



Staple Diet March 2014



Staple Hill Corps

– A Good NEWSS Corps for all people

(Nurture, Evangelism, Worship, Service to Corps, Service to Community)

Our Purpose is:

- To be a vibrant, worshipping Christian community actively introducing Jesus to the people of our area.
- To be a place where all can belong and grow in their relationship with Jesus.
- To serve the local community.

Major's Musings

Dear friends,

During the divisional officer's retreat in February we were asked to lead prayers on one of the mornings. In my research for this I came across the following story:

I Had a Dream. I dreamed I had an interview with God... "Come in," God said. "So, you would like to interview Me?" "If you have the time," I said. God smiled and said: "My time is eternity and is enough to do everything; what questions do you have in mind to ask me?"

"What surprises you most about mankind?"

God answered: "That they get bored of being children, are in a rush to grow up, and then long to be children again. That they lose their health to make money and then lose their money to restore their health. That by thinking anxiously about the future, they forget the present, such that they live neither for the present nor the future. That they live as if they will never die, and they die as if they had never lived..."

God took my hands and we were silent for while and then I asked... "As a parent, what are some of life's lessons you want your children to learn?"

God replied with a smile: "To learn that they cannot make anyone love them. What they can do is to let themselves be loved. To learn that what is most valuable is not what they have in their lives, but who they have in their lives. To learn that it is not good to compare themselves to others. All will be judged individually on their own merits, not as a group on a comparison basis! To learn that a rich person is not the one who has the most, but is one who needs the least. To learn that it only takes a few seconds to open profound wounds in persons we love, and that it takes many years to heal them. To learn to forgive by practicing forgiveness. To learn that there are persons that love them dearly, but simply do not know how to express or show their feelings. To learn that money can buy everything but happiness. To learn that two people can look at the same thing and see it very differently. To learn that a true friend is someone who knows everything about them ...and likes them anyway. To learn that it is

not always enough that they be forgiven by others, but that they have to forgive themselves."

I sat there for a while enjoying the moment. I thanked Him for his time and for all that He has done for me and my family, and He replied, "Anytime. I'm here 24 hours a day. All you have to do is ask for me, and I will answer." With that, He looked into my eyes and whispered these words: "My dear child, please remember that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

With this story in mind I have put together some thoughts on forgiveness in relationship to the cross that is printed later in this edition of Staple Diet.

Major Ian.

Corps Family

Mark & Kirsty Fielding welcomed 'Oliver Mark' into their family on February 3rd. He is the first grandchild for Linda & Robert Hall and the first great grandchild for Morag Fletcher, not forgetting Aunty Emily and Uncle Jonathan.

Malcolm and Gerry Wiltshire have also welcomed a new grandchild into their family as their daughter Ruth gave birth to 'Amara Louise'. We congratulate the parents Matt and Ruth Alway and big sister Isabella.

Former Corps Officers, Majors Lawrie and Angie Brown have also welcomed their first grandchild into the world. 'Sophie Rose' is the daughter of Rachel & Martyn Read and was born on February 18th.

We were recently able to wish Barbara peacock a happy birthday as she celebrated her 90th year with family and friends.

Words of appreciation were expressed to Linda James during YP Anniversary meetings, thanking her for service she has given as assistant

Young People's Sergeant Major since 1994. The words spoken of Linda are printed in this edition.

Bibles were presented to Emily Dickens, Victoria Hitchcock and Jeovany Thomas as they leave the Primary and join Lighthouse Club. Charlotte Nee received her Youth Bible as she now joins the Youth group.

There are to be a number of new leaders commissioned in the coming weeks, keep looking out for these as they are announced.

Those currently on the 'Wish you were here' prayer list are:

Madge Rickards; Edie Phillips; Margaret Bessex; Marion Davis; Irene Ackerman; Francis & Ruth Shepherd; Gladys Shellard; Frank Snell; Edna Heath; Pam Henderson; Gordon Stone; Valerie Scott, Tom and Ruth Cable Joyce Lear, Gwen Lear; June Wallington;

THOSE AT COLLEGE / UNIVERSITY

Natasha Bennett (Bristol Uni); Esther Kasumba (U.W.E. Bristol); Esther Dickens (U.W.E. Hartpury, Glos); Andrew Campbell (Plymouth); Paige Hassard (U.W.E.).

Viv Wallington

Thank you very much to everyone who contributed to the Christmas shoeboxes. I have had an e-mail to say our shoeboxes went to Kyrgystan. Many children would have had a special Christmas.

Margaret Belcher

Well what can we say about Linda James?

She was appointed to the position of Assistant Young Peoples Sergeant Major on the 3rd February 1994. According to DHQ records, that means she has served 19 years 364 days. For approximately 13 years she has been the 'acting' Young People's Sergeant Major after Marc relinquished the position when the RAF posted him to Lincolnshire. Linda said she would do the job until they found somebody else. Well I think you will agree she has waited long enough!!!!

During this time she has either attended planned or led: 1040 Lighthouse Club sessions, 19 YP Carol Services, 8 Retreats, 5 Junior Soldier Camps, Prayer and Share evenings, Holiday Fun Clubs, Messy Church, and I could go on.

SO WHAT DOES LINDA STAND FOR?

L - STANDS FOR LOYALTY

She has loyally done all the things we have mentioned despite running a home, having a husband and 3 growing boys and a full time job not to mention a huge ironing pile!! Her Saturday nights out have often been spent in the Bradbury hall setting up and preparing for Sunday Morning – a cheap night out for Kelvin!

I - STANDS FOR INNIVOTIVE

Linda has been an unending source of ideas. To motivate and interest the young people and their workers always coming up with something suitable for the theme.

N - STANDS FOR NURTURING

Linda started a monthly Prayer and Share where all those working with young people in this Corps could come together to pray for them and share news and any concerns. She wanted our young people to experience the Love of God in their lives as she has for herself.

D - STANDS FOR DEFINITELY DO NOT DESTROY

Linda will never throw anything away! This is clearly evidenced by the cluttered state of the YP cupboard and her garage - always planning how her junk pile could be transformed into the next craft project.

A - STANDS FOR APPRECIATIVE

Linda has always taken time to thank those working around her for their help and support. The Young People's Corps is not a one man band and she will be the first to stress that she has needed to rely on other members of the YP Team especially at times like YP Carol Services when she would have sleepless nights. But Linda has always been heard to say '*It'll be alright on the night*' and of course it always was.

Linda. This morning we just simply need to say ***Thank You***, a small word with a huge meaning, on behalf of all the children who have passed through your care over the past 20 years and their workers and the Corps.

The Singing Company sing these words

Who will be my hand?

Who will feed my lambs?

Who my seeds will grow?

Tend and watch them grow?

Linda we feel you have put those words into action.

We leave a bible verse with you from Isaiah 43 v19 – we believe Gods message to you:

"For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun - do you not see it?"

A Tribute & Thanks to Linda James at the Young people's Annual Celebrations on Sunday morning 2nd February 2014.

Prepared & presented by Kay Willetts & Michelle Dickens

Easter Reflections 2014

Last year in the week before Easter, we declared that it was **"The End of the Beginning"**. And so it was. Since then, we have been on a journey. We have been reminded that the cross should be at the centre of our theology. As a result, we feel we have been led to the following words you the Corps have identified: **WELCOME, WHOSOEVER, BELONGING, RELATIONSHIP, COMMUNITY, INCLUSION & FELLOWSHIP**. Along with the Leadership Team, I am sure you are praying & reflecting on these words and what they mean to you and the Corps and what God is saying to us through them. And it is that approach we want to take this year in our reflections leading up to Easter.

From Monday 14th April though to Easter Saturday 19th April, we want the Hall open for discussion, reflection and prayer from 10am to 10pm culminating in Easter Sunday morning Worship at 11am followed by a Corps Easter Dinner together. The Hall will be prepared with the right furniture, atmosphere, music, words & a range of resources. We will also provide refreshments. The Hall can be used by many, some or few. Some sections of the Corps will be responsible for preparing some of the sessions. We would like you all to sign up to be responsible for an hours session – you may use it for yourself or you may be joined by others. The spirit will lead & God will speak – we need to be there to listen.

A spreadsheet will go up on the noticeboard over the next few weeks. Please sign your name, or a group of you, or your section to be responsible for a session either

in the Prayer Hall or for the refreshments – would be great if we could all make cakes to share with each other.

Jesus spent time before Easter with His disciples. As His disciples in Staple Hill, let us use our time this Easter to come close to Him and hear His voice which will lead us forward.

Marc Willetts. Corps Sergeant Major



Forgiveness

The spiritual life is about quality not quantity, sadly we are in a movement that has been good at counting numbers but not so good at measuring quality outcomes. I pray that our focussing in on the cross and what it is saying to us will give us a way forward to measuring quality not just quantity. During the exercise that we carried out recently one of the words that appeared on almost everyone's list was 'forgiveness' but what does it mean to forgive?

How do we respond when somebody fails or falters in their walk with the Lord? In the past the history of The Salvation Army and the church in general has been a very legalistic and sanction led approach. Looking at Jesus' response on the cross to the penitent criminal would suggest that this approach is possibly not always the way that we should respond to each other. Neither should it be that we ignore the fact that there are consequences to our actions and sometimes we have to live with the consequences even though we have been forgiven. Any parent will, probably, be able to recount stories of where forgiveness and consequential outcomes have been held in tension and the chord holding them was love.

We must constantly remind ourselves that it whilst we were still sinners that Christ died for us. His love was so great that he not only forgave but he took the consequences for our disobedience upon himself. It may not be possible for us to always follow this example to the point that Christ did but there could be times when forgiveness will lead to a costly outcome for the aggrieved person on behalf of the aggressor. If Christ forgave me and went to the cross for me just what does forgiveness of others demand of me? This is a personal question for each and every one of us but one that must be addressed if we are to have a quality marker for us a corporate body of the church.

There are a number of helpful passages of Scripture that might help us in this quest for truth.

Matthew 6:12-15

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For if you forgive

other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. (NIV)

Matthew 26:28

This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. (NIV)

Luke 6:37

Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. (NIV)

Luke 17:3

So watch yourselves. "If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them." (NIV)

Luke 23:34

Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. (NIV)

1 John 2:12

I am writing to you, dear children, because your sins have been forgiven on account of his name. (NIV)

Acts 2:38

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (NIV)

Acts 10:43

All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name. (NIV)

Ephesians 1:7

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace. (NIV)

Colossians 2:13

When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins... (NIV)

Colossians 3:13

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. (NIV)

Hebrews 8:12

For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more. (NIV)

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (NIV)

Lewis B. Smedes wrote in his book, *Forgive and Forget*, "When you release the wrongdoer from the wrong, you cut a malignant tumor out of your inner life. You set a prisoner free, but you discover that the real prisoner was yourself."

The big question for us is 'How do we show forgiveness in all aspects of our being?' Putting it another way, How do we, 'Sinners saved by Grace' respond to others for whom Christ equally died but as yet have not accepted his love and forgiveness? John 11:35 recounts a response from Jesus as it reveals that on seeing Jerusalem he wept. He was then to go into the city to pay the price that forgiveness demanded of him. What is forgiveness demanding of you, this corps, each section individually?

BUILDING FUND

Almost 6 years ago now, we moved back into our suite of buildings at Staple Hill following a major refurbishment that cost just short of one million pounds - made possible, in part, through a £200,000 loan from our Divisional Headquarters. At the end of January of this year, we were able to repay another £15,000 to DHQ which now brings the outstanding balance of the loan to a mere £40,000 – and I am starting to feel that the end is in sight. Hopefully, another 3 years and the loan will have been fully repaid! Much of this has been made possible through the Gift-Aid scheme. To put this into perspective, we received approximately £11,500 in Gift-Aid at the end of last year relating to our claim for the 2011/12 tax year, and there is a similar amount expected from the 2012/13 tax year. Most of this money is put towards repaying the building loan. Basically, the scheme enables us to claim from the government an extra 25p for every £1 donated, providing the donor has an income to pay an equivalent amount of income tax and he/she has signed a simple declaration to enable us to make the claim. If you would like further information, or your circumstances have changed since you signed the declaration (e.g. you no longer pay income tax), then please let me know.

OTHER DONATIONS

Following the spectacular giving seen over the Christmas period during our carol playing, we have been able to forward £3,454.53 to the Salvation Army's work at LOGOS house in the centre of Bristol – now known as a *Lifehouse*. This is the Salvation Army run centre for homelessness in Bristol that gives short-term housing for up to 93 homeless people every night with follow-on support to find a more permanent housing solution. It also provides detox

services to help men and women break free from alcohol and drug addictions, together with all-important counselling services.

FAST BANKING

The corps is now set up with a fast banking facility. This means that we can now arrange the payment of bills and expenses direct into the recipient's bank account rather than via cheques – saving both time and the cost associated with processing cheques. If you regularly require cheques to reimburse expenses, then we would be happy to set-up a template for you to allow 'fast banking' of any future payments.

GIVING ENVELOPES

Over the coming few weeks I shall be preparing and distributing the new sets of giving envelopes. When you receive these, you may notice that the number printed on the envelope will have changed. This is intentional as I am taking the opportunity this year to reallocate all the numbers in order to eliminate gaps in the numbering system that slowly accumulate over time as people change their method of giving or move away from the corps. The numbering will be in alphabetical order of surname based on the method of giving: weekly envelope, monthly envelope or monthly standing order. If you ever want to change the way you give your regular tithes and offerings then again, just have a chat to me.

Corps Treasurer, Paul Heath

Corps Diary

March 1st & 2nd Corps Youth Retreat Weekend
Friday 7th March 7.30pm Women's World Day of Prayer Service
Sunday 9th March – Self Denial Missionary Appeal Sunday
Saturday 22nd March – Band visit to Reading Central Corps
Sunday 23rd March – Divisional Youth Councils

Sunday 13th April – Divisional Celebration at Staple Hill 4pm
Sunday 20th April – Easter Sunday 11am Meeting followed by corps lunch

Saturday 10th May – Band Concert
Sunday 11th May – Candidate Sunday

Saturday 28th June – Armed Forces Day (Band leading procession)
Sunday 29th June – YP Anniversary

Sunday 6th July – Farewell Meeting Majors Ian & Helen + Abi
Saturday 19th July – Proms Evening
Saturday 26th July – Sam & Emma's wedding
Sunday 27th July – Welcome meeting Majors Colin & Nicola Hylton-Jones
+ Carys and Senan

Sunday 28th September – Back to Church Sunday

Saturday 4th October – Visit of Portsmouth Citadel Band
Sunday 5th October – Harvest
Sunday 12th October – Corps Anniversary
Sunday 19th October – Songsters @ Reading Central

Sunday 9th November – Remembrance Sunday

Sunday 28th December – morning meeting only

The Salvation Army is a Christian Church and a registered charity, No 214779