

FEATURE

From hardship
to hope

FAITH TALK

The journey
to the cross

MY STORY

From a bad dream
to a new life

The liberating story of Easter

Reflections on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus

EASTER EDITION



SALVOS

MAGAZINE

Vol. 003 | No. 12
9 April 2022
AUD \$1.00
salvosmagazine.org.au



Never forget that Jesus was a brown-skinned healer, who empowered women, destroyed religious systems, loved the rejected, opposed our fascinations with power and flipped the tables of oppression.

**His mission was neither lights, stages, nor influence.
It was our liberation.**





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

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Press date 28 March 2022

Printed and published for The Salvation Army by Commissioner Robert Donaldson at Focus Print Group, Rowville, Victoria

Some photos in this magazine were taken prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

 salvosmagazine.org.au

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Hardship to hope

Having hope, feeling liberated, and experiencing the deep joy of spiritual freedom can seem almost impossible as we face personal upheavals, see tragedies unfolding locally and globally that can seem overwhelming, and just try to go about our daily lives.

Jesus knows this. He understands our needs, emotions, experiences, and frailties. He relates to grief, loss, loneliness, violence, and pain. As our Easter-focused stories discuss, Jesus willingly came to earth, lived, and died for us, and today continues his work of liberation, restoration, and healing in our lives – despite our circumstances.

In Faith Talk, Salvos pastor Amanda expresses her thoughts on the events in the week leading up to the death and resurrection of Jesus (often called Holy Week) and the personal impact these have on her.

Francis also shares his personal life story, from a traumatic childhood to desperately seeking change as an adult and finding faith, forgiveness, and a completely new life.

See our back cover for details if you'd like to know more about Easter or celebrate with the Salvos.

Simone Worthing **Assistant Editor**

Glimpsing hope at Easter

Celebration of new life rolls away the stone of adversity

WORDS Jo-anne Brown

Once upon a time, in a place far away, as a long, cold winter drew to a close, a woman gazed out her window, longing to see more than bare branches and grey skies. She noticed a slight tinge of green on the forsythia bushes and, grabbing a pair of shears, she headed outside. She cut some bare stems from these barren-looking bushes and brought them inside. As she placed them in water, she saw tiny buds just beginning to form. Soon, she thought, these buds would blossom into glorious flowers.

“

**Hope is a choice,
not a feeling.**

”

This is a picture of hope: knowing that branches that now look brown and bare will burst into flower as the spring sunshine breathes warmth upon them. This is the recognition that all is not what it seems.

That gets me thinking about hope. What is it? Where does it come from? How can I experience more of it? And how can I be a person of hope in a world that seems so full of hopelessness?

Many things can dampen, even steal, our hope. People, organisations, technology, medical advances, and so on that we once placed our hope in have let us down, or proven not to be, or have, the answers we

expected. This can be crushing and can lead to discouragement, even despair.

A NEW PERSPECTIVE

But it doesn't need to. We can discover, or rediscover, hope and find a new perspective on situations we encounter in the world around us. Hope is not just a feeling, and it is far more than simply wanting things to get better. We might hope to pass our exams, but hope will not do much for us unless we put some effort into studying. Hoping to lose weight won't change our body shape if we don't make any lifestyle changes. We might hope it doesn't rain on our picnic ... but that's not something we can reasonably put our hopes in without at least checking the weather forecast – and perhaps having an alternative plan!





Hope is looking forward to something positive, with the reasonable expectation that it will happen. It is confidently anticipating something good or desired.

We can feel hopeful about something, but it's also a mental attitude we can harness. Feeling hopeful will do us no good without some awareness of the reality surrounding that situation. Hope is a mindset that involves every part of our being. It's a conscious choice that arises from and influences how we feel and is a catalyst for action. Being hopeful involves both belief and expectation. Recent research shows hope changes the physiology of our brains in positive ways, releasing chemicals that ease pain and enable us to feel more positive.

Jane Goodall, the English primatologist and anthropologist, describes hope as something that "enables us to keep going in the face of adversity", as a "human survival trait and without it we perish". Many things we hope for can prompt us to action, to put in some effort to bring about the desired outcome. There are also things we hope for that we might not be able to do anything about. This is where it is hardest to hold on to hope. Perhaps in such situations, we need to look for new perspectives or find small signs that something good is already happening, even if a difficult situation is not yet resolved.

NO SEASON IS FINAL

The rhythms of the created world remind us that the darkest, coldest, and harshest seasons eventually end. No matter what else is going on in the world, in our own lives, each day the sun will set and each morning, it will rise again. Even with the unpredictability and chaos brought on by climate change, the sun, moon and stars, high tide and low tide, full moon and new moon continue in their regular rhythms – offering hope and the reminder that no phase, no season, is final.

“

... the darkest, coldest,
and harshest seasons
eventually end.

”

I know enough to be sure that even after a long, bitter winter, daffodils will appear, trees will again be green, and fruit trees will blossom. I discover hope in the changing of the seasons and the rhythms that have been set in place since the beginning of time.

I choose to hold on to this knowledge. I won't ▶



always feel the hopefulness of spring when I am in the middle of winter or might not be able to visualise the light of dawn when the darkness of midnight still hovers over me. I don't feel it – but I choose to believe it, knowing it to be true. Hope is a choice, not a feeling.

“

Hope ... is far more than simply wanting things to get better.

”

NEW LIFE

And those bare brown forsythia branches? I brought them inside on the day that the Christian world marks the death of Jesus Christ (Good Friday). On Easter Sunday

morning, as Christians worldwide celebrated the resurrection of Christ, those bare branches were a mass of golden flowers. Easter is a celebration of hope and new life.

Each Easter, we remember all is not as it appears. Each sunset, we remember the darkness will eventually fade and dawn will come. Each low tide reminds us there will be a high tide. We can choose to hope good things will come, even when we don't yet see them. We can choose to hope there is good in life even amid sorrow and suffering. We can choose hope, even when we don't feel hopeful.

Major Jo-anne Brown is a Salvos officer (pastor) in Queensland.



Scan here for more on finding meaning.

Learning skills for an independent life

Towards Independence Program Top End (TIPE) aims to teach tenants how to manage finances more effectively and become financially independent.

TIPE, which runs at Darwin Salvos, applied for a \$20,000 Innovation Grant through The Salvation Army in 2019 to facilitate a Life Skills Program to educate tenants on budgeting, home maintenance, cooking, cleaning, and health care.

The program was put on hold due to COVID-19; however, TIPE was granted an extension and given funding to continue Life Skills in



Leanne Butler, TIPE case manager (front), enjoys a celebratory meal with Life Skills program participants.

2021. Workshops ran for two hours, providing participants with the opportunity to have hands-on experience and tools to take home.

Glowing with anticipation



GLOW girls well-being and empowerment group, a long prayed-about initiative and partnership between 2508 Salvos (Helensburgh NSW) and a local youth worker, started recently.

Created by Sammy Mahler of 'A Fountain of Youth', the program aims to empower and enrich the lives of growing teens.

The course guides participants through self-worth, resilience, healthy friendships, body acceptance, boundaries, social media and a session on fashion styling and op-shopping.

Flood appeal update

Thanks to our generous donors, volunteers and supporters, The Salvation Army has provided the following support in Queensland and NSW:

- Distributed \$4,770,958 in financial assistance and in-kind support such as food parcels, clothing, and household items
- Issued 11,862 recovery grants
- Assisted 17,443 households
- Currently supporting 20 recovery hubs plus providing outreach
- 7488 total volunteer hours worked at evacuation centres (now closed)
- 42,647 meals and refreshments served at evacuation centres (now closed)

(As of 23 March 2022)

The Easter story

A path to hope

WORDS Julia Hosking

Despite hot cross buns and Easter eggs appearing on store shelves from early January, Easter is not an easily understood Christian holiday.

It can be a little complicated to understand why Good Friday is 'good', why Easter is celebrated, or how the meaning of Easter relates to our lives today.

Easter has two significant celebrations every year – Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Unlike Christmas, these dates change from year to year – based on the lunar calendar. In 2022, Good Friday will be commemorated on 15 April and Easter Sunday on 17 April.

However, many churches will start Easter celebrations one week earlier on Palm Sunday, which leads to the term 'Holy Week'.

HOLY WEEK

On Palm Sunday, Jesus was celebrated as he entered Jerusalem. The people waved palm branches as they shouted Jesus' praises. Many people realised Jesus had been sent down from Heaven as the Son of God, a saviour – but they were still confused about how he would save them.

The religious leaders did not like Jesus, though. They were jealous and did not believe he was the Son of God. Their apparent 'disbelief' caused doubt and confusion among the people in Jerusalem. A few days later, the same crowd that shouted praise towards Jesus began to shout criticism. "... 'Away with this man! ... Crucify him!'" (Luke chapter 23, verses 18-25).

Jesus was whipped, mocked then sentenced to death on a cross. What is now known as

'Good Friday' was a sad and dark day. But the Easter story wasn't over yet.

JESUS UNDERSTANDS OUR PAIN

On Holy Thursday, Jesus was eating a special meal, now known as the 'Last Supper' with his friends. After this meal one of Jesus' 12 close followers betrayed him to the religious leaders to be arrested and killed. Others rejected him and denied knowing him.

“

**Jesus also offers everyone
hope for today.**

”

Jesus experienced fear and anxiety about what lay before him. God, his Heavenly Father, did not stop the suffering, but instead, he gave Jesus the strength to endure the path to the cross. This was part of God's greater plan of redemption for the people of the world who he loved so much.

Jesus could have stopped the process at any time. But he persevered because his love for people was greater than the pain he felt.

That is why Good Friday can be 'good'. Because of Jesus' sacrifice, we can have a true and meaningful relationship with God. We can experience unconditional love and everlasting hope. Jesus held on to this hope for us so that we could hold on to his hope in our own lives.

Many of the emotions there on Good Friday



are similar to those we experience today. There is nothing you can experience today that God has not seen before. Friends who betray and reject us. Fear and anxiety over financial insecurity and sickness. Pain and heartache for loved ones. Confusion and hopelessness about the future. Grief, despair, loneliness. Jesus understands all of it.

EASTER SUNDAY

After he died, Jesus' body was taken down from the cross and placed in a tomb. It was sealed and guarded from the outside. On Saturday, Jesus' followers felt devastated, afraid, disappointed, and hopeless.

Jesus brought hope and light into the darkness of his death by rising again on the third day – Easter Sunday.

The Bible says in the first light of day, some women went to Jesus' tomb, expecting to anoint his dead body, as per their custom. Instead of finding Jesus' body, they saw an angel, who said, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!" (Luke chapter 24, verses 5-6). Their hopelessness changed to hope and joy!

MEANING OF EASTER

The message of Easter, and Jesus coming back to life, is about the purpose he gives us.

His resurrection means you can have a meaningful relationship with God the Father – the Creator of the universe – and experience a new, everlasting life. And Jesus also offers everyone hope for today.

This doesn't mean we will never experience sickness, financial hardship, family crisis, disappointment, loneliness, or grief – but it does mean that we can have hope even through those hardships and are not alone in our struggles. When life seems chaotic and confusing, Jesus offers us meaning and purpose, and a hope we can hold on to.

For the full version of this story, and for more information and contact details, go salvationarmy.org.au/Easter



Scan here for more on finding meaning.

The journey to the cross

Reflections on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus

In this second of a two-part Easter series, Salvos officer (pastor) Captain Amanda Hart shares her thoughts on the events in the week leading up to the death and resurrection of Jesus (often called Holy Week). Amanda begins her reflections with the final meal Jesus shared with his disciples (followers) and the assurances Jesus gave them, even as he faced his impending crucifixion.

THE LAST SUPPER

Jesus had spent Wednesday being ministered to, but on Thursday, the day before 'Good Friday', he became the servant in every way.

In the biblical book of John, five chapters are devoted to this meal that became known as the Last Supper. There was still much to be said, many lessons to be taught, and so during those final hours, that's what Jesus did. He sat with the disciples, shared the meal with them and taught them – even Judas, who had betrayed him. I often wonder how Jesus sat so calmly next to the one he knew was about to hand him over to be killed.

Nothing he said that night could have prepared his disciples for those next few days. No one could have imagined God's plan. Crucifixion. Resurrection. Ascension to heaven and the coming of the Holy Spirit.

But one thing Jesus assured his disciples of on that fateful night was that when he was gone, they would receive the Holy Spirit – counsellor, advocate, helper – who would take up residence in them and in us.

CRUCIFIXION

After the Passover meal, in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus was arrested and taken to be tried.

I wonder how the other disciples felt when Judas approached Jesus and betrayed him. I wonder if Jesus still really meant it when he called Judas his friend. I think about the guilt of the disciple, Peter, as I recall times when I have denied Jesus – perhaps not in my words, but in my actions. I struggle to comprehend that the same people who welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem at the start of the week were now crying out for his death.

As I reflect on this time, I share the disciples' frustration, guilt, fear, and emptiness as they questioned what was to come.

I am struck by the power of the voices of the chief priests and elders who convinced people to testify against Jesus. They persuaded the people to demand that Jesus be put to death. Although many people had heard Jesus teach and seen him perform miracles, the chief priests and elders used their position of power and authority to manipulate them.



How do I use my position? For God's purposes or my own? **Matthew chapter 27 verse 20.**

SATURDAY

This day would have been a day of absolute darkness for the disciples. Jesus, the Messiah, the one they thought would rescue them from the rule of the Romans, was gone. It all ended with an excruciating and humiliating death on a cross. Would they have been wondering if they could have done something to prevent this outcome? And, where to from here?

We can never fully experience the emotions of Jesus' followers on that dark day, but for me, Easter Saturday reminds me of the times that I turn my back on God. They are times of darkness, hopelessness, and despair – a constant search for meaning. But I know the rest of the story, and so on Easter Saturday, I eagerly await the dawn that brings with it new life. **Mark chapter 15 verses 42-43.**

HE IS RISEN

On Easter Sunday, we remember and celebrate the resurrection of Christ from the dead, his victory over death and the evil one.

It would have been a day of extremes for the disciples – going from emptiness and despair to being full of hope and joy.

I like to reflect on the first proclaimer of the resurrection – Mary Magdalene. Mary was a follower of Jesus. She had spent time with him, heard his teaching, seen miracles performed, but just like his other followers, she hadn't understood that the cross wasn't the end of the story. At least not until the risen Jesus spoke one word to her – her name. Mary. In saying her name, Mary's eyes were opened. She was known, loved, and the truth had been revealed to her. Her life was once again transformed.

We, too, can have new life, just as Mary did, because of the resurrection – we just need to be prepared to respond when he calls us by name. **John chapter 20, verse 16.**



Scan here for more on finding meaning.

From a bad dream to a new life

WORDS Francis

Francis' childhood was filled with fear and trauma, which flowed into years of crime and addiction. At the height of his addiction – exhausted and emaciated – he cried a desperate prayer for help. From there, his life began to change.

As a scraggy, long-haired, skinny, addicted dude with no teeth, I was picked up by a truck driver while I was hitchhiking. I was desperate to change my life and just about at the end of my tether.

I didn't tell the driver too much of my story, but it was kind of obvious. When we started talking, he mentioned a few options. "You know there's The Salvation Army," he commented.

CHILDHOOD CHALLENGES

One of 11 children, my earliest memories are overwhelmingly painful. My father was a boilermaker, and he also liked to drink.



Francis is living a life today he could never have imagined possible.

Trouble seemed to follow him around, and we were always on the move.

I don't recall a day when there wasn't tension. There were continual arguments about everything, and I was in fear all the time.

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The simple life I now live is a world away from the addiction that threatened to destroy me.

”

I worked hard at part-time jobs from the age of 13, but that work increasingly included crime. The only influence I had was sporadic visits from older brothers who taught me how to steal, lie, cheat, and get away with it. My teen years were largely spent in institutions and reform schools around Sydney.

By the age of 19, I was sentenced to prison for armed robbery committed with an older brother. At the time, I thought, "There's got to be a better way. There has to be something better than this," but I just didn't know how to get out of it.

A DESPERATE PRAYER

I got married soon after leaving prison, but it was doomed to failure because I was such

a mess. I began using heroin and had violent outbursts, repeating much of the behaviour I'd seen in my father. Ordered by the courts out of Sydney, I stayed with a friend outside Byron Bay.



Francis and his wife, Joane, are building a new life together.

It got to the point where I'd just had enough. I said, "God, help me. I'm going to start hitchhiking, and if I get a lift into Byron, I'll go searching for money and drugs. But if my lift takes me beyond Byron, I'll go to Brisbane and get help. I'll do whatever it takes."

The driver who picked me up turned out to be a Christian, and he dropped me off near The Salvation Army's Pindari homelessness service [in Brisbane]. The next morning, weak, sick, and desperately thin, I was driven to The Salvation Army's Brisbane Recovery Services, known as Moonyah, and began a hard but life-changing journey.

MOVING FORWARD IN FAITH

Eventually, I began to find hope. I started volunteering on the reception desk at Moonyah. As

my confidence grew, I took on more volunteer roles then trained in disability support.

Today I work in disability support and also help young people from challenging backgrounds transition from school into the workforce. I have volunteered for a number of years with the Salvos and other organisations.

Looking back, my chaotic and fear-filled childhood and life of crime, addiction, and imprisonment is like a distant dream. I still struggle with anxiety, but the simple life I now live is a world away from the addiction that threatened to destroy me.

I have now remarried, and life is completely different. It sounds clichéd, but it is nothing like I could have ever imagined. Often when I look back, it feels like a bad dream, like it was someone else.

EASTER HOPE

When I became homeless and alone for the best part of a decade, Christmas and Easter were so painful. The stores were closed, the streets were silent, and for me, there was a sense of feeling more alone than ever.

Easter holds far more significance for me now. It's a time to reflect and appreciate the gifts I have – the people in my life, the interactions, the joy of seeing someone's life transformed, gratitude for the life I've been blessed with, and faith.

At times, I struggle to forgive myself, but at Easter-time, I count my blessings. I realise that forgiveness is real, and the message of Jesus' sacrifice to save others is active and alive today. If they weren't, I wouldn't be here telling my story.



Scan here for more on finding meaning.

Caramel slice



PHOTO ANDREA REDFORD

Ingredients

1 pkt Milk Coffee biscuits, 120g butter, 3 tbsp brown sugar, 1 tbsp golden syrup, ½ tin condensed milk, 180g milk chocolate.

Method

- Line the base of a slice tin with biscuits. Break biscuits as needed to roughly fill the gaps.
- Crush the remaining biscuits.
- Melt the butter on the stove in a saucepan. Add sugar, syrup, and condensed milk. Stir to combine. Add crushed biscuits to caramel mixture and stir to combine.
- Pour caramel on top of biscuit base and gently spread evenly with a spatula.
- Melt chocolate in microwave at 20 to 30-second intervals, stirring with a metal spoon until smooth.
- Spread melted chocolate evenly on top of caramel mixture. Refrigerate until set and then slice and serve.

Quick quiz

1. What colour were the first Easter eggs dyed?
2. What creature delivers Easter eggs to children in Switzerland?
3. In England, what is the fruitcake with marzipan balls traditionally served at teatime at Easter?
4. Where is the world's largest Easter egg museum?
5. What part of a chocolate Easter bunny do more than 75 per cent of people eat first?
6. In which year did Cadbury manufacture its first Easter egg?



Tum-Tum

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



Bible byte

For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."

John chapter 3 verse 16
New Living Translation

Wordsearch

Words are hidden horizontally, vertically, diagonally, forwards and backwards. Enjoy!

L L W E O I O H S S E V I L A N H A C E
 C O E E C E N I O T Y E R N H O M C E E
 P N N R N C L J U E O A Y I F P N C T L
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|-------------|--------------|
| Alive | Joy |
| Angel | Life |
| Celebration | Love |
| Christ | Miracle |
| Cross | New |
| Crucifixion | Palm Sunday |
| Disciples | Prayer |
| Easter | Resurrection |
| Eternal | Risen |
| Faith | Sacrifice |
| Garden | Salvation |
| Holy | Stone |
| Hope | Sunday |
| Jesus | Tombs |

HAVE A LAUGH

A man and a woman were walking along the footpath in their local shopping strip. They passed a shop with a handwritten sign stuck on the window that said, 'Help Wanted!' With a gasp of horror, they rushed into the store, yelling, "What's wrong?!"



My teachers told me I'd never amount to much because I procrastinate so much. I told them, "Just you wait!"

DID YOU KNOW?

Jesus shared a meal with his disciples just before he was arrested, known as the Last Supper.

Jesus was betrayed to the Roman soldiers by Judas, one of his disciples, for 30 pieces of silver.

Jesus died on the cross on Good Friday.

Jesus came back to life on Easter Sunday.

After his resurrection Jesus appeared to his disciples and followers 12 times.

Answers: 1. Red 2. The cuckoo bird 3. Simnel 4. Ciechanowicz, Poland 5. The ears 6. 1875. **Tum-Tum:** is hiding behind the flowers on page 4.

Celebrate **EASTER WITH US**

When life feels turbulent, unsettled, or uncertain, it can be hard to know who or what to place our faith in. When nothing feels stable, life can start to feel hopeless.



This Easter, we invite you onto a path that leads to hope. Reach out for practical support, read personal stories of hope, or learn more about Easter at salvationarmy.org.au/Easter

If you'd like to join the Salvos for a service this Easter, if you've got questions about faith, if you want to explore Christianity, or if you'd just like to connect with other people in your community, then our inclusive and welcoming churches are places that can help.

The best way to find a nearby Salvation Army church is to use the link below and search using your postcode. Please note, the event may change from what is published due to government restrictions, so please confirm details with your local Salvos before visiting.

The Bible assures us of this: "[God's] hope is real and true, an anchor to steady our restless souls" (Hebrews chapter 6, verse 19, *The Voice* translation).

We look forward to seeing you.

  salvationarmy.org.au/Easter

