

# salvos

*magazine*

NATIONAL HOMELESSNESS WEEK



## Preserving human dignity

Ensuring a pathway to healing and hope



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### FEATURE

Winter warmth

### FAITH TALK

The Golden Rule

### MY STORY

Loved back to life

“Great opportunities to help others seldom come, but small ones surround us every day.”

- Sally Koch





## 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



The Salvation Army Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet and work and pay our respect to Elders, past, present, and future. We value and include people of all cultures, languages, abilities, sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions, and intersex status. We are committed to providing programs that are fully inclusive. We are committed to the safety and well-being of people of all ages, particularly children.

# Salvos Magazine

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## Human dignity

The theme for Homelessness Week 2024 (5-11 August) is 'Homelessness Action Now!'

As the cost of living skyrockets and the housing crisis deepens, the Salvos, as well as other agencies and organisations, are seeing a constantly increasing flow of people asking for help. The images we see of desperate people living in cars or tents, couch surfing and living on the streets reflect reality for more and more Australians.

Each of these people has a story to tell – of domestic violence, housing affordability, job loss, relationship breakdown, physical and mental illness – and the list goes on.

This edition of *Salvos Magazine* features stories of people who have and are experiencing homelessness, how Salvos services assist and how to access those services. The focus is on human dignity and the warmth, sense of belonging and hope that comes when people gather together, share what they have and care for each other.

Jesus told us to love our neighbours. This includes our neighbours experiencing homelessness. Let's consider our common humanity and respond accordingly.

Simone Worthing **Editor**

# PRESERVING HUMAN DIGNITY

Ensuring a pathway to healing and hope

By Kirralee Nicolle

When a ‘blocking high’ brought unusually low temperatures across much of south-eastern Australia recently, the stakes were even higher for those living outdoors or unable to afford heating.

Frigid weather systems broke records and caused frost throughout Victoria, the ACT, parts of New South Wales, South Australia and Tasmania. In South Australia, the state government announced a Code Blue extreme winter weather response to prompt homelessness and social services to intensify their efforts to care for at-risk populations.

“

IF WE’RE GOING TO BE A  
HEALTHY NATION AND A HEALTHY  
SOCIETY, WE NEED TO MOVE FROM  
LOCKING INDIVIDUALS OUT TO  
ACTUALLY LOCKING THEM IN.

”

The Salvation Army’s Melbourne Project 614 Team Leader, Major Brendan Nottle, said those weather conditions, combined with the cost-of-living crisis, potentially caused a life-and-death situation for those sleeping rough or lacking the funds to pay heating bills. He said the situation led many to a breaking point, meaning services like the Magpie

Nest Café at Project 614 were vitally important for not only providing food, but also the opportunity to engage with others and be reminded that they were human beings who deserved dignity.

Icy temperatures don’t just “impact them physically [in that] they can’t heat their homes, or they find it difficult to stay warm outside, but they impact them mentally and emotionally too,” he said. “And there are people that are becoming very distressed because they basically feel like no one cares.”

## OUR RESPONSE

Brendan said the government was responsible for reducing costs for Australians, including relieving energy and rental costs and investigating grocery price increases. He also said mental health services should be a priority as declining mental health was both a serious factor leading to the problem and an effect of homelessness. But rather than simply blaming the government for the crisis, everyday Australians could work to improve the country by looking out for those around them.

“If you’ve got somebody that’s vulnerable, so they’re elderly, or they’re unwell, check in, invite them over [or] take them a meal,” he said. “We can help people physically, but we can help them mentally and emotionally as well.

“It’s not a certain group of people that are homeless. Homelessness can impact any human being if they don’t have



everything lining up around being able to make ends meet."

Brendan said if people saw someone sleeping rough in their local area and weren't sure how to help, they could simply approach them and have a conversation to find out what they needed.

"The first thing is to ask yourself the question, 'Do I feel safe engaging this person on my own?' he said. "If you don't, then maybe take someone else. If you still don't feel safe, then it's good to be resourced with phone numbers that you can call about the person that you've seen sleeping rough, so could be the local Salvos, could be the local council [or] the local police if you're genuinely concerned about that person sleeping out in the freezing cold."

### NEED TO BELONG

Brendan said the most important thing was ensuring people in vulnerable settings knew they belonged and explained that, as a society, we tended to lock out those who were different or who we disagreed with rather than include them.

He added that once people felt locked out, it was often a short path to being locked up. Practical support, including meals, vouchers, assistance with utility payments, opportunities for training, volunteering and employment, and safe and secure housing, all helped vulnerable people get back on their feet.

"If we're going to be a healthy nation and a healthy society, we need to move from locking individuals out to actually locking them in," Brendan said.

"Because the reality is if we lock people out, they often become very angry. History is littered with examples that indicate that people [who] are locked up often become hardened, not healed.

"And when people feel locked in, then they tend to go down that path of helping others."



Scan here for more information on Salvation Army Homelessness Services.

# Winter warmth

Opening doors and hearts to those on the margins

By Anthony Castle

I once lived on a street in the city. My home was older, with cracks in the walls, on the margins of the city blocks. Alongside were derelict buildings and old bars, men queuing along the kerb at sunset, sleeping bags beneath the trees of the nearby parklands. When winter came, the night air would creep in between the cracks. I would sit alone at sunset sometimes, inside the old house, feeling the growing cold.

“

**No one's problems were solved on those nights, but while we were together, it was warm.**

”

I lived with a friend in that house – our street also hosting a range of services and shelters on the south-west corner of Adelaide. That area was where the homeless came to live. We would wake to find camps in our front garden, people drinking in our driveway. Once a week, we opened our door and offered a meal to any who were living on the street, or simply alone. The house could grow cold, but it didn't feel that way when we all gathered, offering what we had. No one's problems were solved on those nights, but while we were together, it was warm.

## DOMINIC

I have been thinking about my old home more over the last few weeks. An elderly man died alone in his car on that street, on a recent Sunday morning, parked outside one of the shelters. The man was in his 80s and had been sleeping rough for some time. The temperatures that week were at near freezing point. His name was Dominic.

The death has put a spotlight on the crises the country is currently facing. Spikes in the cost of living and a lack of housing have seen an increase in need across Australia, with more turning to services for support. Some services report that there has never been more demand. Adelaide in particular has experienced the sharpest inflation in food prices of any capital city and has the lowest vacancy rates in Australia. Homelessness has increased in South Australia since 2016, with demand for services increasing 60 per cent over the last four years. There are estimates that almost 200 people are currently sleeping rough in the city, with growing campsites in the parklands.

As the cost of living and lack of housing grows worse, many are at risk of experiencing homelessness for the first time. Foodbanks have reported serving two-income families. Experts warn of a new class of working homeless, as families relocate to camping grounds and motels.

Now winter has come, there are more and more people in need. There are



more living on the street, and while there remains no national data on homelessness deaths, we don't know how many will die on the street too.

We don't know how many might die alone.

“

**These problems won't be solved in a night, but unless everyone works together, there won't be any solutions.**

”

### **WINTER FREEZE**

I visit the street where I once lived, where Dominic died. The sun is setting, the air still mild. The old bars have become fashionable breweries, apartment blocks now glowing where the derelict buildings once stood. Shining cranes fill the city sky, but the men still queue on the kerb in front of the shelters. There are more sleeping bags beneath trees.

While much has changed on my old street, it hasn't changed for the better – not for those in need, not for those on the margins. The cracks have opened wider in society, with more feeling the cold. There isn't an obvious solution to the crises we face. There isn't the consensus or resources, and any responses announced would take years. We don't know when this winter will end.

I walk past my old home, the site long fenced off, the front door now dark as the night falls. It is going to take cooperation – from governments, from business, from not-for-profits, from everyone – to resolve these crises. These problems won't be solved in a night, but unless everyone works together, there won't be any solutions. Only when we gather together with what we have do we open doors for those on the margins and make the warmth that so many need.



Scan here for more information on Salvation Army Homelessness Services.

## Art from the heart

The Salvation Army's Inner-City Art Expo is running again this year to coincide with Homelessness Week (5-11 August). The event is hosted by The Salvation Army's Inner City Men's Homelessness Service (Foster House) in Sydney's Surry Hills. It features works by artists who fit the criteria of, "at risk of homelessness; experiencing homelessness, or who had lived experience of homelessness".

Kristie Clifton, Salvation Army State Manager Homelessness NSW/ACT, explains that the primary purpose of the expo is to enrich the lives of those struggling, or who have struggled with homelessness, by providing a voice, a creative outlet, and an opportunity to be seen and celebrated.

"Many of the artists and performers have gone through, and are going through, trauma, difficulties and challenges and face stigma and stereotyping," Kristie explained. "It highlights the fact that no

matter what people are going through, everybody has unique talents and abilities."

### LIVED EXPERIENCE

The art exhibits also bring to life the lived experiences of the artists. At last year's event, each artist included a blurb about their life with their artwork, which is expected again this year.

“

**No matter what people are going through, everybody has unique talents and abilities.**

”

"The one that impacted me the most last year was a painting of a well-known bridge, and underneath the bridge was a tent," shared Kristie. "The artist said every night people used to drive across the bridge to go home from work but had no idea he was living under it.

"Facing homelessness can be one of the hardest times of an individual's life.

"We work as a team to ensure that at the end of their time with us, our community members walk away better resourced, empowered and equipped than when they first came to us. Whatever we do, we walk alongside each individual to enrich their life.

"That's the beauty and strength of the art expo. It helps us achieve that in a very beautiful and healing way."

**– Naomi Singlehurst**



The art expo brings to life the artists' talents and abilities.



# Five minutes of social justice – Homelessness and housing injustice

Social justice means different things to different people, but it generally includes the idea of a society being fair and equitable.

In Australia, social justice challenges are multifaceted. Some of the issues we face are huge and will take effort to fix – but all of them can be improved.

Homelessness is a widespread and serious issue across Australia because of systemic and structural issues like poverty, low income, and a lack of safe and affordable housing. According to the 2021 census, 122,494 people were considered homeless on census night.

## GOT FIVE MINUTES?

- Read about homelessness or sign a petition with a peak body such as Everybody's Home. [bit.ly/3xPOUrq](https://bit.ly/3xPOUrq)

## WANT TO DIG DEEPER?

- Get involved in our advocacy on homelessness! As part of Homelessness Week, we've created a webform to collect people's thoughts and feelings about homelessness. We will use these stories as part of direct advocacy to MPs and senators so they can hear that the community wants action. Sharing your thoughts will directly contribute to the advocacy we do! See QR code below.



Scan here to join  
the Salvo's advocacy  
on homelessness.

*“This is what our Scriptures  
come to teach: in everything,  
in every circumstance, do  
to others as you would have  
them do to you.”*

*Matthew chapter 7, verse 12  
The Voice Bible translation*



# Loved back to life

Helping others navigate their own paths

By Alan

I was working as a financial advisor in the city, and it was just two different lives. I was struggling with gambling, alcohol and making good decisions. I had family court and separation from children and breakdown of a relationship. I started sleeping in my car first and then sleeping in the office. That was really, really stressful – trying to be gone by the time people came in the morning, and in the evening, having to come back and not get caught.

“

**The support is there if you reach out, and I'm eternally grateful for that.**

”

It was really difficult trying to navigate that on my own, so it became very dark, very fast. I've tried to take my own life a few times. I ended up in rehab, and while I was there, they recommended I should get into Foster House.\*

## LEAP OF FAITH

I think they took a leap of faith on me that this time I would double down on recovery and give it a fair shot. I suppose that leap of faith was enough. Somebody just to give me a go and trust me. There was lots of empathy and compassion and understanding, and very little judgment.



The early days of homelessness for Alan were very dark.

This was important because I was judging myself so hard, I didn't need anyone else to jump on board. In some ways they nursed me back to life and loved me back to life as well. The support is there if you reach out, and I'm eternally grateful for that.

Now I'm working in Foster House after doing a bit of an apprenticeship with New South Wales Health. It's where I wanted to come back to. I am bringing my lived experience of homelessness and addiction and navigating situational stresses to try to support the men. I would say that if you don't know what Foster House is, it's a safety net that people don't know they need.

**If you or someone you know needs help, contact Lifeline on 13 11 14.**



Scan here for more information on Salvation Army Homelessness Services.



Alan is loving his new life and is helping others navigate their own paths to recovery and wholeness.

## OUTCOMES FOR ALAN

\*Foster House is The Salvation Army's Inner City Men's Homelessness Service in Sydney, providing accommodation, advocacy and support to men from all walks of life.

"Foster House is a service for men experiencing homelessness," explains Luka, team leader, Residential Services, at Foster House.

"We work collaboratively towards an outcome-based approach, whether it be to support the men in finding housing and on their alcohol and drug

recovery journey, whether it be needing financial advice or other services.

"When Alan came to Foster House for support, me and one of the other team leaders at the time sat down with him to discuss his own goals.

"Alan now is just amazing at what he does. Being a voice and advocating for the men here is a major strength of balance and the way that he supports his team, supports all the teams at Foster House, is just amazing."

# Spinach and tomato pasta



## Ingredients

250g pasta; 1 bunch spinach; ¼ cup water; 1 tbsp olive oil; 1 clove garlic, crushed; 4 large ripe tomatoes, chopped; ¼ cup tomato paste; black pepper to taste; ¼ cup pine nuts, toasted; 1 cup grated parmesan cheese; salad and garlic bread (optional)

## Method

- While pasta is cooking as per packet instructions, in micro-wave place spinach and water in a large dish, cover and cook for 8 minutes until tender. Drain.
- Heat oil and garlic for 30 seconds.
- Stir in tomatoes, tomato paste and black pepper, cook for 6-8 minutes, stirring halfway.
- Stir in cooked spinach and pine nuts. Heat for 4-5 minutes, stirring halfway.
- Stir in cheese and pour over hot pasta. Serve with salad and garlic bread.

# HAVE A LAUGH



What type of tree likes to give high fives?  
A palm tree.

Why do trees hate riddles?  
Because it's too easy to get stumped.

Why are trees the best networkers?  
They're constantly branching out!

How does a tree get on the internet?  
They log on.

# SIGNING IN



# Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

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## Quick quiz

1. What is the Scout motto?
2. Can girls join Scouts?
3. What are the names of the sections within the movement?
4. In which year did Scouting in Australia celebrate 100 years?
5. Which animal's home is also the name of a meeting place for a Scout group?
6. How old do you need to be to join the Scouts?

## Tum-Tum



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

## Bible byte

"Defend the helpless and everyone in need."

Psalm 82, verse 3b

Contemporary English Version

**Quiz answers:** 1. Be Prepared 2. Yes 3. Mob, Pack, Troop, Unit, Crew 4. 2008 5. Lion – A Scout Group meets at their den. 6. Five  
**Tum-Tum:** is hiding on the piano behind Alan on page 13.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**National Tree Day, on 28 July, started in 1996 and has grown into Australia's largest community tree planting and nature care event.**

**Earth has more than 60,000 known tree species.**

**Most tree roots stay in the top 46cm of soil, but they can also grow above ground or down to 6 metres deep.**

**More than half of all tree species exist only in a single country.**

**Trees can lower stress.**

**The biggest tree in volume alive today is known as General Sherman. It is located in Sequoia National Park, California. This massive redwood tree is more than 83 metres tall and 7.7 metres in diameter.**

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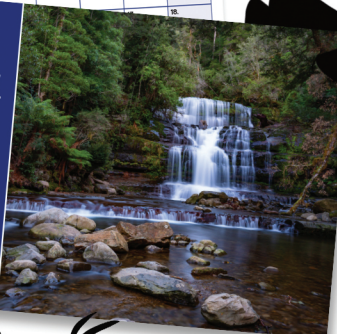
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and it is good

2025 calendar



salvos magazine kid zone

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