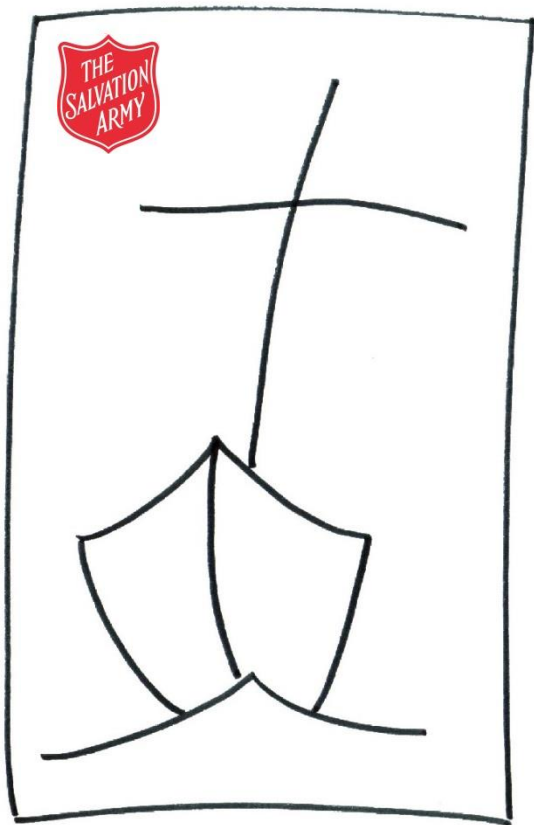


The Salvation Army
United Kingdom Territory
with the Republic of Ireland



**A Brief Guide to
All Things Ecumenical
and What You Can Do**

2017 Edition

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Introduction

What is Ecumenism?

There are many different Christian churches and denominations, but all have the same basic calling: to be signs and instruments of the kingdom of God in their worship, witness and work for the good of all people.

Ecumenism means commitment by each church and denomination to deepen its fellowship with the others, and - without losing what makes each interestingly different - to work with them towards a greater unity.

The Salvation Army and Ecumenism

The Salvation Army's ecclesiological statement¹ says, *'Inter-denominational harmony and co-operation are to be actively pursued for they are valuable for the enriching of the life and witness of the Body of Christ in the world and therefore of each denomination.'*

Territorial Ecumenical Officer (TEO)

The TEO is based at THQ and is responsible for supporting ecumenical and interfaith networks and assisting Salvationists to work, worship and witness with other Christians and to engage with people of other faiths.

Territorial Ecumenical Council (TEcC)

TEcC is a forum to advise territorial leadership with respect to the territory's ecumenical and interfaith engagement, and to support the TEO in developing ecumenical and interfaith engagement locally, divisionally, nationally and territorially.

Territorial Ecumenical Strategy

Our territorial ecumenical vision is:

*To express our unity with other churches in harmonious relations
and in sharing in the life and witness of the Body of Christ
'so that the world may believe' (John 17:21).*

¹ *The Salvation Army in the Body of Christ: An Ecclesiological Statement* (IHQ 2008), p1.

The strategic objectives in pursuit of this vision are:

1. To deliver **effective communication** in order to raise awareness of the ecumenical scene, the opportunities that exist for ecumenical engagement, and the resources that are available.
2. To provide **helpful resources**, including training and theological resources to enable ecumenical engagement.
3. To enable **missional partnerships** in which corps/centres worship, work and witness with other Christians and become more effective in mission.

The principles that underlie our approach to ecumenism are based on our understanding of the Trinity:

- ***Unity is a Gift.*** Christians are one because we share in the oneness of the triune God. Our union with God brings us into spiritual union with all other Christians. Unity is a gift but it is also a calling. We are called to make our unity visible to the world as we worship, work and witness together.
- ***Unity and Diversity.*** There is unity and diversity in the life of the Trinity. Unity in diversity is therefore a key aspect of the life of the Church. It rules out uniformity and disunity in favour of harmony. We engage ecumenically while retaining our distinctiveness, believing that we have much to give and much to receive.
- ***Unity and Mission.*** The three persons of the Trinity work together for the redemption of the world. The Father sent the Son; the Son gave his life for the world; the Spirit empowers the Church to serve the world. We participate in the mission of God by working *together* for the sake of the world. Ecumenism is therefore not a distraction from mission; it is at the heart of mission. Unity and mission are two sides of the same coin.

What You Can Do

Perhaps the most useful part of this document is the section 'What You Can Do' (page 21) - but please dip into the rest as well!

Local Ecumenism

Local Churches Together

Local Churches Together groups (or their equivalent) may be based in line with parish, village, town, borough or city boundaries. In some towns or cities there is an 'umbrella' Churches Together group that supports the work of smaller groups in their area. The commitment to these local groups can vary, as can the activities they undertake. The range of possible activities is wide and varied:

- Prayer events and initiatives
- Joint responses to the local media on matters of local importance
- Setting up practical projects together with regard to addiction, homelessness, food poverty etc.
- Inter-church youth activities and joint training of children and young people's workers
- Shared evangelism and outreach
- Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, which could include a pulpit exchange
- Ministers' Fraternals - informal meetings of local church leaders
- Ecumenical Lent and Advent Bible studies
- Shared worship services for Advent, Christmas, Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Good Friday, Easter and Pentecost, as well as other opportunities beyond major Christian festivals
- Social events
- Taking action to highlight and campaign on issues such as rural poverty and inner-city deprivation, racial justice, world debt etc.
- Shared participation in fair trade schemes and events
- Developing agreed policies and practices concerning church security and distribution of practical aid
- Hosting a hustings event at election time for parliamentary candidates
- Producing resources such as a local ecumenical events bulletin

National Networks with a Local Focus

Churches Together groups are part of national ecumenical structures in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. In recent years other networks have developed to support local ecumenical groups. These local groups usually run parallel with Churches Together groups, but in some cases have integrated with them. Two prominent networks are:

- ‘Gather’ - a national network of ‘vibrant missional unity movements’ that focus on prayer and community transformation
gather.global
- ‘Hope’ - encouraging churches to have a ‘rhythm of mission’ whereby the major events of the Church year become opportunities for witness
hopetogether.org.uk

Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs)

An LEP exists where there is a formal written agreement affecting the ministry, congregational life, buildings and/or mission projects of two or more Christian denominations. The agreement is authorized by the appropriate denominational authorities and the LEP is supported by a sponsoring body at intermediate level (see page 11). You may encounter various types of LEP.

1. Single Congregation Partnerships

The congregation consists of members of two or more denominations who worship as one. In a large Single Congregation LEP ministry is shared by an Ecumenical Ministry Team. There is a common purse and an Ecumenical Council which manages the life of the LEP.

2. Congregations in Covenanted Partnerships

Two or more local congregations of different denominations enter a formal agreement to share in worship, church life, mission and ministry. (Note: not all local covenants are classed as LEPs)

3. Shared Building Partnerships

Two or more local congregations of different denominations enter a formal/legal agreement to permanently share a building,

although they usually worship at different times. (Note: not all shared buildings are classed as LEPs)

4. Chaplaincy Partnerships

Chaplains from different denominations sign an agreement to work together as an ecumenical team within a particular institution or setting, e.g. an airport, college or university, hospital, prison, shopping centre, or workplace. (Note: not all chaplaincies are classed as LEPs)

5. Mission Partnerships

Churches often work together to meet needs in their local community and some of these projects become LEPs. Local churches have a corporate responsibility and the LEP may become a charitable company.

6. Education Partnerships

These include lay training, ministerial training and joint or shared schools.

Declaration of Ecumenical Welcome and Commitment

A Declaration of Ecumenical Welcome and Commitment is intended for local settings, often villages, where there is only one place of worship, but which welcomes members of other churches as regular worshippers.

In these situations, Christians of different traditions will often combine loyalty to their own denomination with a desire to worship and witness in the local church. It may be that their own church has closed, or they have moved into the local area, or they previously commuted to a church elsewhere but can no longer do so through ill-health or lack of transport.

The welcome often happens informally, but a Declaration is a formal way to help people feel that they 'belong'. The church formulates a policy aimed at incorporating the insights, strengths and gifts of people of other traditions into the life of the congregation.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is observed locally by Christians of many denominations, languages, races and cultures around the world. It provides an opportunity for local prayer gatherings and other ecumenical initiatives. The aim is to engage in praying and working for the unity of Christians in the service of the wider redemption and peace of all peoples.

Traditionally the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity covers eight days (octave) and is observed from 18th to 25th January (the days between the feasts of St Peter and St Paul), although some groups observe it at other times of the year.

The themed resources usually include material for an ecumenical act of worship on a Sunday or in a midweek gathering. There are also Bible readings, reflections and prayers for each day for use at home, in church or in a small group. These are available from Churches Together in Britain and Ireland: ctbi.org.uk/weekofprayer

World Day of Prayer

The World Day of Prayer is an international, ecumenical prayer movement initiated and carried out by Christian women in more than 180 countries and over 1,000 languages. Events are held locally.

In Scotland and the Republic of Ireland it is known as World Day of Prayer, but in England, Wales and Northern Ireland it is called Women's World Day of Prayer.

The World Day of Prayer is held annually on the first Friday in March. National committees are convened in the four home nations and in the Republic of Ireland. Local committees arrange local events.

The World Day of Prayer enables people to:

- affirm their faith in Jesus Christ;
- affirm that prayer and action are inseparable;
- share their hopes and fears, their joys and sorrows.

England, Wales and Northern Ireland: wwdp.org.uk

Scotland: wdpscotland.org.uk

International: worlddayofprayer.net

Intermediate Ecumenism

Intermediate/regional/county Churches Together groups, which exist mainly in England, usually correspond to county boundaries, large cities or regions.

These groups give oversight and support to Local Ecumenical Partnerships. They also support and encourage local unity more generally, although there is no structural or governance relationship between them and local Churches Together groups.

Some county/intermediate bodies employ a full or part time County Ecumenical Officer (CEO) or Secretary who works closely with the various County Denominational Ecumenical Officers (CDEOs). CDEOs are appointed by denominations to support local churches in their ecumenical engagement.

Regional church leaders (e.g. divisional commanders, bishops, Methodist chairs of district, Baptist regional ministers, URC moderators) will usually meet together regularly. Sometimes they are also part of the intermediate Churches Together groups, or a representative may attend instead.

National Ecumenism

Ecumenical engagement at a national level is facilitated by the ‘national ecumenical instruments’ for Britain and Ireland as a whole, and for each of the nations within Britain and Ireland. The Salvation Army is a member of each of these.

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI)

ctbi.org.uk

Many areas of work are best tackled for Britain and Ireland as a whole, rather than in the separate nations. It is also important for the different

parts of Britain and Ireland to keep in touch even when working separately. CTBI is the instrument that makes this possible. It produces a range of resources and publications, arranges regular meetings of church representatives - including periodic major Assemblies - and links the churches to a wide range of inter-church organisations.

Churches Together in England (CTE)

cte.org.uk

CTE supports the churches in England in their commitment:

- to seek a deepening of their communion with Christ, and with one another, in the Church which is his body, and
- to fulfil their mission to proclaim the Gospel by common witness and service in the world to the glory of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

(Swanwick Declaration, 1987)

CTE has national member churches, co-ordinating groups, bodies in association and other networks and agencies. It is served by a small staff team that works under the direction of the Enabling Group, which brings together the representatives of the member churches.

As a whole, CTE is represented by six Presidents from the major traditions of member churches: Anglican (Archbishop of Canterbury); Roman Catholic (Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster); Free Churches (Free Church Moderator); New Churches, the Religious Society of Friends and the Lutheran and German-speaking Churches (nominated President); Orthodox Churches (nominated President); Pentecostal Churches (nominated President).

At a national level CTE has 44 member churches. It also supports 49 intermediate ecumenical bodies, 2,600 local groups and 900 LEPs.

Action of Churches Together in Scotland (ACTS)

acts-scotland.org

ACTS brings together nine denominations in Scotland who share a desire for:

- Greater oneness between churches, as Jesus prayed, ‘that they all may be one’ (John 17.21);
- A growth of understanding and common life between churches;
- Unified action in proclaiming and responding to the Gospel in the whole of life.

ACTS has programme groups (part of ACTS) and partner groups (working with ACTS). These are working groups formed for a specified purpose, such as the Anti-Human Trafficking Group and the Racial Justice Group. There are also bodies in association. Local ecumenical engagement and LEPs are supported through the ACTS Ecumenical Development Group.

Churches Together in Wales (Cytûn)

cytun.org.uk

Cytûn (the Welsh word for ‘agreed’) unites in pilgrimage those churches in Wales that seek to deepen their communion with Christ and with one another, and to fulfil their mission to proclaim the Gospel by common witness and service in the world.

Cytûn has fifteen full member churches, together with a few observer churches and a number of Christian organisations. Its work includes:

- supporting local and regional ecumenical groups and LEPs;
- coordinating the churches’ witness at national events;
- enabling the churches’ influence in national discussions and public policy development;
- providing opportunities for the churches to discuss matters of doctrine, and church and society.

Irish Council of Churches (ICC) and Irish Inter-Church Meeting (IICM)

irishchurches.org

The ICC was founded in 1923 and is the formal national body through which member churches engage, dialogue and act on a wide variety of issues. The member churches represent the range of Protestant, Orthodox, Reformed and Independent traditions.

In 1973 the ICC began talks with the Catholic Church which became formalised as the Irish Inter Church Meeting (IICM). Its membership

reflects Christianity across Protestant, Orthodox, Reformed, Catholic, Independent and Migrant-led churches.

The constitution describes the IICM as ‘Christian Communion in Ireland willing to join in united efforts to promote the spiritual, physical, moral and social welfare of the people and the extension of the rule of Christ among all nations and over every region of human life.’

Free Churches Group (FCG)

freechurches.org.uk

FCG is a network of 24 denominations in the non-conformist, evangelical and pentecostal traditions in England and Wales. It seeks to express the unity in Christ that is shared by these denominations by promoting fellowship, shared counsel and working together, where possible, to extend Christ’s kingdom in every sphere of society.

There is a particular focus on chaplaincy work in prisons, healthcare and education, although wider issues in these areas and other fields are considered. Maintaining the spiritual testimony of the Free Churches, upholding their full religious liberty and taking action on matters of principle, where appropriate, are rooted in FCG’s mission.

Evangelical Alliance UK (EAUK)

eauk.org

The EAUK brings Christians together to help them listen to, and be heard by, the government, media and society. It includes 81 denominations, 4,000 churches, 600 organisations and thousands of individual members.

The EAUK connects people for a shared mission, whether it’s nurturing a Church culture that is increasingly confident in the Gospel, getting involved in community action or lobbying the government for a better society. It informs and inspires Christians with resources, analysis and articles about our society, what the Church is doing and how they can get involved. It represents evangelicals to the media, telling good news stories about the difference Christians are making.

Christian Aid

christianaid.org.uk

Christian Aid is an agency of the churches in Britain and Ireland and is mandated to work globally on relief, development and advocacy for poverty eradication. Christian Aid's work is founded on Christian faith, inspired by hope and acts to change an unjust world.

Christian Aid's vision is to end poverty and its essential purposes are to expose the scandal of poverty, to help in practical ways to root it out from the world, and to challenge and change structures and systems that favour the rich and powerful over the poor and marginalised.

The Salvation Army is one of Christian Aid's sponsoring churches and our international work benefits from the support of Christian Aid. A number of corps are involved in the annual Christian Aid week, which includes fundraising and worship.

Bible Societies

biblesociety.org.uk

There are numerous national Bible Societies active in over 200 countries and regions. They focus on translation work, which makes the Bible available in new spoken and signed languages, as well as revising existing Bibles to bring the language up-to-date. They produce printed copies and also visual, audio and digital forms.

They also work to affirm the place of the Bible in society, challenging ill-informed thinking and demonstrating that the Bible can be a force for positive change in today's world.

They work in partnership with the churches and mission organisations with the support of individual Christians and church congregations.

England and Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland have their own Bible Societies. Within each there are offices that develop national initiatives, undertake local projects, and provide resources and support materials.

International Ecumenism

World Council of Churches (WCC)

oikoumene.org/en

The WCC is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures, and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Although The Salvation Army was a founder member of the WCC in 1948, we now, as a 'world communion', have adviser status. This means we are invited to participate in Central Committee meetings and General Assemblies but do not have a vote.

The WCC is the broadest and most inclusive among the many organized expressions of the modern ecumenical movement, a movement whose goal is Christian unity. It brings together 348 member churches in more than 110 countries and territories throughout the world, representing over 500 million Christians, including most of the world's Orthodox churches, Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist and Reformed churches, as well as many United and Independent churches.

As members of this fellowship, WCC member churches:

- are called to the goal of visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship;
- promote their common witness in work for mission and evangelism;
- engage in Christian service by serving human need, breaking down barriers between people, seeking justice and peace, and upholding the integrity of creation; and
- foster renewal in unity, worship, mission and service.

Conference of European Churches (CEC)

ceceurope.org

The United Kingdom Territory with the Republic of Ireland is a member of CEC, as is IHQ which represents the rest of the Army in Europe.

CEC is a fellowship of some 115 Orthodox, Protestant, Anglican, and Old Catholic Churches from all countries of Europe, plus 40 National Councils of Churches and Organisations in Partnership. CEC has offices in Brussels and Strasbourg.

CEC seeks to help the European churches to renew their spiritual life, to strengthen their common witness and service and to promote the unity of the Church and peace in the world.

CEC works on a number of issues of common concern for European churches. These include bioethics, peace and reconciliation, labour and economic issues, climate change, education, economic and social issues, environment, climate justice, human rights and religious freedom, inter-religious dialogue, migration, minority and majority churches, and theological education.

CEC works closely with the Roman Catholic Council of European Bishops' Conferences (CCEE) on matters of mutual concern, which include interfaith dialogue and the involvement of young people in ecumenism.

Interfaith

Inter Faith Network (IFN)

interfaith.org.uk

The IFN for the UK works to promote understanding, cooperation and good relations between organisations and persons of different faiths.

It does this through providing opportunities for linking and sharing of good practice, providing advice and information to help the development of new interfaith initiatives and the strengthening of existing ones. It raises awareness within wider society of the importance of interfaith issues and develops programmes to increase understanding about faith communities, including both their distinctive features and areas of common ground.

IFN's member bodies include national faith community representative bodies; national, regional and local interfaith organisations; and

academic institutions and bodies concerned with multi-faith education. The Salvation Army is connected to IFN through our membership of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

Interfaith Scotland

interfaithscotland.org

The Salvation Army is a member of Interfaith Scotland, which aims to provide a forum for different religions to dialogue with one another on matters of religious, national and civic importance, support a wider interfaith dialogue with other religion and belief groups, support educational activities in connection with interfaith dialogue, encourage civic engagement by religious communities in Scotland, and support religious equality.

Council of Christians and Jews (CCJ)

ccj.org.uk

The Salvation Army is connected to CCJ through our membership of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland.

CCJ works to create constructive dialogue between Jews and Christians on a wide variety of topics, including the Israel-Palestine situation and the global economic crisis. It works to combat anti-semitism and intolerance, working with a variety of Christian, Jewish and secular community groups.

Churches' Forum for Inter-Religious Relations (CFIRR)

CFIRR is an ecumenical body resourcing the churches' engagement in interfaith relations. It is a group within Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) and The Salvation Army is involved with CFIRR through our membership of CTBI.

For further information regarding ecumenical involvement in interfaith work in individual nations contact ACTS, Cytûn, CTE and ICC.

Calendar of Events

During the year there are a number of opportunities for shared witness, worship and action. Even if you are not able to organise events together with other churches or groups, by marking these occasions you will be in accord with others doing the same where they are.

January

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity: ctbi.org.uk/weekofprayer

Homeless Sunday: homeless-sunday.uk

Holocaust Memorial Day: hmd.org.uk

February

National Marriage Week: marriage-week.org.uk

Racial Justice Sunday: ctbi.org.uk/rjsunday

Poverty Action Sunday: church-poverty.org.uk/sunday

Fairtrade Fortnight: fairtrade.org.uk

March

World Day of Prayer: wwdp.org.uk and wdpscotland.org.uk

International Women's Day: internationalwomensday.com

May

Christian Aid Week: christianaid.org.uk

Mental Health Awareness Week: mentalhealth.org.uk

June

Refugee Week: refugeeweek.org.uk

Society Sunday: premier.org.uk/Projects/Society-Sunday

July

Sea Sunday: missiontoseafarers.org

September

Creation Time: ctbi.org.uk

Education Sunday (England and Wales): cte.org.uk

Peacemaking Sunday: jointpublicissues.org.uk/issues

International Day of Prayer for Peace: oikoumene.org/en

Day of Prayer for Victims of Human Trafficking:
salvationarmy.org/ihq/antitrafficking

October

Freedom Sunday: ctbi.org.uk/freedom-sunday

Prisons Week (England and Wales): prisonersweek.org

One World Week: oneworldweek.org/v2

Bible Sunday: biblesunday.org

November

Remembrance Sunday: ctbi.org.uk

Interfaith Week: interfaithweek.org

International Days of Prayer for the Persecuted Church: idop.org/web

Prisoners Week (Scotland): prisonersweek.org.uk

December

World AIDS Day: worldaidsday.org

Human Rights Day: www.un.org/events/humanrights

What You Can Do

Ecumenism should not be ‘an extra, which absorbs energy’, but ‘a dimension of all that we do, which releases energy through the sharing of resources’.² In other words, instead of just doing ecumenical things, we should try to *do things ecumenically*. In light of this, consider the three ecumenical Rs:

- **Realise** that each church and every Christian has something to offer and much to learn.
- **Recognise** that God can accomplish more through us when we share our common tasks, interests and concerns.
- **Re-assess** priorities and ways in which local churches can be together and do things together.

Action Points

Ensure that ecumenical reflection and action is part of your corps/centre Mission Development Plan. Ideas to consider:

- Carry out an ecumenical audit of your corps/centre to identify involvement with the churches, networks, agencies, initiatives and events mentioned in this booklet.
- Look at how your corps/centre could introduce or develop an ecumenical element in its programme and activities.
- Look at the activities listed under ‘Local Churches Together’ (page 7) and highlight areas where your corps/centre could initiate or get involved with local expressions of ecumenism.
- Appoint a corps ecumenical officer or look at how you can support your centre chaplain in developing further ecumenical contacts.
- Place ecumenism on the agenda of corps council meetings.

² *The Next Steps for Churches Together in Pilgrimage* (1989), page 3.

- Check the websites of some of the agencies and groups included in this booklet for news and information about the wider ecumenical scene.

A New Framework for Local Unity in Mission

Local ecumenism is increasingly mission-focused and relational. Recognising that, Churches Together in England has produced what it calls ‘an exciting, significant, practical, ecumenical document’. It is called *A New Framework for Local Unity in Mission* and is well worth looking at as part of your Mission Development Plan process.

The framework is for churches working together with a clear missional purpose. To fulfil this purpose they often need to agree to cooperate in ways that will affect their core activities as churches - worship, ministry, congregational life, buildings and mission. The work is rooted in the relationships between them, but they also often need agreements to enable cooperation to happen - agreements that are light, enabling and flexible.

The framework includes the widest possible range of ways for churches to cooperate with one another in a variety of contexts. There are four questions on which the framework is constructed.

1. What are the churches involved called to do together and for what purpose?
2. How will they relate with one another as they work together?
3. What is the context or locality in which they are called?
4. What sort of agreement and authorisation are needed to do this work?

David Cornick (CTE General Secretary) suggests this ‘may well prove to be one of the most significant practical ecumenical documents of our time’.

Download *A New Framework* from cte.org.uk or contact the Territorial Ecumenical Officer for a copy.

Recommended Reading

Unless otherwise indicated, details of where to buy or download these documents (and others) are at the bottom of our ecumenical webpage:
<https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/ecumenical>

Books

[The Salvation Army in the Body of Christ: An Ecclesiological Statement](#)

(IHQ 2008) A statement on the Army's relationship with other churches.

[Community in Mission: A Salvationist Ecclesiology](#)

(Phil Needham, 1987) Written primarily to give Salvationists a vision of the missionary future into which their Lord is leading them, this book also gives a perspective on ecclesiology.

[Unity in Process: Reflections on Ecumenism](#)

(Ed. Clive Barrett, 2012) Looks at the huge amount of ecumenical activity going on, building relationships between churches, especially at local level, and reflects on these relationships from a range of thematic perspectives.
(Search in <https://books.google.co.uk/> for purchasing information)

[Who Are These Salvationists?: An Analysis for the 21st Century](#)

(Shaw Clifton, 1999) An examination of the history, theology and position of The Salvation Army within the Christian Protestant Evangelical world view.

Dialogues

[Conversations with the Catholic Church](#)

A report from a series of informal conversations from 2007 to 2012 between representatives of the Roman Catholic Church and The Salvation Army.

[Working Together in Mission: Witness, Education and Service](#)

A report of the 2009/2011 Salvation Army - World Methodist Council Dialogue.

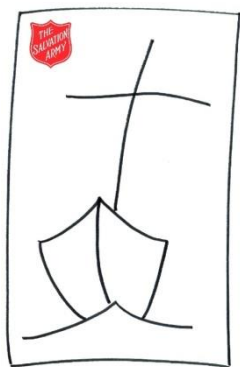
Official Responses

[Response to 'Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry'](#)

(IHQ 1986) The Army's response to the WCC's Faith and Order Paper No 111.

[Response to 'The Church: Towards a Common Vision'](#)

(IHQ 2015) The Army's response to the WCC's Faith and Order Paper No 214.



www.salvationarmy.org.uk/ecumenical