



Divisional Plan

to embrace our National Vision together



Revised March 2019



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Our Divisional Plan (formerly known as 'Hope Rising') is how we will implement the National Vision, mission and values and how we will live out the National Strategy for integrated, holistic mission.

Our National Vision

Wherever there is hardship or injustice,
Salvos will live, love and fight
alongside others
to transform Australia one life at a time
with the love of Jesus



Wherever there is hardship or injustice

The Divisional plan aims to reinforce the DNA of The Salvation Army in the NSW/ACT Division and to strip back to the Army at its best - sharing the love of Jesus as we holistically meet need, seeking God's preferred future for our communities.

Planting 'Communities of Hope' are one of the ways we will actively do this.

Communities of Hope are a faith expression that gathers around identified needs, hardship, or social injustice within the community. The intention is to respond to need in a holistic way while also providing a natural way for people to explore faith.

Salvos will live, love and fight

The Divisional Strategy encourages every Salvo to be engaged in our shared mission.

The Salvation Army was founded in community and the 3 faith expressions of holistic Mission (Communities of Hope, Community Tables, and Gathered Worship) are to maximize, not only our connection with God, but also with each other. They are designed for us to share life, and faith, together – to fight for what matters, alongside each other.

alongside others

The Divisional plan embraces our need for collaboration.

No frontline leader needs to feel isolated or alone in their ministry and we acknowledge that ‘together we’re stronger’. No longer in ‘silos’ but partnering up in teams— partnering together for spiritual renewal and in Area Leadership Teams for strategic, integrated re-imagining that collaborates with all Salvation Army expressions in the area, other churches, agencies & organisations that share our values. The goal is to work together to bring about authentic transformation in our communities

to transform Australia one life at a time

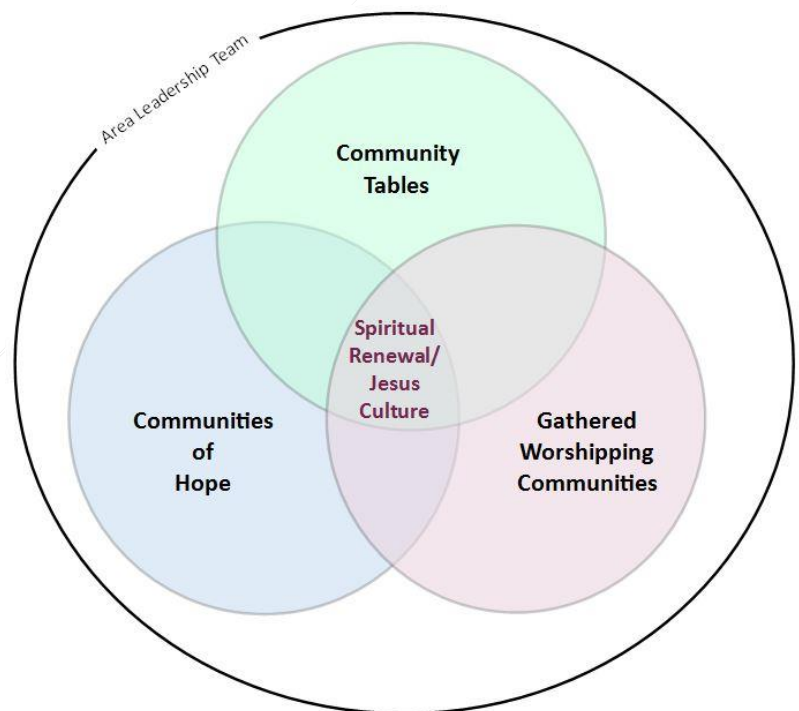
With the implementation of the Divisional plan, we have already begun to see signs of sustainable change. Partnering up is bringing about increased energy and optimism for mission, the planting of Communities of Hope and Community Tables are helping to connect faith and life in more natural and accessible ways and, as individual lives are transformed, we believe for holistic transformation in our communities. Hope is rising!

with the love of Jesus

Jesus is, and must be, at the centre of everything we do. It is only through encountering Jesus that life transformation, and authentic mission, is sustainable.

At the centre of the Divisional Plan is a focus on Spiritual Renewal and Jesus Culture. Knowing Him, and living like Him, is the only way to be ‘Great Commission’ people and live authentically missional lives.

Our focus on Spiritual Renewal and Jesus Culture will empower us to ‘share the love of Jesus’ in life-changing ways.



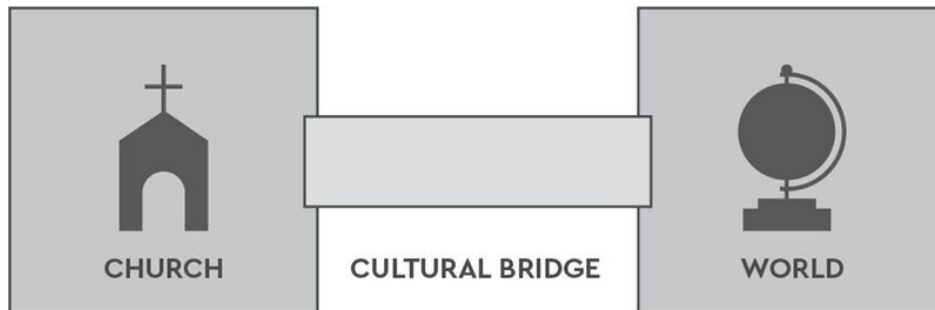
Sharing the love of Jesus

CARING FOR PEOPLE | CREATING FAITH PATHWAYS | BUILDING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES | WORKING FOR JUSTICE

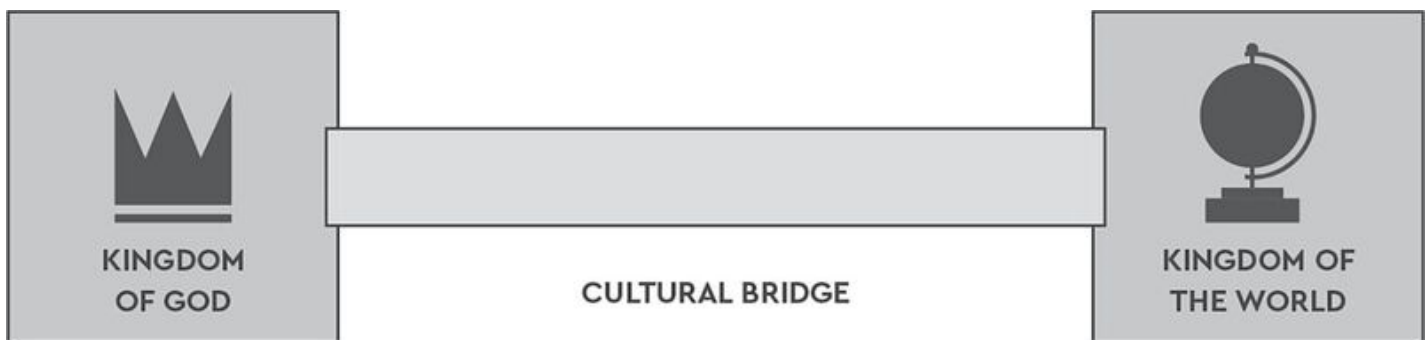
Why?

‘The Great Divide’

By Colin Stoodley



In the 1950s-1990s the “cultural bridge” was quite easy to cross. So many people had been to Sunday School; some of them had been to Religious Education in School; others had numbers of family members following Jesus. Either way, the journey from the world into the church was still seen as possible. There were only minor philosophical issues that society faced and generally, if you were feeling lost and seeking truth, you could make your way to the church. And, because of this the church adopted an “attractational” stance and waited in their churches for the seekers to come.



The situation now is very different. The number of people with a Sunday School or RE experience is almost negligible and the tendency is for people to have no knowledge or understanding of the revelation of Jesus in Scripture. So, when they feel lost or seeking truth they tend not to consider the church as an option. In addition, the influence of philosophies like naturalism, existentialism and epicureanism have led to the development of vastly different narratives and increasing numbers of westerners are finding their answers within those stories.

Now the “cultural bridge” is long and difficult. So now, we cannot remain in our churches - we must venture out on Kingdom business into the marketplace of ideas and camp there to help all those we meet with the story about grace and forgiveness through Jesus.

Why continued....

- **The need for diversity**

The Australian culture demands greater diversity in the offerings/modes of church. The current model of Gathered Worshipping Community that meets predominately on a Sunday morning, and whose format is worship through song and message through preacher, is not to be devalued but rather is to be supplemented with new expressions of Communities of Hope and Community Tables. The last 20 years has seen the church innovate around the Gathered Worshipping Community mode of church, but not innovate in the essential shape of the mode. Community Tables and Communities of Hope are radical changes in mode. The change in mode will allow “church” to be more accessible and a potential way of mobilising Corps into Social expressions.



The Divisional Plan acknowledges that:

- Our current methods aren't optimally helping us accomplish our mission – we need to recapture the Army's radical and pioneering spirit
- We are Great Commission people – we have a passion for Jesus and the world for which he died.
- We are called to be 'hope bringers' wherever there is hardship or injustice
- Our faith compels us to an action-oriented, self-sacrificial love of others.
- We want to share the love of Jesus well
- We know that serving God puts mission above tradition
- People desire to belong and transformation happens through relationships - with Jesus and in community.
- **The transformation of Australia is possible – one life at a time**

Key Focus Areas

1. Spiritual Renewal

2. Strategic Re-imagining

Within these two areas, there are a number of critical, foundational factors needed to support the overall Divisional plan.

Spiritual Renewal

National Strategic Imperative ---

Foster Christian spirituality

The foundational factors include:

People of prayer

Focused training and action that creates local and regional prayer movements to facilitate our people in released prayer engagement in their towns and cities.

Personal encounters

Encourage/provide opportunities that facilitate Holy Spirit personal encounters that bring about repentance, healing and empowerment. Open up pathways that give opportunity for people to explore discipleship and mission.

Living authentically missional lives

We want to help every person of faith be:

- Encouraged to find and live a natural rhythm for mission.
- Enabled to find a place (a context) where they can engage in mission.
- Led by the Spirit to the person/s we are to intentionally walk alongside.

Strategic Reimagining – integrated Missional Engagement

Collaboration


National Strategic Imperatives ---


Grow partnerships

The motto of ‘No-one should have to go it alone’ shouldn’t just apply to the people we serve but it needs to apply to the way we think about, and structure ourselves, for mission. This will be fostered by partnering up in Area Leadership Teams for strategic & integrated missional planning, in groups that will focus on spiritual renewal, and in partnerships with others.

Reimagining Faith Engagement

Moving from limited pathways to diverse opportunities to engage with faith. Engaging through the creation integrated missional spaces - Community Tables, Communities of Hope, & Gathered Worshipping Communities.

 Seeking to recognise where God is already at work in our communities and discerning the part he wants The Salvation Army to play (discern & do).

 **Enlarged vision, serving our towns & cities** – From pastoring our patch to broader city/region/town/community-wide transformation. Seeking to expand the Kingdom of God.

Encourage innovation

Make disciples

Deliver holistic mission

Focus our efforts

The Salvation Army Strategic Framework

Incorporating the NSW/ACT Divisional Plan

4 pillars

We will transform ↔ We will focus ↔ We will pioneer ↔ We will be accountable

Deliver holistic mission

Caring for people, and local Communities, practically and spiritually
 Integrated Missional Engagement
Community Tables (CT)
Communities of Hope (CoH)
Gathered Worshiping Communities (GWC)

Foster Christian spirituality

Consciously foster deep, dynamic, Christian spirituality—reflected through prayer, engagement with scripture and holy living in our work and personal lives.
Spiritual Renewal

Encourage innovation

Being future-focussed, addressing cultural barriers to innovation and developing more effective ways of working.
Strategic re-imagining—
 Embracing God's preferred future

Renew culture

Develop a highly accountable culture where everyone takes responsibility for living out the Mission, & Vision
Establishing an authentic 'Jesus Culture'
 National Values of integrity, compassion, respect, diversity, and collaboration

Strengthen Advocacy

Influence public policy and partner with others to bring about social change in areas that are important to us.

Focus our efforts

We will use our time, energy and resources on initiatives where we can have the biggest impact.
'Discern and Do'
 Embracing God's preferred future

Grow partnerships

Establish relationships with others that share our vision and help us realise our mission.
'Partnering up' - Working together to bring about authentic transformation in our communities

Enhance measurement

Effectively measure the things that matter most to us.
Hope Rising App for CT, CoH & GWC
 # National will be working on a nationally consistent 'scorecard'

Make disciples

Provide opportunities/pathways for knowing & following Jesus

Build leadership capability

Equipping, retaining and attracting effective leaders who can lead us to achieve our ambitious Vision.
Targeted training events, coaching & mentoring for individuals & groups across generations

Create sustainable leadership

Embrace diversity and actively create opportunities for the emerging generations of Salvos

Improve stewardship & sustainability

Use our resources responsibly and efficiently, build a diverse funding base, target our resources towards mission
'Stripping back to the Army at its best'

Community Tables
Communities of Hope
Gathered Worshiping Communities
 And more...

12 strategic imperatives

Communities of Hope, Community Tables and Gathered Worshipping Communities

- *all equally valid and valued expressions of faith life (or 'Church')*

A plan to bridge the gap between people and a life-changing engagement with faith



A **Community of Hope** is a regular gathering, created in response to an 'identified need' in the community. They meet to intentionally walk alongside people and meet need in a holistic way.

A Community of Hope is shaped by specific markers

Summary of Markers for a Community of Hope

- Meets regularly (at least once a month)
- Everyone is invited to contribute
- Authentic community is being created
- Walking alongside others – sharing life
- Clear system of referral
- Shared ownership
- Pathways for faith accessible
- Intentional care, creativity and effort
- Jesus at the centre
- Open invitation
- Sharing/serving the needs of others
- Prayer

A Community of Hope may also refer to a *place*-a missional centre of holistic connection (Corps) that is based on these same markers.



A **Community Table** is a regular meeting of 2-12 people who gather to have conversations about life, faith and ways to work together to serve others. They can meet in a home, at a coffee shop, in a Social Centre or anywhere! *# A Community Table is shaped by specific markers*

Summary of Markers for a Community Table

- Meets regularly (at least once a month)
- Intentional Conversation
- Non-judgemental
- Holy Spirit led
- Authentic community is being created
- Pathways for faith accessible
- Walking alongside others – sharing life
- Jesus is made the centre
- Safe space to be vulnerable
- Open invitation to others
- Awareness of needs of others and opportunity to serve
- Prayer



A **Gathered Worshipping Community** is a regular gathering that focuses on celebrating Jesus through corporate worship and preaching/teaching of the Word. It has the primary focus of worship that refreshes and equips us to be 'sent' into the community.

A Gathered Worshipping Community is shaped by specific markers

Summary of Markers for a Gathered Worshipping Community

- Meets regularly (usually weekly)
- Engaging Worship
- The Word of God is made accessible and applied to life
- Pathways for growing in faith are present and intentional
- Space made to encounter God
- Authentic community is being created
- Serving the needs of others
- Walking alongside – sharing life
- Inclusiveness
- Focus on being a 'sent' people
- Prayer

Communities of Hope, Community Tables, and Gathered Worshipping Communities are all equally valid and valued expressions of faith life (or gathered Church)

5 essential ingredients that make a gathering of people a 'Gathered Church'

- Worship – the uplifting of Jesus
- Ministry – the care of one another and the community we live in and serve
- Fellowship – authentic community
- Discipleship – growing in the life of the Community
- Evangelism – inviting others to engage in the good news

HOW do we stay course?

The challenge for any innovation is to articulate clearly the new future and then to ensure that the engagement stays course with the original design.

To assist the Communities of Hope, Gathered Worshipping Communities, and Community Table expressions stay true to the shape of a gathered church, Hope Rising MARKERS have been developed.

Each gathered church expression shares the same five essential ingredients whilst its uniqueness being evident in its organising principles.

Note: A more detailed explanation of Communities of Hope, Community Tables, and Gathered Worshipping Communities, the markers that shape them, the values and culture reflected in the markers, measurements, and the essence of 'Gathered Church' can be found in the Appendix

Realigning Current Ministries/Programs

In many of our current Mission Expressions there are ministries and programs that have made a difference in the lives of people over many years. They represent countless hours of heartfelt investment and effort by those who have faithfully led and served through them.

Some of those ministries/programs began as a way of engaging people who were ‘on the fringe’ - warm to the ministry of the Salvation Army. Genuine joy was felt if ever one of these people ‘crossed over’ and began attending worship on a Sunday. That was often the unexpressed goal. We celebrate that this still happens, but statistics indicate that (in most places) this is now rare.

But what if these current ministries and programs could become, in their own right, a holistic experience of ‘church’? Where the goal wasn’t getting people to the Salvos for worship on a Sunday, but ensuring that their current attendance and connection with the Salvos provided opportunity to genuinely connect with others and explore faith.



Within many of our current ministries and programs
lies the potential for a future
Community of Hope or Community Table



The **Markers** for Communities of Hope and Community Tables provide a way to assess current ministries and the suggested possibilities to develop and reshape them for even greater missional effectiveness. The Hope Rising App (outlined on the next page) will be helpful in tracking development and celebrating Kingdom success.

As **Area Leadership Teams** meet together they will be exploring how Mission Expressions can best work together to reach missional outcomes for their local community. There will be opportunities in the Area to establish, or realign current activities, to become Communities of Hope and Community Tables.

Example: It could be a natural way for Corps and Social Centres to partner up, as Social Centres open their doors (in an appropriate way) for Corps people to also walk alongside others and provide opportunity for people to explore faith.

The possibilities are endless!

The Hope Rising Markers App



To assist the facilitators of Communities of Hope, Community Tables, and Gathered Worshipping Community gatherings, there has been developed for android (Google Play store) and Apple devices an assessment tool to be engaged with at the conclusion of each gathering. The key rationale for development was to assist the front line facilitators to make personal assessments of the shape of each gathering. Secondary is the reporting capacity this then enables at a Divisional level.

see instructions for downloading below

The Hope Rising Markers App has been developed to assist in:

- Assessing that the shape of Communities of Hope, Community Tables, and Gathered Worshipping Communities stay intentional to the desired outcome, or 'church shaping.'
- Enabling interaction and learning between gatherings across the Division.
- Help stop mission drift toward program delivery (COH) and just conversation (CT)
- Celebrate where we are doing great.
- Reporting to the Division the numbers/sex/age of those gathering.

Downloading instructions:

The Hope Rising App is now live on the app store:

<https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/hope-rising/id1267657174?mt=8>

- AreaID's have been created and a "Find My AreaID" method has been created for you to be able to search and use your AreaID.
- Once logged into the app simply tap the settings cog (top right corner), then tap AreaID, then tap the link "Find an Area".
- Start typing the name of your Mission Expression (eg. Corps/Centre) and a list will be populated. Tap the Corps/Centre that you belong to then tap "return" on your keyboard and this will generate your AreaID.
- Back in the App, tap the grey box to enter in the AreaID you have found from the above steps and then Tap the Update button.

Please Note: The App is still in development. **All suggestions for improvement and any issues/questions can be directed to James Cox (IT Department).**

It is critical for the future that faith expressions are resourced, encouraged and celebrated. The easy, accurate reporting measures that the App provides will help us to do that.

The Hope Rising App needs to become a regularly used tool of every Corps leader and front line facilitator.

Urgency?

Urgency drives change. Urgency comes from two motivators:

1. Threat; and
2. Opportunity

Threats:

- In many of our settings, the number of people exploring faith in Jesus is declining and/or non-existent.
- Attendance in Corps numbers is declining to the point of closure.
- Ineffectiveness of current models to engage with our diverse communities to create spaces for connectedness and journeys of faith.
- Current financial models are unsustainable and hence, there is poor stewardship of available resources.
- We are becoming a gathered people reliant on the 'priest' - not a priesthood of believers sent to make disciples.

Opportunities:

- New National Vision and operating framework that encourages the integrated mission of all Expressions of the Army to achieve local missional outcomes.
- Strong brand awareness – The brand, The Salvation Army, has high levels of awareness and trust within the communities we are called to reach.
- Connections in community – The Salvation Army has many retail and service provider interactions with the community in which to invite engagement in Faith Expressions.
- The Community needs us – Isolation and disconnection are two of the greatest needs within the communities we serve. The Divisional plan seeks to create greater diversity in spaces to meet and connect.
- The good news is as relevant and 'good' today as it has ever been!

Measurements

The Divisional plan will involve several key areas of measurements so we can learn, improve and celebrate what God is doing.

- Quantitative measures:
 - Numbers of Faith Expression meetings
 - Number of people engaged in the meetings
 - People engagement, the extent of collaboration (TSA, Community, Wider Body Christ).
- Qualitative measures:
 - Markers and how they are being engaged in each of the gatherings.
- People measures:
 - Missional life of people of faith.
 - The impact in individual's lives resulting from their engagement with The Salvation Army.
- Social Impact:
 - How engagement with The Salvation Army has enhanced community life.

APPENDIX

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A Broader Explanation of Communities of Hope, Community Tables,
Gathered Worshipping Communities and the Markers that shape them