

Past and Present

1865-2025



PRIMARY ASSEMBLY

AIMS

- To learn about the work of The Salvation Army
- To identify aid from the past and present
- To consider ways to help in the future

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- PowerPoint presentation
- 'Happy Birthday' music eg 'Happy Birthday' (mandolin version) by Birthday World (0:52)
- Salvation Army uniforms from the past and present, ideally for a man and a woman from the past and present
- Photos on how the local Salvation Army corps has developed over time (optional)

INTRODUCTION

Slide 1 Whose birthday?

Play birthday music as pupils enter for assembly. You may wish to mime confusion when no name is mentioned on the third line. Introduce yourself and welcome pupils to assembly.

Happy Birthday! But whose birthday is it? *Ask if anyone's birthday is today or soon, and congratulate them.*

There is another birthday coming up. Can you guess whose? *Take a variety of answers.*

Slide 2 160 years

It is The Salvation Army's birthday! But how old is The Salvation Army? 6 years? 60 years? 160 years? 600 years? *Take a variety of answers.*

The Salvation Army would need 160 candles on a cake! It has been working in our communities for 160 years. On 2 July 2025 The Salvation Army will be 160 years old. *You may also wish to mention the age of your local corps. I wonder what has changed in that time?*

MAIN TALK

Ask for four volunteers and give them each a uniform to wear. These are Salvation Army uniforms. Two are uniforms from a long time ago, and two are more modern. Can you spot which one is which? Ask for a variety of answers. Then put the volunteers into pairs - past and present uniforms.

Slide 3 Uniforms

A long time ago a lot of uniforms were made by Salvation Army members. Women wore bonnets and long dresses, and men wore caps. Today there is a variety of uniforms. Wearing a badge of the Red Shield is very popular.



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These volunteers are going to help us go on a journey and find out what The Salvation Army has been doing for 160 years. Are you ready to do a bit of time travelling? *Depending on the age group, you may wish to pretend to 'time travel' between each slide - wave hands up and down and make a time warp noise! The final click on slide 3 will reveal a time warp image.*

Introduce each slide; then two images will appear and pupils are to decide which is 'past' and which is 'present', by directing the volunteers to stand to the left or right of the slide. Explain what has changed over 160 years - suggested text is below.

Please note - both images will be black and white. Click to change the present-day image to colour, to add past/present labels, and to reveal more images.

Slide 4 Helping people who are homeless

The very first beds were coffins - that was all that could be found! Today we run Lifehouses, a place to support people, to find a home, find work, to find friendship and rebuild their lives.

Slide 5 Helping families

The Salvation Army works with families, to listen, to be a friend, and to help. Today we also run clubs for children.

Slide 6 Helping people who are hungry

Children were going to school hungry. The Salvation Army ran farthing breakfasts - breakfast could be bought for a farthing, which was the smallest value a coin could be - a quarter of an old penny. Today we help with lunch clubs, food banks, soup runs and growing food.

Slide 7 Speaking out for fairness for all

In the past some Salvation Army members were put into prison for what they believed. Today The Salvation Army raises awareness of unfairness in a variety of ways: social media, marches, campaigns, contacting politicians.

Slide 8 Helping people during an emergency

In the past, aid came by wagon and eventually by Red Shield van. Today we still use the emergency response vans, but more modern transport means that support can arrive quicker than before.

Slide 9 Helping older people

Today The Salvation Army runs care homes and clubs for older people.

Slide 10 The local corps - optional

Thank the volunteers for their help.

Slide 11 What has stayed the same?

Take a variety of answers.

The Salvation Army believes in helping others, believes in loving others. The uniforms, the beds, and the food may change with time. We have learned how to improve the help that we give. But the desire to help others has always stayed the same. What might The Salvation Army look like in the future? What might happen in the next 160 years? *Take a variety of answers and be playful!*



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CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE

Slide 12 Care, help, love

Christians believe that Jesus taught us to care for one another, to help others, to love others. Members of The Salvation Army believe that they should share God's love by showing love to others. And one way of doing that is to help people in need.

CHALLENGE AND REFLECTION

Slide 13 Love others

We have looked at how The Salvation Army has been helping people throughout the years. During the past 160 years The Salvation Army has been learning how to do more and more to help others, so that in the future we can hopefully do even more.

Take a moment to think about what you do now to help others. How do you, as a child, help others? How can you show love to others? *Pause for a moment.*

Here's a challenge for you. Take a moment to wonder how **you** might be able to help people in the future: when you're a little older, as a teenager, or as an adult. What would you like to do to help people in the future? What might you have to do to help that dream come true? *Pause for a short reflection time.*

Thank the pupils and staff for letting you be a part of their assembly.

Slide 14 Final slide

Slide 15 Song

Optional - sing a birthday song to The Salvation Army!

Happy Birthday to you
Happy Birthday to you
Happy Birthday, Salvation Army
Happy Birthday to you!

Helping people like you
Helping people like me
Helping people around the world
Helping people in need.

Slide 16 Final slide

