



Staple Hill

Local ... Lively ... Loving



Majors Colin & Nicola Hylton-Jones

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To play or not to play - that is A question!

Mark Dickens

We have lived through, and are living in unprecedented times that's for sure. How mighty can one small virus be? To bring the whole of the economy to its knees, stop the Band playing, stop the choirs singing, and stop us worshipping God together! Not even the Skeleton army could do that in Victorian times! Well, that was the one thing we (the very small media team of this corps in conjunction with the Corps Officers) were determined not to let happen when this hit us.

This Sunday marks the 18th Sunday in a row that we've not been able to meet to worship on a Sunday. From the outset, we tried to find a way to bring a Sunday morning meeting to life digitally, but respecting all of the contributions we'd normally get on a Sunday morning at Staple Hill Salvation Army (SA). We decided immediately to only ever use 100% Staple Hill SA contributions, and thank goodness all those years ago we had the foresight to start recording our services. As that has allowed us to go back into those recordings and search for the songs that Colin & Nicola request for each Sunday. From the start of using a band intro piece that deliberately has all the Staple Hill chatter in the background, to even getting Hilton to join us on his piano, and various other people recording and interacting in person. It's been a real challenge.

This Sunday also marks the 100th man-hour of work that goes into bringing our worship digitally to life. And that is just from the media team, ignoring all you lovely people that join us live reading the Bible, or singing in the worship band, playing the piano for the benediction, or contributing different solo items. It's a mammoth task, so my thanks to Neil, Aidan, Senan and Gary for all their help.

So why bother? We're all busy people, and with the exception of Senan in our small team, everyone else has been flat out working their day-job throughout the lockdown.

Remember at this point, we would usually see around 150 people physically attend our Sunday morning service at Staple Hill SA.

On that very first Sunday of 'Facebook Live' with Colin, we were joined by just under 150 people at 11am. Ever since that first meeting online, it has grown and grown. In fact, we now reach generally around 1,300 devices per week, every week! In computer speak, your iPad or phone is a device, so if 2 people are watching on 1 device, you can double that number for people. Imagine them all trying to get into our hall at 11am on a Sunday.

In truth, not everyone watches at 11am either. Some join us live at 11am, some later in the day, and some even on a Monday! It seems flexible worship is order of the day.

We've had to launch our own YouTube channel to keep up with requests for copies of meetings.

A couple of weeks in, Laura decided to do something similar for Lighthouse Club. From those early days of 10-20 people logging on to join her at 9:45am every Sunday, she now regularly attracts over 300 'devices'!

We've had a lot more people interacting socially through the Extra Slice groups, coffee after the meeting, the Youth Group meeting on Sunday morning.... on time (mostly!!), and who had even heard of "Zoom" last Christmas?

It is apparent that Staple Hill Salvation Army is now a global church, as we regularly receive words of encouragement from all around the globe. But, you know, our single biggest impact has been around Staple Hill and Bristol. We do not know who the people are that join us online, but we do see which geographical region they join from. Maybe they're intrigued, maybe they're other Salvationists or Church-goers that don't have any online worship of their own, or maybe, just maybe, they are someone in need right on our doorstep.

Going back to the start, we used to see around 150 people attend the hall on a Sunday morning. Today, digitally, we are joined by more than that number just from BS15 (Kingswood area), with increasing numbers from Yate.

Perhaps God did have a plan for us in all this!

So, what next? Will we all arrive at the hall in our pyjamas, expecting coffee and bacon rolls throughout the service? Will we all get fidgety when the service runs over 40 mins (the optimal digital time)? Will we all sit in the hall staring at each other waiting for someone else to say something and then randomly shout loudly "sorry, I was on mute"?



Please pray for our church and its ministry. Please pray for Colin & Nicola, who are completely out of their comfort zone preaching to a camera lens every Sunday and please pray that God will make a way for Staple Hill Salvation Army. We will go forward, but somehow we also need to incorporate this new medium for spreading His word. "I'll not turn back, whatever it may cost....."

Staple Hill SA has changed, we won't turn back, and going forward we can expect to touch, and maybe meet, many people we've not seen for a long time, or never seen inside our hall before. Just this week we've had 5 more emails from people we do not know asking if they can come when we all get back together.

We're all looking forward to the time when we can meet up again, but I wonder what the future will be for our corporate worship together? Maybe we'll need a bigger hall - How exciting is that!

I will leave you with these words:

God will make a way
Where there seems to be no way
He works in ways we cannot see
He will make a way for me

He will be my guide
Hold me closely to His side
With love and strength for each new day
He will make a way, He will make a way

PRAYER DIARY:

As a church, we know how important it is to uphold each other in prayer, so we invite you to pray for the following during this coming week.

27 th	Derek & Margaret B; Yolanda, Jeovany & Maria K; Catherine R; Gary, Joanne, Jacob & Emily R; Nneka H
28 th	Jon & Peri H; Joyce L; Doreen R; Sheila F; Paul & Heather C; Paul, Tracey, Victoria & Olivia H
29 th	Staple Hill Corps
30 th	Staple Hill Community
31 st	National & International Issues
1 st	Paul & Roz C; Peter H; Bill & Freda M; Elaine & Peter R; Margaret S
2 nd	Hilton & Lilian B; Alison & Steve C; Colin & Nicola H-J; Carys & Senan H; Alan T

IN MEMORY OF RUBY JAMES:

Thanks to everyone for your thoughts, cards, prayers and messages of support for me and the family following Mum's Promotion to Glory. We have felt so loved, blessed and uplifted by all of your kindness to us at this difficult time.

At the present time we are unable to hold a Celebration and Thanksgiving Service for Ruby, but thought it would be appropriate to collate a memory book for her. If any of you have a particular memory or story of Mum, please could you write it on an A6 piece of paper (1/4 of A4) and we will put them into the book.

Please could you send them to me [Kelvin] at 15 Salisbury Gardens, Downend, Bristol. BS16 5RF or email to kelvin.james@sky.com.

PRAYER NETWORK:

This week we have been praying for Andy Elliott whose Grandad was Promoted to Glory 18th July. Also praying for rest of the family.



The Severn & Somerset Division in Celebration

**Divisional Officers' Welcome
and
Divisional Candidates' Farewell**

SUNDAY 26 JULY, 4.00PM

SUBSCRIBE TO OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL:
'THE SALVATION ARMY S&S DIVISION'

(LINK TO BE CONFIRMED)

THE WEEK AHEAD:

All activities within our buildings continue to be suspended until it is deemed safe, but the following activities continue:

TODAY Sunday 26th July

- from 10am Lighthouse Club Session available online (ages 7-11)
- 10am Youth Group meets online (ages 11+)
- from 11am Sunday Worship available online
'Eye of a needle' [Matthew 19:16-26](#)

Monday 27th July

- 11am - 12pm Food Parcels available at Hall
- 8pm Mission Council Meeting on-line

Tuesday 28th July

- 11am - 12pm Food Parcels available at Hall

Wednesday 29th July

- 2pm Extra Slice Group online
- 3.30pm Extra Slice Group online
- 7pm Extra Slice Group online
- 8.15pm Extra Slice Group online

Thursday 30th July

- 11am - 12pm Food Parcels available at Hall
- 8.15pm Extra Slice Group online

Saturday 1st August

- 11am - 12pm Food Parcels available at Hall

Sunday 2nd August

- from 10am Lighthouse Club Session available online (ages 7-11)
- 10am Youth Group meets online (ages 11+)
- from 11am Sunday Worship available online
'Parable of the talents' [Matthew 25:14-27](#)