Meeting women where they are...

The Salvation Army - USA Southern Territory | Atlanta, GA

Special thanks to our Ministry to Women leadership, Commissioner Barbara Howell and Colonel Susan Bukiewicz

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Imagine what Ministry to Women would look like in a world where women from all walks of life are engaged, encouraged, equipped, and inspired to become all God created them to be. This vision was the catalyst of our Women’s Ministries Refocus Project in the USA South.

Women crave togetherness. We want to belong to a community where we are accepted; to be part of a support system where we can be encouraged and encourage others. We want to sit at tables where people are genuinely loved, meals are shared, stories are told, and sins are confessed – a place where brokenness meets grace. We want to sit at tables and laugh together, cry together, and pray together. Mostly, we want to sit at tables and encounter Jesus – we are hungering for more of Jesus.

The southern table has traditionally been so much more than a piece of furniture beautifully dressed for holiday meals, special occasions, and southern hospitality. It is a place of belonging that speaks the language of love, relationship, and nourishment of every sort. As we wrestle with how to do Ministry to Women in the 21st century, the southern table is our mission strategy. Gather is our response to women who hunger for connection, belonging, and Christ-centered community.

We have encouraged and empowered our women to try brave, innovative approaches. We have given them freedom and flexibility to be relevant in this 21st century, and permission to future proof Ministry to Women in the USA South for the next generation and beyond.

Women today need a community of support as much as ever. We have commissioned the women of the USA South to be that support. The 2019 International Report reflects what Ministry to Women looks like when women are engaged, encouraged, equipped, and inspired to become all God created them to be.

Is reaching the next generation as simple as adding another chair and place setting at the table? If so, we have encouraged our women to throw wide open the doors of our homes, coffee shops, and Corps buildings, go into the streets, gather as many women as we can, bring them to our table and eat!
ENGAGE women where they are and offer counsel, direction, and encouragement so they can have a deeper understanding of God.

ENCOURAGE women in their full potential in influencing family, friends, and community.

EQUIP women with Christ-centered resources and opportunities for growth to unleash their potential.

INSPIRE women to be who God created them to be, fulfilling His passions and purposes for their lives.

FIGHT FOR FREEDOM Anti-Human Trafficking and Social Justice programs.

CONNECT and engage with an online community of women.
Engage

The **Broken Arrow, Oklahoma** Corps engaged in the life of a young woman who suffered sexual, physical, and emotional abuse. She had longed for answerers of why she had to suffer such tragedy. The women of the Corps have covered her with the love of Christ and have walked beside her through this journey, assuring her that she is a beautiful chosen vessel. Her testimony in now one of wholeness and freedom. The women continue to watch her journey unfold before them. It has been an honor for the women to come alongside her and watch her healing through her discovery of Jesus.

The **Stillwater, Oklahoma** Corps has engaged career women and young moms by offering an online Bible Study community. The younger women of the Corps have become more engaged in Ministry to Women through this community and share freely in the online chat discussions.

**Throughout the territory,** women are engaging in online communities. As a result, we’re seeing an increase in discipleship and mentoring and deeping faith in young women.

A woman in the **Sanford, Florida** Corps came to Ministry to Women during a desperate season in her life. Her son suddenly passed away, her husband left her, and she is now living in an assisted living facility. In her brokenness she came to Ministry to Women and they are walking alongside her during a season when everyone else has abandoned her. She has been attending worship and weekly programs on a consistent basis and has found support in their small group.
During Christmas of 2018, Lt. Paula Griffin, Georgia received a phone call from a woman who was very discouraged but wanted to give of her time and volunteer. Lt. coordinated for her to help prepare Nursing Home Christmas bags, which led to her attending the Lunch Bunch Women’s Group; she soon began helping at meetings. She recently told Lt. Paula that her volunteering and attendance at the Lunch Bunch saved her life because she was in such a state of depression when she first came to The Salvation Army. Engaging in Ministry to Women gave her a community of support she needed during a desperate season in her life.

The Jonesboro, Georgia Corps host a Girls’ Lunch monthly for younger women. They are connecting personally and spiritually as they work through the book, “The Power of a Praying Parent”.

A single mom and her daughter attended the Thomasville, Georgia Corps through the Angel Tree Program at Christmas. Her family quickly became involved in Corps activities, and the mom joined Home League. Over time, The Officer discovered that her living situation was very toxic and not good for either of them. After some encouragement and prayer, she finally reached out and asked for help in getting out of her situation. God’s timing was perfect because the Corps Transitional Housing had just become vacant. It has been exciting for the women to see the positive changes in this family. She recently moved out of Transitional Housing and picked her new home because it was so close to the Corps. She is responsible for bringing 5 new people to the Corps.
Linda came to the Sarasota, Florida Corps looking for Summer Care. Her grandchildren were enrolled in their Summer Day Camp, and also attended Camp Keystone. She was going through an extremely stressful family situation and was also grieving the anniversary of her husband’s death. The Officer invited her to attend Bible Study, Home League, and lunch. She immediately connected with some of the women who share the same grief and struggles. She has found a community of support at Ministry to Women.

In Texas, more than one Corps has begun Women’s Ministry meetings in they family shelters at least once a quarter. This has made the ladies from many of the shelter feel welcome to spiritual ministry and given Corps women a new perspective of what The Salvation Army does.

In late summer/early fall, several of the younger ladies began attending a GroupFit class together at the Greenville, South Carolina Kroc Center. What began as a shared interest among a few, has grown into an international Women’s Ministry opportunity. Unchurched women are being connected with and the GroupFit class has grown large enough to need a second class during the week. The opportunity for engagement, connection and community is exciting and the spiritual gain is starting to become visible among the women as result.

The women of Henderson, Kentucky all gathered at Captain Carringer’s house for PMS (Popcorn, Movies and Scripture) Night. They watched War Room and discussed the importance of a deep prayer life. Each woman shared their struggles with prayer and faith and spent time in prayer together. There were 3 new women that night.
A woman in the St. Augustine, Florida Corps has been dealing with family hardships regarding her son’s incarceration. She has found encouragement through ministry to women.
Encourage

THE BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA 614 CORPS STARTED A NEW WOMEN’S PRAYER AND SUPPORT GROUP FOR WOMEN AT THE CENTER OF HOPE. THE WOMEN ARE FINDING COMMUNITY AND BEGINNING TO HELP ONE ANOTHER.

A Breakfast and Bible Study Group is offered at the Lafayette, Louisiana Corps. The women focus on praising God, not only when they are on the mountaintop, but also while they are in the deepest valley.

A woman who attends the Scrapbooking Ministry in the Vero Beach, Florida Corps lost her child suddenly. The women rallied around her and sent flowers, messages, and encouragement. When she was finally ready to come back to Scrapbooking, she said she made it through her darkest days because of the women who walked the journey with her.

A woman who attends Bible Study at the Fort Smith, Arkansas Corps cried as she told the story of the night she received the news that her teenage daughter had died in a car accident. Two other ladies in the group began to share of the loss of their own children. These women found a community to work through their grief and have been an encouragement to each other.
The **Spartanburg, South Carolina** Corps had three women who were expecting. The women rallied together and hosted a baby shower for them. This group of women has supported each other through sickness, death, and births. Lifting prayers up and providing physical needs. The women have grown spiritually by sharing God’s love in these practical ways.

Esther *(Conway, South Carolina)* has been a member of Sassy Lassies for a while. She lives in subsidized housing and is always available to assist with any activities we do in her neighborhood. She felt such a burden for her neighbors, she shared what little she had with them. When the other ladies in the Sassy Lassies heard what she was doing, they hosted a mini food drive for the families. They also collected clothing and toys for the children. When Esther went to distribute the gifts, she simply rang the bell and left the items with a small prayer card as identification. She routinely hangs promotional fliers on her neighbor’s doors to notify them of assistance available at The Salvation Army. She embodies the spirit of Salvationism in her neighborhood.
The women of the **Maryland and West Virginia Division** were invited to the living room to share stories of the past, celebrate the present, and be reminded of our purpose for the future during their annual women’s retreat. Their theme, “Snapshot”, was taken from Philippians 1:6. Women were reminded that they are not alone, that other people have felt like they feel, questioned what they question, and hoped for what they hope for; realizing that your Past, Present, and Future... all belong to God.

The **North and South Carolina Division** hosted their annual DIY Weekend using the theme, “Practically Perfect in Every Way.” There were 155 women in attendance who were encouraged in their faith.

Crafters gathered for the **Texas Division** DIY Camp with the theme, “Intentionally Created”. Just as crafters create their art with intention, they were reminded that God creates us into beautiful masterpieces with great intention and purpose.
A single mom in the Columbus, Mississippi Corps who was recently released from a rehab center has found a community at The Salvation Army to help her focus on sobriety and maintaining the life skills she developed while in drug rehab.

The Decatur, Alabama Corps offers a Bible Study for young adult women entitled, “Authentic Love” with a focus on the pursuit of purity.

The Greenwood, Mississippi Home League hosted a program entitled “Good Housekeeping” that included a craft time, lunch, devotion, and discussion group. The ladies learned tools that can be used to keep their spiritual house tidy.

The Pensacola, Florida Corps hosted a Suicide Prevention Training session to equip women in identifying the warning signs.

Sgt Ashby of Shelby, North Carolina has begun speaking at a local battered women’s center to tell them of the programs The Salvation Army provides. She leaves her card behind and a note. One young woman called asking if she could have a pickup to attend the Corps programs. She has been coming ever since. Her name is Shara and she is a beautiful young lady. She now has a job, a ‘new’ car and is able to bring herself to the Corps on days she doesn’t work.

The Martin County, Florida Corps host Women’s Wellness Wednesdays. Women are invited to come together for lunch and share tips and tricks for healthy living, while they have a scripture-based discussion outlined by and IF Lead program.
The Atlanta, Georgia Kroc Center has set out goals for their women to visit Haven Atlanta, The Salvation Army’s local Anti-Trafficking program, as well so to have community partners come and equip their ladies with workshops on HIV, healthy living and healthy eating in order to equip the women with good life practices and open their experiences.
During a planning meeting at the Frankfort, Kentucky Corps, one of the women spoke up to accept the responsibility for a program, something she’d never done before. She planned a prayer themed event where the women were able to create and decorate their own prayer journals while visiting multiple prayer stations around the Corps. The prayer stations included a sand ‘box’ where they could write whatever they wanted to pray for in the sand and erase it, a place to sit and wrap up in a blanket and eat a Hershey’s Hug to remind them of God’s love and care, a seat in front of the cross to write out prayers before attaching them to the cross and finally Lego prayers were they would select a piece and based on the number of knots pray for that many people before adding their Lego to the other built up by those who had prayed before them.

In April, Marietta, Georgia was blessed to take 8 women to camp for the Women’s Spiritual retreat. Two had never attended before; one woman accepted Christ for the first time at the age of 55 and has become involved in the Corps programs.
One of the young mothers, who recently became a soldier at **Georgetown, South Carolina**, has really stepped up in leadership roles at the Corps. She took the initiative to plan VBS and was a great help in leading the event. She also has stepped up and is helping to lead Girl Guards. In this, she is working hard to become a good role model for the younger girls of the Corps.

Everyone knows the struggle of trying to meet weekly with schedules and life getting in the way. This was a struggle for **Durham, North Carolina** but they came up with the idea to host a once a month event, outside of their weekly ones and welcome in those who's schedule may not allow them to attend the weekly meetings. This has also opened the opportunity for different women to lead meetings.
Inspire

WOMEN TO BE WHO GOD CREATED THEM TO BE, FULFILLING HIS PASSIONS AND PURPOSES FOR THEIR LIVES
The Missississippi Gulf Coast KROC hosted their second annual “I Am My Sisters Keeper” banquet. Participants created beautiful handmade bath scrubs with handwritten cards to honor those affected by domestic violence.

The National Capital and Virginia Division’s Women Officers’ Spiritual Retreat theme was "Only One Life". Focusing on a call to daily prayer, scriptural wisdom, spiritual discernment, and compassion.

The Ocala, Florida women are very excited to help one of their ladies plan her upcoming wedding. She is 70 years young and is getting married to a wonderful man from High School. They reconnected at a High School reunion and he started attending Men’s Club while she attends Home League. Ministry to Women is walking with her through this special season of her life.

The Georgia Division hosted an annual Women’s Retreat with 284 women in attendance. The theme, “Wild and Free” – “If the Son sets you free, you are free indeed!” A lady from the Thomasville, GA Corps attending for the first time. She accepted Christ for the first time in her life at age 55. She has become involved in all aspects of Corps life.

A young girl in the Marietta, Georgia Corps was raised by a Christian mom, but faced many difficulties in her formative years. Her life was full of emotional and physical abuse. No one noticed the pain because she always presented herself as a positive, happy person. She married a man that was abusive, but this was a normal way of life for her. Her father modeled this behavior to her in the way he treated her mother. She found courage at The Salvation Army to tell her story and ask for help. Through prayer and emotional support, she was able to break the chains of the abusive relationship that enslaved her. Today she is thriving! She has secured employment, new housing, and is working to surpass her past. She realizes she was wonderfully made by the Creator for a purpose. She is experiencing freedom from her abuser because Christ has set her free. She knows she can do anything through Christ who gives her strength!

The North and South Carolina Division hosted their annual DIY Camp. The theme was “Practically Perfect In Every Way”. There were 155 women in attendance.
The Home League of Charleston, South Carolina has a strong heart for service in and to the community around it. Each month they collect items for different projects in their area, children’s books for the Ronald McDonald house, toiletries and good for an abused women’s shelter and the giving keeps going. The women are faithful and dedicated in their service to those around them.

Hickory, North Carolina has been invigorated under Captain Trayler, since her arrival the Corps women have began throwing shelter showers, baby showers for women in the shelter with little to no change of that happening on their own in among their families, providing nearly a hundred complete sets of bed sheets for the homeless nearby along with blankets, towels, and willows.

Martin County, Florida Corps’ Women’s Wellness Wednesdays was initiated by one of their corps members who also works in their office. Women are invited to come together for lunch and share tips and tricks for healthy living, while they have a scripture-based discussion by an IF Lead program.

Through Women’s Ministry in Hickory, North Carolina a family of 4 has been brough back into the Corps. The mother grew up in The Salvation Army but had drifted away as sometimes happens. The women of the Corps were able to invite her to the Corps through a common interest - crafting - and were successful! Previous invites had fallen on deaf ears due to lack of interest for her children and husband but they were able to connect as well, the kids getting involved in VBS and her husband joining guys for football. This family has 'come back home'. All of this was brought together through the Women’s craft night!

The Ocala, Florida Corps’ Home League Ladies had a special service project for their Center of Hope. They brought in personal hygiene items like incontinence pads, tampons, pads, underwear and wipes to make "Period Packs" for the homeless. We had a caseworker from COH speak about the needs and lead in devotions. The women also enjoyed a "Birds of a Feather" scrapbooking retreat and a "See the Good" gathering.
The Jackson, Tennessee Corps no longer has a thrift store, yet the community continues to leave bags at the building. They get countless calls from people who only want to give their items to The Salvation Army because they trust it will go to individuals who need it. Seeing this, the Home league came up with an idea to help their neighbors while helping to get rid of all the donated items and to make a little money for the Corps in the process. Using the lobby of the Corps building they set up a “Pop-up Thrift Store”, local retail stores donated clothing racks as well as out of season clothing to help the cause. The women engaged with the community though social media and Facebook to promote the event. It was a huge hit and so long as the donation keep coming in the women will keep having their Pop-up Thrift Store.
We serve survivors of trafficking in 14 programs across the USA Southern Territory. Each survivor's journey is unique and it is our desire to provide a safe place for healing and recovery, whatever that may look like in their situation. One example of this is found in Jessica*. She was referred to our program after leaving her trafficker and being one day clean from drug use. On her first day, she came to the office and said, "I am here to do whatever it is you need me to do to get my life back together"; each day following she has shown sincerity and accomplished much. A few months after arriving at the program, she lost her father whom she had only recently begun to reconnect with and attempt to rebuild their relationship. Staff assisted her in getting back to her home town to help plan and be there for the funeral. While worried this may trigger her to relapse, she shared that her growth and progress helped her to stay committed to her goals. She chose to return to the Salvation Army after the funeral and to the new way of life she had found. She is an example of the strength and resilience we see in survivors of trafficking and has shared gratitude for the support and care of the Salvation Army staff that have supported her on this journey.

Following are two examples of why we are in this fight and how we continue the vision of William and Catherine Booth in each of our anti-trafficking programs.

**WE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM, BECAUSE EACH PERSON TRAPPED IN TRAFFICKING IS WORTH THE FIGHT.**
Below is a speech a survivor shared with divisional and territorial leaders, as well as General Peddle during a visit to a social service center in **Dallas, Texas**. She began by reading William Booth's 'I'll Fight' quote, before sharing how it reflected her own story.

“When I reached out to the Salvation Army I had become that Poor Lost Girl the Honorable William Booth spoke of in His letters. Because of his legacy and the compassion, love and determination of others here at the Salvation Army, I've gained the Light of God in my eyes. I've gained the courage to move forward, with an understanding that obstacles does not mean it’s my end. I know I can be strong like a warrior and remain a humbled child of God. I’ve learned how to carry myself with the dignity and grace of a women and still allow that little girl inside me to be heard when needed. I’m truly a success story in process and for that I’m extremely grateful. I know that the Honorable William Booth has a light shining his heart, joy in his soul and a smile on his face because the mission he started on the East End of London has saved a little girl like me. Thank you.”

*Name and identifying information changed*
SOCIAL JUSTICE RESOURCE CENTER (SJRC) MISSION ALIGNMENT

To reintergrate The Salvation Army's ministry and social services.

To mobilize Salvationists to engage humanity, community and culture for Christ with spiritual and biblical insight, faith-bathed best practice, and contextual relevance.

To connect young adults and the emerging generation to the mission of The Salvation Army.

SJRC is implementing Intro to Social Justice Continuing Education Curriculum, which will be taught to Lieutenants and Auxiliary Captains for degree completion credit. Through this, they will gain a understanding of, and passion for biblical justice within the larger context of God’s activity in the world.

SJRC led a 3-day intensive for urban youth to learn about social ills and issues and propose redemptive engagement in the communities where they live. SJRC presented and mentored the Human Trafficking/Public Policy Track.

SJRC attended the EQUIP Conference to equip our youth workers to faithfully engage the cultural divides. Topics ranged from racism, sexism, gender, marriage, sexuality and more.

SJRC presented to the Southern Territory Executive Council to inform, inspire and invite Territory-wide engagement with the SJRC objectives and resources as a territorial priority.

The SJRC introduced the mission of The Salvation Army to Middle and High School Youth living in Nashville’s Promise Zone on I’ll Fight Day. With William Booth’s speech as their battle cry, youth planned and participated in showing the love of Christ in practical ways that brought lasting hope to their community.

SJRC planned and led the 1st annual Trevecca Nazarene University (TNU) Mission Trip into the SA mission field. Through this, nine TNU college students learned about the mission of The Salvation Army, worshipped and served in Jesus’ name throughout the Atlanta Area Command. The trip included lodging at the Evangeline Booth College, a tour of the SA South Historical Center, meal preparation at the Red Shield Shelter, enjoying a meal with the ARC guests, a tour of the Thrift Store operation, ran activities at the Boys & Girls Club, organized the Angel Tree Warehouse, and worshipped with the Atlanta Temple Corps.
At the **Territorial Youth Institute**, SJRC led the five-day intensive, "Heaven on Earth: What did Jesus mean when he taught us to pray 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven". With youth, they explored what the biblical narrative tells us about who God is and what we are saved for. Students explored their unique giftedness to ENGAGE the world in Christ as the Kingdom builders God created and saved us to be.

During the same event, the SJRC led an evening program on, Love Thy Neighbor. This featured an experiential learning environment for our youth to see, hear and engage in the stories of our “marginalized neighbors”. By asking the question “How can I be a loving neighbor” the delegates discovered our shared humanity, interdependence and compassionate desire to do something.

The Salvation Army testified alongside 150+ advocates and survivors to oppose legislation in Washington, D.C. that would fully decriminalize prostitution including decriminalizing traffickers and exploiters/pimps and buyers.

This bill would give more freedom and protection to traffickers/pimps and be more harmful for individuals who are experiencing commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking.
In one of our more popular blog posts, we featured the top ‘8 Reasons Why It’s Good to be a Woman in The Salvation Army’. This post was shared on Int’l Women’s Day and reached over 3,000 women online. Listed below are excerpts from the blog!

We can be the preachers, teachers and leaders in our Corps
Not only can we fill these roles, but we are also encouraged and equipped to do so!

We could have gold trim on our shoulders one day
That’s right – it’s completely within the realm of possibility that any one of us could rise through the ranks of The Salvation Army all the way to the top, to become General. In a time when a woman hasn’t even held the highest seat of power in our country, three women have already paved the way to Generalship in the Army: Evangeline Booth, Eva Burrows and Linda Bond.

You can make a difference in the lives of other women
There’s a multitude of ways we can support and empower women through the work of the Army. In the States, opportunities lie within our Social Services and Anti-Human Trafficking programs, and we can provide aid overseas through initiatives like the Worth Project and OTHERS Trade for Hope.
Major Mee Sook Chang started writing an incredible series for social media - in both Korean and English languages! It’s been such a long-awaited goal and we’re so glad we can expand our posts to reach more women!

THQ created new resources for women to use at Divisional Events, including customizable bingo cards and reserved seat signs, which featured specific prayers for each woman.

In an effort to procure quality images accurately representing women in our territory, we put a call out on social media for photo shoot participants. The response was amazing, as were the images!

This year we created customizable Galentine’s cards for social media and encouraged women to print, fill them out and share them with friends, family and corps members!
SUMMER ROMANCE SERIES
Major Susie Erickson, Assistant Territorial Secretary for Women's Ministries, contributed a four part Summer Romance Series to our website. Through the stories of Salmon and Rahab, Hosea and Gomer, Samson and Delilah and Mary and Joseph, we are reminded of God’s love for us.

CALL TO ACTION
In an effort to really emphasize the inspiring, difficult and necessary challenges issued throughout Commissioning weekend, we created a blog post called, ‘Call to Action: What Every Salvationist Needs to Hear’. In it, we featured quotes from the weekend’s speakers, accompanied by GIF videos taken from the live-stream footage. We also created social graphics with select quotes and compelling designs, which were then shared by our followers on their own social media pages.

FOUNDERS’ DAY
Founders’ Day is always an opportunity for us to dig into the Army’s history and come up with fun, unique and interesting ways to weave together past and present and engage our followers. This year, we created space on our website to share old Army jokes, little known stories (such as the origin of ‘O Boundless Salvation’), rarely-seen photos, old War Cry articles and fun games that we created!
SOCIAL GRAPHICS
One thing we feature on our website are social graphics. These are images featuring quotes from Salvationists, past and present, that we create as social media resources. In June, one graphic featuring a quote by Flora Larson on the topic of officer moves reached close to 4,000 people.

IHQ REPORT
We were happy to make the 2018 Women's Ministries IHQ report available on our website for women to see what’s happening across our territory. This became a resource that many printed and shared with their divisions. The post itself reached over 1600 people.

WOMEN’S HISTORY MONTH
In celebration of Women’s History Month, we created a series of graphics featuring quotes from Salvation Army women. These were made available to download and share on social media.

CREATIVE ARTS
Guest writer and Territorial Creative Arts Director Bethany Farrell, wrote a blog post for our site on '6 Ways Creative Arts Will Change Your Corps for the Better'. Examples include: creating community and accountability; expanding the way we read the Word; adds elements of creative worship; encourages program growth.
Below is God’s 2020 vision for our team as we advance the mission of Ministry to Women throughout the USA South.

• Reinforce the purpose of mission and ministry to women.

• Adopt the name Ministry to Women to become more culturally relevant and mission focused.

• Train divisional leadership teams on new guide for women in mission and ministry entitled, Gather.

• Design training modules to go with Gather to aid divisional teams in teaching the Field.

• Train Cadets on new guide for women in mission and ministry.

• Clarify guidelines, accountability, and expectations of Ministry to Women.

• Reinforce statistical reporting through training modules.

• Support divisions in training Gather as needed and monitor the ongoing training throughout the territory.

• Provide a platform for the voice of young adult women.

• Expand the reach of our social community to include topics related to families.

• Equip the Field with resources on intergenerational ministry to women by providing training modules on integrating Millennials and Generation Z into mission and ministry for women.

• Host a gathering of women during the territorial congress.

• Expand our reach through online Bible studies and podcast.
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