



Te Ope Whakaora

TRUE HEROES

Everyday people helping every day

Autumn | 2024



You helped Tracey find her feet—and a job!

After a breakup, Tracey moved with her three children to a new town. Defeated and with bills piling up, a friend suggested The Salvation Army. Thanks to supporters like you, she found vital food assistance, and much more.

'Friendship and belonging are what we've found, I call it my Army family. And it all started with a food parcel!

When my partner left, it was a big hit—emotionally, mentally, physically and financially. You go through a lot when you lose a whole entire life. Now, I've done a 180. I've rebuilt my life, better and stronger.

Six months ago, I was asked to apply for a position as a wellbeing worker here at The Salvation Army. I was so proud of myself when I got the job! Now, I can help others. I am empathetic because I know the struggle. It helps people to relax when they realise I've walked in their shoes. As they tell me more of their story, it enables us to know how we can help, not just with immediate things like food but also with our wraparound services that can bring long-lasting change.

Like many, for me, The Salvation Army has been a lifeline. There's a history of alcohol-abuse in my family and I didn't want to worsen my situation by turning to drink.

I was amazed at how generous the food parcel was when I first received it. It was very helpful for school lunches. Being put on a kai plan was a relief. I had thought the help would be one-off and then you'd go away and struggle some more. When I received the second parcel, I was able to redirect food money to the bills. By week four, I felt like I was getting back on my feet.

'I am empathetic because I know the struggle. It helps people to relax when they realise that I've walked in their shoes.'

Along with the food parcels came a feeling of being loved and cared for. I felt, as a newly solo mum, that someone had my back. A sense of community can be hard to find when you move to a new place. This is where I've found it. The food parcels brought new opportunities for me and my children. We found more and more things to get involved with. ►



‘Friendship and belonging are what we’ve found, I call it my Army family.’

I’ve been brought up to give back when I’ve received help so of course I wanted to do that. I started volunteering in the foodbank. That was when I discovered the food was purchased with donations from the public. I hadn’t realised that The Salvation Army had to fundraise to run its foodbanks. Once or twice, when a massive bill came up, I had food help again and felt deep gratitude to the donors.

The future is looking good for me and my girls. I’m doing an eight-week course called Emotionally Healthy Relationships which is part of the centre’s wraparound services. My eldest has been to the Blue Mountain Adventure Centre and it really grew her confidence and leadership skills. The younger ones will go on camps in the future. We are all part of the church. We love our new hometown, and we are flourishing as a family.’



With your help The Salvation Army provides **300 food parcels every working day**

Figure based on nationwide average for January 2024

Finding positivity and a sense of calm

Jamie signed up for our Positive Lifestyle Programme (PLP) because he was keen to improve himself. After the 12-week course, he came away feeling more positive about life and with tools to be able to deal with conflict.

Jamie had been having ad hoc assistance with food parcels from The Salvation Army for about eight months when his keyworker suggested he consider PLP.

‘It’s hard to reach out for help but staff at The Salvation Army made me feel welcome and at ease,’ says Jamie. ‘The Sallies provide warmth and comfort, an environment that wasn’t provided by other services. I was drawn to the programme by the idea of self-development and felt assured that I would be able to improve myself.’

PLP facilitator Bridget Nolan explains her love for the programme. ‘It’s an incredibly gentle programme. But you can go to depths that are life changing.

Each area of focus has its own workbook. There are eight topics: self-awareness, anger, depression and loneliness, stress, grief and loss, assertiveness, self-esteem, and future direction. Personally, I love the anger book because it’s where the penny drops for a lot of people’.

Bridget has no doubt that the programme is empowering and life-affirming.

‘I understand the need for gratefulness in my life, and I have learnt new skills for keeping myself calm in challenging situations.’

‘Neuroscience tells us that we can rewire our brain. PLP includes a lot of positive affirmations, so we are doing a lot of rewiring. Through PLP, as we go through the topics, we’re doing a form of cognitive behavioural therapy, so it’s powerful. It’s very task centred and

solutions focused. We’re giving people tools for their toolkit.’

Because each participant has their own workbook and is working with their own issues and feelings, each person’s takeaways are different.

‘I came away with a new feeling of being positive,’ says Jamie. ‘I understand the need for gratefulness in my life, and I have learnt new skills for keeping myself calm in challenging situations.’

Some topics may take longer to work through than others and each case is different. ‘I found the assertiveness topic the most challenging as I find conflict difficult and, in the past, I haven’t known how to speak up for myself,’ says Jamie.

‘I’m absolutely happy that I did the programme. I’m a calmer and more positive person now. I’m on a journey and I will keep trucking along.’



From our Territorial Leaders

Kia ora and welcome to your newsletter.

On behalf of The Salvation Army, we would like to thank you for the invaluable support you give us as we work to help individuals, families, and communities across Aotearoa. Our mission is to care for people, transform lives and reform society by God's power, and no matter your level of contribution, you are partnering with us to make a real difference in your community.

This is a time of challenge for many Kiwis. Cost-of-living pressures are only increasing—people are paying more for basic essentials like food, electricity and housing. It's not easy, and these pressures impact people's physical, mental and even spiritual health—it can be difficult to find hope amid so much bad news.

That's why our mission is more important than ever. By helping people, we can offer them hope for a brighter future—and your support plays a vital role in this work!

In this issue, read about Tracey. She moved with her three children to a new town after a breakup. Bills were piling up, and she was feeling defeated. A friend of hers then suggested turning to The Salvation Army. She found vital food assistance and much more thanks to supporters like you, saving her and her children from despair and financial instability.

You can also read about Carrie, one of our True Heroes who became a recurring giver because she truly believes in our mission. This has also had a profound impact on her son.

Past participants also share their experiences volunteering for our annual Red Shield Appeal. This important mahi is all about helping others in need.

God bless you and your loved ones.

Ngā mihi nui,

Mark and Julie Campbell (Commissioners)

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



Volunteer collectors needed

Can you spare an hour or two in the week beginning May 6 to join our army of collectors for our Red Shield Street Appeal?

Part of the Red Shield Appeal, Street Week is our yearly event where we head out to the streets of our local communities with our collection buckets. Not everyone can be a recurring donor or give to our other appeals. But seeing the Red Shield on their street corner or at their local supermarket tends to bring a smile to so many people, giving them the opportunity to make a gold coin or cash donation and interact with people who support our work.

The experience of volunteering is uplifting and rewarding. Volunteers range from school-age children to the retired like Marilynn who says 'I like to do two hours at a time, sometimes twice in a day. People are so willing to give, so positive about the work of the Army, and so friendly. Frankly it gives me a buzz.'

'I like to collect for The Salvation Army as I like to help my community,' says Lisa. 'I like talking to the elderly'.

This year marks our 60th year on the streets and we would love to make it our biggest year ever. The need for our frontline services of food and wraparound care—such as social work, advocacy, counselling and parenting advice—is bigger than ever. So, let's meet that need with the strongest volunteer army ever to hit the streets.

Today, the Red Shield is among the best-known logos in the world and represents The Salvation Army's reputation for being there on the frontline of need.



Sign up to collect at salvationarmy.org.nz/collect or at your local Salvation Army Centre (ask for the corps officer as they will be managing volunteers).

Please mark May 6–12 in your calendar and plan to be involved in raising the financial resources needed to sustain our vital services.

Motivated to give through her belief in our mission

Carrie became a recurring giver due to her faith in The Salvation Army. She'd also seen a difference in her son after he was befriended by a member of staff.

I've always held a positive view of The Salvation Army as a valuable grassroots organisation. It is incredibly important for people who are feeling disconnected from society to find connection with people in the community.

I've always been grateful to anyone who shows kindness to my son, Joseph, who struggles with mental health issues.

It was a chance meeting that became significant in Joseph's life. He was hanging out outside his local Salvation Army centre and one of the staff members, Tom, bought him a pie and they started chatting. They met several times and Tom became somewhat of a mentor to Joseph. He even gave him his number when he moved, and Joseph continued to text him. I kept hearing his name pop up and I think he was a great source of comfort and encouragement.

For the next couple of years, Tom was sort of there in the background as a strong person that Joseph felt he could rely on and trust.

'I give to The Salvation Army because it provides that bridge back to life for people who have lost their way.'

As a parent of an adult child who struggles to fit in socially, it's good to know The Salvation Army is there as a place for him to turn to if he needs it. Somewhere he can trust that he won't be judged. Trust is one of Joseph's big words. There are a lot of people he doesn't really feel he can trust. In normal terms, they might not be judgmental people as such, but when they're interacting with Joseph, he feels judged.

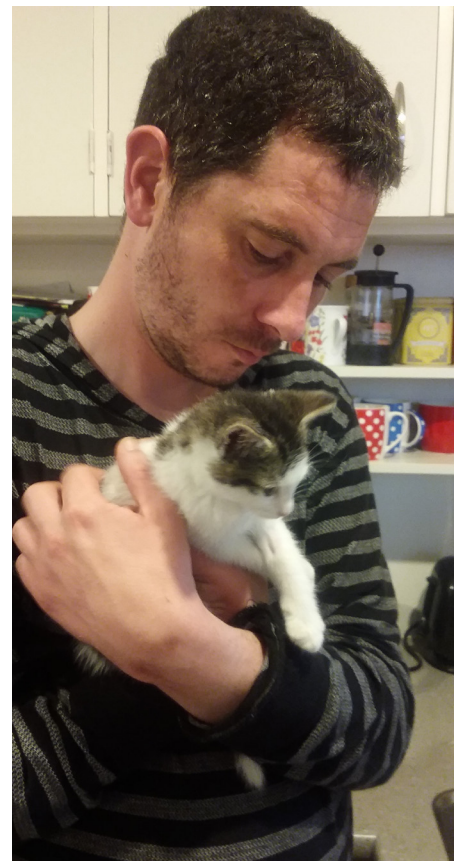
Joseph's experience has given me insight into this other world where people feel lost, lonely and left out. I know that it is so hard to get back in again, without a safe structure around you to help ease you back into life. You can't join a normal community group, it's too much to cope with.

'One thing I always want people to realise is that just acknowledging somebody with a smile ... is just huge.'

I give to The Salvation Army because it provides that bridge back to life for people who have lost their way. The Salvation Army is right there in the community. And even though it's a Christian organisation, it doesn't have those barriers people often feel approaching a church. It's non-judgmental and a safe place for people to go.

One thing I always want people to realise is that just acknowledging somebody with a smile, having a brief chat, giving them a bit of time, or a bit of leeway when something doesn't go quite right, is just huge. People whose lives are ticking along fine don't always realise the difference they can make. But Joseph tells me quite often about somebody who said something nice or did something nice. It really matters, big time.

If you see someone sitting on the ground outside a shop or something, acknowledge them. Don't just walk past. Sometimes that's my son.'



▲ From top: Carrie with her cat Zippy; Joseph with Zippy who is important to him.



We know times are so tough, but if you want to add a little more to your recurring giving plan, please email Gabrielle at trueheroes@salvationarmy.org.nz or call her on **021 352 742**.

A posthumous 'thank you' of more than \$100,000

When Kathleen Schroder, who had been living in social housing at the Blenheim Salvation Army Centre, died, staff were amazed to find that she had left a significant sum of money in her Will—a gift to the people and place she had come to love.

Kathleen lived a frugal life for 15 years in social housing at the Blenheim Salvation Army Centre. When she died at 79 years old in October 2020, staff were amazed and touched to discover she had left a substantial amount to the Army in her Will.

Kathleen had attended The Salvation Army church every Sunday and became a fixture of the Blenheim Centre with several self-appointed roles: delivering War Cry (now SALT) magazines around the offices, washing toys as they were returned to the toy library and monitoring the comings and goings in the car park.

'She was like the car park police,' laughs Bridget Nolan, PLP facilitator. 'She took a lot of pride in it.'

'She was part of the fabric of the place,' says Blenheim Corps Officer Captain Jacob Howan.

At Kathleen's funeral, Jacob told the congregation, 'Though Kathleen could seem blunt and gruff on the exterior, many of us knew a lady who deeply cared for this place and these people.'

Kathleen was placed into the care of a Salvation Army children's home at the age of 13 when her mother died. She

went on to train as a nurse and fell in love with Stan in the 80s. They were wed within three weeks of meeting. Sadly, they were only married for six years, as Stan died suddenly.

'...many of us knew a lady who deeply cared for this place and these people.'

'She never let on that there was a lot of money to be left to the centre,' says Jacob. 'We've used about \$15,000 on storage for the toy library. We have amassed so many toys, it seemed like every room had shelves full of them. Now, they are all in one place. The rest will probably be used to fix up the buildings. There is a lot of work that needs to be done and it's wonderful to know we have some money for it.'



A bequest is a visionary gift which upholds the values of the bequestor and is a living memorial to their life. To leave a gift in your Will, call **0800 53 00 00** or visit salvationarmy.org.nz/wills

You reunited a father with his sons

When the house he was living in was unexpectedly sold and his partner left with the kids, Skip turned to The Salvation Army for help with housing and started the process of getting custody of his boys.

Life had been quite tough for Skip, but he had found a happy place near the beach, breeding horses, working as a roofer and bringing up his two young sons.

Although he felt he had needed to be both mum and dad to his boys, his relationship with his partner was okay until the day they came home to find a 'for sale' sign on the fence. Skip was left wondering what it meant for the future.

When the property sold, his partner left, taking the boys with her and Skip, bereft, moved into his adult daughter's shed. That was home for a month until a social agency referred him to The Salvation Army for Transitional Housing.

First, he was housed in a small apartment to show the court he had a stable abode when he applied for custody. Then, when the boys were allowed to visit, he was put in a two-bedroom house so that there was space for them to stay.

'Compared to 12 months ago, life now is awesome. I've changed as a person too, I'm a lot calmer.'

During his almost year-long stay in Transitional Housing, Skip received help with food along with social work and advocacy.

'I spent eight months fighting for custody of my boys,' he says. 'The Transitional Housing team helped me immensely. I was under a lot of stress, and it was good to be able to vent and get advice.'



Keen for his sons to stay in the school they loved, Skip wanted a house in the area. Finally, a Kāinga Ora house was found, and he now has his boys five days a week.

'I'm so grateful to The Salvation Army,' he says. 'And my boys are too. They are only seven and eight and they struggled a lot, mentally, with the situation at the beginning. Compared to 12 months ago, life now is awesome. I've changed as a person too, I'm a lot calmer.'



Helping families thrive

The Salvation Army's parenting programme, Building Awesome Whānau, is a face-to-face group programme that is helping caregivers find their feet as parents, break cycles of intergenerational trauma, set boundaries and learn healthy communication skills.

Designed by The Parenting Place for those raising children from 2–13 years old, Building Awesome Whānau is delivered over six weeks in two-hour group sessions. Caregivers are guided through content that includes topics around aroha and connection, values and tūpuna (ancestors and grandparents), the importance of the whare (home) and healthy communication.

This content is delivered through a Hauora Māori (wellbeing principles) lens via videos, writing exercises and activities. New Zealand comedian Pio Terei presents the video content in a relatable and humorous way. Parents are guided to reflect on their past, identify areas for change and realise their dreams for their family.

Laura McCabe has been facilitating the programme in Tauranga for two years. She loves seeing parents have 'aha' moments during the classes.

'You see that "aha" moment happen when we play the video about communication. They also have "aha" moments when it comes to discussing parenting styles. We talk about a sergeant major, a jellyfish, an absent parent and a parenting coach. The parenting coach style is what we want to guide people towards adopting. We liken it to a sporting coach who is there to encourage, help along and give guidance on proper techniques.

'One mum told me that she appreciated being able to share in a place of safety and to meet like-minded people with similar thoughts, feelings and experiences. It's not a parenting programme that tells you how to parent. Instead, it asks people to reflect on how they were raised and helps to break any cycles of intergenerational trauma.

'My favourite takeaway is "Nanny's Rule". This tells children, you need to do the things you have to do before you can do what you want to do. It's a good way of saying no while saying yes. For example, if a child wants to watch YouTube for half an hour, they are asked what they need to do first, such as getting out of their school uniform, putting their lunchbox away and getting themselves a snack.'

'Parents are guided to reflect on their past, identify areas for change and realise their dreams for their family.'

At Royal Oak in Auckland, Rose Tuaine and Nofoa Faimalo have run a mixed-gender group with great success.

'One couple who had been struggling with addictions and had lost care of their children have made a lot of changes since doing the course and are now setting goals, keeping up with routines and having visitations with their children,' says Rose. 'It's helped them a lot. The mother commented that the course gave her new hope and new tools, and that she's learned to be gentler in her communication with her children.'



Thanks to generous donations from people like you, programmes such as Building Awesome Whānau support families across New Zealand. **Please scan the QR code to donate today.**