



Church Army USA Vol.1, Issue 1 August 1, 2017

Our First "New" Newsletter

I have been wanting to begin publishing regular newsletters for some time. A discussion with Rev. Will Lawbaugh after Morning Prayer one morning provided the impetus for getting this project off the ground. "Thank you" to Will for collecting stories from across the country from our Church Army officers and gifting us with his editing skills. I am referring to this as our "new" newsletter because Church Army USA is

in a "restart" mode. We are renewing old practices that have worked and which are tied to our history and we are establishing new practices which we pray will make us more effective in the years ahead. Over the course of the upcoming months we will provide updates on the ministries of Church Army USA.

Visit to Church Army UK

In late April Church Army UK hosted a meeting of international Church Army Leaders. It was an eye-opening experience. Church Army UK is extremely well established and is certainly the flagship of Church Army International. It was also wonderful to see some historic sites of Church Army's past and present. Church Army USA is a long way off from being as established as Church Army UK but it is a goal worth shooting for—and it is attainable even though it will take decades of work. Some of the things that we are doing are heading in that direction. We hope that there will be some material coming from Church Army UK that we can use here in the USA to better develop our ministry to the churches in the US.



Church Army Headquarters Sheffield, England

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Church Army International Leaders

From New Jersey to Pennsylvania

A key change in the Church Army ministry over the last few months has been the move that Lori and I have made from relative safety of parish ministry in New Jersey to the uncertainties and challenges of ministry as National Director of Church Army USA in Pennsylvania. To be sure, the ministry is bigger than us. However, in this newsletter I thought I'd share about the change that the Lord is bringing in our lives. The first thing that needs to be said is that this change is not the result of a human decision. We believe with all of our hearts that the Lord was the one who called us here, and that to refuse to answer that call would have been an act of disobedience. For the first time in sev-

eral years we have the sense that we are where the Lord wants us to be. That in itself is exhilarating and encouraging! It is also somewhat frightening. Parish ministry offers more stability, safety, and predictability. Church Army ministry is more edgy, unpredictable and risky. We are closer to the spiritual battle lines. We see both the work of the Lord and the work of Satan more dramatically. The existence of spiritual warfare is more real. As a result, we are learning to trust God more. Perceived "safety" can become a false god. You can begin to trust more in that safety than you do in the Lord of the universe. Safety is a false god who permits

us to slumber and debate inconsequential concepts while the world around us is literally going to hell. The people of faith in Hebrews 11, however, were people who did amazing things because they trusted not in safety but in the Lord. We want to be like those saints of old. Thus, our regular prayer is: "Lord, I believe, help my unbelief." We are in this for the long haul. Nothing lasting is developed in a short period of time. We have decades of work to get where I believe that the Lord wants us to be, but we are on the way there!!

Church Army in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Southwest Virginia—Mary Edna Thompson

Ministry in the Marketplace:

This is the first year for the Farmer’s/ Artist Market in the town of Hillsville. A prayer partner and Church Army’s Mary Edna Thompson signed up for a booth for this 2017 season. Since there are limited arenas in town to interact with residents and tourists, this venue is another path to spread the Gospel love of Jesus Christ. Also, it has opened doors to interact with other believers from a multitude of denominations. It is a good thing when we can be bold in praying with someone who has a concern for themselves or their loved ones. The market is open on Thursdays from 3 to 7 p.m. with live music and Saturdays from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. The season will last until around the middle of December.

Table Grace and Clothing Closet:

The population of Hillsville is around 1500 people with 16.9% below the poverty level, an increase over the past

several years. This area was steeped primarily in furniture and textile manufacturing, but at this time, the largest employer is in the agricultural industry.

This means we have an influx of migrant workers coming to the area. Table Grace is a ministry of the Out of the Box Worship Center, a Methodist Church. It has been Church Army’s privilege to assist in this ministry.

Galax Fiddlers Convention “Soup Kitchen”:

This is no doubt a Holy Spirit inspired ministry that began in 1979 as near as we can figure. It began as an answer to prayer. Musicians, families and friends come from around the world to participate in this gathering of Traditional Ole Time Music and Bluegrass. The kitchen has become a real community action and would not be possible without everyone helping. They call it a recycling center. They bring



supplies, they help prepare soups and they come back to partake of the fruits of their labors after the stage events are over. Therefore, the hours for food are from past midnight until day-break. There are many opportunities for “one on one” encounters where relationships with Jesus Christ are openly discussed with ample time for prayer. Area Christians come

on the first Monday of the convention, and together with many of the musicians, they worship our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This service at the campsite provides a time for testimonies, prayers and of course good old Gospel music as well as some contemporary worship songs.

What's New with Church Army in Branson? - Steve Baughan

Since last summer, the addiction problem in Branson has doubled and redoubled. Just as the awareness of the opiate/ heroin epidemic has become publicized nationally, the deaths in Southwest Missouri continue to grow. The governmental agencies that Standing By the Door deals with on a daily basis continue to invest money in an effort to change the addicts and alcoholic’s behavior (Behavior Modification Therapy) with little or no suc-



cess. In speaking with local law enforcement and the local Veterans Administration officials, all are in agreement that they have never seen addiction problems at this high a level in the area. Steve Baughan has taken three services for the funerals of heroin addicts who died from overdoses in the past few months. Families are hurting, men and women are dying. The problem is real. The need for help is great. Latest statistics from the government have raised the number of

those who are addicted to drugs or alcohol from 1 in 10 to 1 in 6. At Standing By the Door, they have refocused their efforts to help our veterans and other addicts coming out of failed and failing

programs and to re-establish our Mission Statement: “Sharing the experience of God’s transforming love with weary and hurting people through compassionate fellowship and life instruction.” All they

teach and do in the area of recovery for our people is based on this statement of mission. Their volunteer staff is entirely made up of recovered addicts and alcoholics who have experienced a total life change from the inside. They do all in God’s power to share what God has done in their own lives and to continue to carry a message of hope to a dying and desperate segment of our society.

In March of this year, God sent Mark

and Kimberly Kleinfelder from one of those failing programs whose message had drifted from recovery through a relationship with God. Dyan and Steve had worked with Mark and Kim at the former Church Army Branson, and they bring much needed experience and knowledge to our program. They come at a time when CA had lost their new Program Director to a heart attack and his predecessor to a relapse back into his addiction. Mark stepped in as Program Director and Kim is preparing to succeed Dyan as Women’s Program Director. In July they took in their first female client. She is living on the property with Kim and Mark and thriving in her recovery.

Just last week CA signed a lease on a property outside of Branson and on August 15 will open their first house for women. They added one house on the property to use for intake of new clients and will add a duplex (also on the property) on September 1. This will bring their capacity to 40 men and 20

women. Currently their waiting list is at 30 and growing. Since the last report they have purchased two used vans and now employ a full-time and a part-time driver to get their guys to the VA Clinic, court, Probation and Parole offices, and to and from work. Classes in recovery, life skills, and spiritual growth are held 5 times per week at their rented classroom and just last week they opened a thrift shop near the classroom. Dyan spent weeks, working day and night to get the Thrift Shop, Stand By Our Veterans, open with the help of volunteers with a focus on helping veterans in our community. They look forward to the store’s success. A portion of all proceeds from the store will be donated to the local chapter of the Disabled American Veterans Group, and all veterans coming into the program will be scholarshiped into Standing By the Door by proceeds from the shop. They continue to meet at the local Nazarene Church each Thursday night for their time of worship. Attendance is growing and people are finding comfort from the world there during a time of praise, prayer and proclamation of God’s Word.