

Disability

from a Salvation Army Perspective

This course belongs to: _____

Equip offers practical courses and resources to support the mission of The Salvation Army. Courses are intended for all officers, soldiers, employees, leaders, and volunteers.



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Course Designation: Certificate of Completion

Disability from a Salvation Army Perspective



In this course, Scripture and the *International Positional Statement on Persons with Disabilities* will be used to discuss the intrinsic value of God's creation of humankind and how we might respond to ourselves and one another. Defining terms, including the term 'disability', will set the foundation for a global application of the teaching.

Modules

1. Words and Terms
2. The Image of God
3. The Banquet Table
4. The Body of Christ

Learning Outcomes

1. Be familiar with the *International Positional Statement on Persons with Disabilities*.
2. Understand the intrinsic value of all humanity.
3. Consider the biblical mandate of accessibility and belonging.

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All materials belong to *The Salvation Army International Headquarters*.

Introduction to Disability from a Salvation Army Perspective

If you would like to watch this introduction go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=8hKHsacUJ8s&t=2s.

Major Christine Johnston: In 2020, The Salvation Army International Headquarters released a positional statement on disability. This positional statement was developed by many people from around the world, including the Caribbean, United Kingdom, Zimbabwe, Canada, the United States, New Zealand and Norway, and with contributions from those individuals who experience disability.

In this series of four learning modules, we will use the Scriptures and the positional statement on disability to guide our learning. The word 'disability' can cause some friction and some disagreement. For some people, it accurately describes a medical condition or a social construct. For others, the word focuses too much on the perceived lack of ability instead of on the ability that a person has or what a person can do. We recognise that the word disability is not a perfect word, but it is one that is generally accepted in our world, so the invitation is to accept this word with an understanding that it is meant to help each one of us. We also extend the invitation to you to insert a word for disability that you are most comfortable with as you take this learning journey.

There are some other words or terms that we will use at times throughout this series of modules to help us expand our understanding and guide our learning. These words may mean different things to different people, and that's okay because we can learn from one another, and this broadens our thinking and impacts our actions. These terms will be explored throughout the course.

Now we come to a valuable question. Why is it important for us to learn and think about disability? You may want to personalise this. Why is it important for you to learn and think about disability? Why is it important for me to learn and think about disability? For me this is important, because as I have experienced my own disability and as I have engaged with others, I realise that there are barriers in our communities. Some of them prevent people from experiencing life to the full. We all miss out on the contribution that people have to offer to the communities in which we live. In John 10:10, Jesus says that he has come that we may have life and have it to the full. We are all part of his flock and can experience this full life. It is my prayer that as we learn together through this series of modules, we will become aware of the value of all people, that we will recognise the barriers that exist in our communities and discover how we might break down or overcome these barriers, so that all people can experience a full life and belonging in our societies and especially in our faith communities.

I invite you to open your heart and your mind to the exciting possibilities that are before us as we learn and grow together.

To begin: Underline four sentences in the above introduction that you find valuable as you begin this learning journey.

Module One

Words and Terms

Date __/__/__



Scripture Reflection

Activity One

Read Genesis 1:1–31.

Note the number of times Scripture says that God saw that what he made was good and even very good.

Record the correct verses in the blank space provided.

Genesis 1: ____

Genesis 1: ____

Genesis 1: ____

Genesis 1: ____

Genesis 1: ____

Genesis 1: ____

Genesis 1: ____



Activity Two

- **Picture 1 (top left):** small brown bat with wings wrapped around itself hanging from a tree.
- **Picture 2 (top right):** yellow and black bee on a yellow flower.
- **Picture 3 (bottom left):** magnified view of a vine with sharp thorns.
- **Picture 4 (bottom right):** magnified view of a mosquito on blue fabric.

Is there anything in Creation that you would exclude as being 'very good' (Genesis 1:31)? Which parts of God's creation are you not comfortable with or do you dislike?

Read Psalm 8 and circle the aspects of Creation that capture your attention.

¹ LORD, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!
You have set your glory
in the heavens.
² Through the praise of children and infants
you have established a stronghold against
your enemies,
to silence the foe and the avenger.
³ When I consider your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars,
which you have set in place,
⁴ what is mankind that you are mindful of
them,
human beings that you care for them?
⁵ You have made them a little lower than the
angels
and crowned them with glory and honour.
⁶ You made them rulers over the works of
your hands;
you put everything under their feet:
⁷ all flocks and herds,
and the animals of the wild,
⁸ the birds in the sky,
and the fish in the sea,
all that swim the paths of the seas.
⁹ LORD, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

[illegible]

Pause and Pray

Our understanding of all that God has created invites a response.

Use the prayer prompts below to write a prayer. Prior to beginning your prayer, allow yourself to pause, stilling yourself as you come into the presence of our living God who has created and welcomes you.

Amazing Creator God you are _____

I marvel at your creation of _____

I see the intricate details of your handiwork in creation when I see

I praise you especially for humankind _____

You have said that **ALL** your creation is '**very good**'.

I confess that there are parts of your creation I do not always like

Forgive me for the times I have behaved in ways that have shown
my dislike for people whom you have created or for the times I have
excluded other _____

As I continue through this learning journey, open my heart and mind to
new learning and understanding _____

I pray in the name of Jesus, the one who can create and recreate for his
honour and glory _____

Amen.

Defining the Word 'Disability'



*Las Murciélagas – 2023 IBSA (International Blind Sports Federation) World Games Champions (left);
Augustina Medina (Cuerpo de Mendoza – Mendoza Corps) (right)*

Activity One

It is of great value to understand how words and terms from around the world do not carry the same meaning. In this exercise, we will take time to examine this truth.

State which sport you see being played in the pictures above. _____

Turn to page 54 to see if your word is the same word used by others.

Activity Two

1. Consider the word 'ALL'.

Below are four definitions of the word 'ALL'.

Select the definition that you like the best:

- ☐ every member or individual component of
- ☐ any, whatever
- ☐ the whole number, every one
- ☐ everyone, everything

2. Re-read Genesis 1:31 and answer the questions.

A. What is included in God's affirmation of 'very good'? What does 'ALL' mean to you in this sentence?

B. Does the world around you show affirmation that 'ALL' things God created are 'very good'? If not, where might this statement not be affirmed?

Activity Three

Consider the word 'disability'.

Different interpretations, views and uses of words are natural, but they can sometimes lead to misunderstanding. The word 'disability' is not equally used nor understood around our world.

Definition of Disability

The United Nations (UN) describes persons with disabilities as 'those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others'.

Here are some examples of other words that are used in place of disability. They may be more familiar to you:

- person with disability
- differently abled
- special needs
- other _____

Which word referencing disability is most used in your setting? Write it here.

IMPORTANT: When the word 'disability' is used in these modules, act as an interpreter and interpret it for a word that is suitable for you in your setting.

The Reality of Disability

Disability is part of being human. Almost everyone will temporarily or permanently experience disability at some point in their life. An estimated 1.3 billion people – about 16% of the global population – currently experience significant disability.



'The word (**disability**) ends with ability, so that's the most important thing to me. I try to find the ability in disability because people with disabilities are able to do a lot of things. Sometimes some of those things are things that people without disabilities can't do or don't understand.'

– Kristen

Read the above quote shared by Kristen, who must spend her life in a wheelchair. What is your initial response to her reflection on the word disability?

Identifying Types of Disability

Activity One

There are many types of disability. Circle the images which present a person with disability.

Check the answers on page 54 to see if you have discovered them all.



Activity Two

1. What is your experience with disability?

Reflect on the questions below and answer in the space provided.

The UN states that persons with long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments should experience ‘full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others’.

A. Which disabilities, in your context, invite individuals to participate in society on an equal basis with others?

B. Are there any disabilities which limit participation?

2. What is your personal experience with disability?

Think back on your life and try to remember your experience with disability. It may be your own experience or that of someone else whom you know.

A. What was the circumstance (where, when, who)?

B. Which of the following are the result of NOT being self-supporting?

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> fearful | <input type="checkbox"/> concerned | <input type="checkbox"/> frustrated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> uncomfortable | <input type="checkbox"/> content | <input type="checkbox"/> at peace |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sad | <input type="checkbox"/> curious | <input type="checkbox"/> anxious |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> other _____ |

Remembering our experience with disability may leave us with thoughts of fear, shame or embarrassment. We may have felt uncomfortable. We may also have had thoughts of joy, curiosity or acceptance. We invite you to bring all your feelings to the Lord Jesus in prayer. Also, if talking to someone about your experience would be helpful, find a trusted person and invite them into your story and experience.

International Positional Statement on Persons with Disabilities

To conclude this module, read the *International Positional Statement on Persons with Disabilities* found on page 58.

Read it slowly, **aloud**, and think about what you are reading. Write down five things that inspire you, you have learnt or have captured your attention, and explain why in the spaces below.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Next Steps

Equip is established upon application-based learning. This includes a one-week applied learning periods at the conclusion of each module.

For the next seven days, reflect on the content discussed in this module.

1. In your daily life, consider Genesis 1:31: 'God saw ALL that he had made, and it was very good.'
2. Be aware of both seen and unseen disabilities.
3. Allow the Spirit of God to make you sensitive to different impairments, 'which in interaction with various barriers may hinder [people's] full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others'.
4. Take time to write about your observations and experiences.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Please begin Module Two any time after this one-week period.

Module Two

The Image of God

Date __/__/__



Post-Week Reflection

Before beginning Module Two, answer the following

Were you able to notice both seen and unseen disabilities? If so, how did this change your perspective on disability?

Did you notice how society or your community may limit the participation of any individuals? Are there any steps you can take to change this reality?

Did you notice any instances when society or your community invites all individuals to participate, despite disability?

Psalm 139: First Reading

Prepare yourself to read Psalm 139. Use your personal Bible if you have one. If not, use the Scripture provided on the following page.

Psalm 139

¹You have searched me, LORD, and you know me. ²You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. ³You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. ⁴Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely. ⁵You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. ⁶Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. ⁷Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? ⁸If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. ⁹If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, ¹⁰even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. ¹¹If I say, 'Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,' ¹²even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you. ¹³For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. ¹⁵My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. ¹⁶Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. ¹⁷How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! ¹⁸Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand — when I awake, I am still with you. ¹⁹If only you, God, would slay the wicked! Away from me, you who are bloodthirsty! ²⁰They speak of you with evil intent; your adversaries misuse your name. ²¹Do I not hate those who hate you, LORD, and abhor those who are in rebellion against you? ²²I have nothing but hatred for them; I count them my enemies. ²³Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. ²⁴See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

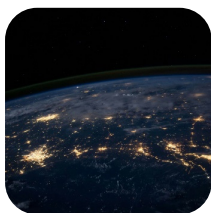
Psalm 139 is a portion of Scripture that is filled with many powerful and beautiful images.

Examine the pictures below, and for each photo state which aspect of Psalm 139 you see portrayed. Begin by noting the verse, and then add your personal reflection.













Psalm 139: Second Reading

Reading a piece of Scripture a second time is sometimes very valuable. Make sure you are in a place that allows for quiet reflection. Read Psalm 139 again. Note any part of the Scripture that has captured your attention. Underline it.

Re-read the verses that stood out to you. Consider why this portion of the Scripture was of special interest to you. Ask the Lord to be present as you rest in stillness. Take note of anything significant.

Phrase Reflection: Psalm 139:13–14 – ‘Knit’:

Activity One

1. Re-read Psalm 139:13–14. Circle the word ‘knit’.



Knit means:

1. to make clothes, etc., by using two long needles to connect wool or another type of thread into joined rows
2. to join together.

In the article ‘God as Knitter: Psalm 139 Through a Disability Lens’ by Jasmine Duckworth (<https://disabilityandfaith.org/god-as-knitter/>), another definition of ‘knit’ is given:

‘God’s intentional, methodical, individual methods of creating a person.’

Using Jasmine Duckworth’s definition of ‘knit’, share how you feel, knowing this is how you and all others were created by the eternal God.

Activity Two

1. Consider the value, uniqueness and characteristics of your body, which have been knit together by God.



Your physical body.

Think about small details like your thumb, cheek, knee, eyebrow. *Look at the colour and its different shades. Look at the shape of each part. Are some parts brighter or deeper in colour? Do you see freckles or scars or wrinkles? Where is your body strong? Where is it weak? Pause and answer these questions silently to yourself.*

The functioning of your brain.

The brain is responsible for all your emotions, sensations, aspirations and everything that makes you uniquely individual. This organ, created by God, has many functions. It receives, processes and interprets an incredible amount of information. Your brain also stores memories and controls your movements. *Do you learn best by hearing, doing, watching or reading? What is one emotion you have experienced today? Pause and answer these questions silently to yourself.*

Your unique personality.

Personality describes your unique patterns of thought, feeling and behaviour that distinguish you from another person. Your personality is said to be a product of both biology and environment. A personality remains quite consistent throughout life. *How do you respond to meeting someone for the first time? Would you be eager or hesitant in this situation? Pause and answer these questions silently to yourself.*

2. Fill in the following statements:

A strength that God has given me is the ability to:

A weakness I have, that is sometimes difficult to live with, is:

People say that this is a positive aspect of my personality:

Personal Reflection: God's Mercy Seen from Kintsugi



Major Keiko Takabatake
KINTSUGI – A Personal Reflection

In Japan, there is a technique of glueing chipped or broken ceramics with lacquer and decorating them with powders such as gold and silver. Rather than returning an item to its original state, we make use of the scars as they are, creating a new beauty and a tasteful finish.

Kintsugi conveys that people and vessels are beautiful because they are imperfect.

Isaiah 64:8 says: 'Yet you, LORD, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.'

We live with scars, visible or invisible. People may call it a disease, a disability, an economic hardship or a mental illness. It is because of it that we suffer, worry and grieve. Despair can make it difficult to live. It can feel like a stain on your life. However, God repairs the missing parts, the wounds, with his deep love and comfort, and makes them even more valuable than before. You want to hide your flaws and chips. But let's put our wounds and gaps before God. Instead of a seam of gold, God will join the parts together with the blood of the Cross, heal you and remake you into a precious vessel.

God is the potter who makes the man who is the earth, and the kintsugi who repairs the chipped and cracked person.

Isaiah 43:4 says: 'Since you are precious and honoured in my sight, and because I love you, I will give people in exchange for you, nations in exchange for your life.'

Personal Prayer



Take this opportunity to bring any prior thoughts and feelings to God through the gift of prayer.

Sit quietly before entering this prayer time. This prayer is based on Psalm 139.

After each section, pause in the quiet and listen to the Lord, responding as you are led, in prayer.

I praise you, Creator God, for searching me and knowing me, knowing when I rise and discerning my thoughts. You search out my path and all my ways. Amazing! You know everything I will say before I speak it and you place your hand of affirmation and love on me. This is so incredible that I find it difficult to understand. **PAUSE**

There is no place I can go without you. Whether it be the heavens or underground, you are there. You are with me. You lead and hold me regardless of where I go. In both the spaces of light and darkness you are there. Darkness is as light to you. Teach me to comprehend this! **PAUSE**

You formed me. You knit me together. You were attentive to every detail as you created me. You formed me wonderfully and with intentionality. I praise you. This reminds me of how wonderful you are. Nothing was hidden from you when you created me in the depths of the earth. You saw me. You see me. The days of my life are all important to you! **PAUSE**

To think that you think about me is a beautiful realisation. Your thoughts overwhelm me. They are vast and complete – as many as grains of sand! I am unable to comprehend the amount or significance, but I am thankful for this. When I see things in the world that may seek to overwhelm me or are against you, I am reminded that you are just, and your will – it will be done. In this, I receive your rest. **PAUSE**

Align myself with you and all your ways. Search me and my heart so I can know how I can best follow you. I ask that you lead me in every step I take. May my life applaud you and glorify you. May this happen even as I see those around me, knowing they are equally seen and loved by you, their Creator, Redeemer and Friend. **PAUSE**

Take my life and teach me the things I need to know through this course, as I continue to serve you. **PAUSE**

Amen.

Listening to Those with Disability

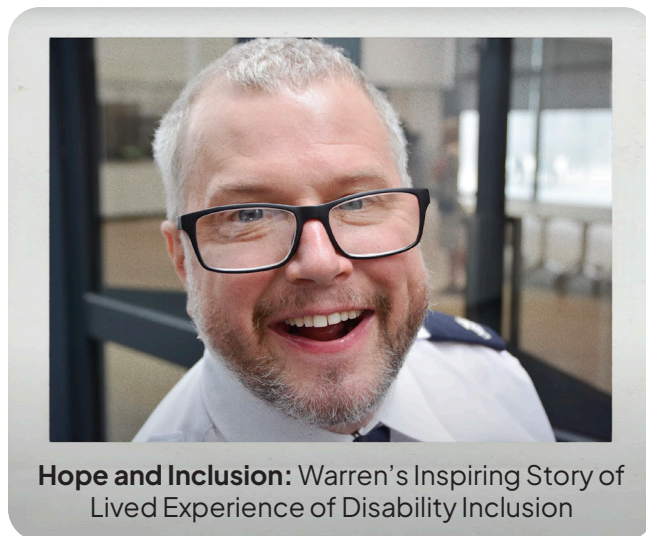
This is Warren's story. Warren is disabled. Find two other people to read this interview with you. Each person can be one person in the interview.

Warren's Story

Bram Cassidy: _____

Warren O'Brien: _____

Anita O'Brien: _____



Bram: Let's tell the audience who you are.

Warren: Warren O'Brien. I like my artwork. I like going there. It's good fun. We have good laughs.

Bram: How would you describe yourself?

Warren: Happy. Happy painter. Cool, Cool, cool, cool fella.

Anita: When he was almost three, we discovered he had a disability. Our children were always embraced in The Salvation Army. He was involved in a youth group and that was great. Warren is a very, he's a very caring person. He's got a very strong sense of justice these days. He seems to be very confident in who he is. And, you know, I've seen that blossom in many ways. He's very good with older people, particularly at his church.

Bram: I've known the family for a long time, when Warren was a little boy. But in 2014, my wife and I were the corps officers at Box Hill. And that's when my relationship with Warren really started. I was used to come to the 9:30 service in those days, and he just wanted to belong. You'd turn around and there was Warren.

Anita: He was a junior soldier for about 30-plus years. What happened? He just suddenly noticed that people were getting involved in becoming a senior soldier. And he actually said, can I do that?

Bram: For me, I looked and I thought, give me a, give me a reason why he can't be. It was my privilege to, as we say in The Salvation Army, 'swear him in as a senior soldier of The Salvation Army'.

Anita: He very proudly stood up there in his uniform and he wears his uniform proudly today. So it's really important to find ways to bring that in, that belonging, sense of belonging to people.

Bram: Tell us some of the ways you help people at the corps.

Warren: Welcoming them to church, on the door, shake their hand, and sit next to some people, have a chat.

Bram: You could not get into that service without getting past Warren. And so he would greet people, he would shake them by the hand. There would be a small conversation that would go on and folk would make their way in. The living out of a senior soldier is more what happens outside of Sunday in the way that they live, the way that they interact with their community. And Warren has a very large interaction. Warren's volunteering with the police and he's actually an integral part of developing detectives and helping them in their training. Warren, where do you go on Wednesdays and Thursdays?

Warren: The Arts Project, Northcote.

Bram: What do you do there?

Warren: Paint, paint pictures, draw pictures.

Anita: I think that it's wonderful for him to have that avenue of communicating, and to actually express himself in that way is very empowering for him. And he's always loved the lights of the city... he says they're windows. To me, often it's like windows into the soul for Warren because you see the light coming through. He does different colours and the light comes through. He has grown in his faith. He demonstrates his faith by the way he acts and interacts with people.

Bram Cassidy: We are the poorer without the 'Warrens' in our congregations. So as much as we need to allow them to be there, and we do, we need them because they add something to us. They broaden our perspectives and they earth us. So tell us, Warren, why do you attend church?

Warren O'Brien: It's good fun. And they do a good job, I was happy. I have been proud of being a senior soldier in The Salvation Army. Have coffee and have a chat. Worship the Lord.

Bram Cassidy: And that's important to you?

Warren O'Brien: That's important to me. Yeah. Help people.

Bram Cassidy: And when you see someone who's lonely or sad, what do you do?

Warren O'Brien: Make them feel happy.

If you would like to watch the interview go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=k2-qeosrZ1c&t=253s

What did you learn about disability from this interview? What surprised you or confirmed your thinking? Talk about it with the people who were included in this activity. Write your discoveries.

Disability Positional Statement: Follow-up Reflection

In Module 1, you were invited to read the *International Positional Statement on Persons with Disabilities*. Read it again slowly, aloud, and think about what you are reading. See page 58 for the *International Positional Statement on Persons with Disabilities*.

Answer the following questions based on your reading:

1. What is one thing mentioned that you see applied in your current setting?

2. What is one thing that you would consider difficult to apply in your setting?

Engaging the *International Positional Statement on Persons with Disabilities*

Read each section below, referenced from the *International Positional Statement on Persons with Disabilities*, and answer the corresponding true and false question. Answer each question that follows each statement of position.

A. People with disabilities experience discrimination.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Question: Is discrimination seen in your setting? If yes, describe one situation that you know of.

B. Some people are made in the image of God.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Question: Have you ever seen anyone treated without dignity or respect? How do you think they felt?

C. Diversity, including people with disabilities, helps The Salvation Army's mission and ministry.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Question: Where have you seen the goodness of inclusion expressed in your community or congregation?

D. The word 'disability' means a personal impairment.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Question: Describe, from your setting, where you see it is difficult for someone with a disability to engage with the wider community or your corps/church community.

E. People-first language highlights personhood first rather than the condition of the person.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Question: Choose which of the sentences below is better. Explain why.

'The blind woman met us at the corps' or 'The woman who is blind met us at the corps'.

F. Depending on a person's ability, some people are more valuable to God than others.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Question: Is the biblical view, that all are made in the image of God, reflected in your community or society?

G. Disability is caused by sin.

Read John 9: 1–3 and Matthew 9: 27–30 on page 52.

- ☐ True
☐ False

H. We can have a better understanding of God and his love when we include all people.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Question: How have you recently included someone with a disability?

I. The Salvation Army does not advocate for the elimination of poverty and discrimination towards people with disabilities.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Question: How might pausing to pray for human rights around the world be of value?

J. People living with observable or invisible disabilities desire to be treated as ordinary human beings.

- ☐ True
☐ False
-

Question: Has your heart or mind had a shift in how it views or responds to those with disabilities?

Next Steps

Over the next seven days, complete the following three tasks:

- 1. Write down three things you learnt in this module that you don't want to forget.
- 2. Choose two people to share your learnings with. After you share, ask them if there is anything they might want to ask you. Record the names of the people you shared with.
- 3. Read Genesis 1:27–31 and answer the following questions:
 - What does it mean to you to be made in the image of God?
 - Do all people, of all abilities, bear the image of God? Why or why not?
 - How does seeing people as being made in the image of God impact how we view ourselves and others?

Sometimes, our beliefs, attitudes and actions do not align with seeing all people as made in the image of God. Write a prayer. Confess that you have not always seen others as God sees them, ask for his forgiveness and that he will renew your mind, attitudes and actions. Give thanks that God provides a renewed view of all persons.

Please begin Module Three any time after this one-week period.

Module Three

The Banquet Table

Date__/__/__



Post-Week Reflection

How has reflecting on all people, of all abilities, bearing the image of God, impacted your thinking and behaviours?

How did the people you shared with respond to what you had learnt?

God's Provision



1. Pause. Make sure you are in a place where you can participate in the following activity in peace and quiet.

2. Read Psalm 23.

The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

3. Read through the passage again and notice what kind of help is being given. Underline five or more ways that the Lord, our Shepherd, is offering help.

4. How has God helped you? How has he provided for you and your family? The help may have come directly to you, from God, or from something that someone else has done for you or given to you.

5. Continue in reflection and read the beautiful words from this Salvation Army reflective piece, 'His Provision'. Afterwards, take time to offer your own prayer to the Lord.

His Provision

At the moment of my weakness,
When my need for power is plain,
And my own strength is exhausted once again,
Then my Lord has made provision for the day of my despair,
And his precious Holy Spirit hears my prayer, my prayer,
Then my Lord has made provision for the day of my despair,
And his precious Holy Spirit hears my prayer.

Holy Spirit! Promised presence fall on me.
Holy Spirit! Make me all I long to be.
Holy Spirit! Holy Spirit!
Give your power to me, O Holy Spirit.

When the darkness falls around me,
When bewildered and afraid,
When I feel the most deserted and betrayed,
Then my every need is answered by God's providential care,
And his precious Holy Spirit hears my prayer, my prayer.
Then my every need is answered by God's providential care,
And his precious Holy Spirit hears my prayer.

Nothing now can rob God's servant
Of the peace that he bequeaths,
Nothing take away the strength his presence breathes.
Of the everlasting arms of love I'm daily made aware,
And his precious Holy Spirit hears my prayer, my prayer.
Of the everlasting arms of love I'm daily made aware,
And his precious Holy Spirit hears my prayer.

Lyrics by General John Gowans

God's Provision Through You

Activity One

God's Provision – Personal Reflection

1. In the list below are different expressions of help. Select the ones you have been able to offer to someone else. Check the appropriate boxes.

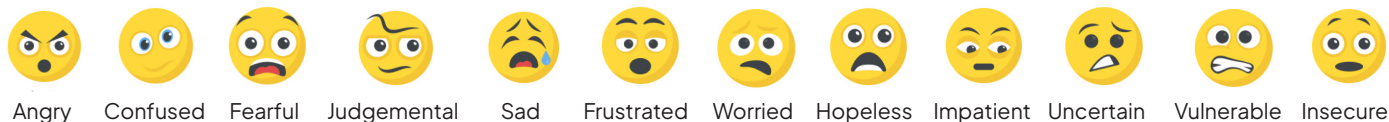
- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stepped to the side to make room for someone else when walking. | <input type="checkbox"/> Offered care to an elderly person. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Smiled at someone. | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixed something that was broken. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listened to what someone had to say, seeking to understand them. | <input type="checkbox"/> Assisted someone with their work. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gave to a neighbour in need. | <input type="checkbox"/> Affirmed someone with words. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Opened a door for someone. | <input type="checkbox"/> Found something that was lost. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gave directions to someone who was lost. | <input type="checkbox"/> Expressed love in a tangible way. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Offered a financial gift. | <input type="checkbox"/> Prayed with someone. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shared an encouraging Scripture verse. | <input type="checkbox"/> Spoke up when someone wasn't treated fairly. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Showed extra patience. | <input type="checkbox"/> Shared the good news of Jesus. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Explained something that was confusing. | <input type="checkbox"/> Taught someone younger how to do something. |

2. We all need help sometimes. Think about a time when you have needed help (with mobility, reading, completing a task or requiring clarification for better understanding, etc.).

I needed help with

3. Can you think of a time when you did not receive the help you needed? How did it feel not being able to do what you wanted to do? If you cannot recall anything, ask someone about their experience.

A. Circle the emoji faces that describe how you may have felt.



B. If you had received the help, would the journey or the outcome have been any different?

Activity Two

1. Read Proverbs 3:28 in the translations provided. Circle the translation that you appreciate the most.

*Do not say to your neighbour,
'Go, and come back, And tomorrow I will give it,' When you have it with you. (NKJV)*

Don't tell your neighbour to come back tomorrow, if you can help today. (CEV)

If you can give your neighbour the help that he needs, do not say to him, 'Go away! Come back tomorrow, and then I will help you.' (EASY)

2. Think about these questions. Answer them in your heart and mind.

A. What does this verse from Scripture tell us about helping others?

B. Has there been a time when God could have used you to be his provision of help in the lives of others and you were not aware of it or did not act upon it?

3. Why do you think that we are sometimes hesitant to help?

From the following list, choose the top three reasons why you feel we are sometimes hesitant to help others. You may want to add your own reason in the space provided.

- ☐ The cost of time, effort or resources is too high.
- ☐ The worry that the offer of help might be rejected or judged negatively.

- ☐ Understanding the emotions and needs of others is not easy and this affects how we measure the impact of possible assistance.
- ☐ The thought that someone else will step in to help, therefore it is not our responsibility.
- ☐ The perspective that people have caused their own situation and therefore don't deserve to be helped.
- ☐ Busy schedules and competing priorities limit the time for helping others.
- ☐ Personal culture does not prioritise helping others.
- ☐ Concerns about being taken advantage of or manipulated causes hesitancy.
- ☐ Personal doubt about the ability to make a meaningful impact: 'What difference can I really make?'
- ☐ Other _____

Help That Transforms



Read the story of Mephibosheth and David in 2 Samuel 4:4 and 2 Samuel 9:1-13. After reading, answer the questions.

See Scripture on page 53.

1. Why did David begin to search for a member of Jonathan's family?

- ☐ He felt guilty.
- ☐ He wanted to kill him.
- ☐ He wanted to show kindness.
- ☐ He needed a leader.

Why is this important?

2. David makes a significant effort to find a family member of his friend Jonathan. He asks questions. What questions does he ask? Choose two.

- ☐ How can he help me?
- ☐ Where is he [Mephibosheth]?
- ☐ Is anyone still alive from the house of Saul?
- ☐ Why is he not here?

3. How does Ziba refer to Saul's relative?

- ☐ A son of Jonathan who is crippled/disabled/lame in both feet.
- ☐ A son named Mephibosheth.
- ☐ A son.

How does it make you feel that Ziba didn't use Mephibosheth's name?

4. Mephibosheth is surprised by David's welcome. How does Mephibosheth describe himself?

- ☐ A little child.
- ☐ A puppet.
- ☐ A dead dog.
- ☐ A beautiful bird.

What do you think this description meant? Why do you think he felt this way?

Some would use the phrase '**dead dog**' to describe a worthless or contemptible (shameful) person.

Has there ever been a time in your life when you felt that you were a 'dead dog' (worthless or shameful)? Write as much as you are comfortable doing, as this is personal.

What might cause someone to describe themselves in a negative 'dead dog' way?

Are there people in your community who might feel this way?

5. Which of David's actions helped Mephibosheth, crippled in both legs, to see himself in a different way?

- ☐ His order that others farm the land and bring in the crops to provide for Mephibosheth.
- ☐ The invitation to always eat at David's table.
- ☐ The welcome into David's family.
- ☐ His acts of kindness rather than revenge.
- ☐ The restoration of rightful land to Mephibosheth.

Help That Transforms



Scripture

'People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God. Indeed there are those who are last who will be first, and first who will be last' (Luke 13:29-30).

Read this beautiful thought – 'Remembered at the Table' written by Dr Coralie Bridle – **aloud**.

Thought: Remembered at the Table

Weddings happen everywhere in the world. While the traditions might be different in the global south or north, and again in the global east or west, the significance of the celebrations is universal. Setting a table for a wedding feast takes time and attention to detail. For example, who will sit where, which flowers or decorations will be used, and are there enough seats for all of the guests?

A few years ago, my husband and I attended a family wedding in another city. Our son Samuel, who lives with a complex disability, was not able to travel. When we arrived at the wedding feast, we discovered a name-card (or place-card) for Sam alongside ours. Even though the bride and groom knew that Sam could not attend, they had remembered him by having his name-card on the table. People living with disabilities are not always able to attend events. Whatever the reasons


might be for their absence, small actions by the faith community can signal that they are not forgotten. Taking time to think about how to include people, even when they cannot be physically present, demonstrates a vision of inclusion that seeks to build life-giving relationships. Knowing that you are not forgotten is a gift that everyone should be able to enjoy.

Reflective question

As you think about your own context, who are the people that Jesus might ask you to write a name-card for today? How might you pursue faithful 'remembering' with disabled people in your community?

If you would like to watch the video go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ig8fhb7A2NI&t=1s>

1. Draw a picture of a table or a place that people gather around for sharing food. Imagine that it is a community table or sharing place.



A. Who is invited to that table (included)? Draw some circles with smiles to represent the people who are at the table.

B. Is there anyone missing (excluded) who should be there (those with a disability and others)? At a distance, draw those who are perhaps not welcomed yet to the table. Consider what facial expressions they would have

Prayer

Father, guide us to move beyond welcome statements and towards inclusion that remembers people even in their physical absence. Help us to ensure that everyone has a life-bringing place in our communities.

A Banquet Table

1. Find the following quote on page 58 in the *International Positional Statement on Persons with Disabilities*. Complete the quote by printing the exact words in the spaces provided

We know less of who God is and how God appears in the world when

Inclusion is

2. Read Luke 14:12–14 (NLT).

‘Then he [Jesus] turned to his host. “When you put on a luncheon or a banquet,” he said, “don’t invite your friends, brothers, relatives and rich neighbours. For they will invite you back, and that will be your only reward. Instead, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind. Then at the resurrection of the righteous, God will reward you for inviting those who could not repay you.”’

3. Hyatt Moore depicts a banquet, hosted by Jesus. Picture One shows the actual people that he used when painting his picture. Picture Two is his finished artwork.



Picture One

If you would like to watch the video go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=gRwtHJtr3tO



Picture Two

What stirs your heart or captures your attention as you look at this piece of art?

Luke 14:12–14

Use the above Scripture and the things that you have heard through this module (help, kindness, welcome, transformation) as an inspiration for writing a prayer.

- Thank God that he helps you and welcomes you into his presence, through the gift of Jesus Christ.
- Ask that you might be aware of any who are not at the table.
- Confess the truth that some people are not invited or welcomed to belong in the same way that others are.
- Ask that the Spirit would begin shaping in you a practical response of helping others to experience God's welcome.

Write your prayer in the space below and return to it whenever you would like a reminder.

Next Steps

For the next seven days, complete the following tasks.

Choose three or more people with whom to share either the story by Dr Coralie Bridie or the artwork by Hyatt Moore.

After sharing, ask them the following questions:

- Did anything seen or heard capture your attention?
- Did you learn anything new?
- Was there anything meaningful in the content?

[illegible]

Please begin Module Four any time after this one-week period.

Module Four

The Body of Christ

Date __/__/__



Post-Week Reflection

Who did you share the story or picture with? What was their response?

Did they share anything that was meaningful to them that was different from your experience when reading the story or viewing the picture?

Introduction

This paragraph is taken from the *International Positional Statement on Persons with Disabilities*. Write the phrases in the correct spaces to complete the paragraph. When you are finished, read it **aloud**.

The *Handbook of Doctrine* describes the ideal of The Salvation Army's third doctrine as 'God-in-community who reaches out to _____. It is the very basis of the _____. From its beginning, The Salvation Army has consistently proclaimed this gospel, calling people of all nations to respond to the love of God. We seek to include and welcome _____ those who feel themselves to be _____. It is the aim of all Salvationist practice to create communities 'which reflect the inclusiveness, genuine acceptance and mutual love of the triune God'.

Word Bank

excluded from society

create community

inclusive gospel

into the family of God

See answers on page 57.

The Body of Christ



The Body of Christ – Togetherness

How good it is, as followers of the living God, to know that we belong to the Body of Christ. Jesus prayed for us: **his body**.

Read his prayer as found in John 17. It may be helpful to read the translations below **aloud**, allowing the power and beauty of Jesus' prayer to be experienced.

I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one – as you are in me, Father, and I am in you.
And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me.

(John 17:21 NLT)

The goal is for all of them to become one heart and mind –
Just as you, Father, are in me and I in you,
So they might be one heart and mind with us.
Then the world might believe that you, in fact, sent me.
The same glory you gave me, I gave them,
So they'll be as unified and together as we are –
I in them and you in me.
Then they'll be mature in this oneness,
And give the godless world evidence
That you've sent me and loved them
In the same way you've loved me.

(John 17:21–23 The Message Paraphrase)

Togetherness

The Body of Christ – Togetherness

The next three sections of this module will offer three segments for reflection. They were written by Major (Dr) Catherine Spiller and focus on the Body of Christ.

The Body of Christ

If you would like to watch this segment go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=UYOwqsOVauA&t=3s.

Major (Dr) Catherine Stiller: When we think about disability and the Church, the Body of Christ is a really important metaphor in the Bible. You might like to take a moment to imagine a body. In his book, *Disability: Living into the Diversity of Christ's Body*, Brian Brock explains the reason for this image. He speaks about the church in Corinth as a group of people bickering over who was the most gifted and the most spiritual. He then says that this competitive attitude is still alive in congregations today. Paul uses this metaphor to challenge this bickering.

1 Corinthians 12:14–21 says:

Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

Now if the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,' it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,' it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I don't need you!' And the head cannot say to the feet, 'I don't need you!'

Brock says Paul is confronting the Corinthian Church, saying that 'togetherness depends on genuinely different people being unified'.

To do: Circle two things in the above writing that are of interest and capture your attention. Explain why.

Activity One

‘Togetherness depends on genuinely different people being unified.’

Use the blank space divided into two sections to draw the following:

Left side: one piece of wood with fire.

Left side: one car tyre.

Left side: one drop of water.

Right side: a fire with many pieces of wood.

Right side: a complete car.

Right side: a bucket full of water.

Togetherness is beautiful, strong, enables purposeful function and produces life.

Alone	Together

1. Read the following Scripture verses.

‘For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others’ (**Romans 12:4–5**).

‘Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ’ (**1 Corinthians 12:12**).

‘Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it’ (**1 Corinthians 12:27**).

‘There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all’ (**Ephesians 4:4–6**).

Which two words, repeated in each passage, speak of togetherness?

Word 1:

Word 2:

Activity Two



In Ephesians 4:16, we read:

‘From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.’

Consider: What is the ‘work’ that, for the glory of God, the different parts of the body are called by Christ to do?

Read the following Scripture verses. As you read, underline every spiritual gift or ‘work’ mentioned.

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • pastors | • prophets | • teachers |
| • miraculous powers | • prophecy | • giving |
| • speaking in different kinds of tongues | • gifts of healing | • showing mercy |
| • speaking | • teaching | • distinguishing between spirits |
| • evangelists | • encourage | • faith |
| • lead | • interpretation of tongues | • prophesying |
| • message of wisdom | • message of knowledge | • serving |

Ephesians 4:11–13

‘So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.’

1 Corinthians 12:4–12

‘There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines. Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.’

Romans 12:4–8

‘For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.’

1 Peter 4:10–11

‘Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.’

Gifts Given to the Body



The Body of Christ needs each part. The Body of Christ needs the gifts that have been given to each part of the body.

Read what Major (Dr) Catherine Spiller shares about her thoughts on the Body of Christ.

Gifts Given to the Body

If you would like to watch this segment go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=uPyDK84FX5w&t=1s.

Major (Dr) Catherine Stiller: While Paul has used this image, the Body of Christ is not Paul's idea. It is something that God has initiated. If we jump back to verse 6, we see that it is God who forms this body. It is God who embraces and gifts people by the Spirit to contribute to the body. God is the initiator, but individuals also have a responsibility. Paul is encouraging the people in the church to build each other up. No one is better or more spiritual. Each person is valued and can contribute to the body. Paul says we need each other. If one member suffers, we all suffer; if one member is honoured, we all rejoice (1 Corinthians 12:26).

This applies when the Body of Christ comes together in worship. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 14:26 that everyone has something to bring to the worship gathering. This means worship needs to include all people, not just the people we think are talented. God has arranged the body so that everyone has a place. The theologian Miroslav Volf says that the Spirit doesn't remove the differences with our bodies – we are not forced into the same mould. But we each have access to this body on the same terms. We are all given gifts of the Spirit despite our differences. Because of this, we should be actively working towards full participation, where each person with a disability can receive and contribute to the worshipping community.

To do: Circle two things from the above writing that are of interest and capture your attention. Explain why.

Activity

Read 1 Peter 4:10 in the following three translations. Emphasise the bold words. It may be helpful to read **aloud**.

'Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.' (NIV)

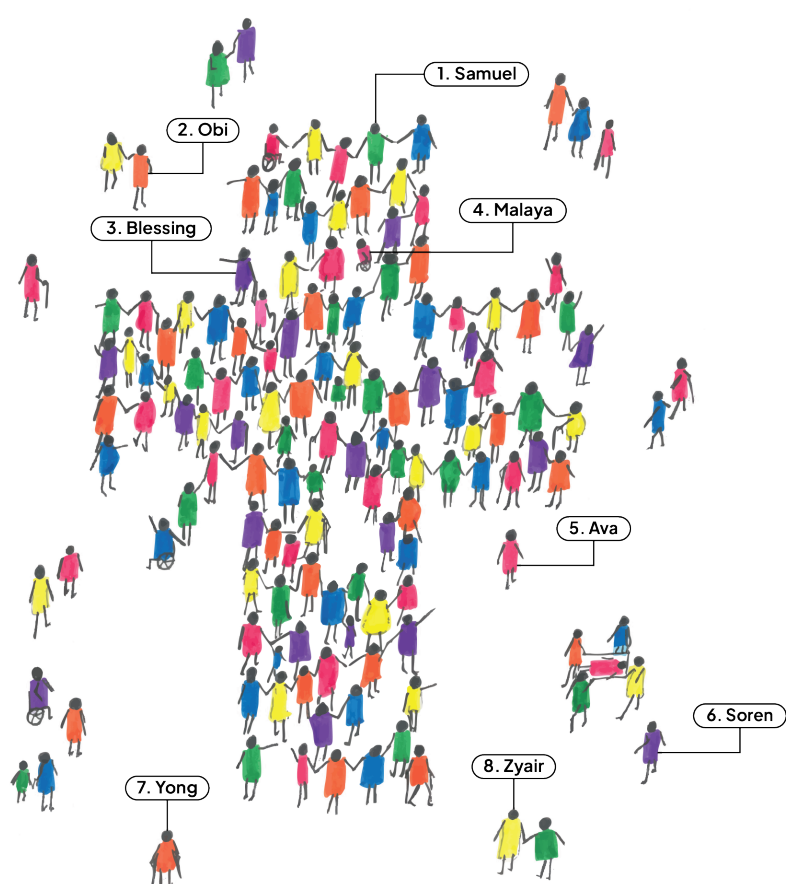
'God has given **each of you** a gift. Use it to help each other. This will show God's loving-favour.' (NLV)

'Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift **each of you** has received.' (NRSV)

When the words ‘each of you’ are spoken, what does this tell us about those who belong to the body, who have a disability? Think about those you know who have a disability. Where do you see their gifts being used in the one Body of Christ?

Examine the picture below. Each number represents a different person with a disability. Read the description associated with each number. Think about how they could be real situations in your setting.

Underline the disability that the person has and circle the gift(s) that they bring to the Body of Christ. The first one is done for you.



1. Samuel knows Jesus and has a strong faith in God. **He has a very good memory and expresses his love for God through singing.** He shares his gift of singing at his corps by leading the songs. Samuel is blind and has a learning disability. He learns new songs by listening to them and remembering them. His gift is appreciated by the people in his corps because of his faithful and joyful spirit. Samuel's gifts of leadership and faith add to the Body of Christ.

2. Obi and his family were generous people who often gave vegetables from their garden to others in need. One day, when Obi was working in the orchard, he fell and hit his head on a large rock.

The accident caused a brain injury which changed his abilities and personality. He could no longer care for the garden, and most of the vegetables rotted before they could be harvested. Obi was unable to use his gift of generosity to serve others. Obi needed help from others to care for the garden. The Body of Christ is missing Obi's gift of generosity.

3. Blessing lives by the words of Matthew 22:37–39, which tells us that the most important commandment is to love God and others. She enjoys getting to know new people and has the gift of hospitality and encouragement. Blessing shares her gift by visiting people who are lonely. She is a faithful friend. Blessing has a physical disability that affects her ability to walk long distances. Sometimes, Blessing needs more time to walk to her destination and needs to stop and rest along the way, but others are happy to be patient and helpful. Many people in the Body of Christ have been blessed by her gifts.

4. Malaya's father taught her and her younger siblings all about God. Together they read the Bible and sang songs of praise to God. Malaya especially loved Bible stories about children, because she understood how much Jesus cared for them. Malaya could not join with other believers at the corps or go to school with her brother and sisters because she could not walk. This made her sad and lonely. One day, a family friend noticed that Malaya wanted to learn but needed help so she could learn and grow in her faith. The friend asked her what kind of help she would need so she could attend the corps and school with the other teenagers. Together, they talked with their corps officer and community members to make a plan. Malaya agreed to be carried on a mat to church and school until a wheelchair could be found and fitted for her. She was kind to the children at the corps and taught them all about Jesus. Malaya's gifts are no longer missing from the Body of Christ.

5. Ava served her community and corps for a very long time. She was a respected leader who was known for her faith, wisdom and discernment. As she got older, people started to notice that she was not remembering very well and sometimes would get upset easily. People no longer trusted her and did not know how to talk to her. Ava became more and more isolated, and did not want to go to the corps anymore. She became angry because people thought she had lost her ability to lead and did not have any gifts to offer the Body of Christ. Ava needed understanding and patience from others. Ava and her gifts are missing from the Body of Christ.

6. Soren enjoys physical work, like setting up chairs or washing dishes. He used to attend the corps with others in his community. He enjoyed learning about God but found it difficult to be around many people for long periods of time. He tried to attend the Sunday service and then go home when he started to feel anxious, or go outside to take a break for a little while, but others thought it was rude and disruptive. Now he just stays home. Soren would be a great person to help take care of the corps building and the property around it, but because he doesn't attend, most people think he doesn't want to be part of the corps or that he doesn't believe in God anymore. Soren's needs could be accommodated by teaching the community about anxiety and accepting his need to take a break from the service. Soren and his gift of helping is missing from the Body of Christ.

7. Yong loves food and he loves his community! He understands how to blend spices and make everything taste good. He shows his love by cooking many delicious meals for his family. The local corps needs help to provide meals for people who do not have a home. If they do not get a cook, then they may have to stop this community event. Yong wants to serve, but he is embarrassed by his bowel problems. Others don't understand that sometimes his stomach makes rumbling sounds, and he often needs to stop and use the facilities. It is not considered proper in his culture to talk about bowels or digestion, so he has not talked to anyone and has not volunteered to help with the meal preparation. Yong and his gift of serving is missing from the Body of Christ.

8. Zyair loves the Word of God and studies it frequently. He has great understanding and wisdom. The people at his corps do not know that he could teach others about the Bible – they assume that because he cannot hear well, he also doesn't understand. Zyair needs others to speak clearly and to look at him when they are talking, but most people don't do this. This makes him feel like others don't care about him and do not value him. His gift of teaching is not being used to help the Body of Christ in his community.

Consider the fictional stories shared in the above activity, and the value of each person in and for the Body of Christ. Sit quietly with the Lord and invite the Spirit to guide you in developing some 'I wonder' statements related to your current setting, corps or ministry centre. You can begin your statements by using the following:

- I wonder if...
- I wonder why...
- I wonder how...
- I wonder when...
- I wonder who...
- I wonder what...

Example: I wonder if there is anyone with a disability I should seek to reach out to.

Example: I wonder how I can find a way to help others recognise the gift that _____ has.

Example: I wonder when we could share with others the importance of every person being part of the Body of Christ and how, if they are not present, the body is incomplete.

Write four 'I wonder' statements in the space provided below.

1. I wonder...

2. I wonder...

3. I wonder...

4. I wonder...

Love Welcomes



The Body of Christ needs each part. Each part needs one another. Read as Major (Dr) Catherine Spiller shares more of her thoughts on the Body of Christ, and the importance of living with love for God and for others.

Love Welcomes

If you would like to watch this segment go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=4kPzLaRYeYE.

Major (Dr) Catherine Stiller: It is also important to remind ourselves of why we seek to include people with disabilities. The key to the why must be love – love for God and love for others. We read all about this in chapter 13 of 1 Corinthians. The gifts of the Spirit that have been given to build up the community of faith are ineffective in an environment without love (1 Corinthians 13:1–3). Love is the reason that people are embraced and included in the community of faith. It is also why people are invited to participate fully in the act of worship.

When our understanding of worship is grounded in love, we want to go beyond accommodating the needs of a person with a disability. We want to acknowledge the contribution that each member of the Body of Christ is called to make. When people with disabilities are overlooked or we think they can't contribute, it is not just the person living with a disability that misses out. We, as the Body of Christ, miss out as well. We miss out on encountering the image of God in others. And we miss receiving the gifts that God has given to build up the Church.

To do: Circle two things from the writing that are of interest and capture your attention. Explain why.

Activity

Mark's Story

Read the following testimony.

My experience of having someone with a disability become a soldier was not out of the realm of possibility for me or the corps. Our corps had many individuals who attended with varying degrees of disabilities, so when Paul approached me about soldiership, I was open to it. The challenge I realised immediately was that I would have to somehow think about how to lead Paul through the soldiership lessons. I knew that the current way of teaching would not work well or be beneficial for our time of learning.

With the assistance of another officer, we considered what would be best for helping Paul learn and understand what is required to become a soldier. Together, we concluded that the lessons would be in a conversational format. Here, we would talk about the Doctrines and what they mean or look like, and just talk to Paul to gauge his understanding of the conversation. We also spent time talking with Paul about why he wanted to be a soldier and what that meant to him. It was one of the most beautiful understandings of soldiership and faith in Jesus I have ever heard.

One of the most challenging but rewarding aspects of leading someone with a learning disability was reshaping the lessons to ensure learning and comprehension. This took some time to think through and prepare for, but the end result was most rewarding. Through this experience, I came away with a new-found appreciation of how we can and should be open to adjusting our approaches within corps life, so that we may extend the invitation for anyone to be included.

Answer the following questions.

1. How is love demonstrated in this story?

2. How is the Body of Christ being honoured in the story?

Practical Applications

You have reached the end of Module 4. At this point in time, you will have learnt many important aspects found in *The Salvation Army's International Positional Statement on Persons with Disabilities*. You have learnt these things 'so that' you can apply them in your local setting and...

...so that God's people would be thoroughly equipped to minister and build up the body of the Anointed One (Ephesians 4:12, *VOICE*).

and

...so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen (1 Peter 4:11).

Activity

The following Goal Setting Tool can help you to take a step towards applying what you have learnt about valuing the person and place of persons with disabilities.

In the space provided, write **one or two** goals that you hope to accomplish. These goals will help you to be faithful to what God has taught you as it relates to those with disabilities.



SPECIFIC

What is your precise goal? Is your goal clear and defined? A clearly defined goal will guide the way forward in meeting your goal.



MEASURABLE

What specific criteria will you use to measure your progress? Can you calculate/assess if your goal is being accomplished? A meaningful and motivating goal will make it more measurable.



ACHIEVABLE

Is your goal achievable? How do you know you will meet your goal? If you know for certain you can attain your goal, it will be achievable.



REALISTIC/RELEVANT

Will you truly be able to reach the goal you set? Will your competencies and current circumstances contribute to meeting your goal? Make sure your goal is a real possibility.



TIME-BOUND

What target dates have you set to begin and finish your goal? Can you say that by a certain time your goal will be reached? Make your goal time-based, time-limited and time-sensitive.

1.

2.

Closing Prayer



Matthew Allen

'I am a follower of Christ. I am a senior soldier here at Agincourt Community Church in Scarborough where I am a greeter at the door, I help take up the offering and I assist in a Sunday school class. I also have a learning disability that prevents me from having a full-time job. So, I volunteer two days a week in our busy food bank, and I volunteer two days a week at The Salvation Army Ontario Distribution Centre (SA-ODC) in North York.

I enjoy my special needs hockey team and the fun I have with my teammates. I watch the Toronto Maple Leafs hockey team as well as the Toronto Blue Jays baseball team. One of my hobbies I picked up during the pandemic is flying my drone. I enjoy getting shots of the sunrise, the sunset and just before thunderstorms. I enjoy being around people, having fun and praising God for his goodness to me.'

Prayer – by Matthew Allen

<https://youtu.be/DjbFuz4-Jgk>

We praise you, God our creator, for your handiwork in shaping and sustaining your wondrous

creation. We especially thank you for the miracle of life and the wonder of living. We thank you that we are unique individuals each created by you. We thank you that we are a diverse people that you equally love and value.

Father God, we pray for the Equip programme learners as they seek to apply their learnings in their local settings. May you open their minds to recognise that all of humankind is made in your image. Thank you for forming us before we were formed in our mother's womb, and the fact you formed us wonderfully and with intentionality – we praise you. Our soul knows how wonderful you are. Nothing was hidden from you when you created us in the depths of the earth. You saw us and

wrote out our days, and they are fully written, in every detail.

We give thanks, Father, for the creators and developers of the Equip programme. May their wisdom be imparted on the learners of this course. May we all see the intrinsic value of your creation of humankind, and, through this Equip programme, how we might respond to ourselves and one another.

God our creator, yours is the morning and yours is the evening. Let Christ, the sun of righteousness, shine forever in our hearts and draw us to the light of your radiant glory. We ask this

for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.

Amen.

Certificate

1. Confirmation of Completion

I _____, have completed all activities in the course, including any mandatory seven-day applied learning periods between modules.

2. Certificate Request

To receive your certificate, please email equip@salvationarmy.org with the following information:

Certificate Details:

1. Full Name (as you would like it to appear)
2. Course Title
3. Date of Completion
4. Territory

Witness Verification: The name and role of a witness who can verify your course completion (e.g., corps officer, divisional leader, or supervisor).

Please ensure all details are accurate to avoid delays in processing your certificate.

Scripture



Module One

Scripture Reflection

Genesis 1:1–31

The Beginning

¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

³ And God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light. ⁴ God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light ‘day’, and the darkness he called ‘night’. And there was evening, and there was morning – the first day.

⁶ And God said, ‘Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water.’ ⁷ So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. ⁸ God called the vault ‘sky’. And there was evening, and there was morning – the second day.

⁹ And God said, ‘Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.’ And it was so. ¹⁰ God called the dry ground ‘land’, and the gathered waters he called ‘seas’. And God saw that it was good.

¹¹ Then God said, ‘Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds.’ And it was so. ¹² The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. ¹³ And there was evening, and there was morning – the third day.

¹⁴ And God said, ‘Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth.’ And it was so. ¹⁶ God made two great lights – the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. ¹⁷ God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ And there was evening, and there was morning – the fourth day.

²⁰ And God said, ‘Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky.’ ²¹ So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird

according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ²² God blessed them and said, 'Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth.' ²³ And there was evening, and there was morning – the fifth day.

²⁴ And God said, 'Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind.' And it was so. ²⁵ God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶ Then God said, 'Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.'

²⁷ So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.'

²⁹ Then God said, 'I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.' ³⁰ And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground – everything that has the breath of life in it – I give every green plant for food.' And it was so.

³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning – the sixth day.

Module Two

Psalm 139: First Reading

Psalm 139

For the director of music. Of David. A psalm.

You have searched me, LORD, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely. You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. If I say, 'Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,' even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand – when I awake, I am still with you.

If only you, God, would slay the wicked! Away from me, you who are bloodthirsty! They speak of you with evil intent; your adversaries misuse your name. Do I not hate those who hate you, LORD, and abhor those who are in rebellion against you? I have nothing but hatred for them; I count them my enemies. Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Engaging the *International Positional Statement on Persons with Disabilities*

John 9:1–3

As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned,' said Jesus, 'but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him.'

Matthew 9:27–30

As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, 'Have mercy on us, Son of David!' When he had gone indoors, the blind men came to him, and he asked them, 'Do you believe that I am able to do this?' 'Yes, Lord,' they replied. Then he touched their eyes and said, 'According to your faith let it be done to you'; and their sight was restored. Jesus warned them sternly, 'See that no one knows about this.'

Luke 19:1–10

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him,

‘Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.’ So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. All the people saw this and began to mutter, ‘He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.’ But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, ‘Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.’

Module Three

A Biblical Story of Help That Transformed

2 Samuel 4:4

(Jonathan son of Saul had a son who was lame in both feet. He was five years old when the news about Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nurse picked him up and fled, but as she hurried to leave, he fell and became disabled. His name was Mephibosheth.)

2 Samuel 9:1–13

¹David asked, ‘Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan’s sake?’ ²Now there was a servant of Saul’s household named Ziba. They summoned him to appear before David, and the king said to him, ‘Are you Ziba?’ ‘At your service,’ he replied.

³The king asked, ‘Is there no one still alive from the house of Saul to whom I can show God’s kindness?’ Ziba answered the king, ‘There is still a son of Jonathan; he is lame in both feet.’ ⁴

‘Where is he?’ the king asked. Ziba answered, ‘He is at the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar.’ ⁵ So King David had him brought from Lo Debar, from the house of Makir son of Ammiel.

⁶When Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David, he bowed down to pay him honour. David said, ‘Mephibosheth!’ ‘At your service,’ he replied. ⁷ ‘Don’t be afraid,’ David said to him, ‘for I will surely show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan. I will restore to you all the land that belonged to your grandfather Saul, and you will always eat at my table.’

⁸ Mephibosheth bowed down and said, ‘What is your servant, that you should notice a dead dog like me?’ ⁹ Then the king summoned Ziba, Saul’s steward, and said to him, ‘I have given your master’s grandson everything that belonged to Saul and his family. ¹⁰ You and your sons and your servants are to farm the land for him and bring in the crops, so that your master’s grandson may be provided for. And Mephibosheth, grandson of your master, will always eat at my table.’ (Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.) ¹¹ Then Ziba said to the king, ‘Your servant will do whatever my lord the king commands his servant to do.’ So Mephibosheth ate at David’s table like one of the king’s sons. ¹² Mephibosheth had a young son named Mika, and all the members of Ziba’s household were servants of Mephibosheth. ¹³ And Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem, because he always ate at the king’s table; he was lame in both feet.

Answers to Questions



Module One

Defining the Word ‘Disability’

Activity One

Football and Soccer

Football is played with a round ball that can be kicked and headed.

Soccer is played with a round ball that can be kicked and headed.

Same game, different name!

Identifying Types of Disability

Activity One

1. **Acquired Brain Injury:** Damage caused by events after birth.
2. **Muscular Dystrophy (MD):** A disease that causes progressive breakdown and weakness of skeletal muscles.
3. **Attention Deficit:** Persistent display of inattention, hyperactivity or impulsivity that has a direct negative impact on academic, work or social functioning.
4. **Dyslexia:** A learning disability that affects either reading or writing. Problems may include difficulties in spelling words, writing words, pronouncing words, etc.
5. **Visual Impairment:** Full or partial vision loss.
6. **Fibromyalgia:** A medical condition defined by the presence of chronic widespread pain and fatigue.
7. **Amputation Injury:** The action of surgically cutting off a limb.
8. **Spinal Cord Injury:** Damage to nerves and nerve fibres that communicate with the brain.

Module Two

Engaging the *International Positional Statement on Persons with Disabilities*

Activity One

A. People with disabilities experience discrimination.

True People with disabilities continue to face oppression in terms of injustice, economic

deprivation, abuse, stigmatisation and discrimination. In some contexts, women with disabilities are multiply disadvantaged, many children with disabilities do not attend school, and children with disabilities may die at four times the rate of others. In many parts of the world, disability legislation does not exist.

B. Some people are made in the image of God.

False All people are made in the image of God and are of equal intrinsic value. Thus, The Salvation Army celebrates difference and seeks to treat all people with dignity and respect.

C. Diversity, including people with disabilities, helps The Salvation Army's mission and ministry.

True Inclusion is beneficial for everyone. Diversity within our communities and congregations strengthens us and shapes our mission and ministry.

D. The word 'disability' means a personal impairment.

False The word 'disability' can be understood as an umbrella term that includes both personal impairments, and the societal restrictions experienced by people living with a disability. In general, 'impairment' is understood in medical terms and 'disability' as an expression of the exclusion between people living with disabilities and wider society. Disability is thus not just a health problem.

E. People-first language highlights personhood first rather than the condition of the person.

True Language plays a significant role in shaping narratives around disability, and there are differences regarding how people with disabilities self-identify. In seeking to communicate the depth of our desire for inclusion, The Salvation Army strives to use the term 'persons with disabilities', an example of 'people-first' language, intended to highlight personhood first rather than the condition of the person.

F. Depending on a person's ability, some people are more valuable to God than others.

False All human beings are created in God's own image, uniquely reflecting God's nature and character (Genesis 1:27–31). God's creation is signified by diversity and that diversity is good (Genesis 1:31; Psalm 8). God loves and values every person, giving each one equal dignity and worth, and commanding us to love and value each other.

G. Disability is caused by sin.

False Jesus corrected the assumption that disability was caused by the sin of a person or their parents (John 9:1–3), and he challenged social stigma by touching and eating with the socially marginalised (Matthew 9:27–30; Luke 19:1–10).

H. We can have a better understanding of God and his love when we include all people.

True In order to know God more fully, everyone needs to be fully included. The gift of being is profound. It is only together with all the saints that we can comprehend the love of God (Ephesians 3:18).

I. The Salvation Army does not advocate for the elimination of poverty and discrimination towards people with disabilities.

False The Salvation Army recognises the breadth of international advocacy regarding the human rights of people with disabilities, and seeks to better contribute to that advocacy, particularly in regard to the elimination of poverty and discrimination towards people with disabilities.

J. People living with observable or invisible disabilities desire to be treated as ordinary human beings.

True One of the primary desires of people living with observable or invisible disabilities is to be treated as ordinary human beings, created in God's image and called to dwell in mutually supportive communities. In most instances, to respond to this desire will require a collective shift in attitudes of both heart and mind.

Module Three

A Biblical Story of Help That Transformed

Activity One

1. • He wanted to show kindness.
2. • Where is he [Mephibosheth]?
 - Is anyone still alive from the house of Saul?
3. • A son of Jonathan who is crippled/disabled/lame in both feet.
4. • A dead dog.
5. • His order that others farm the land and bring in the crops to provide for Mephibosheth.
 - The invitation to always eat at David's table.
 - The welcomed into David's family.
 - His acts of kindness rather than revenge.
 - The restoration of rightful land to Mephibosheth.

A Banquet Table

1. We know less of who God is and how God appears in the world when people with disabilities are excluded.

Inclusion is beneficial for everyone.

Module Four

Introduction

The *Handbook of Doctrine* describes the ideal of The Salvation Army's third doctrine as 'God-in-community who reaches out to **create community**. It is the very basis of the **inclusive gospel**. From its beginning, The Salvation Army has consistently proclaimed this gospel, calling people of all nations to respond to the love of God. We seek to include and welcome **into the family of God** those who feel themselves to be **excluded from society**.' It is the aim of all Salvationist practice to create communities 'which reflect the inclusiveness, genuine acceptance and mutual love of the triune God'.

Togetherness

Activity One

Word 1: *One/Body*

Word 2: *One/Body*

THE SALVATION ARMY INTERNATIONAL

POSITIONAL STATEMENT

Persons with Disabilities



Statement of Position

All people are made in the image of God and are of equal intrinsic value. Thus, The Salvation Army celebrates difference and seeks to treat all people with dignity and respect.

Many people around the world experience discrimination due to disabilities. The reality ranges from stigma or negative attitudes to deeply engrained and systemic exclusion. The Salvation Army's response is to go beyond minimum national legal requirements and to make it possible for persons with disabilities to be fully included and to flourish.

We know less of who God is and how God appears in the world when people with disabilities are excluded. Inclusion is beneficial for everyone. Diversity within our communities and congregations strengthens us and shapes our mission and ministry. The aim of all Salvationist practice is to ensure that we are a church that makes the embodied gospel accessible for all.

Background and Context

Disability is an historical, contemporary, cultural and global reality. It is estimated that approximately one billion people live with a disability.¹ People with disabilities continue to face oppression in terms of injustice, economic deprivation, abuse, stigmatisation and discrimination. In some contexts, women with disabilities are multiply disadvantaged, many children with disabilities do not attend school, and children with disabilities may die at four times the rate of others. In many parts of the world, disability legislation does not exist.²

The word 'disability' can be understood as an umbrella term that includes both personal impairments,³ and the societal restrictions experienced by people living with a disability. In general, 'impairment' is understood in medical terms and 'disability' as an expression of the exclusion between people living with disabilities and wider society. Disability is thus not just a health problem. It is a complex phenomenon, reflecting the interaction between features of a person's whole being (body and mind) and features of the society in which he or she lives.⁴

Numerous causes for the global reality of disability can be identified. These include, but are not limited to, accidents, poverty, injuries related to war and violence, pollution, cultural practices, birth defects, ageing and degenerative diseases. Addressing the difficulties faced by people with

birth defects, ageing and degenerative diseases. Addressing the difficulties faced by people with disabilities requires a combination of medical, social, environmental and cultural interventions.

Language plays a significant role in shaping narratives around disability, and there are differences regarding how people with disabilities self-identify. In seeking to communicate the depth of our desire for inclusion, The Salvation Army strives to use the term 'persons with disabilities', an example of 'people-first' language, intended to highlight personhood first rather than the condition of the person.⁵

Among others, three commonly understood models of disability help us understand and respond to the reality of disability. For example, the Medical Model organises disability around the themes of medical intervention, cure, rehabilitation services and personal limitation. The Social Model understands disability as limitation or disadvantage caused by societal structures and attitudes, while the Cultural Model highlights the interaction of various notions of disability within a given cultural setting. Meaning is then attributed to disability from within, or across cultural traditions. In some cultural settings people with disabilities are considered less than human, or are considered to be disabled because of evil spirits, curses or sins.⁶

Various international bodies are involved in the pursuit of improved outcomes for people living with disabilities. In 2008, the United Nations (UN) 'Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' was ratified by 157 countries. Amongst other things it promotes respect for the inherent dignity of people with disabilities. In looking towards 2030 and addressing global challenges while seeking to 'leave no-one behind,' many of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals speak directly to the difficulties encountered by people living with disabilities.⁷ The World Council of Churches also signals the marginalisation that people with disabilities experience within the church itself and calls for 'A Church of All and for All'.⁸

Grounds for the Position of The Salvation Army

All human beings are created in God's own image, uniquely reflecting God's nature and character (Genesis 1:27–31). God's creation is signified by diversity and that diversity is good (Genesis 1:31; Psalm 8). God loves and values every person, giving each one equal dignity and worth, and commanding us to love and value each other.

The Bible tells the story of a God who values those who are outcast, powerless and weak in the eyes of society. While reflecting the context of its day, Scripture recognises the real experience of exclusion that can result from disability (Luke 17:11–19). The Bible acknowledges pain and hardship as a part of the human condition (e.g. in the Book of Job). Paul states that when we are weak, God

makes us strong (2 Corinthians 12:9). Jesus showed compassion for people with disabilities (Mark 1:41, Matthew 9:20–25) and urged his followers to do likewise (Luke 14:12–14). He corrected the assumption that disability was caused by the sin of a person or their parents (John 9:1–3), and he challenged social stigma by touching and eating with the socially marginalised (Matthew 9:27–30; Luke 19:1–10). God’s creative intention is that we are fulfilled in community, living in relationship with God and each other. Paul described the community of the Church as a body, stating that ‘those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable’ (1 Corinthians 12:22 NIV). The perceived weaker members help to shape our knowledge of God, and without them we are less. In order to know God more fully, everyone needs to be fully included. The gift of being is profound. It is only together with all the saints that we can comprehend the love of God (Ephesians 3:18).

In its international mission statement, The Salvation Army declares it will meet human needs in the name of Jesus ‘without discrimination’.⁹ *The Handbook of Doctrine* describes the ideal of The Salvation Army’s third doctrine as ‘God-in-community who reaches out to create community. It is the very basis of the inclusive gospel. From its beginning, The Salvation Army has consistently proclaimed this gospel, calling people of all nations to respond to the love of God. We seek to include and welcome into the family of God those who feel themselves to be excluded from society.’¹⁰ It is the aim of all Salvationist practice to create communities ‘which reflect the inclusiveness, genuine acceptance and mutual love of the triune God’.¹¹ It follows that we are not a complete church if people with disabilities are not among us.

Practical Responses

The Salvation Army recognises the contribution of those actively engaged in addressing issues of ignorance, neglect or discrimination against people living with a disability. One of the primary desires of people living with observable or invisible disabilities is to be treated as ordinary human beings, created in God’s image and called to dwell in mutually supportive communities. In most instances, to respond to this desire will require a collective shift in attitudes of both heart and mind. Such attitudes and responses can be promoted, modelled and taught, to a certain extent. The goal of any response should be to eliminate a dividing line between ‘us’ and ‘them’. Drawing on its theological understanding of God’s view of people with disabilities, The Salvation Army notes the following:

1. The Salvation Army recognises the breadth of international advocacy regarding the human rights of people with disabilities, and seeks to better contribute to that advocacy, particularly in regard to the elimination of poverty and discrimination towards people with disabilities.
2. The Salvation Army embraces, promotes and models an understanding of persons with disabilities as people created in the image of God, with a unique and invaluable contribution to make in all aspects of life in community.

3. The Salvation Army fosters reciprocal ministry rather than the temporarily able-bodied ministering to people with disabilities. We are stronger together when we integrate every person into every fibre of our worship and mission.
4. The Salvation Army seeks the engagement, consultation and active involvement of people with disability when developing and framing general Salvation Army policies, human resource policies, as well as those specific to disability.
5. The Salvation Army acknowledges that the following aspects and considerations in relation to disabilities are a necessary part of its ongoing commitment to enabling all of God's children to flourish within the Body of Christ:
 - Raising awareness
 - Engaging in specific training
 - Employing universal building design
 - Embracing recognised 'best practice' communication preferences and initiatives.
6. The Salvation Army community is encouraged to have a greater understanding of the interdependence and mutuality inherent in supporting each other through the journey of life. We seek to respect the autonomy and self-determination of all people.

Additional Resources

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Approved by the General, October 2020

The views expressed in this international positional statement constitute the official position of The Salvation Army on the issue addressed, and they may not be modified or adapted in any way without the express written permission of International Headquarters.

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9. <https://www.salvationarmy.org/ihq/Mission>
10. *The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine* (2010), p. 75
11. *Ibid*, p. 76