## Community celebration ideas

This resource offers event suggestions to thank your local community for their support and include them in our birthday celebrations. Think about how to get the word out about your celebrations. Reach out to people who have supported your corps throughout the years by using social media, leafletting or posters.

As well as the ideas below there are leaflets, posters, banners and giveaways to order to showcase who we are and help connect with your community. See what’s available at: <https://www.salvationist.org.uk/resources/community-engagement/>.

Here are some suggestions of ways your corps can say thank you to the community:

### Picnic in a park birthday party

Celebrate the birthday of The Salvation Army with your community by organising a bring-your-own picnic to a local park. The event can follow the theme of a birthday party which includes decorations and sharing birthday cake. Use the ideas for activities and games (see end of document) to set up some things for everyone to take part in. Spend time together to celebrate your surroundings and as an opportunity to include people passing by.

### The birthday bake off

Invite everyone who is at your corps to partake in a bake off. Everyone should bring their best sweet creation, there can be a competition for prizes for the best bake. The prizes might follow a baking theme like an apron. Once the judging is over, you can all share and eat lots of cake together.

### Summer games

Hold a mini-Olympics / sports day to celebrate your community and to involve people of all ages. The games could start by having a short opening ceremony with your band or singers to symbolise that the event has begun. Once all the games have been played, together you can award medals as part of a ceremony for those who have been particularly good in this event. This might be decided by keeping track of points in team and individual games. Some ideas for team and individual games are below or you can use some of the additional games and activities provided:

Individual activities

* Bean bag throwing competition

Egg and spoon race

* Sprint races
* Bowls

Team games:

* Rounders
* Cricket
* Football
* Relay race

### Movie night

Show a family-friendly film in your hall. This is a good opportunity to invite your local community to use your hall and to get all ages involved. Snacks can be provided such as popcorn or ice cream. Please ensure you follow all the correct permissions, such as not financially benefitting from the event.

### Acts of kindness

To celebrate The Salvation Army’s birthday, give back to your local area through carrying out acts of kindness. Groups can do actions like picking up litter at a local park, singing at an older people’s home or gardening around your own building. Giving back to your community is a great way to celebrate and show appreciation to the place and the people who have looked after The Salvation Army.

### Birthday open-air service

If your corps has a regular open-air service, during this time, have an alternative service to celebrate The Salvation Army’s birthday. Go to the same space you usually go to, but instead have birthday signage up and celebrate with your community. During this time music can be played including the ‘Happy birthday’ tune. Pieces of cake and birthday balloons and hats can be handed out for everyone to join in the celebration.

## Additional activities and games to use at any community event:

### Classic birthday party games:

#### Pass the parcel

Wrap up a present with lots of layers. On each layer have a surprise little present like a sweet. All participants sit in a circle and pass around the present while the music plays. Have a leader pause the song at a random moment when you stop passing the present around. Whoever is still holding the present opens one layer, then the music starts again. Keep doing this until you reach the middle present.

#### Musical statues

#### Limbo

Have two volunteers hold a pole at both ends. Move the bar lower and lower each round until no one can fit under the bar without touching the ground.

* Giant treasure hunt

Place sweets or chocolates around the building before anyone arrives. Challenge everyone to find all the sweets and chocolates you have hidden. Once they have been found everyone can share the sweet treats.

#### Musical chairs

### Activities and crafts:

* Use The Salvation Army Birthday colouring-in sheets

Colouring sheets have been designed for your celebrations

in your corps and community.

* Make birthday thank you cards

Using card and other creative elements you own, like paint or colouring pencils, you can encourage people to make a birthday-themed thank you card and give it to someone they are thankful for

* Make birthday celebration decorations, such as banners, paper plates (for your cakes)
* Cake decorating

Buy or bake some plain sponge buns, and allow people to come and decorate the cakes using icing and sprinkles.

* Birthday quiz

See end of document for questions and answers. These can be placed on tables, or it can be an event in teams

### Games:

* Oversized games, such as giant Jenga, Connect four, Snakes and Ladders
* Capture the flag
* Team tug of war
* Parachute games: <https://www.performancehealth.com/articles/7-fun-parachute-games-for-all-ages-toddlers-to-seniors>
* In the sea, out of the sea, on the sand.

Have a piece of rope spread out across the ground in a straight line. Each participant must change position based on what the leader calls out.

1. ‘On the sand’ – stand with a foot on either side.
2. ‘In the sea’ – participants jump to have both feet on the left-hand side of the rope.
3. ‘Out of the sea’ – participants jump to have both feet on the right-hand side of the rope.

The leader calls out ‘in the sea’, ‘out of the sea’ or ‘on the sand’ and the participants must then go to that position. If they jump to the incorrect position, they are disqualified. The winner is the last person standing after correctly following all the commands.

* Obstacle course

Lay out an obstacle course, including (this can be adapted based on what equipment you have available):

* Crawling through a tunnel
* Running in and out of cones
* Skipping with a rope ten times

Have someone with a stopwatch time each individual as

they go through the obstacle course. The fastest person

to successfully complete the obstacle course wins.

### Birthday quiz

Each correct answer is worth one point. This quiz has been

made for all ages.

1. How old is The Salvation Army in 2023?
2. 158 years old
3. 163 years old
4. 152 years old
5. What is a golden birthday?
6. Your 50th birthday
7. When your date of birth matches your age
8. When you share a birthday with a celebrity
9. In what language does ‘bon anniversaire’ mean happy birthday?
10. Italian
11. Spanish
12. French
13. How many times is the word ‘happy’ sung in the ‘Happy birthday’ song?
14. Five
15. Four
16. Seven
17. What day of the week has the most people born?
18. Monday
19. Tuesday
20. Saturday
21. Where was Jesus born?
22. Bethlehem
23. Jerusalem
24. Nazareth
25. What do you receive from the King on your 100th birthday?
26. Nothing
27. A present
28. A signed birthday card
29. What is the King’s birthday parade called?
30. Jubilee
31. Trooping of the colour
32. Coronation
33. Methuselah was the oldest character in the Bible, but how old was he said to be?
34. 504 years old
35. 969 years old
36. 788 years old
37. On average, how many people celebrate their birthday on any

particular day?

1. 25 million people
2. 32 million people
3. 17 million people

### Birthday quiz answers

1. A
2. B
3. C
4. B
5. B
6. A
7. C
8. B
9. B
10. C