habits and by trusting God moment by moment; by going deeper in the Word of God and by increased time in prayer. God will infuse us with His strength so that we can soar like an eagle. God will move us from a low place to a higher place where our circumstances do not make us weary and faint.

# Live with initiative Faith

he Christian believers are living with faith in Jesus Christ. Whatever may be their doctrines and congregation but they all are following Christ and His teachings. Now we are entered into a new year and we are going to have our new life. This year we can live with initiative faith. Through this I would like to share with you the importance of initiative faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. In the Bible we are see different characters who were keeping initiative faith in their life. We can see such kind of characters and their initiations for keeping their life in Christ. Every believers must be known and exercise initiative faith in their life. Normally we knew about faith and its power in believers' life. We knew that the Bible says about faith, "Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." (Hebrew 11:1) The writer of Hebrew chapter 11 says the list of people who lived in faith.

Here we are seeing the meaning of initiations and its importance and also the need of initiative faith to a believer. A person is initiative means, he has the ability to assess and initiate things independently also the opportunity to act or take charge before others do. The initiative person has a personal quality that shows a willingness to get things done and take responsibility. A person who has initiative faith, he will do things without being told by anybody. He will find out what he needs to know and not stop even when the things get tough. Also the person spot and take advantage of opportunities that others pass by. Such kind of many examples we are seeing in the Bible. Luke chapter 7: 1 - 10, we are seeing the faith of the Centurion. The Bible is saying about the faith of the Centurion, even though he was not a Jew but a Roman soldier (Centurion). The Bible says about his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.



The first phase we are seeing the simple faith of the Centurion. He was lived in Palestine and heard about Jesus, specially His power of doing miracles and healing sick and suffering people. His servant was severely sick, (Paralyzed) because of his love to his servant he wanted to save him from his disease. Therefore, he sent some Jewish elders to Jesus and asking Him to come and heal his servant. He believed that if Jesus come and touch his servant then he will be healed. He heard about many sick people was healed by Jesus Christ, so he believed that Jesus has the power to heal his servant also.

The second phases we are seeing the initiative believe of the Roman Centurion. After the Jewish elders have gone to Jesus the Centurion was thinking about Jesus and His power. The Roman Centurion knew about the physical power of people, especially he knows the physical power of the Roman King. If he made an order that will be accomplished all over the Roman Kingdom. That time many countries were ruled by the Roman King. The Centurions were very well knows the power of Roman



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Kings because they were known as the backbone of the Roman Army. So the Centurion was made a comparative study about the physical power and the Spiritual power. His faith has made initiative study about Jesus and His power. In what way the physical power of the Roman King is accomplished in their kingdom, so the Spiritual power can go anywhere else without any hindrance or block. Even nothing can block the spiritual power, there is no boundary for that, and nothing can stop that power. Therefore, immediately he sends friends to Jesus and said to Him, "Lord, don't trouble yourself, for I don't deserve to have you come under my roof." He accepted Jesus as a Lord in the spiritual world. Even though he was a Centurion, leader of hundred Roman soldiers, a great authority man, he feels, he was nothing before Jesus. He has seen Jesus much greater than Roman King. So he accepted Jesus the Lord of the Spiritual World and His immense power. He believed in Jesus and said to himself that, the Lord, no need to come and see my servant, no need to touch him, no need to come near to him. Also ask his friends to say Jesus, "Say the Word, and my servant will be healed." Great initiative faith of the Centurion. He believed that, "if the Word comes out from Jesus, immediately his servant will be healed." That is like twinkling of an eye, there is no time needed for that, there is no problem of distance. Nothing can stop the powerful Word of Jesus Christ.

The Centurion initiated such kind of faith in his life. So Jesus said, "I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel."(Luke 7:9) This is initiative faith. Dear friends, this New Year every believer need to initiate this kind of faith in our life. May God bless you all to achieve this kind of initiative faith in your life!

### Hoping for New Strength: Finding Renewed Faith in the New Year

ew Year is always a joyous occasion to many and the idea itself brings new vibes for it has a special savour. As we stand on the threshold of a new year, many of us carry the weight of the past year's challenges and uncertainties. The idea of a fresh start brings with it a sense of hope, a hope for new strength to face whatever lies ahead. In times of uncertainty, turning to faith becomes a source of solace and guidance. For Christians, this hope, belief, and trust are deeply rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ.

#### The Foundation of Hope:

Hope is a powerful force that propels us forward, even in the face of adversity. In the Bible, hope is often connected to faith and trust in God's plan. Proverbs 23:18 (NIV) states, "There is surely a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off." This verse reminds us that our hope is not in vain; it is anchored in the promise of a better future. The Bible describes hope as an anchor for the soul, providing stability in the midst of life's storms. "We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure."\* - Hebrews 6:19 (NIV), In a world marked by uncertainty, the hope found in Jesus serves as a constant and unchanging anchor. This hope is not contingent on external circumstances but is rooted in the unchanging character of God.

#### **Believing in the Promises:**

Being the children of God, we are assured by the promises of God's love, protection, and guidance for those who believe. Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV) assures us, "For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." This verse encourages us to trust in God's divine plan, even when our own plans seem uncertain. In times of doubt, it's essential to hold onto the belief that God's promises are true. Hebrews 10:23 (NIV) emphasizes the importance of unwavering faith: "Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful." This verse teaches us that our hope is not based on our circumstances but on the faithfulness of God.

#### **Finding Strength in Trust:**

Trust is the bedrock of any meaningful relationship, and the relationship between a believer and God is no different. Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV) instructs, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight." Trusting in God involves surrendering our worries and anxieties, allowing His wisdom to guide us.

We are consistently reminded that God is our refuge and strength. Psalm 46:1 (NIV) declares, "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." This verse offers a profound sense of assurance that, in times of difficulty, we can find strength in turning to God as our refuge.

#### **Overcoming Challenges with Faith:**

Life is replete with challenges, and the new year may bring its own set of trials. However, the Christian faith teaches that through Jesus, believers can find strength to overcome adversity. Philippians 4:13 (NIV) asserts, "I can do all this through him who gives me strength." This verse serves as a reminder that our capabilities are not limited by our own strength but by the strength derived from our relationship with Christ.

In moments of weakness, the Bible teaches that Jesus is a source of unparalleled strength. 2 Corinthians 12:9 (NIV) records Jesus' words to the apostle Paul during a time of struggle: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." This profound statement encourages believers to embrace their vulnerabilities, knowing that Christ's strength is magnified in our weakness.

Finally, as we experience our lives are full of uncertainties, and we often find ourselves facing situations that demand strength beyond our own capabilities.



Captain Aseervadam Cheeli National Business Secretary for C&A, Mumbai

Whether it be personal struggles, challenges in relationships, or the uncertainties of the future, the human spirit longs for a source of strength to navigate these trials. The concept of hoping for new strength is a universal one, transcending cultural and religious boundaries.

As we step into another new year, let us carry with us the profound truth that hoping for new strength is not a mere aspiration, but a reality grounded in the person of Jesus Christ. Our personal encounter with Jesus and through our regular mediations from the word of God encourage and assure us that in Him, we find a source of strength that transcends our own limitations. In the journey of our Christian lives, characterized by its ups and downs, uncertainties, and joys, the hope, faith, and trust in Jesus provide an unshakeable foundation. As we navigate the challenges that the new year may bring, let us hold fast to the promises of God, confident that our hope in Him will be a guiding light, illuminating the path toward a future filled with His strength, purpose, and love.

May the Light of Jesus shine us in the new year that we might ignite and light others as well being the lights of this world.

## Medical Services of The Salvation Army Catherine Booth Hospital

#### **ORIGIN AND GROWTH**

Bramwell Booth, son of General William Booth, promised to care for a dying mother's baby boy. He could not have imagined the tiny infant would become a nineteenth-century missionary Harry Andrews with the given Indian name, Sekundar (The Brave One).

At age of 17 Harry became an officer in The Salvation Army. He was appointed to assist Major William Stevens at Nagercoil, South India, Mrs Stevens becoming aware of Harry Andrews sympathies for the poor suffering from diseases and his keen desire to relieve their suffering observes: 'The boy wants to heal bodies and I'm going to make it easier for him. He shall have that little bathroom at the end of the verandah for a dispensary". This was the humble beginning of the Salvation Army Catherine Booth Dispensary. The amateur dispensary in the bathroom was set up in 1893, and patients walked many miles to seek help at the hands of Harry Andrews who had a remarkable practical ability to render medical assistance to them with a limited means at his disposal. "It was love for people and concern for their physical and spiritual welfare which led young Harry Andrews to use the healing virtues which he possessed to bring relief to the suffering around him...

The severe outbreak of cholera in Travancore first became the field of work for Harry Andrews. He gathered a few simple remedies, walked from village to village, ministering to the sick and dying and thus his mission of healing the sick started. News of Harry's skill was reported to the Salvation Army's

London Headquarters. Bramwell Booth thought it worthwhile to bring Harry Andrews to England to take a dresser's course in a London Hospital. He returned to India in 1896 with increased confidence and boyish delight. He received the news that a friend had given £ 50 with which to purchase a piece of land where 'a proper dispensary' could be established.

It was named the Catherine Booth Dispensary in honour of the Army Mother, Co-founder with William Booth of the Salvation Army. As the work began to grow, a large building became necessary. Harry found a site, designed the new building and helped to dig its foundations'. This was the beginning of Salvation Army's' medical work as well as the beginning of Catherine Booth Hospital.



Dr. Percy Turner arrived in India and took up his medical appointment at the Catherine Booth Dispensary, Nagercoil, in 1900. He was the first qualified Salvation Army medical missionary doctor. The Salvation Army Catherine Booth dispensary was widened and developed in every section by Dr. Turner. On 27th April 1901,

the stone laying ceremony of the Catherine Booth Hospital took place and the stone was laid by the former Prime Minister of Travancore State, V. I. Kesava Pillai. In 1901, the dispensary was elevated to become the Catherine Booth Hospital.

Dr. Percy Turner was able to start a fouryear medical course, with laboratory work and dissections within the hospital. The students were given regular examinations according to the English syllabus. When they were qualified for the Diploma, to be recognized by the letters L.M.S.M.G. (Licentiate in Medicine, Surgery, Midwifery and Gynaecology). Among those who trained under Turner, three of the Salvation Army officers recognized as registered medical practitioners in Kerala State.

In 1912, there was epidemic outbreak of cholera in and around Nagercoil. As a result, medical demands increased immeasurably. Hundreds were dying as the epidemic raged throughout Kanyakumari District. Dr. Turner and Dr. Steibel spent all their off-duties in the nearby villages, and saved as many lives as they could.

Dr. William Alexander Noble who succeeded Dr. Turner reached Nagercoil in 1921. He was an American Officer who became known and loved as Bahadur. Remarkable developments had taken place in the hospital during his tenure and new branch hospitals and dispensaries had been added. In 1937, Dr. Noble started the nursing training with eight students. Dr.



Catherine Booth Hospital at 1901 - India's first Medical Building

The first Medical Officers in India. Reading from left to right they are Nurse Sneyd, Adjutant Murugasen, 'Ensign' Daya Nasen (Dr. Turner), Captain Packianathan, Late 'Staff Captain' Sikander (Dr. Andrews), 'Captain' Noah (now Commandant in charge of Kangazha Branch Hospital), and Nurse Ruth

Continued to page 11



### **THE WAR CRY**

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#### **Our Mission**

"The Salvation Army is an international movement, a part of the Christian Church whose spiritual motivation has practical application in an evangelical, social, educational and health ministry.

It's goal is to help all people find fulness of life in a relationship with the living Christ discovered through the scriptures and demonstrated by holy living in peace and harmony with others."

#### Continued from page 10



Noble was ably assisted by Catherine Lord of USA, who became the nursing superintendent. By 1948, sixty seven young people had been trained and registered as nurses and twenty had further qualified as midwives. This was a great milestone during Dr. Noble's period. Still the Nursing School is continuing its Nursing Education.

Dr. Colonel Noble founded the Evangeline Booth Hospital at Kerala for lepers as a branch of Catherine Booth Hospital. Followed by him Commissioner Dr. Harry William used his expertise in reconstructive surgery refashioning noses deformed by leprosy and working to change attitudes towards the disease. The Salvation Army's Vocational Training Centre for the physically handicapped at Aramboly was the landmark in the Army's endeavour of reducing the sufferings and sorrows and to give social recognition to those who recovered from leprosy.

Followed by him Major Dr. Lyle Alloway, Major Keneth A. Tutton, Catpain N. J. Karunakara Rao, Captain Terence K. Willey, Major Dr. Herbert C. Rader, Captain James D. Hood, Major Janet M. Cooper worked as missionary Administrators along with them there were so many other missionaries worked at the Salvation Army Catherine Booth hospital caring patients as well as developing the hospital services. Wing Commander Hector Jacob, Lt. Colonel P. Selva Raj, Major A. Sam Deva Raj, Captain. P. Suthantha Dhas, Major T. Alfred, Major S. P. Simon, Major D. Jeeva Ratnam, Major J. Jaya Seelan, Lt.

Colonel Arul Dhas and Major Subash were also worked as Administrators.

During the year 1992, the Salvation Army Catherine Booth hospital (CBH) had a shock when the local newspaper headlined "AIDS patient in CBH". TSA CBH was a pioneer institution in medically managing thousands of people Living with HIV and AIDS providing treatment for opportunistic infections (OIs), counselling services and in the later stage initiating ART even before the Government Medical College Hospital in Kanniyakumari District established ART centre. These initiatives significantly contributed to scaling up and improved quality of care, support and treatment services for People Living with HIV and AIDS. These initiatives were taken under the leadership of Major J. M. Cooper, Major Dr. Ruby Samunel, Dr. Ebenezer Solomon and Mr. G. Benjamin Dhaya (Benny). In appreciation of the services, the Tamil Nadu State AIDS Control Society (TNSACS) voluntarily provided financial support for Institutional Care Centre to TSACBH. There were many projects implemented with the support of APAC/USAID, TSA Norway/ NOARD, Alliance International, State AIDS control Society. ~

Major G. Swamy Dhas Administrator TSA Catherine Booth Hospital

## Territorial Writers' Workshop 2023

he territorial writers' Workshop was a three-day event from 9th November to 11th November 2023, organized by the Editorial Department, Territorial Headquarters, The Salvation Army India Northern Territory with the support of Secretary for Programmes, Lt. Colonel George Patrick and HRD Centre Batala. The workshop aimed to provide a platform for emerging and established writers

from different Corps and centers of INT to interact, exchange ideas, and learn from each other and to implement in our publications for better output. The workshop also featured guest lectures and panel discussions from across the Territory.

The workshop was inaugurated by the Territorial Commander, Colonel Vanlalfela who praised the initiative and stressed the importance of promoting the rich literary heritage of the Salvation Army, India Northern Territory, He also encouraged the delegates with the key verse from Habakkuk 2:2. (Write the vision)

The workshop was attended by 40 delegates (Young officers and soldiers) from various centers of Punjab, UP, Bengal, Odisha, Bihar and New Delhi representing different genres, languages, and styles of writing. The workshop provided them with an opportunity to showcase their works, receive feedback, and network with fellow writers for Mukti





Samachar, Yuva Sipahi and The Officer.

The workshop also featured several sessions by eminent speakers, who shared their insights and experiences on various aspects of writing. Some of the topics covered were "Ministry of the imperative, instruction and inspiration" by Territorial Commander, Colonel Vanlalfela. "The Concept, History & Scope of Army Literature" & "How to Write Reports and Articles" by Lieut. Colonel George Patrick. "The Importance of Written Words" and "Social Media & Evangelism" by Major Amrik Masih, Editor & Communication Secretary "Principles of Communication" by Mr. Alwin Masih, General Secretary ® CNI, "Effective Christian Writing" by Dr. David Teja (Rtd.) Registrar, Baring Union Christian College, Batala, and "How to write for children and youth" by Captain Anil Masih, Literary Officer.

The workshop concluded with a valedictory function, where the participants received certificates and souvenirs from the

Territorial Commander. The function also featured a cultural program, where the delegates showcased their talents in singing, dancing, and cultural activities. The workshop was a grand success and received positive feedback from the participants, who expressed their gratitude and appreciation to the leaders and the department. The workshop also generated a lot of attention from all the officers of the territory and was widely appreciated. The workshop was a milestone in the history of INT literature, after a long gap of 15 years this workshop was organized. It gave a new direction and guidance to the writers of our periodicals.

Major Amrik Masih Editor & Communication Secretary India Northern Territory

International Secretary's Column

#### Return to God!

Continued from page 3

The second part of Hosea 14:9 gives us that confidence by stating, 'The ways of the LORD are right; the righteous walk in them.' The letter to the Romans further gives us confidence in Jesus - we find God's abundant provision of grace and the gift of righteousness (Romans 5:17).

Please take this message as it comes to you, helping you to know where you stand at the threshold of 2024 and look back at how you spent 2023. Know what prevented you from living a better and fruitful life – in responding to God's unfailing love for you.

Take steps in claiming his unfailing promises, confessing how and where you had fallen short to fully live a faithful life, and giving thanks to God for the wonderful miracle of his forgiveness and redemption – able to restore our complete life with his divine purpose and fulfilment. Then you will ably find blessings that God has promised to help you live life to its full potential - abundant life here on earth and the life beyond the other shore.

Take a look at your present life - sincerely search and find how well you are living your life. Seek God in prayer, turn to the pages of the Bible, the living word of God, and the voice of God will whisper into your heart revealing to you if you have wandered away. Listen to his voice and turn to him. I am sure, if you do so, your life will never be same, but will turn to see the glory of the Lord right where you are.

As you learn to obey and depend on him, you will live a victorious life, not living under the bondage of sin, but freedom that God will give you in Jesus.

Why then would you waste any more moments of your life?

Ask Jesus to come into your life and turn to God.

## Year 2024- The Year of Lord's Blessings

023 is over. 2024 is here. As we stand here at the beginning of a New Year it is a good time to reflect on the year that is ending and look forward to the year that is soon to begin. It is also a good time for God's people to take inventory of their walk with the Lord. We should take a very close look at where we are in our relationship with Him. We need to examine ourselves and see where we have been, where we are, and where the Lord wants us to be.

Bible Reading Passage: Colossians 3:1-4 This passage gives us the opportunity and the challenge to do just that.

Paul tells us that we are "risen with Christ". The word "if" is not a statement of possibility, it's a declaration of a spiritual reality. Paul is saying "...Since you have risen with Christ..." — Paul is discussing our spiritual position. When Jesus Christ died on Calvary, every person who would ever place their faith in Him also died that day, (Galatians 2:20; Romans 6:1-11). In a spiritual sense, we died to the penalty and the power of sin when Jesus died on the cross.

Since we have been raised to a new life in Jesus, we are told to seek those things which are above. The verb "seek" is in the Present Tense - Imperative Mode. In other words, we are told to continually be seeking those things which are above. The second verse builds on that thought by telling us to set our affections on things above not on things on the earth. The word "affections" refers to the mind. We are told here to focus our thoughts on heavenly things, not earthly things. We are to set our minds on the things of God and on the things that bring glory to Him. A quick look at some of the verses following this verse gives a little insight into what Paul is talking about here. We are to pursue:

A. A deeper knowledge of Jesus, (Colossians 3:10)

B. A clean, holy life, (Colossians 3:5-9) C. Godly virtues, (Colossians 3:12-17)



Wycliff John Christian
Ahmedabad Central Corps, Ahmedabad Division
India Western Territory

D. Holiness in our domestic life, (Colossians 3:18-21)

E. Holiness in our social life, (Colossians 3:22-4:1)

F. An effective prayer life – (Colossians 4:2)

G. A fruitful witness - (Colossians 4:3-6)

In other words, we are to live like Jesus lived, (1 John 2:6). We are to live out the fruit of the Spirit on our lives day by day, (Galatians 5:22-23). We are challenged to live out our lives with genuine spiritual values and not the values of a fallen world. As we give our attention to these spiritual and heavenly things, we are enabled to live a heavenly, holy, God-honoring life in this world.

We are to allow a heavenly perspective to govern our earthly walk! Every decision, every activity, every plan, and purpose is to be considered in the light of eternity. Everything is to be laid out before the Lord and considered not from an earthly, sensual perspective, but from the viewpoint of Heaven.

May God help everyone of us to live happy and joyous life in the light of Lord's blessings. Let us receive Lord's blessings in our lives.

My family wishes you all Happy New Year 2024.





### Women's Ministries Sharing and Caring the Christmas Joy with Street Dwellers - 2023

n the season of Christmas, the Women's Ministries took a privilege to share the love of Jesus Christ and joy of Christmas by distributing the Bedsheets and Food Packets with fruits to Street dwellers and Heaven Home, Virugambakkam Home on 15th December 2023 at HRD Centre, Chennai.

This program was arranged under the leadership of Colonel Sumitra Masih, TPWM, and with the Support of Lt Col Kezial, TSWM. All THQ women officers participated in this program.

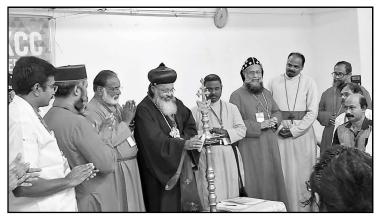
Colonel Sumitra Masih, TPWM delivered the word of God from John 3:16. She explained about the Love of God, God's plan for humankind, and Salvation through Jesus. These words have courage and comfort to all the beneficiaries. A total of 250 poor and needy people benefited from this wonderful program, and they expressed their heartfelt gratitude towards the Army. The Women's Ministries have

blessed and felt the real joy of Christmas by participating and distributing things.



Major Aruna Kumari WDO, India Central Territory

### Kerala Council of Churches Triennial 2023



erala Council of Churches is an esteemed organization, and a community follows equality without discrimination. This community is heavily organised, built an accurate basement in Christian faith and ecumenical concerns. The harmony, openness of different beliefs has been addressed in many assemblies. The assembly of KCC of this year is organised at JMM study centre, Mannanthala Trivandrum from 21st – 23 November 2023.

The conference introduced a deep serious study on the aim of 'Christianity in

Pluralistic Society'. It was in the second day Rev. Dr. Mothi Varghese and Rev. Dr. David Joy, Principal of Kannammola, **KUT Seminary** has given the lectures to concentrate the areas of our faith and affirmations are

commercialised for many purposes. As a Christian we must deal with dissimilarity and differences. It's not about the agreement but to manage the art of disagreement is necessary. Being a Christian it's our responsibility to frame a normative society where diaspora of social evil and controversial political coexistence must be eradicated.

Things have not changed much. But the ideology of each other's beliefs is to be preserved. In (Acts 10:34-35) Peter speaks I truly understand that God has no partiality, but in every nation who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to

him. Dimension varies but the wisdom offered by Christ should be utilized for humanity in pluralistic society.

KCC is doing a commendable service to the society. Gender equality is the present tool used for empowering the trivial society. Encouraging Women leaders, will help to achieve more gender equality to take it as a weapon, elected Major Asha Justin, Social Secretary as a Vice President of KCC. Undoubtedly first Woman successor, history maker for the rest of the KCC events. The Most Rev Alexios Mar Eusebius Metropolitan is selected as President of KCC. Lt Colonel Saju Daniel, Secretary for Personnel Administration is selected as the member of the executive committee. Along with the faculty new office bearers joined for new exploration. The final session of the triennial assembly was so blessed one to challenge the delegates to become the voice of unheard and keep love of Christ for each other and choose faith to grow in Christ.

Blessy George
Amarakunnu Corps, Thiruvalla Division
India South Western Territory

### Women in Leadership Training 2023

n the dazzling spotlight of the Women in Leadership training 2023 held in HRD Centre Chennai, Officers were equipped to seek and identify attainable pathways and goals to strengthen the representation of women in leadership positions in Indian Territories.The Seminar themed "Change agents transformation", conducted by the National Office ,was held from 2nd to 5th December. The programme commenced with sightseeing historic landmarks of Chennai.In the inaugural address, Commissioner Martha Pawar, Zonal Secretary, South Asia, encouraged



delegates to radiate God given responsibilities to change the society.Lectures led by Colonel Annamma Simon, Secretary for Women Development, rekindled the spirit and celebrated the glory and beauty of womanhood. The foremost speaker Mrs.Surya Ishan inspired the officers by her thought provoking session on Personality development. The narration of her personal struggles being a transwoman, the journey to her current









stardom as a celebrity make up artist and the turmoils she has undergone to be accepted by the public, urged Women leaders to find the answer to the question "who a woman is". The training programme was enriched with 23 delegates. Group discussions, Tapestry presentation, Skill exchange and Cultural evening added vibrance to the event. Amidst the devastation and flood caused by cyclone Michaung, the four day seminar came to end successfully by God's grace.

**Colonel Annamma Simon** Secretary for Women's Development **India National Office, Kolkata** 

# UPCOMING OF INDIA NATIONAL OFFICE PROGRAMMES

10-12 January 2024 Educational Program to Program Visit - IWT 23-25 January 2024 : National Administrative Leadership Training 30-31 January 2024 B.Th. Assessment Program - ISET & ISWT

## National Brengle Institute — Holiness Retreat The Salvation Army, Spiritual Retreat and Conference Centre, Surrenden, Coonoor



nder the theme, "Presenting to God as one Approved" based on 2 Timothy 2:15, the National Brengle Institute - Holiness Retreat was conducted by India National Office during 2 - 6 December 2023 at The Salvation Army Spiritual Retreat and Conference Centre, Coonoor. Commissioner Suresh Pawar, International Secretary of SASIA zone led the entire Holiness retreat under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. 23 selected senior officers from around India had given an opportunity to attend and refresh their spiritual life. Colonel S.P Simon, National Executive Officer had organized the retreat.

The National Brengle Institute – Holiness Retreat was inaugurated by the International Secretary, Commissioner Suresh Pawar with lamp lighting followed by praise and worship through which participants felt the presence of the Holy Spirit. Also, brief information about the Brengle Institute and its importance was explained by the Commissioner.

There were 12 very effective topics on Holiness which was flowing one after another and empowering the delegates; each topic was helping everyone to profound in holiness. Each topic and activities moved the delegates and helped them to find out their place in the journey of the Holiness in their personal life as well as in their officership in the Salvation Army. Topics like Making Saints, Keeping the Folk, were not only taught but discussed in the light of present-day challenges to Saving Souls, Growing Saints and Serving Suffering Humanity.

Questions for Reflection at the end of every topic was compelling the delegates to re-think about their relationship with God. The reflection of the delegates had proved their understanding of each topic. On second- and third-day Bible Study on John's three letters were conducted. Amous walk — "What does Jesus Meant to you" provided time for delegates to know about each other's journey with Jesus and individual prayer time helped them to talk with and listen to God personally.

On the final day, during the final session many delegates remembered and renewed their covenant; delegates were testified that they are regenerated in Spirit; that they are improved in spirit, they have heard God's voice, experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit. Some delegates share that what they were lacking in their life and in their relationship with God is now reminded and will follow the decision they have made.

A very challenging message shared by Commissioner on selected Bible verses from Hosea 12: 22-24 – Return to God with broken heart, Return to God with Confession and Return to God with thanksgiving. Everyone rededicated their lives with tears at Mercy Seat and signed their fresh covenant with the Lord.

We praise God and thank to International and National leaders for the opportunity given to selected senior officers. Delegates were able to explore the city of Ooty prior to Retreat and campfire, thanks to National Office for this wonderful arrangement.

Lt. Colonel Jashiben Khristi Secretary for Program Administration India Central Territory

India National office Team Sending warm wishes to all the Subscriber, Writers, Readers, Supporters and well wishers.. May good luck and blessings be with you always.

