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support

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Never alone

# *The cliff's edge*

Recapturing the reason for our existence



# SALVOS

MAGAZINE

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When you see something beautiful in someone, tell them. It may take you a second to say it but for them, it could last a lifetime.

Author unknown





## 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

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## Emotional rollercoaster

This has been, and still is, a year that has led to all kinds of intense emotions, experiences and reactions from people all around the world. Incredible trauma and anguish has been suffered alongside deep new friendships, restored relationships and renewed social justice campaigns.

Our feature story looks at this co-existence of pain and love, and the hope and meaning it can bring when seen through the lens of God's presence and purpose in our lives.

'The big cover-up' also looks at seeing the beauty of who we really are inside, despite how we hide behind what we think makes us valuable.

In 'My story' Julie shares her journey through toxic relationships and the impact they had on her and her children, until she called out to God and came to understand that he had never left her, and never would.

Whatever you're facing at this time, we hope you know that you are not alone either, and never will be.

Simone Worthing  
**Assistant Editor**

# The cliff's edge

Recapturing the reason  
for our existence

## WORDS

PETER McGUIGAN

A recent urge to shoot the world's best photo got the better of him and the image-producer drove to the foothills of a mountain range about 100 kilometres from home. There he studied the best route to the top and began his ascent carrying a backpack filled with all the equipment needed to achieve the result he could see through his image-producer eyes.

Upon reaching the highest point, he began preparations to capture the majesty of the earth in a single image. He slept under the stars in anticipation of what would unfold at daybreak.

At the first glimpse of dawn he decides to take anonymity out of his image, sets the camera's timing device and walks to the cliff's edge. He raises his hands, not as a gimmick to give the image more life, but because, suddenly, an instinctiveness has taken hold from deep within and he can't resist.

He lifts his arms, his hands, his soul to the majesty of the One who created the brilliance now before him. Words come rushing from a far-flung corner of his life, a place of yesteryear that in an instant becomes as current and as fresh as the first light around him: "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it" (Psalm 24, verse 1).

Behind him the camera clicks, but he remains transfixed. The words bring a sobering reality ►

PHOTO BY GARETH McGUIGAN







PHOTO BY CHRIS FULLER ON UNSPLASH

to his moments of remote meditation. In an unexpected collusion, the outlook from high above and the view from the street that he has carried to the mountaintop, are one.

He is at once overwhelmed with joy and grief; he sits down and closes his eyes, still at the cliff's edge. How long can the earth's beauty and the tragedies of humankind co-exist? How can the love and meticulous care evident high above the earth coincide with the destructive and desolate experience below? How can "the world and all who live in it" be reconciled with the One whose nature is love and who has given us such a profound dwelling place?

The scenes from below are strong and vivid. George Floyd's last words, "I can't breathe", haunt us and become our cry for equality, our chant for freedom and our plea for listening – our ultimatum: "We can't do this any more, stop!"

The image-producer has read that George was "a gentle giant" who loved people, an encourager with "a quiet personality but a

gentle spirit". In a recent video message, Floyd had spoken against gun violence, saying, "Our young generation is clearly lost." He worked two jobs and had been "a loving father". Now, through tragedy, he is a citizen of heaven.

Within seconds a thousand thoughts flood the image-producer's mind. It's about stopping racism, yes, definitely, the sludge still lurking in the human heart, disfiguring the human experience even amid 'advanced civilisation'. It's about a global crisis in physical and spiritual health, something only a far-reaching, depths-invading change of the human heart can fix.

The image-producer hopes it's about humans coming of age, an awakening to the truth of a line from a song he suddenly remembers: that we are "prisoners here of our own device". It's about getting off the apocalyptic road and allowing a much higher view and experience to reconfigure and re-energise



PHOTO BY GARETH McGUIGAN

our everyday lives and encounters with each other – person to person, in families, in communities and between nations.

## BECOMING WHOLE

The image-producer himself has been on a journey towards holistic health – towards addressing and solving the issues stopping him from being the best father and husband and son and employee and photographer he can be. He himself wants to be a man through whom the sentiment and values behind black lives matter are lived out day-by-day.

Suddenly, the feeling of things swirling dissipates. The eyes of his heart are open, and he can see from this inner place that the violence and the pandemic and homelessness and the general state of the earth below are part of the same condition. Humankind has become distracted and separated from the reason for its existence. We are responsible together for the life we have been given, nurturers of our

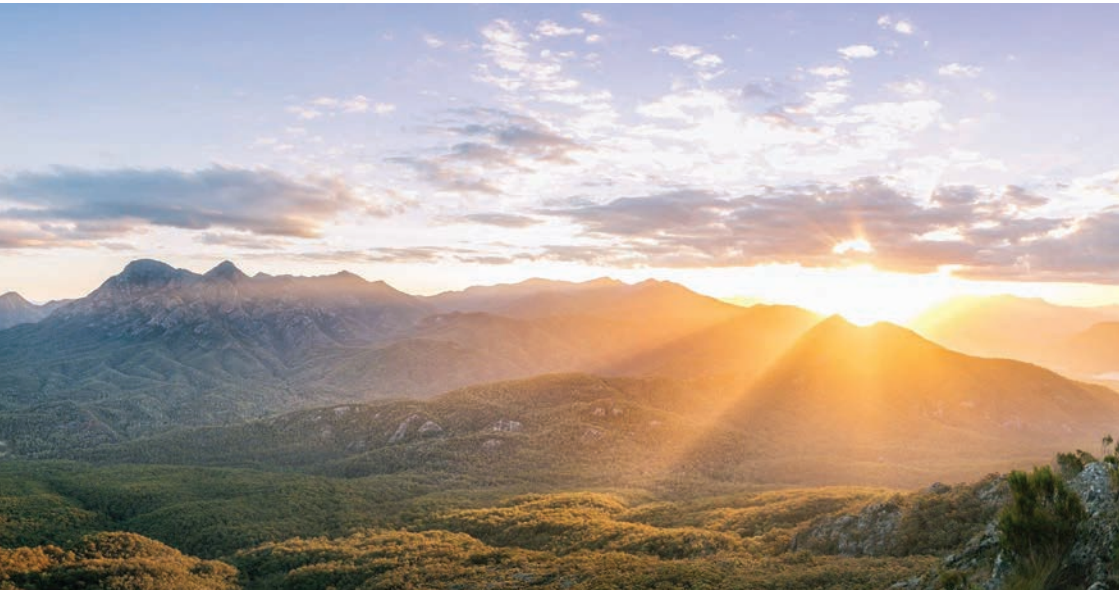
life with God, with each other and with the earth as our home.

Then his physical eyes open and once more he stands at the cliff's edge. The earth's beauty again he sees. He feels the Maker's love and presence. He recalls the words of Jesus: "I came so that everyone would have life and have it in its fullest" (John chapter 10, verse 10). He considers that the sun continues to rise despite humanity's seeming recalcitrance. It disperses its light and its energy across the earth and its peoples without discrimination, inviting our full participation, stewardship and respect for one another.

*Major Peter McGuigan is a Salvation Army officer (pastor) who serves in Melbourne.*



Scan here for more on finding meaning.



# Family support zooms in during COVID-19

Salvos First Floor Program expands mental health service provision during pandemic

The Salvation Army has stepped up its assistance to families who are supporting loved ones with mental health or substance abuse issues during COVID-19.

Since the onset of the pandemic, the First Floor Program in Wollongong has been running its See Change facilitator training online, reaching more people than ever before, all around Australia.

The program, which operates out of Wollongong Salvos, is a holistic, community-based drug, alcohol and mental health service covering the Illawarra region of NSW, supporting and empowering individuals and their families in the recovery process.

The program also works in conjunction with Wollongong University to develop and train evidence-based family empowerment programs, which are offered in a number of Salvation Army centres across NSW, ACT and Queensland. The First Floor Program also mentors staff who work to support families at these locations.

## NATIONAL IMPACT

When COVID-19 hit, instead of cancelling their scheduled Family Connections program, First Floor staff decided to deliver it online via the video-conferencing tool Zoom. Family Connections is an evidence-based program for families with a loved one with borderline personality disorder.

First Floor Program psychologist Maris Depers facilitates programs and training sessions online during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a result, Family Connections were quickly inundated with participants from different parts of Australia and made the decision to offer two online groups, with a third group and a monthly online support group being established in late July.

But it didn't stop there. Also in May, the team was to offer training in their See Change program and it, too, was transitioned to online delivery. See Change is a program for families, carers or individuals with a loved one with a drug and alcohol or mental health issue. (Recently released research shows that



Psychologist Maris Depers facilitates the First Floor online programs.





People from all over Australia are participating in the online training programs.

COVID-19 and the related social-distancing restrictions has led to some Australians increasing their use of alcohol.)\*

Maris said the online accessibility of the program significantly increased its reach: “The real blessing of this is that it has allowed us to sidestep geography. We now have people from rural Victoria all the way through to Queensland involved and accessing the training, many of whom had never heard of it before.”

The demand led to First Floor quickly filling its May training and scheduling another one, and then another. “We’ve trained close to 40 people instead of maybe five to eight people we’ve had in previous years,” said Maris. “So that’s really special!”

Another round of training will be offered from 8 September. Waiting lists for additional sessions are also available. (If you’re interested in participating or finding out more, email [firstfloorprogram@salvationarmy.org.au](mailto:firstfloorprogram@salvationarmy.org.au) or phone (02) 4229 1079.)

This change is set to greatly increase the impact of the program on communities across Australia, with Salvation Army Doorways

staff, Alcohol and Other Drugs workers, officers (pastors) and a variety of chaplains taking part.

“Hopefully as restrictions ease, what that will mean is that we will see a number of See Change programs running up and down the country,” said Maris “If we could resource the rest of the Salvos [in this way] nothing would make us happier.”

Jayne Wilson, the First Floor Program founder, passed away on Christmas Day 2013 after a battle with cancer. Maris said that before Jayne died she had spent the best part of 20 years “trying to widen the lens in the Salvos in terms of providing family support, so it’s really humbling to finally see that happening”. – **Lauren Martin**

\* According to a study conducted by the Australian National University [www.anu.edu.au/news/all-news/alcohol-consumption-increases-during-covid-19-crisis](http://www.anu.edu.au/news/all-news/alcohol-consumption-increases-during-covid-19-crisis)



Scan here for more on addiction.

# The big cover-up

Restoring the original beauty of who we are

## WORDS

DANIELLE STRICKLAND

When my sister moved into a new house recently, I had the capacity and time to help her with a project. My soft, fragile hands were introduced to the world of home renovations, and we got to pulling up the old, ugly carpet, uncovering the beautiful hardwood hidden underneath.

It turned into a spiritual project for me as I thought of all the necessary work involved in the uncovering of our own beautiful selves. And about the ways we so quickly staple things over us, hiding our true selves with something more practical.

There was a season in home renovations where carpeting everything seemed like a good idea. I had that same idea in my life. It's called a cover-up. And it makes perfect sense. Get something that looks better, or at least more practical, and just stick it on top. Leave the original beauty (that requires a bit of work) covered.

But God, like my sister in her new house, was hungry to uncover my original beauty, hidden under the 'carpet' of success, conformity, my work as a religious leader, and a heap of other things I had stapled to my life – trying to be more practical and durable and useful.

I never knew how much the true beauty of original wood could transform a house. Wood. Sounds so common. Go figure.

So, we got to pulling and prying and

hammering, scraping and grunting and long-ing and hoping that this job was going to be easy. And it was, sometimes, but then there were other times!

I've experienced that same process in my own life. Some things that I nail to myself just pop off with a prayer. An intention to receive love from God can often just pull out a nail of rejection or fear. But other times that nail is not coming out! It's rooted and deeply embedded in the actual floorboards of my life. I have to pry, pull, grunt, hammer and chip, and then I literally have to leave it for a while because the whole 'not budging while I'm doing my best to get it to move' is so frustrating that I'm tempted to just put the carpet back down and call it a day.

Resentments, failures, curses, memories – sometimes those things are so rusted and stuck into my original self that I need to spend some time, and do some real work, to get them out.

My sister and I would take turns so we didn't get too stuck in our own frustrating corners of 'operation uncover', commenting on how irritating a little nail could be, and changing our postures, laughing when we pulled so hard we fell over, and sharing our cuts and bruises. But we did it. Together. Which is also a key to uncovering.

Anyway, it wasn't the whole job done – that's for sure. But it was the 'dirty work' of the project. The un-covering. And it was what



God wanted to remind me. And I thought it might be helpful for you too.

You are precious. You are valuable. You are beautiful. You. Your original self. The way God made you. And whatever you've allowed to be stapled down to your life to cover your own beautiful self is never as valuable as you. If you would allow God the ownership

of your life, he'll never rest until he uncovers your original worth and restores you to your glorious true self.



Scan here for more on finding meaning.

# Never alone

Julie had felt so lost for so long that she didn't realise God had never left her

## WORDS

JULIE MACLEAN

I grew up in Lake Macquarie in the Hunter region of NSW. We weren't a church-going family. Mum and Dad had problems, as everyone does, and it was often kind of hectic. I could always run off into the bush, though, and down to the lake. I was very fortunate to have my grandmother, my dearest 'Nanny Mac', and I spent a lot of time at her place.

My first contact with the Salvos was in the 1960s when I was a young girl. I fondly remember that the Swansea Salvos band – in uniform and with drums, brass and timbrels – would march around the streets. For a while, I was a member of the Salvos 'Sunbeams' (a group for girls aged 7-10 years).

I became a teenager and very rebellious around the same time my parents divorced. I was 15. I took off and went wild. I went anywhere and everywhere – I was a gypsy.

I became a sole parent at 19. It was heart-breaking for me, but I just set about doing the best that I could to look after my son. I was raised by parents who taught me that you don't give up, that life isn't a fairy tale, and you just keep going and always do your best.

Then I met a man who I thought was my 'Prince Charming' and we had two children – my beautiful twin boys. When they were three years old, I divorced my husband, and once again became a sole parent.



I was involved in lots of toxic relationships and doing all sorts of things. I did a lot of voluntary work and finished my education. I did a lot of good things, but they were temporary.

Deep down, I was just looking for love, real love. I now have four sons, praise God, and they are the joy of my life. They've always kept me going, even when I went through another relationship breakdown.

In February 2001, I just stopped one night and looked at myself. I took a long, hard, deep look inside because I was becoming very



bitter. I didn't like myself. I felt so bad that not only did my sons not have a dad, they didn't have a very nice mum to look after them.

That broke my heart.

I was in a very deep pit. I had dug myself in so deep that I didn't know what to do. I just knew I couldn't go on another day feeling so bad. I was really desperate. As one does, I was calling out, "God, help me, if you're real!" I'd been lost so for long; I didn't know anyone was looking for me.

The most amazing thing happened! I looked up and Jesus was there! And he didn't condemn me. I had been condemning myself all those years. I looked up, and I can only describe (what I felt) as a perfect peace and a calmness that I had never known. And I looked (at Jesus) and I was awestruck, and I said, "You're real! You are real!" And he smiled and said, "Yes, I am real." And I recalled a verse of Scripture that I hadn't heard since I was a little girl, since I was a (Salvos) Sunbeam – "I will never leave you or forsake you" (Deuteronomy 31:6).

Straight away it was clear to me that Jesus had always been there. He'd been through everything with me; he'd never left me. In my entire life he'd been there through everything I'd ever done, everywhere I'd been. He had felt everything I felt, he knew everything I thought, and he still does. He's here – he's always here and he never goes, he never turns away.

On Sunday morning, 18 February 2001, I went to church at Eastlakes Salvos. There, at the foot of the cross, I was led by the lovely Salvation Army people to give my life to Jesus and be born again. It was the best day of my life so far.

Now, I have a purpose with our Eastlakes Salvos family, sharing the love of Jesus with others. Life is amazing – learning and growing on this journey with Jesus.



Scan here for more on finding meaning.

## Mexican corn



### Ingredients

- 2 corn cobs (cut in half)
- ½ tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- ¼ cup finely grated parmesan cheese
- 1 lime (cut into 4 wedges)

### Method

Bring a pot of water to the boil over high heat. Add corn and boil for 6-8 minutes until cooked. Remove from water and drain.

Meanwhile, combine cayenne pepper, paprika and mayonnaise in a small bowl.

Brush the cooked corn cobs with the mayonnaise mixture.

Roll in parmesan cheese and serve with a lime wedge to squeeze over the corn before eating.

## Have a laugh



## Bible byte

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”  
2 Corinthians chapter 5, verse 17

# Wordsearch

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

- |            |             |
|------------|-------------|
| BILL       | LAND        |
| BLINKY     | LEAVES      |
| CLEARING   | MARSUPIALS  |
| DIEBACK    | NATIVE      |
| ENDANGERED | NOCTURNAL   |
| EUCALYPT   | POPULATIONS |
| FORESTS    | POUCH       |
| GUM        | PROTECTED   |
| HABITAT    | TERRITORIAL |
| JOEY       | VULNERABLE  |
| KOALAS     | WOODLANDS   |

**Answers:** 1. Habitat loss 2. Less than 50 of the 700-plus varieties 3. Up to 1kg of leaves 4. Caramello Bear (now Caramello Koala) 5. With mercy (Psalm 145, verse 9)

**Tum-Tum:** is peeking in Marti's window on page 8

# Quick quiz



1. September is Save the Koala month. What is the greatest threat to the survival of koalas?
2. How many types of eucalyptus leaves do koalas eat?
3. How much does an adult koala eat every day?
4. In 1966, what koala-shaped chocolate was introduced in Australia?
5. How does God view all his creation?

# Tum-Tum



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

# Did you know?

- The fire hydrant patent was lost in a fire.
- Saudi Arabia imports camels from Australia.
- In Connecticut (USA) it is illegal to sell a pickle that does not bounce.

# 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



- Send me a FREE copy of your Wills information booklet
- I am interested in leaving a gift to The Salvation Army
- I have included a gift to The Salvation Army in my Will

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Best time to call  AM  PM

Send to (no stamp required): The Salvation Army Wills and Bequests, Reply Paid 229, Sydney South NSW 1234

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](mailto:willsandbequests@salvationarmy.org.au) or complete and return the coupon.**

[salvationarmy.org.au/wills](http://salvationarmy.org.au/wills)

