SALT
Salvation Army Life and Times

Homelessness doesn't move on
Parables on politics
A practical act of faith
Harold Hill's last book

October 2026 | saltmagazine.org.nz



Casting Your Vote

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SALT Magazine

The Salvation Army New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa Territory

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A Powerful Tool

Kia ora e te whānau,

It feels like it's impossible to ignore the upcoming election, the news is full of election stories and it's all over social media too. The avalanche of content can make it hard to get to the nub of the issues but don't worry—we can help!

This issue of *SALT* is themed on the election, but instead of promoting any party or candidate, we remain proudly nonpartisan and have extracted key issues impacting the people we serve. On page 10, you can read about the Army's position on the Move-on Orders Bill, and on page 28 you can read about the valuable work done by our Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit to identify the seven most pressing issues impacting those we work with. As depicted on our cover they are: housing, living costs, food security, Māori wellbeing, reintegration, addiction, and poverty, tax and welfare.

It's easy to get downcast when you think of the challenges that so many are facing, with one in five households with children regularly going without food. This is not the Aotearoa New Zealand any of us want. How we grapple with this as Christians is explored in different ways. On page 26, Captain Andrew Wilson takes a theological perspective on how we can approach voting. On page 12, Teisa Unga writes about moving from frustration to faith into action, and on page 24, Major Nicki Dutton shares a striking prayer for the election.

If that doesn't reassure you, you will certainly be inspired reading about Captain Ian Wells' Auckland CBD Metro Project to reach the vulnerable in our biggest city (page 8), the extraordinary testimony of faith from Julie at Hibiscus Coast Corps (page 18) or our in-depth piece about Major Gavin Baxter's 3000km hike along Te Araroa Trail (page 20).

The opportunity to have a say about our next Government is a powerful tool. My youngest brother Rico has an intellectual disability, and people might assume he's not interested in voting, but he takes it very seriously, watching the news and asking lots of questions about politicians. I've gone with him to vote, and seeing the reverence that he approaches the voting process reminds me of how important it is.

May God continue to bless Aotearoa New Zealand through this election.

Trina

Trina Saffioti
Editor



Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you. **DEUTERONOMY 31:6**

What's On?

Kingdom Conference UNSTOPPABLE 2026 Auckland City Corps

2–4 October

Fijian Language Week Aotearoa

4–10 October

Thought Matters Conference | Albany Bays Corps, Auckland

9–11 October

Conference theme: 'Do not be anxious about anything'



Tino Taonga Month

October

Save the date

Father and Kids Weekend | BMAC, Raurimu

6–8 November

bluemountainadventure.org.nz

Aranui Corps 50th Anniversary

23–24 January 2027

For more information, contact

helen.knowles@salvationarmy.org.nz





Tino Taonga Month

This October, Tino Taonga Month invites Salvationists across Aotearoa New Zealand to discover what it means to recognise children and young people as tino taonga—precious treasures whose voices, perspectives and participation matter.

The Next Gen team has created resources to help your church community explore the biblical foundations of this vision and discover how we can live it out together.

Want to join in? Take part in weekly online devotions, gather your community for a four-week Bible study exploring stories from our past and present, and celebrate children and young people through an all-age service.

This October, let's make space to see the next generation differently.

Prayers for Tino Taonga Month

- Pray that children and young people across Aotearoa would come to know Jesus and experience His presence in their lives.
- Pray that our children and young people be seen, heard, valued and encouraged in our corps and communities.
- Pray that Tino Taonga Month would inspire deeper relationships and greater understanding, so that every young person knows they are valued and loved as precious treasures.

Find the resources and join the movement: Tino Taonga Month, October 2026. Visit **nextgen.salvationarmy.org.nz** or our **Facebook/Instagram: nextgensalvationarmy**

“Do not think your single vote does not matter much. The rain that refreshes the parched ground is made up of single drops.”

KATE SHEPPARD

Do You Know These People?

If you recognise anyone and the occasion in this photo, we’d love to hear from you. Email: **archives@salvationarmy.org.nz**



SALVATION ARMY PRAYER

Whangārei Corps; Winton Corps; Woodville Corps; Youth Mission Department; Addictions and Health Services; Albany Bays Corps; Alexandra Corps; Aranui Corps; The Salvation Army in USA Central; The Salvation Army in USA Eastern; and The Salvation Army in USA Southern.



INTRIGUING INDEX

Inside Elections

On Saturday 7 November, voters across Aotearoa New Zealand will head to voting centres to have their say. At the last General Election, almost 2.9 million New Zealanders voted. Around the world, voting can look quite different.

1 High Turnout

Australia and Belgium consistently record some of the highest voter turnouts in the world, often exceeding 90 percent. This is partly due to compulsory voting laws. In contrast, 78.2 percent of enrolled New Zealanders voted in the 2023 General Election. This is considered a high turnout rate for established democracies.

2 Digital Decisions

Estonia was the first country in the world to hold their legally binding elections using the internet. ‘I-voting’ was introduced during 2005 local elections and has been used as a voting option in general elections since 2007. In the 2023 elections, 51 percent of all votes in Estonia were cast online, setting a world record for internet voting.

3 Save the Date

Sunday is the most common election day internationally, allowing people a better opportunity to vote. Canada typically votes on Mondays, the United States on Tuesdays and South Africa on Wednesdays. India has multi-day voting. Some countries that hold weekday elections declare election day a public holiday.

4 Social Politics

Social media has transformed the way political campaigns connect with voters. While digital platforms can help people stay informed and engaged, they can also amplify misinformation, bias and content shaped by algorithms. In the 2024 US election, political advertisers spent more than US$1.9 billion on social media advertising.

5 Unlikely Officials

Most election candidates are people, but a few unexpected contenders have appeared on ballots around the world. These include Stubbs the cat, who served as honorary mayor of Talkeetna, Alaska for 20 years; and Saucisse the dachshund, who won 4 percent of the vote in a French municipal election in 2001.



Chicken and Chickpea Curry

This is a family recipe that is great for anyone short on time.

20 mins | **Serves 4**

Ingredients

- 1 brown onion, finely chopped
- 1 tsp crushed ginger (roughly)
- 1 tsp crushed garlic (roughly)
- 2 Tbsp curry powder
- 2 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 400g tin chickpeas
- 1 400g tin tomatoes (I prefer crushed)
- Whatever chicken you have on hand, drumsticks/tenders, etc
- 2–3 lemons

Method

Heat oil in a large pot.

Throw in finely chopped onion and stir, when it's a bit softer add the crushed garlic and crushed ginger. Stir for a minute or so.

Add the curry power (this adds enough flavour, but it's not too hot for my ten-year-old, so start here and you can add some more later).

Stir it fast and add a little water if it starts to dry out.

Add chicken and stir. Add some water and let simmer for a few minutes until the chicken is partially cooked.

Rinse chickpeas in cold water, drain and add to the pot. Stir and then leave for a minute.

Add tinned tomatoes, the juice of the lemons and a third of a tin of water. You can lessen the amount of lemon juice if you prefer a milder flavour.

Cook until the chicken is cooked through and the curry has thickened slightly. Add salt if needed.

Serve with rice and vegetables of your choice.

Note: You can replace the chicken with potato or leave it out entirely.

Source: Trina Saffioti



QUICK QUIZ

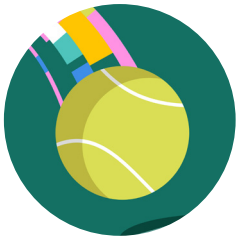
1 Who watched Moses float down the Nile in a basket?

2 What colour is a polar bear's skin beneath its fur?



3 Which New Zealand tennis player became the first Kiwi woman to reach a Wimbledon singles quarter-final?

4 Which 1975 movie is this line from: 'You're gonna need a bigger boat'?



5 What is the most consumed manufactured drink in the world?

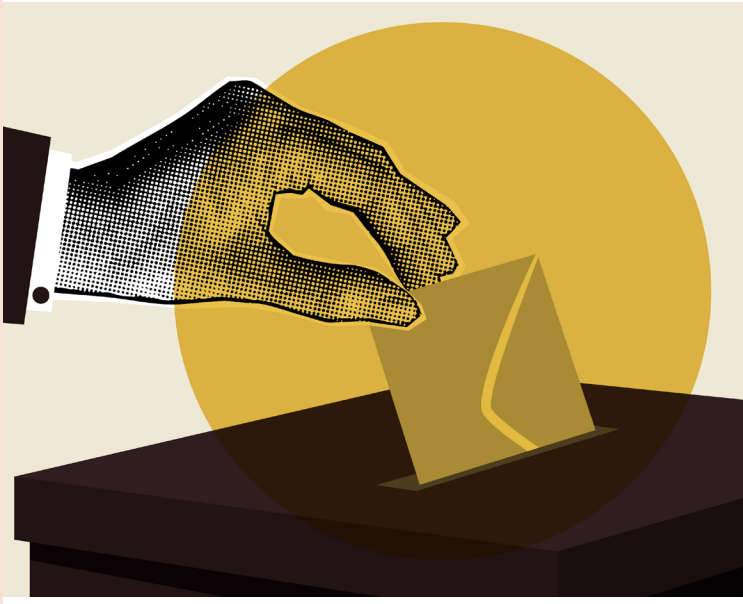
Answers page 32

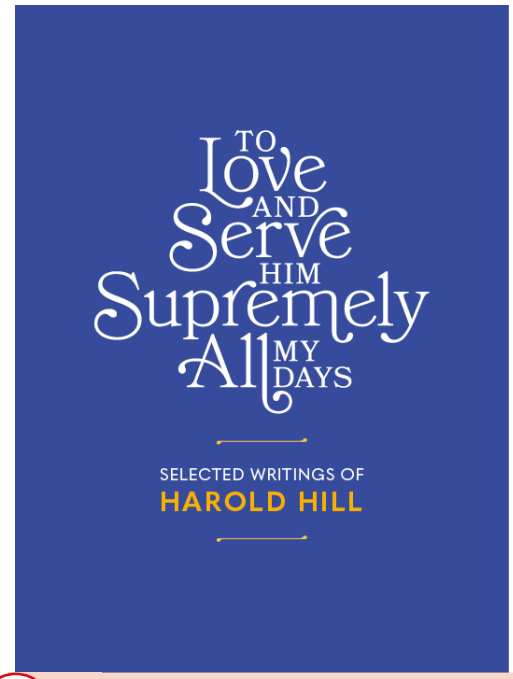
WORD OF THE MONTH

Psephology

(Noun) The scientific study of elections

Source: merriam-webster.com





Available now!

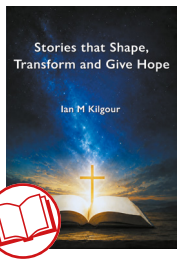
To Love and Serve Him Supremely All My Days

Salvation Army theology | Written by Harold Hill | Flag Publications

This book is a collection of previously published articles, essays and talks from the late Harold Hill, dreamt up by Harold before his passing. I had the privilege of helping publish this book, and each time I read it I gained new insights and a new appreciation for Harold's significant contribution to The Salvation Army through his writings.

The book covers a range of topics related to the Army and its history: advice around leadership and pastoring; the charismatic movement's influence on The Salvation Army; balancing social action with spirituality; and the age-old question, 'is The Salvation Army a church?' Each chapter is considered, well researched, and opens timely questions of faith and leadership for those both inside and outside The Salvation Army.

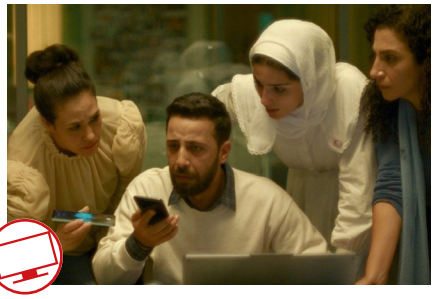
Harold offers wit and wisdom to his observations of the Army, often paired with a sharp remark or thoughtful challenge to the status quo, but always guided by a clear love for the movement he served in. If you read this collection, you are sure to learn something (including, perhaps, some new words), and you will get to know the mind of a very clever and faithful man of God. (Reviewed by Holly Morton-Chong)



Stories that Shape, Transform and Give Hope

Faith | Written by Major Ian Kilgour | Philip Garside Books

Stories that Shape, Transform and Give Hope is a thoughtful exploration of the stories that shape our lives, deepen faith, challenge narrow certainties and open a path towards hope. Major Ian Kilgour draws from decades of preaching, teaching, listening, counselling and reflecting on the stories that shape lives. The book combines personal experience and reflections with theology, science, and history of religion. It is a book for anyone who wants to engage more deeply with the stories that have shaped them, and readers will find Ian's frankness and honesty refreshing. The result is an engaging exploration of how stories shape our lives in profound ways. For enquiries or to order the book, email Ian at **kilgours@xtra.co.nz**. (Reviewed by Craig Stephen)



The Voice of Hind Rahab

Docudrama | Directed by Kaouther Ben Hania | Prime Video, Neon Rentals, AroVision

In January 2024, Red Crescent volunteers received an emergency call from five-year-old Hind Rajab pleading for rescue while trapped in a car with her deceased family under fire from the Israel Defence Forces in Gaza. This film recreates what took place in the call centre as they tried to save Hind and as their efforts to broker a safe path and rescue proved futile. As fine a job as the actors do, the most compelling part is the actual audio of Hind, unbelievably brave and composed, begging for her life while injured and alone in the dark, with the sound of gunshots in the background. Important but painful viewing. (Reviewed by Trina Saffioti)



Coming Home: Auxiliary Captain Ian Wells' Vision For Auckland's CBD

For Auxiliary Captain Ian Wells, the launch of The Salvation Army's Auckland CBD Metro Project is more than a new ministry. It's a homecoming.

WORDS *Doug Golightly*

Standing on the threshold of an ambitious new chapter for The Salvation Army in Auckland's city centre, Auxiliary Captain Ian Wells sees more than busy streets, office towers and urban challenges. He sees opportunity. Opportunity to listen, connect and perhaps most importantly, love.

'There's no way we can go into a community respectfully and successfully with the assumption that we have all the answers. That would just be foolishness.'

It is a refreshingly humble approach from the man tasked with helping re-establish The Salvation Army's visible presence in the heart of New Zealand's largest city.

Returning home

In many ways, Ian's appointment to Auckland's CBD feels like a full-circle moment. His Salvation Army roots stretch deeply into the city through Newton Corps and beyond. He and his wife Janine were married at Newton, and their first child was dedicated there.

'My great-grandfather lived in the area. My family has strong connections to the city,' he says.

That's why Ian speaks about the CBD project in terms of homecoming, and he knows he is not alone in that sentiment.

Across The Salvation Army there, are people whose family stories, faith journeys and memories are intertwined with Auckland's city centre. For generations, Salvationists cared for vulnerable people, worshipped and served in the heart of the city. Now a new chapter is beginning.

A presence in the heart of the city

The Auckland CBD Metro Project is not about creating another programme for its own sake. Instead, Ian sees it as an opportunity to establish a welcoming place where people from all walks of life can find connection, support and belonging.

'We're there for community wellness,' he says. Importantly, the project is not seeking to duplicate work

already being undertaken by other organisations. 'There are already agencies doing great things in the city. Why would we repeat that? Why would we duplicate it?'

Instead, the vision centres on collaboration. The Salvation Army will work alongside existing partners, community organisations and support services already engaging with residents and vulnerable populations across the CBD.

For Ian, success is not measured by how much work The Salvation Army does alone. Success is measured by relationships. 'We'll engage and collaborate with anyone who is bringing inclusion, bringing love and helping create a healthier community.'

One of the reasons Ian feels so strongly about establishing a Salvation Army presence in the CBD is the diversity of vulnerability that exists within the city. When people think about hardship in urban environments, visible homelessness often comes to mind first. But Ian sees a much broader picture.

Vulnerability exists among rough sleepers, certainly. But it also exists among people living in social housing, those in low-cost accommodation, newly arrived migrants, international students separated from family support networks and individuals navigating isolation, mental health challenges or financial hardship.

'The vulnerability in the inner city is large,' he says. Addressing those challenges requires more than services. It requires relationships. And that brings Ian to one of the most debated issues facing cities today.

Beyond Move-on Orders

Like many New Zealanders, Ian has followed public discussions around the recent Move-on Orders Bill and responses to homelessness in urban areas.

His perspective begins not with policy but with people. 'On a human level, how is it going to work?' he asks. 'How is it going to impact vulnerable people?'

Ian recognises the complexity involved. Law enforcement and public safety have important roles to play. Communities need safe public spaces, and behaviour that harms others must be addressed. Yet he worries that legislation alone can only address part of the problem.

'I think the Move-on Orders are trying to manage a symptom of society.' In his view, homelessness, addiction, isolation and poverty are rarely problems that can be solved through enforcement measures alone. History offers plenty of examples of societies attempting to legislate solutions to deep social issues, only to discover that lasting change requires something more. 'You've got to have a community that embraces all people.'

That doesn't mean ignoring harmful behaviour. It means recognising the humanity of the person behind the problem. For The Salvation Army, this has always been part of the mission.

'You've got to have a community that embraces all people.'

Rather than simply managing visible symptoms, Ian wants to help create pathways toward hope, dignity and belonging.

The shield returns

For many Aucklanders, The Salvation Army Red Shield evokes memories stretching back generations. Some remember receiving support through addiction services. Others remember family members helped during difficult times, as well as former city ministries, community meals and moments of kindness that have left a lasting impression.

That is why Ian believes the return of a visible Salvation Army presence carries significance beyond bricks and mortar.

'The shield is coming back,' he says. And with it comes a reminder of who The Salvation Army has always sought to be: A people committed to serving those who are vulnerable, willing to meet people where they are and offer hope.

As The Salvation Army takes this next step into Auckland's CBD, Ian remains clear about the mission.

'We want to demonstrate to people who may feel cast aside that somebody still values them. That somebody loves them enough to be interested in them.'

For Ian, everything else flows from there. And that's why coming home matters. ◆

Homelessness Doesn't Move On

Kai Sanders considers The Salvation Army's observations on the Move-on Orders Bill, with insights from the National Homelessness Data Project.

WORDS *Kai Sanders*

When Parliament debates policies aimed at people sleeping rough, it can be easy to focus on what we see rather than what is causing it. Tents in parks. People sleeping in cars. Someone bedding down in a shop doorway.

But homelessness is not simply about where a person is sleeping. It is the result of deeper issues: a lack of affordable housing, growing financial hardship, mental health challenges, family breakdown, addiction and insufficient support services. Moving people from one place to another does not change any of those realities.

The Summary Offences (Move-on Orders) Amendment Bill which has passed its third reading in Parliament allows police to direct people to leave a public place if they are considered to be causing obstruction, intimidation or public nuisance. This also includes sleeping rough, begging and even those who simply look like they may be setting up to sleep in a public place. While the Bill is intended to address concerns about public safety and amenity, The Salvation Army believes it risks targeting some of the most vulnerable people in our communities without addressing the underlying causes of homelessness. The Bill originally intended that children aged 14–17 years would also be targeted with such orders, but after significant public opposition this was removed.

The Salvation Army's position is simple: homelessness cannot be solved through enforcement. It can only be solved through housing and support.

What the data is telling us

The Salvation Army has been working alongside Community Housing Aotearoa and homelessness organisations around the country through the National Homelessness Data Project (NHDP) to better understand what is happening on the ground. The latest Homelessness Briefing paints a concerning picture.

Eighteen of the 19 organisations surveyed that support people experiencing homelessness surveyed reported an increase in homelessness over the past six months. Frontline services are seeing more people becoming homeless for the first time, while others are remaining homeless for longer periods. The data also found that one in three people seeking help were either sleeping rough or living in vehicles.

The latest Homelessness Briefing paints a concerning picture.

At the same time, service providers reported increasing levels of food insecurity, mental distress and addiction among people seeking assistance. Many described growing pressure on already stretched services and a severe lack of suitable housing options.

Perhaps most concerning is that these trends are occurring as government funding for homelessness responses has fallen by $75 million over the past two years.

The wrong solution to the wrong problem

Move-on Orders are often presented as a practical response to visible homelessness. Yet they do not provide housing, income support, treatment services or emergency accommodation. Instead, they simply require people to relocate.

Paul Barber, principal policy analyst in The Salvation Army's Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit, says this approach misunderstands the nature of homelessness. 'If someone has nowhere to live, moving them from

one place to another doesn't address the problem. When people are constantly being moved on, it can make it more difficult for outreach workers and support services to maintain contact with them. It can also disrupt pathways into housing and other support.

'At the end of the day, you can't move someone out of homelessness by moving them around a city. The solution to homelessness is housing,' says Paul.

Housing works

The Salvation Army's position on Move-on Orders is not simply criticism of a particular Bill. It is an argument for investing in solutions that have already been shown to work. 'We know what works. Housing First works. Transitional housing works. Social housing works.

'The NHDP found significant shortages in housing options for young people, families, pregnant women, women escaping difficult situations and older New Zealanders. These shortages create bottlenecks throughout the system, leaving many people with nowhere suitable to go.'

Paul says issues such as addiction, mental health concerns, unemployment or family challenges are easier to overcome when people have a stable place to live. 'When people have a safe place to live, they're in a far better position to address the problems in their lives.'

Seeing the person behind the statistic

One of the challenges in conversations about homelessness is that public attention often focuses on behaviour or visibility rather than humanity.

'Every number in this report represents a person, family or whānau experiencing an incredibly difficult situation. They may be someone who lost their rental after a relationship breakdown. A family unable to keep up with rising living costs. A young person leaving an unsafe home. An older New Zealander facing housing insecurity for the first time,' says Paul. 'Public policy should be focused on helping people find stability, dignity and housing, not simply moving the problem somewhere else.'

The Salvation Army is urging policymakers to focus on responses that are proven to reduce homelessness and improve outcomes.



No Address? You Can Still Vote

The Electoral Commission says being homeless doesn't stop you voting in this year's General Election.

'If you are in temporary accommodation, or with no fixed address, you can enrol and vote in elections.'

The Commission says you can enrol at the address where you spend most of your time, or at the last residential address where you lived for at least one month, even if that was some time ago.

'When you enrol to vote, you also need to provide a postal address where electoral mail, such as enrolment confirmations or an EasyVote pack, can be sent. The postal address could be a PO Box, or the address of a friend, family member, church or support group, but it needs to be someone who will agree to hold mail for you to collect.'

The Commission has information available on its website about enrolling without a permanent address: **tinyurl.com/VoteEligible**

If Aotearoa New Zealand wants fewer people sleeping rough, fewer people living in cars and fewer people facing housing insecurity, the answer is not to tell them to move on. The answer is to ensure they have somewhere to call home. ◆

A Practical Act of Faith

Teisa Unga is a community organiser from House of Grace Family Church in Auckland, who reflects on faith in action to create positive change in our churches and neighbourhoods.

I often think about Peter stepping out of the boat to walk towards Jesus on the water in Matthew 14. Faith required him to take a step. He could not stay in the boat and expect the miracle to happen around him.

For years, I sat in church listening to sermons about faith, justice and caring for the vulnerable. But I began to ask whether we were meeting Christ halfway, whether we were willing to step out of the boat and take action alongside our prayers.

We prayed for our communities, but were we speaking out about the issues affecting them? We prayed for families struggling with poverty, but were we standing alongside them and working to change the conditions creating it?

For me, voting is one of the clearest ways we can meet that obligation halfway. The policies politicians make can have real consequences for the prayers we pray, for decent wages, secure housing, good education and families living with dignity.

Sometimes the answer to a prayer can also come through a policy decision.

Sometimes the answer to a prayer can also come through a policy decision. Enrolling to vote is therefore more than a civic task. It is a practical act of faith, taking our first step then trusting God to elevate what we do.

Connecting to community

I reflect on my 12 years as a youth leader in my church, from age 18 to 30, with deep gratitude to my pastors for trusting me to take our youth beyond the four walls of the church. Our church has always understood that faith is lived in community. We were not waiting for an election to become active. We volunteered, served families, supported community initiatives and looked for ways our young people could put their faith into practice.

Coming from a small local church, running a youth programme often meant limited resources and even less time. But our conversations quickly went beyond church attendance. They were about how we could support young people to stay strong within their families and communities while navigating poverty and the social issues affecting their homes.

One part of our programme involved packing food parcels for Auckland City Mission. I imagined the people who did not have enough food or basic necessities, but as we kept volunteering, some of our young people were shocked by what was being donated. I realised they were themselves coming from households where people went without. Poverty was not happening somewhere else. It was sitting in the homes and families of people in our own church.



...what does it mean to pray for change if I am not willing to meet God halfway and do something about it?

Anger at injustice

That realisation changed something in me. Sometimes, all I felt I could do was pray. Prayer still matters deeply to me. But I began asking, what does it mean to pray for change if I am not willing to meet God halfway and do something about it?

That question first led me to take my youth door-knocking, not for a political campaign, but simply to check on families in our own community. I watched young people who had never spoken to a neighbour find the courage to knock on a



House of Grace Family Church youth after their performance at the Tongan Assemblies of God (AoG) NZ national youth weekend, 2024.

stranger's door and return changed, having heard stories that echoed their own.

What surprised me most was not their nervousness, but their anger. Many were carrying private pain, parents working multiple jobs, overcrowded homes and food insecurity they had never spoken about. Hearing those experiences reflected back to them gave their pain a shape. It stopped being something to hide and became something they could act on.

That is when I understood that righteous anger is not a contradiction of faith. It can be a response to injustice that moves us towards action. Our youth began to see that their circumstances were not simply individual struggles. They were connected to wider issues affecting families across our communities.

Your voice counts

During elections, that community work took another step. We moved from door-knocking to check on families, to helping people enrol to vote. The conversation changed from, 'How are you doing?' to, 'Your voice counts, and here is how you can use it.' Young people helped neighbours understand that decisions about housing, wages and education are not abstract. They affect real households, including our own.

My journey into politics and community organising grew from these experiences. Working as a field organiser for a political party gave me a closer understanding of how campaigns operate, while community organising deepened my understanding of collective power. I have worked alongside workers, communities, young people and faith groups and seen what happens when private pain becomes a shared purpose.

For young people especially, this matters. The decisions made today will shape the world they inherit. Our role as a church is not only to pray for that future but to help build it.

Sometimes faith looks like prayer. Sometimes it looks like packing a food parcel, knocking on a neighbour's door, helping someone enrol to vote, or teaching a young person that their anger at injustice can become action.

For me, faith outside our church walls means meeting Christ halfway. We take the step we can take, we serve, organise, speak, enrol and vote. Then we pray not as a substitute for action, but asking God to elevate what we are willing to work for together.

Leadership Matters

As our Aotearoa New Zealand moves towards another election season, many conversations will naturally focus on the future and the kind of society we hope to build together. As followers of Jesus, these moments invite us to pause, pray and reflect on the values that shape our lives and our choices.

Throughout the Bible, God calls and appoints leaders who are marked not simply by ability or influence, but by character. Integrity, wisdom, humility, compassion, courage and a heart for serving others are qualities that honour God and bless those entrusted to their care.

Micah 6:8 offers a helpful guide as we reflect on leadership and our responsibilities as followers of God. God calls His people to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with Him. These values are not only for our personal discipleship; they also help shape how we engage with the world around us and how we pray for those entrusted with leadership.

We may hold different views on issues and policies, but we can all appreciate the importance of leaders who act with honesty, seek the wellbeing of others, listen carefully and serve with a genuine desire to make a positive difference.

As The Salvation Army, we have the privilege of walking alongside people from all walks of life. Every day we encounter individuals and families facing challenges, hardship and uncertainty. These experiences remind us of the importance of promoting dignity, justice, compassion and hope for all people, especially those who are most vulnerable.

At the same time, election season can sometimes create division and strain relationships. As Christians, we are called to a different way. Whatever our views may be, we are called to treat one another with grace, respect and kindness.

Most importantly, our confidence does not rest in any political party, candidate or election result. Our hope is found in Jesus Christ. He remains faithful, sovereign and unchanging, and His kingdom endures beyond every human institution and circumstance.

As election day approaches, let us continue to pray for our nation, for those who lead and for those who seek leadership. May we approach this season with wisdom, compassion and discernment, always remembering that our highest calling is to love God and love our neighbour.



Commissioner Janine Donaldson
Territorial Commander

Micah 6:8

'He has shown you, O mortal what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.' (NIV)

Kua whakaaturia e ia ki a koe, e te tangata, te mea pai; ā he aha tā Ihowā e rapu nei ki a koe, heoi anō ko te whakawā tika, ko te pai ki te tohu tangata, ko te whakaiti me te haere tahi i tōu Atua? (PT)

E sega, sa tukuna oti ga vei keda ko Jiova na ka e vinaka. Na ka e vinakata o koya vei keda sai koya oqo: me vakayacori ga na ka dodonu, me vakatakilai ga na yalololoma sa sega ni yalani, ka me ia ga na talairawarawa kei na veitokani veivolekati kei na noda Kalou ena yalomalumalumu. (FNV)

Kuo ne fakahā kiate koe, tangata, 'A e me'a 'oku lelei; 'Io, ko e hā 'a e me'a 'oku 'eke 'e Sihova kiate koe? Ka ko e fai fakalao, Mo e manako ki he meesi, Pea ke taka angavaivai 'I ho'o feangai mo ho 'Otua. (TMB)

Sole, ua faaali atu e ia ia te oe le mea lelei; se a foi se mea e finagalo ai Ieova ia te oe, pe a le o ia mea, ia fai le amiotonu, ia naunau i le alofa, ma ia feooai ma lou Atua ma le loto faamaulalo? (SOV)



New Partnership Gives Charitable Reuse Sector a Stronger Voice

A significant new chapter for Aotearoa New Zealand's charitable reuse sector began at Parliament in July with the official launch of Charitable Reuse Aotearoa (CRA), a national body established to strengthen collaboration, advocacy and impact across the sector. **Kai Sanders** reports.

Hosted by Hon Nicola Grigg, Minister for the Environment, in Parliament's legislative chamber, the launch brought together representatives from charitable organisations, government, local authorities and industry partners to celebrate a long-awaited milestone for a sector that has quietly delivered environmental, social and economic benefits to communities for decades.

Teaming up

Charitable Reuse Aotearoa (CRA) was founded by four organisations with a shared commitment to reuse and community wellbeing: Hospice New Zealand, The Salvation Army, Habitat for Humanity and SPCA New Zealand.

Speaking at the launch, CRA Chair and Salvation Army Territorial Director of Family Stores Gareth Marshall said the new organisation represents an important opportunity for the sector to work together more effectively and tell a stronger collective story about its contribution to Aotearoa New Zealand.

'For years, charitable reuse organisations have been delivering significant environmental, social and economic benefits to communities across Aotearoa, but we've largely been telling those stories as individual organisations,' Gareth said. 'Charitable Reuse Aotearoa gives us a collective voice and the ability to demonstrate the full scale of our impact.'

Counting the contribution

The launch was more than the introduction of a new organisation. It also marked the release of the first high-level data examining the collective impact of charitable reuse in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The most important outcome of the partnership, for sector leaders, is the new data.

Until now, much of the work carried out by charitable reuse organisations has been understood through individual organisational reports and local success stories. While those stories remain important, there has been limited nationwide information showing the full scale of the sector's contribution.

The new data begins to address that gap. By capturing information about waste diversion, environmental outcomes, economic activity and community benefit, Charitable Reuse Aotearoa is building a clearer picture of the value created through charitable reuse across the country.

A good work

That evidence will become increasingly important as Aotearoa New Zealand faces growing environmental and economic pressures.

Charitable reuse sits at the heart of the circular economy, extending the life of goods that might otherwise end up in landfill. Every item donated, repaired, recycled or sold through an op shop represents resources being kept in use for longer, reducing waste and lowering demand for new production.

At the same time, charitable reuse contributes to local economies through employment, volunteering opportunities and affordable access to goods for thousands of Aotearoa New Zealand families. The funds generated through many op shops also support a wide range of community services, including food security initiatives, housing support, addiction services, hospice care, animal welfare programmes and emergency assistance.

For The Salvation Army, which operates Family Stores across the

'Charitable reuse is about much more than second-hand goods. It is about caring for creation, reducing waste, supporting local communities and generating funds that help transform lives.'

country, the launch reinforces the importance of collaboration in achieving greater impact.

'Charitable reuse is about much more than second-hand goods. It is about caring for creation, reducing waste, supporting local communities and generating funds that help transform lives,' Gareth explained.

Impacting our future

The partnership is also expected to strengthen engagement with government and policymakers. Reliable data gives the sector a stronger foundation for future discussions around waste reduction, sustainability, resource recovery and community development. It enables organisations to move beyond anecdotal evidence and demonstrate measurable outcomes that can inform decision-making and investment.

Gareth said the ability to gather and analyse sector-wide data would be critical to the organisation's long-term success.

The partnership recognises that the challenges facing New Zealand, from waste management and climate pressures to the rising cost of living, are too large for individual organisations to tackle alone.

'One of the most exciting aspects of Charitable Reuse Aotearoa is the ability to collect and analyse sector-wide data,' he said. 'Good data gives us credibility. It helps us better understand our impact, identify opportunities and demonstrate to government, local authorities and the wider public just how important charitable reuse is to New Zealand.'

As Charitable Reuse Aotearoa begins its work, leaders across the sector are optimistic about what can be achieved together.

The partnership recognises that the challenges facing New Zealand, from waste management and climate pressures to the rising cost of living, are too large for individual organisations to tackle alone.

By combining expertise, sharing data and speaking with one voice, Charitable Reuse Aotearoa is positioning the sector to play an even greater role in New Zealand's future.

The launch at Parliament celebrated what has already been achieved, but it also pointed towards what comes next: a stronger, more connected charitable reuse sector, backed by credible evidence and united by a shared vision of creating environmental, social and economic value for Aotearoa New Zealand.



Above, from left: Mark Cassidy (Society of St Vincent de Paul), Gareth Marshall (The Salvation Army), Cathy Crichton (SPCA NZ—front), Karen Panckhurst (Charitable Reuse Aotearoa—back), Emma Stokes (Hato Hone St John), Talei Kitchingman (NZ Red Cross), Gretchen Leuthart (Hospice NZ), Shane Chisholm (NZ Red Cross), Devon Diggle (Hospice NZ) and Tracey Cameron (Habitat For Humanity) at the launch of Charitable Reuse Aotearoa at Parliament.

Every Step of the Way

Julie from Hibiscus Coast Corps shares her story of God's remarkable provision through every season of life.

I was born and brought up in Papakura in South Auckland. I had a wonderful childhood with my three siblings. Mum and Dad were very resourceful DIY people and I have inherited this trait from them.

I met my husband while we were at Papakura High School. We were married and had three children. Over time, my life became increasingly chaotic with my husband's excessive drinking and adolescent children who had become unmanageable. I was desperate for my life to change.

I went along to an assertiveness course looking for some help parenting my children. While I was there, I broke down and told them about my situation. They suggested a family support group for family members affected by a loved one's drinking.

I nervously made a phone call, and they suggested I come along to a meeting the following week. Over that weekend everything at home was fine, my husband didn't drink and I decided by Monday that I didn't need to go. But as I was walking that morning, I physically felt a hand on my shoulder telling me that I needed to go to that meeting.

I wondered, 'If I was to turn my life over, who would I turn it over to?'

This group provided me with community and practical support. It was what I needed and it's still a big part of my life. I learned about the 12 Steps, and these gave me hope for a better way of life. I became curious about what this group referred to as a Higher Power. I started to question what I believed. I wondered, 'If I was to turn my life over, who would I turn it over to?'

A good friend of mine visited me a year later and I shared with her my search for a Higher Power. She was a Christian and asked me if I had considered giving my life to Jesus. So, on that rainy day, in October 1989, I sat in the car and surrendered my life to Jesus.

Preparing the way

Four years later, alcoholism claimed my husband at the age of 39 in a car accident. I became a widow with three challenging children. I was completely grief stricken. I received a lot of support and encouragement from my family support group for which I am so grateful.

I tried a few churches, and God led me to The Salvation Army in Papakura one Easter Sunday. It was the weirdest service I had ever been to. That Sunday they had what was referred to as 'messy' church. Everyone sat around tables doing crafting activities, chatting to one another. Although it wasn't what I expected it was very friendly and welcoming and I started attending regularly.

In 2002, I decided it was time to move out of Papakura. I handed in my notice at work and with no job, I transferred my mortgage to a three-bedroom home in Orewa. It was a bit large for me now that my children had moved out but it felt like it was the right home for me.

Having no job gave me time to look around. I walked into the Whangaparaoa Family Store and mentioned I had moved from Papakura and was looking for volunteer work. Captain Milton Collins appeared from the staffroom and said, 'You must be Julie, we have been expecting you.' God had prepared the way for me.

I attended the Hibiscus Coast Corps Plant, and I worked for the corps until I got a full-time job.

My grandsons remember attending church in the prefabs before we had a permanent building.

Waiting on God

In late 2006, my granddaughter Kiara was born in the Caribbean. She became very unwell and required medical treatment in the United States. God met my needs again and provided for me financially. I was able to travel and stay with my daughter while Kiara received medical attention.

Their family arrived back in New Zealand in 2008 and that big house gave us the space and the stability we all needed. My house has always been very important to me, and I believe it was given to me for a reason. Sadly, Kiara passed away just before her fifth birthday. She was a lively and beautiful girl.

In 2014, I was enrolled as as an adherent in The Salvation Army. The same year, my eldest son passed away through alcoholism. Twelve days later, my father also passed away. I received incredible support from my family support group and my church family.

I waited on God to provide, and He did.

One year later, everything felt too much for me. I resigned from my job and once again was alone in a big house with a mortgage and no job. I waited on God to provide, and He did. I became the administrator in the Hibiscus Coast Corps office. It was very different from my previous corporate job, but where else do you get a job that comes with a warm welcome and a hug every day? It was exactly what I needed.

I've been at Hibiscus Coast Corps since the beginning. I look back at parts of my life now and wonder how I got through. God's timing and provision has always gone ahead of me through each part of my journey. He has faithfully put the right people in the right place before I even needed them, every step of the way. I'm so grateful to all the corps officers and for the fellowship of the Hibiscus Coast Corps community.



God's timing and provision has always gone ahead of me through each part of my journey.

The Best Reason to Keep Walking

Retired Salvation Army officer Major Gavin Baxter was getting near the end of his 3000km hike along Te Araroa Trail. He still had 300km to go and nothing much left in the tank. But knowing he was walking to raise money for foodbanks gave Gavin a reason to keep going—for just one more kilometre and another $10.

WORDS *Penny Harding*

He had set a goal of $10 per kilometre for supporters and they achieved it. When Gavin eventually reached Cape Reinga on Friday 24 July, he had raised $25,500 and the money was still coming in. The final tally was close to $31,000. That was appropriate, really. When Gavin started walking, he had just retired from the Greymouth Corps after 31 years' service in The Salvation Army.

New Zealand's 'long pathway' had been on his radar as a retirement challenge. 'I pretty much bought into the idea of tramping Te Araroa and to feature, as part of that, the opportunity to raise some funds for something. Having leadership oversight of the foodbank work in Greymouth showed me that the need was real and ongoing.'

A growing need

Gavin's mission soon became clear. As he pulled on his tramping boots in Bluff on 1 January and became a 'NOBO', or northbound tramper, foodbanks throughout New Zealand were in crisis.

In December, the major foodbanks were warning of substantial closures if the Government did not provide ongoing funding. More people than usual were coming in for food, including working families. Salvation Army Food Security Manager Sonya Cameron said without government funding, The Salvation Army would have to reduce the amount of food given out from its 60 foodbanks.

So, Gavin started his Marching for Meals campaign to raise funds for Salvation Army foodbanks and help households struggling with the cost of living. He wanted to raise awareness too of the thousands of Kiwis who turn to the Sallies each year for food support: the parents skipping meals so their kids can eat, families doing it tough with rising costs, and people simply trying to get back on their feet.

Starting the journey

Gavin wasn't new to tramping; he had some previous experience on week-long tracks. 'I imagined it would just be a series of those connected end on end.' The reality was different—he navigated isolated stretches in the South Island, where he could walk a long time before seeing other trampers. In the North Island, there was a lot more road-walking than he expected, where his route took him closer to civilisation and looking for camping sites to pitch his tent, but away from the convenient Department of Conservation huts of the South Island high country.

'I think most hikers would find the South Island more satisfying in terms of its challenging terrain and beauty.'

Gavin's evening meals were sponsored by Real Meals, a company specialising in freeze-dried meals for



Above: Major Gavin Baxter on the Paparoa Track, on the West Coast of the South Island.

trampers and other outdoor adventurers. 'They were a Nelson company and when I was there, I dropped in and had a chat.'

It took him seven months to walk the trail—*retirement pace* he calls it—and when he emerged into towns and cities along the way he often connected with foodbanks and supporters to remind people to pray for him, donate money or to walk with him.

Picturesque posts

He shared his highs and the lows in mostly daily posts on his Facebook page and a Marching for Meals website.

Gavin's post on Sunday March 22, day 68—Pelorus Bridge to Havelock read: 'It was lovely to be offered a free sandwich pack, with a milkshake I bought, to go as tomorrow's lunch (as the store was closing). I asked what they normally did at end of day and was blessed to hear that unsold items were distributed to needy families for school lunches. It's great that caring for one's neighbour is shown in this practical way. It helps meet real need. Well done, Havelock.'

His posts were full of images of the spectacular scenery of New Zealand's backcountry and a candid account of his daily triumphs and struggles. He described wet feet from river crossings, sandy wet socks that felt like sandpaper, blisters, aching limbs and the odd tumble off the track. Not to mention having to dress in partially dry clothing or pack up and carry a wet tent.

He described wet feet from river crossings, sandy wet socks that felt like sandpaper, blisters, aching limbs and the odd tumble off the track.

Gavin's wife, Major Bev Baxter, was his main support and supply partner throughout, but she couldn't help much in the more remote areas, particularly during the challenging 10-day section through the Richmond Ranges, where Gavin had to carry a heavy pack of supplies.

An unexpected detour

Then, on Tuesday 17 March—day 67 and halfway through the ranges—abdominal pain and fatigue forced him to activate his personal locator beacon (PLB) and summon help from the Nelson Marlborough Rescue Helicopter.

…abdominal pain and fatigue forced him to activate his personal locator beacon (PLB) and summon help from the Nelson Marlborough rescue helicopter.

'This morning, after a few days of abdominal pain of various types and increasing lethargy, I decided to set off my PLB and go off-trail for a check-up. I was facing a steep climb first thing and, while I'm at my best in the mornings, I needed to balance that with my increasing inability to complete full days, which was also resulting in a diminishing food supply.'

A helipad was right in front of the hut where he was and he doubted there would be a better landing spot further on.

'About 40 minutes after setting off my PLB the cavalry arrived, circled and landed. After some preliminary checks, a 10-minute flight saw me at Nelson ED, where I eventually underwent a CT scan. Discharged with some antibiotics, after ruling out a couple of worse options, I was advised to rest up for a few days. So here I am, with Bev in Blenheim.'

However, there was a price to pay for those few days off the trail. The Cook Strait ferry was already booked, and he had to keep going to Wellington for a scheduled walk with supporters over the Wellington South portion of Te Araroa Trail from Island Bay on the south coast to Oriental Bay in the central city. Once that was done, the difficult 24km section between huts on the



Above: Gavin at Lake Ōhau, in the Mackenzie Basin in the South Island.

Richmond Ranges section still had to be completed. Staying true to the trail, Gavin went back and ticked that off before travelling north again. He ended up doing the hardest section, Slaty Hut to Rintoul Hut twice—there and back—to match the distance missed after his evacuation.

To the people who asked him how he managed to keep walking every day, he said it was just a matter of one step after another. 'Sometimes it's on scree, sometimes it's on flat ground, sometimes it's thigh-deep in water.'

Poverty marches on

The trail gave him plenty of time to reflect. Gavin says the cost-of-living crisis is hitting a broader section of the population, and families from higher socio-economic backgrounds are now also seeking help. He says some people who were hit hard financially during COVID-19 have not recovered. The fuel crisis was a significant additional cost to the budget and along with extras, like back-to-school expenses, puts families under a lot of pressure. But it is still a tough step to go to a foodbank.

‘Anyone who presents with a need like that shows courage,’ Gavin says. ‘People might describe this as weak. But I think there is great courage showing.’ He is also supportive of the move towards social supermarkets where people can choose their own food, spending points that have been allocated to them based on their need.

The New Zealand Food Network Hunger Monitor 2025 found that one in three households had experienced some form of food insecurity during 2025, and the Food Network is now supporting more than 500,000 people a month—10 percent of the population—through its network of foodbanks and community organisations.

‘My walk has ended but poverty keeps marching on.’



Knowing the pressure on foodbank supplies, Gavin is happy with the $31,000 raised. ‘I think that’s significant enough to make a difference,’ he says. He also hopes his ‘Hikoi Against Hunger’ has helped spotlight the issue of food poverty in New Zealand. ‘My walk has ended but poverty keeps marching on.’

He hopes the parties contesting the General Election in November will remember the individuals when they are developing their policies. ‘I guess my plea to politicians is don’t forget the ordinary man and woman in the street and the real challenges they battle every day.’

Swapping the solitude of the long-distance walker for real life has been an adjustment for Gavin. He finds himself wishing a few more of the people around him were trees. But he thinks the experience has changed him. ‘I hope so. Perhaps it has deepened a work of patience within me—a sense of what is important and that what needs to be done will be done. You’ll get there in the end—just keep taking one more step, even if it’s a small one.’

After seven months on the trail, Gavin is on to his next project. He and Bev are moving to Masterton, where they will start their retirement closer to his extended family.

Acknowledging that Bev put her retirement on hold to be his on-road support while he walked Te Araroa Trail, Gavin says he knows it is now Bev’s time to think about she would like to do, and for them to spend more time together. ◆

Left: A swing bridge that Gavin crossed over the Ōtaki River, in the Kāpiti District of the North Island.

A Prayer for the New Zealand General Election

WORDS *Major Nicki Dutton*

Sovereign God, we pray for all those who would seek to lead our beautiful country. May their focus be on kotahitanga (unity). Grant them wisdom, integrity and compassion that looks beyond personal ambition or political victory to the wellbeing of all people.

May our politicians uphold the covenant on which our country is founded and view it with the same regard that You do. For those elected to govern, give them the courage to make decisions that are right rather than merely popular. Help them to pursue justice, love mercy and walk humbly before You. May they be leaders who listen carefully, act fairly and use their authority to serve rather than to be served.

For those in power who serve You, protect them in the battle as they live out kingdom values in service to You and our country.

We pray especially for those who are often overlooked when decisions are made: the poor, the lonely, the sick, the unemployed, the homeless and those whose voices are seldom heard. May their needs be seen, their mana upheld and their concerns taken seriously.

Guide us also as citizens. Guard us from dissention, envy, hate and corruption. Teach us to disagree graciously, to seek truth and to care for one another across political differences.

Amen.

Kia rahi atu tō mātou aroha ki a Koe
Let our love for Thee increase,

Kia kore rawa ō manaakitanga e mutu
May Thy blessings never cease,

Homai te pukahu, homai te rangimārie
Give us plenty, give us peace,

E Te Atua, whakawaowao tō mātou whenua herekore
God defend our free land.

Te reo translation for verse 4 of *God Defend New Zealand* by Ken Te Tau.




feed my kids?
climate change scandals
Betrayed Representation
violent crime
Fuel crisis
Community?
Purpose
rivers
polluted

Parables on Politics

Captain Andrew Wilson, corps officer at Wellington South Corps, shares a theological perspective on how we approach the elections and voting as Christians.

With promises of better futures, more jobs and cheaper living—and with the usual number of babies kissed and hands shaken—the time has once again come for us to exercise our responsibilities as good citizens of Aotearoa New Zealand. It's time to vote. It is a season that, if we're being completely honest, often brings out the worst in us. Every political issue, from our founding document to healthcare, employment and immigration, becomes a moral battleground where one side claims the virtuous high ground and the other is cast as some kind of subhuman monster. As heralds of the Good News and bearers of the Light, should we draw our own battle lines and descend into the fray? Or is there something of a prophetic response in answering the question 'Whose side are you on?' with a simple, 'Wrong question'.

To explore this idea further, I want us to look at the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector found in Luke 18:9–14. Off the bat, I should say this is not a parable that is often pulled out in political discourse. However, there is something in the interplay between the two main characters that has the potential to challenge the way we engage in this next election cycle.

The Pharisee

'To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable.' (Luke 18:9)

Sound familiar? We see this posture expressed by political leaders across the spectrum—and, if we're honest, we can slip into it ourselves. When we articulate our political values and positions, it's easy to assume we hold the moral high ground while everyone else is either blind and naïve or corrupt and manipulative. At this point, it's worth pausing, breathing and recognising that these reactions are normal when we're dealing with deeply foundational values such as personhood, responsibility, justice and security, to name only a few. But as we act on our convictions, we must be careful not to fall into the same rationalising that our Pharisee friend did as he prayed in the temple beside a tax collector:

...it's easy to assume we hold the moral high ground while everyone else is either blind and naïve or corrupt and manipulative.

'[The Pharisee prayed] "God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector".' (v11)

The trap, I believe, is in turning the Pharisee into a kind of villainous caricature—like Jafar from *Aladdin*, scheming in the background and manipulating others like puppets for his own selfish ambitions. In reality, the Pharisees—though often criticised for what they had become—were driven by a foundational desire to restore their nation to a place that shared the favour of God. They saw the influence of foreign powers, the moral decline of the population and the disregard for holy practices and institutions as forces holding the nation back from that hoped for outcome. Again, sound familiar? We can easily imagine them thinking, *If only we didn't have such-and-such,* or *If only so-and-so got out of our way, then things would be better!* Their desire for national renewal mirrors much of the political narratives we hear today. It's not the Pharisee's end goal, or even many of their practices, that Jesus challenges most directly—it's their attitude toward the 'other' that He consistently confronts.

...it's their attitude toward the other that He consistently confronts.

The tax collector

'But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner".' (v13)

Let's be clear: the tax collector is morally culpable for his actions. Imagine you and your friends join a game of Monopoly after it has already begun. Most of the properties are already owned, the other players



have amassed small fortunes, and there is simply no way for you to win by playing within the rules. So, what would you do? Keep playing, knowing you will lose everything? Walk away? And what if losing meant not just financial ruin but material, physical death? This is the kind of game played out in societies across all time and place.

We see it in our own work within The Salvation Army. Many of the people we serve—those caught in addiction, homelessness, gang life or cycles of imprisonment—have entered a game already stacked against them. For some, creating their own rules, systems or survival strategies becomes the only way they can carve out a sense of security or future. Their choices may be understandable, even predictable, but they still break the rules. In Monopoly, the consequences are trivial. In the real world, the consequences of intentionally corrupting the law carry moral weight that can reach into eternity. The tax collector acknowledges this: he accepts he has broken the rules, recognises he is deserving of the consequences and appeals to God for mercy.

For some, creating their own rules, systems or survival strategies becomes the only way they can carve out a sense of security or future.

The parable

'I tell you that [the tax collector], rather than [the Pharisee], went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.' (v14)

So, what's the takeaway? Do we assign the posture of the Pharisee to one political party and the tax collector to another? There is a temptation, when reading the Gospels, to conclude that Jesus is partial towards the marginalised simply because they are marginalised. But to ask Jesus, 'Whose side are you on?' is to invite the response, 'Wrong question'. As we engage in political discourse and vote on election day, we refuse the Pharisee's misplaced confidence in our own moral high ground and take up the tax collector's humility. From there, we ask which ideas genuinely help create a society where anyone has the opportunity to thrive—and how will we as a nation treat the 'other' with the same mercy we ourselves depend on.



Pressing on for Aotearoa

In the lead-up to November's General Election, The Salvation Army's Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit has identified seven of the most pressing issues impacting the 125,000 people the Army has worked with over the past year. **Penny Harding** reports.

The need for food and somewhere to live are the two most urgent reasons why people are now coming to the Salvation Army looking for help. But these are only the most visible of the problems.

Along with food security and homelessness, The Salvation Army is putting the spotlight on the cost of living; Māori wellbeing; poverty, welfare and tax; reintegration and addictions. It has released a series of papers outlining these issues and asks political parties how they plan to improve the lives of New Zealanders.

'Food is the most pressing issue, but if you look a bit closer you see it's housing, mental health and addiction,' says Ana Ika, senior social policy analyst with The Salvation Army's Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit.

Ana would not rank the issues in order of priority. 'It's a lot easier for the Government and the public to buy into the need for food,' she says. 'But all of them are important. All of them are linked together.'

Going hungry

The food security issues paper says food insecurity is unacceptably high in this country. 'Most recent figures show more than one in five households with children are regularly going without food. Salvation Army centres around the country provided over 90,000 food parcels in the year to December 2025, almost 50 percent higher than pre-COVID-19 in 2019.

'Most recent figures show more than one in five households with children are regularly going without food.'

'Our country has plenty of food, with annual food exports estimated to be enough to feed 40 million people. Food insecurity is a completely solvable problem, and we are calling for politicians to work together with communities to end food insecurity.'

The paper asks political candidates to explain how they will ensure that people can afford healthy food.

The paper asks political candidates to explain how they will ensure that people can afford healthy food. They are challenged to commit to adequate multi-year funding for the Food Secure Communities programme and to expand the Community Food Initiatives Fund.

Visible and invisible

On housing: 'The past two years have seen a sustained rise in homelessness—both the very visible rough sleeping and street homelessness but also the unseen homelessness of people sleeping in cars, temporary accommodation, inadequate shelter and couch surfing in overcrowded housing.

'The impact of homelessness falls disproportionately on young people, with half of those in severe housing deprivation aged under 30 years. Nearly half of people who are experiencing homelessness are Māori and the LGBTQ+ community also experiences much higher rates of homelessness.'

'The impact of homelessness falls disproportionately on young people...'

In the papers, party candidates are asked how they will commit to ending homelessness, provide immediate access to housing for people with no shelter in every town in the country, and support people into stable longer-term housing.

A different take on tax

On the cost of living: 'Cost-of-living pressures are not being experienced equally, with low-income households, beneficiaries and superannuitants facing larger increases in living costs than higher-income households.

'These differences matter because households on lower incomes spend a greater proportion of their income on essentials and have less capacity to absorb rising costs. For many people, even modest increases in everyday expenses can place significant pressure on already stretched budgets.'

'...even modest increases in everyday expenses can place significant pressure on already stretched budgets.'

As the election campaign heats up, several of the major parties are competing to offer lower taxes to voters struggling with the cost of living. But the issues paper on poverty, welfare and tax urges a different approach. 'Tax should be seen as a vital tool for shaping our society, not a burden but a blessing.'

'Tax policies that help reduce poverty include creating a tax-free income band for the lowest incomes and paying for this with higher income tax for the highest income earners (eg, over $180,000). Income transfers such as Working for Families need to be designed to ensure they lift lowest incomes above poverty lines and help people to transition into sustainable paid employment through more gradual reductions in income support as income rises.'

Use your voice

All seven issues papers are available at **www.salvationarmy.org.nz/sppu/2026-general-election/** and Ana says that during the campaign period they will be releasing a series of short videos on social media discussing the issues and featuring frontline staff talking about the solutions that are making a difference.

The Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit has also issued guidance for local Salvation Army centres and churches planning to host candidates' meetings.

'For The Salvation Army, a candidate evening is also an opportunity to raise awareness of community concerns, social issues and the lived experiences of people who are often unheard in public debate.'



The Salvation Army is also reminding people that enrolment rules have changed this year.
To vote in the 2026 General Election on 7 November 2026, you must be enrolled by midnight on 25 October 2026. If you are not enrolled by that date, you will not be able to vote. Please check your enrolment details, encourage your whānau and friends to do the same, and enrol now at **https://vote.nz/**

New Family Store for Timaru

The new Washdyke Family Store in Timaru opened on 24 September. The original Timaru Family Store on Wai-iti Road remains open while the new Family Store, located in Washdyke on Hilton Highway, is in a highly visible and accessible location on the main route through Timaru. 'We are already attracting travelling customers who are passing through,' says Sharon Breakwell, Canterbury South Area Family Store manager.

The opening of a larger Family Store in Timaru has been a long-term goal, with suitable premises being sought for more than seven years.

Opening day was a community celebration including Timaru Corps member along with Family Store managers across the region. 'We have received very positive feedback from the public, and donations are steadily increasing as more people become aware of the store,' shares Sharon.

The Washdyke team, led by team leader Jan Hogg, along with Dale McKay, Fiona Austin, Cheyenne O'Neill and logistics drivers Jonathan Hines and David Wijnveld, put in an enormous amount of work preparing the store for opening.

'I am extremely proud of our new Washdyke Family Store and the team behind it. We are excited about the opportunities it will create for our community and look forward to seeing the store continue to grow and make a positive difference in the years ahead,' adds Sharon.



Left to right: Team leader Jan Hogg and Dale McKay on opening day of the Washdyke Family Store.

Standing up Together

The Fiji Divisional Men's Camp was held between 31 July and 2 August. The theme for this year's camp was, 'Stand Up, Man Up for Jesus'. From across the division, 181 men joined for the weekend, and were encouraged to make a difference by shaping families that are grounded in faith, acknowledging who they are as believers and speaking out against injustice. One young man who attended had recently connected to his local corps and youth programmes. At the men's camp he was inspired by the theme of the weekend, which reinforced his conviction to live out God's Word in an exemplary Christian character of holiness. The previous Divisional Men's Camp was held in 2024, so there was a lot of excitement to be able to meet again and learn, grow and fellowship together as brothers in faith.

Thank You for Supporting our Self-Denial Appeal

To every person, family, corps and community who contributed this year to The Salvation Army's Self-Denial Appeal, thank you. Your gifts and financial support help create opportunities for children and families, strengthen communities and bring hope where it is needed most around the world. Thank you for being part of the story. If you would still like to donate, visit **secure.flo2cash.co.nz/donations/SalvationArmySelfDenial/DonateSecure.aspx** or scan the QR code. You can also donate through your local corps.



Cambridge Celebrates New Soldiers

On 5 July, Cambridge Corps joyfully celebrated the enrolment of four new junior soldiers, Simmy Rikiriki-Ohlson, Shiloh Rikiriki-Ohlson, Luke Joyce and Ellie Joyce.

During the service, the children were asked to say a karakia (prayer):

Ellie: 'Lord, thank You for helping me get up and ready for this day. Lord, thank You for guiding me to be a junior soldier.'

Luke: 'The Lord's power will guide me through life and help me and my family throughout the struggles of life.'

Simmy: 'Dear Lord, thank You for bringing me into this world. If it wasn't for You, I would not have met everyone I know and love, so thank You God.'

Shiloh: 'Dear Lord our Holy Father, we thank You for everything You have done for us and thank You for being there when I needed it the most. In Jesus' name, Amen.'

On 26 July, the corps also had the privilege of enrolling Annette Willis Peake as a covenanted member of Cambridge Corps. Annette shared her testimony before her family and friends of how God guided her life back to Him.



Making Kai an Election Issue

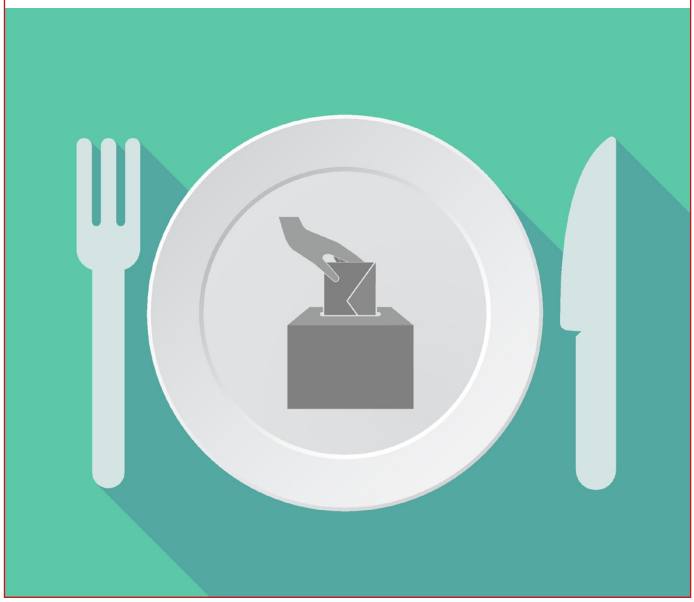
The Salvation Army is calling candidates to act on food security and make a commitment to feeding the nation with just weeks to go to next month's election.

Earlier this year, we proudly added our voice to the Vote for Kai campaign to advocate for long-term, cross-party solutions that can ensure everyone can eat healthy, affordable kai.

The campaign was initiated because of a sustained demand for food support across Aotearoa New Zealand. Too many children go to school hungry, too many people are skipping meals and too many of us are having to choose between nutritious food and other essentials.

The coalition campaign is calling on all political parties to make a genuine commitment to a food system that works for everyone.

Join The Salvation Army and other groups by putting kai first. Sign the Vote for Kai open letter: voteforkai.nz/open-letter



Looking for more news?
Read the latest news online at **saltmagazine.org.nz**

Official Engagements

Commissioner Janine Donaldson (Territorial Commander)
28 September–4 October: SPEA Fundraising Conference, Singapore
7 October: Territorial Online Praying Together meeting
14 October: Official Opening Addington Supportive Accommodation, Christchurch
15 October: Jeff Farm Management Board, Southland
18–31 October: Visit from SPEA International Secretaries, Wellington
19 October: THQ Leaders Day with God, The Life Centre Wellington
24–25 October: New Lynn Corps 50th Anniversary

Colonel Jennifer Groves (Chief Secretary)
30 September–5 October: Tonga 40th Anniversary, Nuku'alofa
7 October: Territorial Online Praying Together meeting
9–11 October: Thought Matters 2026, Albany Bays Corps
12 October: Retired Officers Fellowship, New Lynn Corps
19 October: THQ Leaders Day with God, The Life Centre Wellington
21 October: Spiritual Day, BCM
23–25 October: Christchurch visit with SPEA International Secretaries



Gazette Summary

To read the full version of Gazette notices, visit **saltmagazine.org.nz/gazette**

Annual General Change: The Annual General Change was published on Thursday September 17, and can be read at **salvationarmy.org.nz/news/annual-general-change-2027**

Promotion to Glory: *Major Melvyn (Mel) Impey* was promoted to Glory on Saturday 15 August 2026 from his home in Auckland, aged 79 years. Mel and *Jan* entered Training College from Newton Corps in 1980 as cadets in 'God's Soldiers' session. We honour Major Mel for his faithful service as an officer in The Salvation Army. He is remembered for his pastoral care, positive attitude and delightful sense of humour. Please uphold in prayer Mel's children *Rachel* and *Andrew*, and other family members at this time of grief and loss. Well done, good and faithful 'God's Soldier'!
Lieutenant Tauhuia (Tau) Mataki was promoted to Glory on Wednesday 9 September 2026 from Christchurch Hospital, aged 72. Please uphold Tau's wife *Trish*, children and extended whānau in your prayers at this time of grief and loss. Well done, good and faithful 'Herald of Grace'!
Major Glenis Cross was promoted to Glory on Monday 7 September 2026 from Christchurch Hospital, aged 80 years. Please uphold in prayer Glenis' husband *Rex*, her children *Andrew*, *Rachel* and *Matthew*, Glenis' sister *Major Marlene Diack*, and other family members at this time of grief and loss.

Bereavement: *Marilyn McMillan*, the mother of *Major Phillipa van Abs* and grandmother of *Captain Char Whybrow* was promoted to Glory on Saturday 22 August 2026, from her home in Waikanae. Please uphold *Majors* Phillipa and *Rob van Abs*, *Captains* Char and *Jonny Whybrow*, along with other extended family members in your prayers during this time of grief and loss.

Retirement: *Effective Monday 31 August 2026*, *Major William Murray Sanson* entered retirement after 29 years, 8 months and 24 days of active officer service. Murray, along with his wife *Wendy*, entered the Booth College of Mission from Dunedin South Corps in 1995 as cadets of the 'Messengers of the Truth' session. We thank God for Murray's faithful practical service as an officer of The Salvation Army. Many people have benefited from his caring pastoral approach. We pray God's continued blessing upon Murray's ministry and service as he continues his current appointment in retirement.

International Service Appointment: *Lt-Colonel Michelle Collins*, presently director of SALT Learning Centre in South Asia, has been appointed as secretary for spiritual life development/protection coordinator (children and vulnerable adults), Hong Kong and Macau Territory.
Lt-Colonel Milton Collins, presently project development secretary/sponsorship secretary in the Sri Lanka Territory has been appointed as secretary for business administration, Hong Kong and Macau Territory.

Officer Ordination and Commissioning: *Auxiliary Captain Roslyn Johnson* will be ordained and commissioned on *Saturday 12 December 2026*. Auxiliary Captain Ros will continue her current appointments with the rank of Captain. We pray God's blessing on Auxiliary Captain Ros as she continues her ministry as a commissioned officer in Greymouth.

Re-acceptance to Officership: *Effective from 14 January 2027*, *Nicola* and *Philip Mellsop* will re-accept officership with the rank of Captain, as corps officers and community mission officers, Nelson Tasman Bays. We pray that God will bless Nikki and Phil as they prepare to re-enter officership in the new year.

Marriage: *Captain Cameron Millar* was married to *Catherine Liddle* on Saturday 22 August 2026 in Wellington. Cameron will continue his service as an officer under the territorial policy for single spouse officership. We pray God's blessing on Captain Cam and Catherine as they commence life together as a married couple.

Quiz Answers: 1. Miriam, his sister, **2.** Black, **3.** Lulu Sun, **4.** *Jaws*, **5.** Tea.

SALVATIONISTS IN HISTORY

Taking a Stand for Women



The Salvation Army has always walked a tightrope when it comes to politics. But that did not stop it taking a stand on a woman's right to vote.

When the Women's Christian Temperance Union arrived in Aotearoa New Zealand in 1886, The Salvation Army found common cause with them. Well known for advocating a lifestyle without alcohol, the Temperance Union also promoted suffrage, and it followed that The Salvation Army's publication *The War Cry* began to feature articles relating to the votes for women campaign.

Rosemarie Smith, in *The Ladies are at it Again! Gore Debates the Women's Franchise* (1993), documents a well-advertised meeting held at the Gore Town Hall, on 21 June 1892.

The Southern Standard reported that the meeting was chaired by Mrs Marion Hatton, president of the Dunedin Women's Franchise League. The audience was addressed by visiting women speakers and several Gore women proposed motions, including Salvation Army Captain Beatrice Dixon. Beatrice (Beattie) and her husband Ernest were the local corps officers. The local women were described as, 'determined, but nervous, speakers', and Beattie was reported as being the only speaker not to use notes.

Beattie was also known for her clear singing voice. The story of Beattie and Ernest as Salvation Army officers in New Zealand and Australia (1889–1914) is told in *From Maoriland to Wattleland*, by Major Adelaide Ah Kow (1930).

Beattie Dixon was one of the thousands who supported women's suffrage in Aotearoa New Zealand.

In 1891, the first ever Female Suffrage Bill was presented to Parliament with a petition of 10,085 signatures. On 19 September 1893, Governor Lord Glasgow signed the new Act into law and Aotearoa New Zealand became the world's first self-governing country in which women had the right to vote.

The Salvation Army has never shied away from actions related to social justice and human rights. In his book *Saved to Save and Saved to Serve*, Salvation Army historian Harold Hill said the Army has been committed to social action throughout its history.

'Such activity is always likely to cross into political action, which has always been a problem for The Salvation Army. There has always been within the Army a degree of tension between these two complementary endeavours.'

Harold wrote that General William Booth's mentor, evangelist Charles Finney, required new converts to sign up for either the anti-slavery or the women's suffrage campaigns.

William Booth told the 1904 International Staff Conference: 'There may be some officers amongst us today … who may not feel free to accept my advice as to a total abstinence from politics in the wide sense.' But he warned that to 'proclaim ourselves as taking any particular side on political questions agitating this or any other country … would be to stem the flowing tide of our soul-saving efforts and create discussion and strife where now peace and unity reign'.

The Army's official international position today on politics states: 'The Salvation Army is politically nonpartisan. Although it seeks to influence governmental and public affairs, it will not promote or endorse specific candidates or political parties.'

Information about Captain Beatrice Dixon is thanks to The Salvation Army Heritage Centre and Archives article 'Woman has a right to vote now and to drum' published on 19 September 2023.



What makes a good leader?

It's likely you've thought of this many times over the years as you've looked at those who lead you, and how you in turn lead others. Good leadership is modelled by showing people what to do as you live it out yourself.

As we encourage our children to be leaders, it's helpful to look at the principles that Jesus modelled as a leader, and how we can apply them to our lives. Jesus turned the conventional idea of leadership upside down. Instead of seeking power or authority, He showed us that real influence comes from serving others with love and grace. Jesus lived a life reflective of His teachings, with no hidden agendas. He was honest, transparent and unwavering in His values. As followers of Jesus, we are called to uphold integrity in every aspect of our lives.

Jesus teaches us throughout Scripture that leading by example is essential for anyone looking to guide others. Jesus lived a life of love, compassion and righteousness, demonstrating for us how to walk in faith and reflect God's love in our actions. When we live out these values, we inspire others to follow.

Within His leadership, Jesus showcased the importance of compassion. He often displayed a deep empathy for those who were suffering, marginalised or lost. Jesus calls us to look out for our neighbours, and extend love, action and kindness.

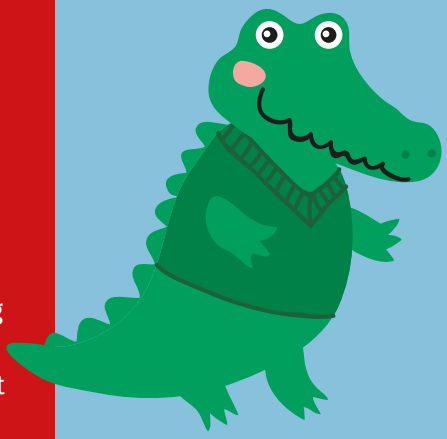
Jesus' teachings often provided insight into the hopes of the kingdom of God, encouraging us to think beyond our immediate circumstances to the greater plan of God. By following His lead, we can inspire others and work towards a brighter future filled with hope and love.

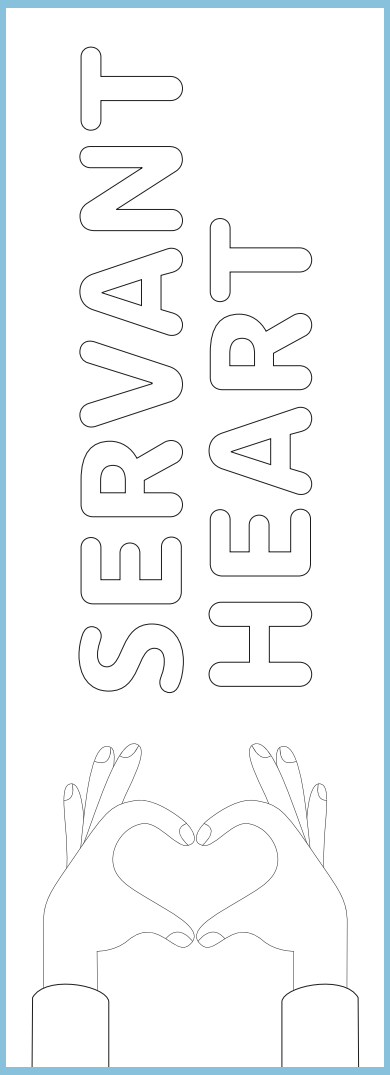
When we apply these teachings to our own lives, we are modelling leadership that seeks to serve and uplift each other. Let's help our children see the importance of being leaders who live by example their values, while holding integrity, and showing care and compassion for others.

Cut and **colour** bookmark

Colour in the bookmark then cut it out and place in your Bible.

Q What do you call an alligator in a vest?
A An investigator





Secret **leader**

Choose one day this week to be a secret leader at home.

A servant leader looks for ways to help others before thinking about themselves. Find a job that needs doing and do it without being asked and without bragging about it later. You might set the table for dinner, pick up toys your sibling left out, or load the dishwasher.

Jesus noticed the small, quiet acts of love. See how much joy you can bring to your family by leading through serving others!



Word scramble

Unscramble the letters to discover words that describe qualities of a good leader.

sraifnes

ypaerr

sevrcei

pocmassino

owmisd

thnughtosfules

yicoturis

nhestyo

wrdkionghar

ttusr





Leaders serve

'If one of you wants to become great, then he must serve the rest of you like a servant.'
Matthew 20:26 (International Children's Bible)

Read: In the Bible, there's a story about a mother who asked Jesus for a favour. She wanted her two boys, James and John who were disciples of Jesus, to have the greatest positions. Jesus explained that if anyone wanted to become great, then they must humble themselves, and learn to be a leader that serves others.



Think: I wonder what qualities you think make a great leader? Perhaps this person needs to be a good listener, or be funny or have a nice smile. Perhaps this person needs to care about people and creation, show courage and stand up for justice and fairness. Jesus spoke many times about what a great leader looks like, but He also backed this up by living it out Himself. Jesus was helping to show people the type of leadership that He desired in His kingdom, which comes from a servant heart.

Pray: Dear God, thank you that Jesus came to serve, and to give His life for us. As I think about leaders who I know, I ask that You help them to follow You and Your example. Please also help me as I have opportunities to lead, to want to follow Your servant heart and care for others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Do: Jesus teaches us to love, serve and show kindness to those around us. Is there someone at school, home, sports or church that you can care about this week? You could give them a smile, a word of encouragement or invite them to play with you. When you are leading at school or during another activity, think about how Jesus led, and follow His example.



Word scramble answers: fairness, prayer, service, compassion, wisdom, thoughtfulness, curiosity, honesty, hardworking, trust.

He has shown you, O mortal,
what is good. And what does the
Lord require of you? To act justly
and to love mercy and to walk
humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8

