



Central Vic Salvos

21st December 2025

“I am not the Light” – John the Baptist

John the Baptist is character I really warm to. He’s wild and untamed, echoes the voice and the lifestyle of old time prophets, and he calls out for systemic change – “Get ready for God! Get your act together - whatever your position in society, bring yourself into line with God’s love and justice.” He doesn’t point the finger at the usual suspects – instead, he calls us all to look to our own ways of handling tough situations and open up to the ways of God.

It’s easy to point the finger at the rich and privileged, or at the strange and unfamiliar. In the tragedy and terror of the past week, we have seen a bit of finger-pointing. It can be a knee jerk, defensive move when we feel disturbed, and who isn’t disturbed by the weaponised attack on a cultural family event with intent not just to frighten, but to kill.

John the Baptist had a different kind of finger pointing. For the soldiers, the rich, the down trodden, the oppressed, the enslaved, the ‘meat-in-the-sandwich’ tax-takers, John pointed the finger, not at any of them, but pointed at Jesus.

John 1 v 6 There was a man sent from God whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. 8 He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. 9 The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.

John didn’t point to himself either. When people started gathering to follow him, he redirected them, pointing to Jesus. Jesus was the the one. John identified Jesus:

John 1v29 “Look! The Lamb of God who carries away the sin of the cosmos”



A group of bales of hay in a field

Jesus would take all the finger pointing, all the blame, Jesus takes the fall for all the wickedness, evil, violence and terror the world can and has served up. In Jesus God turns up to take responsibility for the world he’s created. The blame game of finger pointing can be endless. We can go round and round in circles finding another person to blame, if it weren’t for God sticking up his hand and taking the blame.

John gives us two great ways of handling our fingerpointing urges: Firstly to look at our own practices and re-orientate ourselves with God’s integrity, justice, welcome, peacemaking, reconciliation.

The second is to point to the Light – rather than fixating on how this or that person has wronged us or others, we point to the Light of Jesus and let that light shine, showing what is good and true and beautiful, and what needs carrying away by the Lamb of God. (Yes I know John mixes his metaphors! We truly need many images to rightly understand the full wonder of God’s ways).

It is harder sometimes to find expression for our best principles and practices – easier to point the finger at what is patently evil and wrong: easier, but it leaves us empty and hopeless.

To be a community of faith is to not give into fingerpointing, and to refuse the easy but empty blame game. We point to Jesus, human and holy, God with us, in solidarity, not to fingerpoint at our wrongs but to shine light where there has been shame, and show love where there has been harm.

Beth Waldron Anstice

PRAYER/PRAISE POINTS:

If you have any you would like to share below please email centralvicsalvos@salvationarmy.org.au or let your Corps Officer know and they will pass it on



Pray that we will be a praying church, filled with the Holy Spirit, and experience spiritual revival and a greater hunger for God's presence.

BENDIGO CORPS

General Christmas Season - Please pray for our Christmas season programmes, that through every event and act of kindness, people may experience the true joy, peace, and hope found in Jesus Christ.

Community and Outreach - Pray for those we will meet and serve through Christmas programs, that God's love will touch their hearts and meet their needs in both practical and spiritual ways.

Church Family - Please remember in prayer our church family members who are unwell, lonely, or grieving during this season — that they may feel God's comfort and presence.

Volunteers and Leaders - Pray for all who are giving their time and energy to prepare and serve during this busy season, that God would strengthen, refresh, and bless them.

For Sick

The world: for the country's who have had natural disasters recently

Lord, You have promised us: "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." (Matthew 7:7). Today, we come before You asking, seeking, and knocking with faith. May Your will be done, and may Your Spirit guide us as we lift up these requests.

CASTLEMAINE CORPS

Continue to surround John and Pam spending Christmas far from family and friends.

Pray for a peaceful joyful experience of God's presence for those collecting hampers and toys this week prayers of gratitude for abundance to share, and for the generosity of our community in donations and volunteering

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Prayer for those travelling over the Christmas period, for care and refreshing, and for families gathering holding the love, the grief and the long complex stories of family relationships together.

MARYBOROUGH CORPS

Praise God for all the generosity of our community to our Christmas Cheer.

Pray for all the families receiving a Christmas hamper this coming week

Praise God for all He is doing in our CVS communities.

Ask for boldness to share the gospel and to be a witness to God's goodness

Pray for believers to grow in their faith, to be strengthened, and to be able to encourage one another.

Pray for the families in our corps

Pray for healing of anyone who is unwell at this time

Pray for God to raise up more workers for the harvest field

EAGLEHAWK CORPS

For everyone in the Corps

God's name to be honored and glorified

For people who are sick at the moment

For our community and outreach opportunities

praise God we can celebrate together as a church family





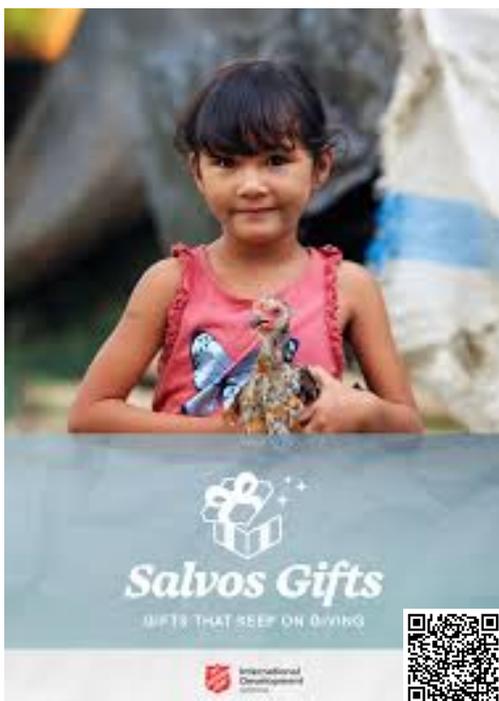
The Hope of Christmas is a series of devotionals designed to help young families connect with each other and with God during the Advent season.

For each day, there is an fun interactive activity, a devotional reflection, prompts for sharing, and a prayer.



Join us for Week 4 of our Advent series.
Come along **THIS SUNDAY** to hear about how
Jesus is no ordinary king!

WEEK 4: NO ORDINARY KING
Key Scripture: Matthew 2:1-12



PICK YOUR SALVOS GIFT

Browse our online catalogue and choose the gifts that inspire you or the loved one you are gifting to. Gifts are divided into three categories: Children, Livelihoods and Health. All correspond with projects supported by The Salvation Army International Development. Add the items to your cart and proceed to checkout when done.

SHARE A GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

Your gift will bring hope and joy to families and communities around the world. Share this warm feeling with your loved ones by sending them your personalised gift cards and letting them know the impact of your generosity. Scan the QR code or go to <https://www.salvationarmy.org.au/international-development/give/salvos-gifts/>

Eaglehawk



EAGLEHAWK CORPS OUTING

February 3rd 2026

A fun Corps outing.

We need to have a minimum of 15 people.

Cost: \$TBA

Opportunity will also be given to people to walk around to Port of Echuca.

You can join a tour, this will be at your own expense.

Contact: Major Karen - (03) 5459 0507



Maryborough



DOORWAYS

Closure Dates

Monday 22nd Dec

Open

Tuesday 23rd December - Monday 12th January 2026

Closed

Wednesday 14th January 2026

Open

IN RECESS

Indoor Bowls

resumes Thursday 22nd January

Women's Fellowship & Noon Prayer

resumes 2026

Kids Club & Youth Group

resume February 2026



Maryborough

CHRISTMAS SERVICE

CHRISTMAS EVE CAROLS

24th December 5pm free BBQ & Games

6pm Christmas Carols

Bring your family & friends to sing Christmas carols

Maryborough Salvation Army

27 Wills Street,

Maryborough



IN NEED

If anyone has any egg cartons they don't need our doorways program could use them.

Bendigo

BENDIGO CBD THRIF SHOP

will be closed 24th Dec and
re-open 6th Jan



Christmas Trading Hours:

Tuesday Dec 23 —9AM to 4:30PM
Wednesday Dec 24 —CLOSED
Thursday Dec 25 —CLOSED

Friday Dec 26—CLOSED
Monday Dec 29 — 9AM to 4:30PM
Tuesday Dec 30—9AM to 4:30PM
Wednesday Dec 31—9AM to 12:30PM

Thursday Jan 1—CLOSED
Friday Jan 2—CLOSED

NO COMMUNITY LUNCH ON THE 25th Dec 2025 and 1st Jan 2026

**Wishing you and your family a peaceful and blessed Christmas
and a Happy New Year**



CHRISTMAS GIFT WRAPPING

Lets get our wrapping on (Christmas wrapping) We are need two people per shift
Dec 24th: 10am - 12.30pm, 12.30pm-3pm, 3pm - 5pm and 5pm - 7pm
If you can help please call Captain Ashir on 0408 746 144

CHRISTMAS DRAMA

SAME GOD CALLING US TODAY

21st of December 2025 10:00 AM
Morning tea will be served

Bendigo Salvation Army
65-71 Mundy St, Bendigo
enter via Gate # 1

A golden crown with a red jewel and a manger scene with a baby in a wooden box, surrounded by straw and a white cloth.

Castlemaine

Castlemaine Christmas Celebration Diary

- Dec 14 – 10:30 am service
- Dec 14 – Harcourt Carols 4:30pm
- Dec 15 – Playgroup Christmas Party 10 am (Hall)
- Dec 15 – Just Brass Caroling 3:45 -4:45 (outside IGA)
- Dec 15 – Karaoke Carols 5:30-7:30 (Hall)
- Dec 17 & 19 Christmas Cheer Distribution 9:30-3:30
- Dec 19 – Carols in the Park – Just Brass playing from 6:30pm
- Dec 21 – 10:30 am service and Corps Lunch
- Dec 22 – Blue Christmas service 7pm (Hall)
- Dec 25 – Combined Christmas Day service 9:30

(Church of Christ, Blakely Rd.)

DOORWAYS OPENING HOURS

Friday Dec 26

Friday Jan 2

Friday Jan 9

Normal Wednesdays and Fridays
from Jan 14



Last Sunday Worship -
working together to bring
Great Joy - the perfect start
for this week providing 100
hampers and toys in
Castlemaine.

Blue Christmas Service

Monday December 22, 7pm

A simple, short, quiet reflective time

- *for those who find Christmas hard and don't feel joy at this time
- *for those whose Christmas is touched with grief and pain
- *light a candle to remember a loved one you have lost
- *All are welcome - find comfort and peace

 Castlemaine Salvos – Kennedy Street by the Railway Station



Thrift Shops

BENDIGO THRIFT SHOP

2B Thistle Street, Golden Square
Ph: (03) 5459 0504

Open Hours:

9am-4:30pm Monday to Friday
9am-2pm Saturday

BENDIGO CBD THRIFT SHOP

18 Pall Mall, Bendigo
Ph: (03) 5459 0509

Open Hours:

9:30am-4:00pm
Monday to Saturday

EAGLEHAWK THRIFT SHOP

4 Marong Rd, Ironbark
Ph: (03) 5459 0508

Open Hours:

9:30am-5pm Monday to Friday
9:30am-4pm Saturday

CASTLEMAINE THRIFT SHOP

46 Forest Street, Castlemaine
Ph: (03) 5459 0506

Open Hours:

10am-4pm Monday to Friday
10am-3pm Saturday

ST ARNAUD THRIFT SHOP

70-72 Napier Street, St Arnaud
Ph: (03) 5459 0503

Open Hours:

9:30am - 3:30pm Monday to Friday
10am-2pm Saturday

AVOCA THRIFT SHOP

114 High Street, Avoca
Ph: (03) 5459 0502

Open Hours:

10:00am - 3:30pm Mon, Wed, Fri

WEEKLY PROGRAMS & SERVICES

BENDIGO

MONDAY

12.00pm - Community Meal
1.00pm - Art Space

THURSDAY

10.30 to 1.30pm - Clothes Washing
11.15am - Chapel
12.00pm - Community Meal
1.00pm - Art Space
3.00 to 5.00pm - Drop in space
6.00 to 7.15pm - Zac's Place

SUNDAY

10.00am - Celebration Service
4.00pm - Discovery Church

65-71 Mundy St, Bendigo

MARYBOROUGH

MONDAY

9:30am to 12.30pm - Doorways

WEDNESDAY

9:30am to 12.30pm - Doorways

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

9:30am to 12.30pm - Doorways

SUNDAY

9:15am - Prayer Meeting
10.00am - Celebration Service

27 Wills St, Maryborough

CASTLEMAINE

MONDAY

10.00am - Playgroup*

WEDNESDAY

9.30am to 12.00pm Doorways

FRIDAY

9.30am to 12.00pm - Doorways

SUNDAY

10.30am - Worship Service

47 Kennedy St, Castlemaine

EAGLEHAWK

TUESDAYS

3:35 to 5pm - Choir Practice.

THURSDAY

1.30pm - Crafty Skills Community

1.30pm - Band Practice

3.00pm - Bible Study *

4:30 pm - Prayer Meeting - Hall

SUNDAY

9:40am - prays

10.00am - Celebration Service

51 Church St, Eaglehawk

*not on during school Holidays



Contact Us

THE SALVATION ARMY CENTRAL VIC SALVOS

BENDIGO

Capt. Ashir Morris and Hummera Ashir
65 – 71 Mundy Street, Bendigo | 03 5440 8431
corpsofficer.bendigo@salvationarmy.org.au

CASTLEMAINE

Beth Waldron Anstice
47 Kennedy Street, Castlemaine | 03 5459 0505
corpsofficer.castlemaine@salvationarmy.org.au

EAGLEHAWK

Major Karen Armstrong
51 Church Street, Eaglehawk | (03) 5459 0507
corpsofficer.eaglehawk@salvationarmy.org.au

MARYBOROUGH

Major Vanessa Evans (Starting December 1)
27 Wills St, Maryborough | 03 5459 0500
corpsofficer.maryborough@salvationarmy.org.au



2 WAYS TO GIVE

IN PERSON
PLACE YOUR CASH OR ENVELOPES IN THE OFFERING PLATE

ONLINE
VIA BPAY
BILLER CODE: 437855
REFERENCE #: 10009



doorways

Doorways is our Community Support program. It is the entryway through which those experiencing hardship and/or disadvantage can take proactive steps to find the support they need to overcome life's challenges and find long-term solutions. We offer a range of services from emergency relief to case management and more.

If you are experiencing hardship or financial difficulties, please call the Salvos Phone Assistance Line (PAL) on 03 8873 5288. This service operates Monday to Friday between 9am and 4pm.

Please be aware no assistance interviews will be conducted from our local sites. Community members presenting to any of our Central Vic Salvos sites will be invited to contact Salvos PAL.



The Salvation Army Central Victoria acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Peoples of the Kulin Nation, the Traditional owners of the land on which we meet and work and pay our respect to Elders past, present and future. We value and include people of all cultures, languages, abilities, sexual orientations, gender identities, gender expressions and intersex status. We are committed to providing programs that are fully inclusive. We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of people of all ages, particularly children.