

MINISTRY MINUTE

NOVEMBER 2023

HOSTING A YOUNG ADULT WORSHIP NIGHT

In London, Ontario a group of Salvation Army university students decided they wanted to encourage each other and so they began **New Life Worship Nights**. The plan is simple and could be duplicated across our territory. We posed some questions about how they got started and what they include in a worship evening. Read their responses and consider your own area and who you could invite to be a part of a Worship Night team.



What inspired or led you and the team to organize, plan or be involved in the New Life worship nights?

Many young adults spend their summers working at Salvation Army camps. Camp is a place where faith and community flourishes. Most of us carried the struggle of leaving camp and feeling like there wasn't much in place for our demographic to gather for worship and fellowship like we would in the summers. We wanted a space for young people to be fed spiritually by one another, to support each other, pray for one another, and most importantly, develop a closer relationship to Christ. We started New Life to create new opportunities to grow in community and our faith, to be challenged by messages geared towards our age group, and to be inspired by the testimonies of our peers. We wanted the young adults of The Salvation Army and beyond, to be lit aflame for Christ once again.



What do you and the team typically include in a worship evening?

Before our worship night starts the New Life committee, and all involved in leading and supporting, gather for a time of prayer over the night. Our worship night then begins with fellowship and community time where we share in pizza, drinks, sports, and lots of laughter. We always want to kick off our event with a welcoming environment and time to get to know each other. After fellowship, we head into the sanctuary to have a time of worship. We typically include eight worship songs that will either build reflection space, or give us time to dance and shout to the Lord with praise. We also include a testimony, a 10-15-minute message, and discussion questions to follow up on the message. Having discussion time really gives the young adults space to talk about their struggles, trials, and pray over one another. This layout has been very effective and works well with the age group.

What tasks need to be accomplished in preparation for the New Life evening?

In order to prepare for New Life, we have multiple tasks that we split up between our committee. First, we decide who will be preaching, giving their testimony, and who will be leading worship. Then we post on social media to let everyone know when our next service will be and to make sure they save the date. We continue to post throughout the month to try and reach everyone. We also try to post in different group chats we have, reach out to friends, and to the Christian community around us that is not Salvation Army so that we can build this ministry with the full body of Christ. Once it gets closer to the date of the event, we pre-order pizza, practice with our worship team, create slides, and set up the sanctuary for the night. We are blessed with many helping hands to make the setup process easier.

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How do you let others know about the New Life events?

We let others know about New Life through multiple different ways. We post on our social media account, LC_newlife, once a week to build awareness of our event that month. We post on our Instagram story and encourage our committee to share these posts too. We have some connections to the Christian group, Power to Change, at Western University, and we post on their Facebook page to try and reach the University students. Since most of us have worked at camp we like to send our events in our camp group chats to make sure everyone knows they are welcome, and we also spread the word by contacting our friends 1 on 1. Lastly, we put our event in our church bulletins and Facebook group, and our officers help us to send an invite via email to the churches surrounding us.



How do you decide who to invite to speak?

We invite those who have a passion for Jesus and the gift of sharing their faith with others. There are many young adults who desire to teach God's Word and have written messages that simply don't get opportunities to share. We often have people reaching out asking to share a message, or to recommend someone. We look at a few things when considering having someone share a message: Their patterns, passions, and pursuits (in regards to their walk with Jesus). We also spend individual time in prayer inviting God to place a name on our heart. A member of the committee will contact someone and ask if they would be open to speaking. We don't focus on one's experience in preaching but rather their heart and ability to talk about Jesus in their everyday lives. New Life is a safe and intimate space to share a message regardless if you have never preached or have many times.

What have been the benefits of hosting New Life worship nights?

There have been many benefits of New Life. The most important one has been the Holy Spirit bringing the community together. It can be hard for youth/young adults to prioritize time with God and Christian community, but these nights have allowed them space to come together and worship freely. It has been so great to see the Holy Spirit moving within this community and we have truly been blessed by the way the Lord has moved. It has also given us a chance to make connections with groups outside of the Army who also love the Lord. The Bible encourages us to be one body of believers and being able to worship with a broader scope has brought beautiful new relationships. These nights have also given the youth/young adults the opportunity to have more quality time together. We started these nights at the end of Covid and a lot of people hadn't seen each other in a while. These nights brought young people together again for the first time in a while. These nights have been such a blessing to our team to see how the Lord ministers to His people in so many ways.

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What advice do you have for others who may want to organize worship nights in their region/division?

The first piece of advice to give is to walk in obedience to what the Lord is calling you to. If God is calling you to do a ministry like this, then step out in obedience with Him by your side. No matter how scary it might feel to start a ministry, God is going to bless you in it and bear much fruit. Our obedience is an opportunity from God and an act that shows love to the only one who is truly worthy! The second piece of advice is to lean into those around you. These nights wouldn't be possible without the help of others and God doesn't want us to walk alone. God calls us to dive into community and help each other in all our different ministries. The third piece of advice is to truly be in prayer about the ministry you want to start. Be in prayer about the type of ministry you should do, about the songs you will sing, about the message that will be given, about people who will help you carry the load, and for people to be touched by the Lord on these nights. Prayer holds so much power and God is waiting to hear from you.

What kind of feedback has the team received about the New Life worship nights?

Our team has received a lot of positive feedback on how this night has impacted many youth/young adults. Many people have been encouraged because that these nights have given them a place to worship freely with a new style of worship. At New Life we do contemporary worship which isn't always seen in church, so it has been good for youth/young adults to have that type of worship in their lives. We have also seen that a lot of the congregation love doing discussion questions and that it is their favorite part about the night. Everyone enjoys connecting with each other and sharing about their life when they might not have an outlet to do so otherwise. People really enjoy the time of fellowship beforehand where they can see one another and deepen friendships. Overall, the biggest take away has been how everyone feels free to connect with the Lord and is grateful to have an outlet like New Life!

