

FEATURE

Lockdown, life
and *Ted Lasso*

FAITH TALK

You can't take it
with you

MY STORY

Standing with the
desperate

Finding true freedom

Establishing a new life and identity in Australia



SALVOS

MAGAZINE





UNSPLASH.COM/DREWCOFFMAN

Friendly reminder that

"doing your best"

does not mean working
yourself to the point of a
mental breakdown.

@PeacefulMindPeacefulLife



The Salvation Army is about giving hope where it's needed most.

What is The Salvation Army?

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church.

Vision Statement

Wherever there is hardship or injustice, Salvos will live, love and fight alongside others to transform Australia one life at a time with the love of Jesus.

Mission Statement

The Salvation Army is a Christian movement dedicated to sharing the love of Jesus by:

- Caring for people
- Creating faith pathways
- Building healthy communities
- Working for justice

Salvos Magazine

Founders William and Catherine Booth

General Brian Puddle

Territorial Leaders

Commissioners Janine and Robert Donaldson

Secretary for Communications and Editor-In-Chief

Lieut-Colonel Neil Venables

Publications Manager Cheryl Tinker

Assistant Editor Simone Worthing

Designer Sienny Yoso

Editorial ph. (03) 8541 4562

Enquiry email salvosmagazine@salvationarmy.org.au

All other Salvation Army enquiries 13 72 58

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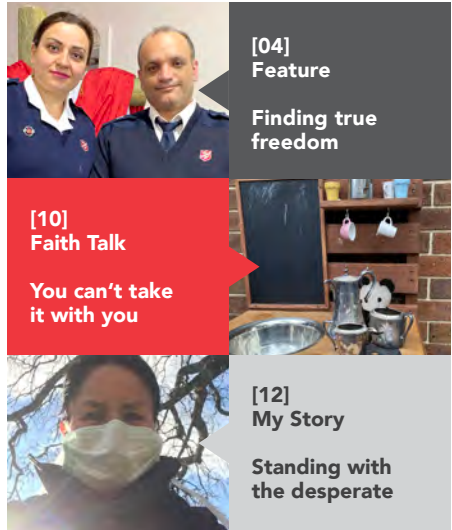
Cover Ryan and Maryam have found a new life of freedom and faith in Australia.

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salvosmagazine.org.au



[04]
Feature

Finding true
freedom

[10]
Faith Talk

You can't take
it with you

[12]
My Story

Standing with
the desperate

Taking up space

It's always humbling to speak to people who have gone through trauma and have made huge and ongoing sacrifices to turn their lives, and those of others, around. Ryan and Maryam, originally from Iran, are such people. Their story in this edition is inspirational.

The impacts of the Black Summer bushfires of 2019-20 are still being felt around the country. In My Story, Aqua talks about her role with the Salvos in bushfire relief, and the difference it makes in the lives of those struggling financially and emotionally.

For a delightful story with an important life lesson, check out Faye Michelson's Faith Talk. Faye shares the story of her little granddaughter playing with her great-grandmother's silver teapot, and the importance of keeping our most valued possessions in perspective. When it comes to eternal life, just how important are they?

Guest writer Justine Toh also reflects on an eternal perspective and leaving space in our lives for God, especially in light of the challenges being faced by the millions in lockdown in Australia.

God is ready to take up that space – we only have to ask him.

Simone Worthing **Assistant Editor**



Finding true freedom

Establishing a new life and identity in Australia

WORDS MARYAM AND RYAN

Maryam's story

I was born into a religious family in Iran, where following Sharia laws and rules was fundamental to how we lived. Every member of the family had to follow those rules. We had to pray five times a day, and the girls and women had to cover their heads – including at home with close family members and relatives.

Even though the age at which girls start following Islamic rituals is nine, my family forced me to start at seven. I even have a photo of myself at four, wearing a full hijab. When I asked my mum why I had to wear it, she told me that girls must always be fully covered. At that stage, I didn't even realise that there were different genders.

I had to attend classes, prayer times, gatherings and other practices. These were all in Arabic, a language I didn't understand [the native language of Iran is Farsi]. Our home was busy, with people coming and going, praying and crying in Arabic. It was such an unhappy and unpleasant environment, sad and depressing for me, and I just wanted to run away.

WHO IS GOD?

Despite all this, I always wanted to know who God really was, who I was talking to five times a day and whether anyone heard my prayers. I also wanted to know why prayer had to be in Arabic because I just couldn't connect emotionally with God in a language not my own. I wanted to be sure that I loved God and he loved me back, and I wasn't sure at all.

I tried to follow all the rituals, but I never felt satisfied in my heart. This religion was not a religion of love, compassion and equality between men and women. I was looking for freedom, love and grace.

At around 11 years of age, I read the chapter about Mary [Maryam in Arabic] in the Koran and read about Jesus Christ and the miracles he performed. A light came into my life and there was hope in my heart. I felt at peace and even decided to call myself Maryam. My family was not happy about this, but that is the name they call me.

I met Ryan in 2006, and we got married.

Thankfully, Ryan was open-minded and was leaning towards Christianity. This made it easier for me to start researching Christianity. A seed of faith and the love of Jesus started growing in me.

In 2012, we were invited to attend home churches by a Christian friend. We were able to listen to God's Word and increase our faith. It was very dangerous though – the locations changed each time, and we only found out where we were meeting at the last minute. We risked arrest, imprisonment, violence and even death.

A NEW BEGINNING

When it was just too dangerous, and the meetings stopped, we decided to leave our country and go to Australia. I believe that Jesus made this possible for us and I am grateful that we could reach freedom and have peace in our lives.

When we arrived in Australia, we didn't have an income and were struggling financially. We went to The Salvation Army's Asylum Seekers and Refugee Service in Melbourne and met Major Colin Elkington. He was welcoming and kind, we talked about our interest in Jesus, and the Salvos Doorways program [emergency relief] gave us food.

We completed the Christianity Explained course and became members of the Salvos in Brunswick. In 2015, Major Colin and some others started a Farsi-speaking Salvos church, and we started going there. I am grateful that I can praise God in my own language, can connect with him, and help others to do so, too.

I believe and feel that God is always in my heart, and he hears my prayers. I am so happy to be here and definitely happy that my children do not have to experience what I went through.

Ryan's story

I was born in the small religious town of Kashan, Iran, where we Kurdish were in the minority. I lived my childhood in fear and stress of the war between Iran and Iraq (1980-1988) and the destruction that resulted.

The religious community I was raised in followed its teachings and practices strictly and harshly. I had no part in choosing that religion for myself, but, like everyone, I had to follow it. In this religion, I was always afraid of being punished and not forgiven. And the God of that religion was not a kind and compassionate God. He would punish you for any mistakes you made – he had no mercy or grace.

“

**I was looking for freedom,
love and grace.**

~Maryam

”

I am a peaceful and calm person. And I respect people's and nations' beliefs. But I couldn't make any connection with the religion of Islam. It didn't make sense to me. I have always believed that there is a God, and he is there and is willing to listen. And I believed in a different God, not the God of Islam.

I was always curious to learn about different religions and meet people with different beliefs. I wanted to understand their differences and whether they also felt guilty or had more peace and happiness than us. I wanted to know whether there was any love or care in their lives and compassion for others.

The minority of Christians I saw were happier ▶

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Our God, and our country Australia, is now our identity.

~Ryan

”

and had peace in their lives. They were kind and caring. I wanted to know why. Was it their religion, their God, their teachings? Was their God and ours different? Why would one God preach violence and power, and the other peace and getting along with others? These questions were always in my head.

TURNING POINT

When I was 20, I entered Iran's compulsory military service. I met two young Armenian Christians and became friends. I started to ask questions about their faith and belief. They explained that their God is Jesus Christ and that he is God, not just a prophet. And he died on a cross to forgive people's sins and to show his love for them. And he teaches love, not violence. As they were sharing their faith, slowly but surely my understanding and knowledge grew.

The usual military service was two years, but because I didn't go to prayers and spent time hanging out with people from minority religions, they [authorities] made life difficult for me and extended my service by six months.

I met Maryam in 2006. We had similar thoughts around religion, although I didn't tell her very strict family, or those around them, my point of view. I became more and more interested in becoming a Christian and living a life of love and having peace.



Ryan and Maryam have joined the Salvos Farsi Fellowship in Melbourne.

We left Iran in 2012 and initially spent three months on Christmas Island. After several months in Adelaide, we arrived in Melbourne where we came into contact with the Salvos and Major Colin. He helped me understand more about Christianity, and I became a Christian. I am now conducting Christianity classes on Zoom for Iranians who come to the Salvos asking about Christianity.

I have studied English for a few years and completed certificates in barbering and hairdressing. I now work and our children go to school and daycare. We also changed our names when we became Christians. All my extended family is now in Australia. They attend the Salvos and have changed their names, too.

Our God, and our country Australia, is now our identity.



Scan here for
more information
on the need for
community.



Lockdown, life and Ted Lasso

WORDS JUSTINE TOH

If *Ted Lasso* didn't exist, it would have been necessary to invent him.

Sure, the French philosopher Voltaire originally said as much of God. And no, that doesn't mean that the moustachioed, aviators-wearing football coach of Apple TV+'s feel-good sports comedy is God. Or that God and *Ted* are both works of fiction. It just means we're in dire need of both right now.

For millions in lockdown in 2020, *Ted Lasso* was the perfect pick-me-up: cheerful comfort viewing offering welcome relief from our grim pandemic reality. Now, as the highly contagious Delta strain locks down over 13 million Australians in the midst of winter, the show's second season is about to make its debut.

His mercies, as some might say, are new every morning. God's, that is.

The stress of uncertainty makes it easier to retreat inward. To look after our own team, so to speak. But *Ted Lasso* is about the

possibility of kindness in broken people, even if they happen to be on the brink of personal and professional disaster.

The show reminds us to lift our gaze beyond the demands of the moment and to have a heart that swells for others. It also reminds us you can't force the magic to happen.

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We need a big enough perspective to allow a little help from outside.

”

In a chat with Brené Brown, show creators Jason Sudeikis and Brendan Hunt (who play Ted Lasso and Coach Beard) discuss creativity. Sudeikis quoted Quincy Jones' approach as inspiration: get the work almost right, then "leave space for God

to walk through the room". You do your bit and trust that the overflow is someone else's responsibility.

As with lockdown, as with life. We need a big enough perspective to allow a little help from outside.

Justine Toh is a Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Christianity

A fellowship of courage celebrates anniversary

The Salvos Farsi Fellowship (church) in Melbourne celebrated its sixth anniversary last month. This fellowship, and the bilingual service it runs, is largely made up of those from the Iranian community. It has grown organically through family and friends inviting other family and friends.

Farsi is the national language of the people of Iran.

As of 2017, almost 7000 Iranian refugees were living in limbo in Australia while their asylum applications were being processed. Many rely on community support to survive as they have no access to a government benefit while their visa applications are being processed.

“People here are on their way to Christianity or have become Christians,” said Major Colin Elkington, Salvos officer (pastor) who oversees the fellowship. “A conversion in the Farsi Fellowship is more than a celebration; it’s a declaration of courage. Not just in regard to the faith they’ve left behind, but the culture they are now joining.”

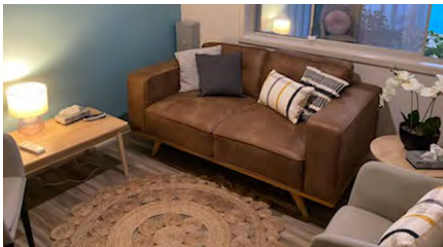
– Jessica Morris



Top: The Farsi Fellowship celebrates its sixth anniversary. Above: The Farsi Bible.

Women’s refuge funding boost in Karratha

Women and children fleeing domestic violence in the remote Pilbara region of Western Australia have more access to



A redesigned consulting room in the Karratha women’s refuge.

housing after The Salvation Army received a Commonwealth Safe Places grant of \$5.6 million to build a new family violence refuge for women and children in Karratha.

The funding will allow 10 two-bedroom and three-bedroom self-contained units to be developed, in addition to a communal group room, therapeutic rooms, a sleepover room and an administration building. Karratha and the Graceville Centre in Perth are the Salvos’ two main refuges for women and children.

– Jessica Morris

Salvos support personnel in military exercises

Members of the Red Shield Defence Services (RSDS) in Queensland were heavily involved in Talisman Sabre 2021, the largest bilateral combined training activity between the Australian Defence Force and the United States military that took place last month around Far North Queensland.

RSDS Chief Commissioner Major Brett Gallagher said RSDS personnel from Brisbane's Gallipoli Barracks and Townsville's Lavarack Barracks supported about 17,000 military personnel from seven nations.

The soldiers appreciated the food and hot drinks from the RSDS, which was "a bit nicer than what comes out of a ration pack",



The Salvation Army Red Shield Defence Services senior representative Major Garry Johnson sets up his 'Hop In' at the Brigade Maintenance Area, Townsville, as part of the RSDS involvement in Talisman Sabre 2021.

said Brett. He added that the soldiers were always keen to talk to the RSDS. "These guys have many issues that many other Australians wouldn't even realise," Brett said.

– Darryl Whitecross

Learning hub helping families in Caloundra



Children from the local Caloundra community are attending the Salvos after-school Learning Hub for help with homework and mentoring, as well as games and lots of fun.

Caloundra Salvos on Queensland's Sunshine Coast began an after-school Learning Hub for primary school-age children earlier this year and is finding it is meeting a need in the community.

Salvos officer (pastor) Aux-Lieutenant Karen Clark said the program not only provided children with a safe place to do their homework and interact with other children, but gave

parents and carers an environment where they could enjoy a hot drink and a chat. "It's a great space and is meeting a need and has the potential to grow," Karen said.

The hub aims to "encourage a love for learning". The children receive one-on-one mentoring from the Salvos and the community, play games and also get their homework done!

– Darryl Whitecross

You can't take it with you

How much value do we place on our possessions?

WORDS FAYE MICHELSON

We have a little toy kitchen in a corner of our back deck, a popular play space for the little people in our family. It's a compact box made of sturdy pallets and chipboard, stained to withstand the elements.

It has necessary features such as an oven door with knobs you can turn, a small black-board to scribble on, a stainless-steel bowl for a sink, a shelf with hooks underneath to hang cups and painted-on hotplates for cooking. Most of the kitchen utensils are plastic, but sitting alongside the bright plates, spoons and saucepan is some matching silverware – a dainty milk jug, a two-handled sugar bowl and an elegant water pitcher.

They belonged to my late mother-in-law. They were wedding presents, and I remember them in her crystal cabinet, although I can't

remember ever using them at family dinners. When we came to pack up her house when she moved into care, I was surprised that no one in the family wanted them. "They're too much work to polish and a bit old-fashioned," my nieces and daughters said.

It was the same with the fine-bone china dinner set that we'd eaten celebratory family meals off over so many, many years. Again, they were just not interested. "It can't go into the dishwasher or microwave," they explained.

STYLISH ADDITION

No one wanted it, and I didn't either, but I couldn't throw it out. So, it stayed boxed up in my garage for years. So did the silverware, until we bought the little kitchen. I was going to buy a plastic jug because the kids loved pouring water – then I remembered the jug, the pitcher and the sugar bowl. Rust-proof and shiny – perfect! They're tarnished, but these beautifully shaped pieces with their finely etched patterns still look very stylish in the little kitchen. My daughter laughed out loud when she saw them there for the first time. "I remember polishing these with Grandma when I was a kid," she said, as we watched her two-year-old mixing sand in the sugar bowl and pouring water from the silver jug into a plastic cup. "I wonder what Grandma would think if she knew her lovely silverware was being used like this?"

What an interesting question. When we packed up my mother-in-law's house for her, all of us asked her again and again what she would like to take with her to make her little suite more homelike. Any ornaments, special crockery, paintings for her walls, small pieces





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Possessions serve their purpose, and, in the end, they have no purpose at all.

”

of furniture, anything? There was not much she wanted from the house she'd lived in for nearly 60 years, filled with the things she'd collected, bought and been given over a lifetime.

A small armchair and her bedroom chest of drawers, a crystal vase, a set of decorative plates to hang on the wall, a collection of family photographs – not much else, really. Not the stamp collection that had given her pleasure since she was a child, not the figurines displayed on the mantelpiece, not the large painted porcelain urns that had belonged to her parents – as she shook her head over everything, we packed it all up. She said she simply didn't need them. Her possessions had served their purpose.

LIFE LESSON

What a life lesson that was. There's plenty written about material objects and our attitude towards them in the Bible, but the one that came to my mind was from 1 Timothy chapter 6, verse 7. "For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it." Possessions serve their purpose, and, in the end, they have no purpose at all. These silver pieces told the story of the value of objects, going from pride of place in a crystal cabinet to being discarded because they were old-fashioned to being played with in a sandpit and toy kitchen.

As I watched our little two-year-old fill and refill cups of water with her fancy jug, I know exactly what dear Noela would have thought about her great-granddaughter playing with her silverware.

Faye Michelson is assistant editor of the Salvos online magazine Others.org.au



Scan here for more on finding meaning.

Standing with the desperate

Aqua helps bring hope and healing to those impacted by bushfire tragedy

Aqua Hastings works for the Salvos in Disaster Bushfire Outreach. She is based in Albury-Wodonga and works to assist those severely impacted by the 'Black Summer' bushfires of 2019-20. Recently, Aqua spoke to *Salvos Magazine* and shared some of what her role entails and why she loves it so much.

Salvos Magazine: How long have you been a Bushfire Outreach worker?

Aqua Hastings: Since 4 May 2020. I prayed that God would put me where I was needed, and I am just so grateful for this amazing job. Most of us who work for the Salvos have our own life stories that prompt us to help people.

SM: What does a typical day look like for you?

AH: It's a delicious mixture of administrative tasks and delivering Bushfire Outreach services. Outreach requires driving through exquisitely picturesque countryside to bushfire-impacted properties. Once there, I confirm the loss and destruction of homes and property, have the

great honour of listening to the heroic and incredible stories of the impacted people, and collect documentation of these facts.

There is a huge variety and a lot of travelling involved. I cover a huge geographic area, from Tumut and Bombala in New South Wales to Mansfield in southwest Victoria and Numeralla in Victoria's southeast.

I field phone calls for clients who find themselves with no money for food or fuel, and I organise loaded gift cards or vouchers. A farmer may have broken machinery, and I look into what assistance may be available for that. We only assist families and individuals, though, not farm businesses as such.

We are now in the process of transition. For the past 18 months, we have focused on directly delivering funds and grants to people. The Salvos have delivered a number of staggered grants – funds made available at different stages of the disaster – for which people have been incredibly grateful. We're moving into community capacity-building as that is what the communities we assist have asked for. They are presenting ideas for what this might look like based on community needs.

I can also offer the support of other Salvation Army services, as they are available. This includes chaplaincy support from our rural chaplains.

SM: What are some of the areas of need you are finding in local communities?

AH: One area is that of trauma, especially among the men who stayed back when the fires came through in an attempt to save





their homes and farms. Many of them were able to save their homes, but very few could save their farms. The vast majority have lost their livestock, equipment, infrastructure and are struggling to rebuild.

This falls into the category of mental health support, and several organisations are partnering to assist the men, many of whom are reluctant to access support. The Salvos team is also looking into needs expressed by the community and assessing how we can work to best meet them.

SM: What do you value most about your role?

AH: The humanity of it! I love the fact that we are meeting people at their point of need and that people make the most of the support we offer. I absolutely value the flexibility of the Salvos that enables them to fill in the gaps of services and care where people might otherwise miss out. I love that our help also brings hope to people in desperate situations.

Personally, it is also such a privilege to stand with people as they recover from devastating bushfire impacts and to be a small part of their recovery. We work with people intensively, and recovery work is for the long haul. There are so many moments and stories that

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I love that our help also brings hope to people in desperate situations.
”

come out of this work – stories where bushfire grants have literally changed people’s lives.

One fourth-generation farmer told me that he would’ve broken down if I hadn’t been there with him, for three hours, watching a digger tip the remains of what had been his home, his parents’ home, his grandparents’ and his great-grandparents’ home, into a tip truck.

SM: What is something you do as part of your role that others may not know?

AH: I become geographically misplaced quite regularly – don’t trust a GPS in the mountains!

SM: Is there anything else you would like to add?

AH: My role as Disaster Bushfire Outreach enables me to stand by people in hardship and speak and act with heart. By holding a presence of support, I live each day committed to serving and acting in love, to meet people where their need is.



Scan here for more information on the Salvos Disaster and Emergency Support Services.

Chicken and mushroom pasta bake



Ingredients

375g penne
½ roast chicken (skin and bones removed, meat shredded)
490g jar creamy mushroom sauce
120g baby spinach
salt and pepper
250g shredded mozzarella.

Method

Preheat oven to 200°C. Cook the penne in large saucepan of boiling water until soft.

Combine the penne, chicken, mushroom sauce and spinach in a large bowl. Season with salt and pepper as desired.

Spoon into a 10-cup (2.5L) baking dish. Sprinkle evenly with mozzarella.

Bake for 20 mins or until top is golden brown and pasta mixture is heated through.

Serve immediately.

HAVE A LAUGH



If I got 50 cents for every failed maths exam, I'd have \$6.30 now.

I'm terrified of elevators ... so I'm taking steps to avoid them.



Sometimes I tuck my knees into my chest and lean forward. That's just how I roll.

Bible byte

You must treat the outsider as one of your native-born people – as a full citizen – and you are to love him in the same way you love yourself.

Leviticus chapter 19, verse 34
The Voice Bible translation

Wordsearch

A E S P D U C K R L G C S I V N
 D I R E A Y O S E M I T E S A M
 B M E P F L O W E R S E M I Y S
 S I L E F C O M E D Y D T N E V
 S I M L Y G R A N N Y R W S L F
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 M N S T A E A Y K R F Y S E N S

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|------------|--------------------|
| ANIMATIONS | LOONEY TUNES |
| BUGS BUNNY | MARVIN THE MARTIAN |
| CARTOON | PEPE LE PEW |
| CHARACTER | PORKY PIG |
| COMEDY | ROAD RUNNER |
| DAFFY DUCK | SERIES |
| DUCK | SKUNK |
| ELMER FUDD | SOMBRERO |
| FAST | SPEEDY GONZALES |
| FELIX | SYLVESTER |
| FLOWERS | TWEETY |
| GRANNY | YELLOW |
| LAUGHTER | YOSEMITE SAM |

Quick quiz



1. In the Looney Tunes cartoons, who says, "What's up, Doc?"
2. Which cat always chases poor Tweety?
3. Which Australian animal is a Looney Tunes character?
4. Which character tries to cover up his smell with flowers when trying to catch the attention of his feline friend?
5. Who finishes off Looney Tunes shows by saying, "That's all folks!"?
6. Which mouse wears a yellow sombrero and is fast?



Tum-Tum

On which page of this week's *Salvos Magazine* is Tum-Tum hiding?

Answers: 1. Bugs Bunny 2. Sylvester 3. Tasmanian Devil 4. Pepe le Pew 5. Porky Pig 6. Speedy Gonzales

DID YOU KNOW?

The harmonica is the world's best-selling musical instrument.

The word 'unfriend' was first used in 1659.

In Medieval Europe, a moment was exactly 90 seconds.

Pure cocoa can help prevent tooth decay.

15



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Have you taken care of your Will?

Like ripples in a pond, a gift in your Will to The Salvation Army can impact more lives than you could ever imagine

When having your Will made or updated, please consider including a gift to The Salvation Army.

Please contact The Salvation Army's Wills and Bequests team to find out how you can start or continue your legacy of generosity.

Together, we can give hope where it's needed most long into the future.

For a free copy of our Wills information booklet, contact us on 1800 337 082, email willsandbequests@salvationarmy.org.au or complete and return the coupon.

salvationarmy.org.au/wills



- Send me a FREE copy of your Wills information booklet
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