

MAGA//ZINE

Issue 15: June 2020

The Church is empty...

...but the music continues!

Music and Gospel Arts



Canada & Bermuda Territory

As I write this, I can't help but think of the passage from Philippians 1:3-7 from The Voice translation...

3 Whenever you cross my mind, I thank my God for you and for the gift of knowing you. 4 My spirit is lightened with joy whenever I pray for you (and I do constantly)...

7 It is only right that I should feel such admiration for you all—you hold me close to your hearts. And, since we are partners in this great work of grace, you have never failed to stand with me as I have defended and stood firm for the gospel—even from this prison cell.

Sometimes these days, it does in fact feel like we are in prison cells. Stuck in our homes, restrictions in our movement and barred from seeing loved ones; it all feels endless. Most of all: there is no live music together. During these times, you miss the fellowship, as much as the music. I do have immense confidence that we will all get through this. Our music groups, our churches, our communities, our country, and our world, perhaps we will even be in a better world because of it.

During this grand pause, what have we learned about music ministry? I think there are three things that have become obvious:

1. Those who cultivated an online presence and were early adopters of social media as a tool in their ministry are currently reaping the benefits of having a broad reach for their message.

BEYOND THE DOORS

BY CRAIG LEWIS

TSMAGA

2. The importance of video. Specifically, content that incorporates both good quality video and audio gets the most attention.

3. Action is better than inaction. In the words of the famous running shoe brand: *Just Do It!* It's easier to tweak something once you've got it started. Do nothing, and the reality may be, that you may not recover from this pandemic.

But wait, this is the good news! This time we are all in offers a tremendous opportunity for both creativity and rapid change and transformation. We have a catalyst that challenges some of the traditional assumptions of the things we thought we needed in order to have effective ministry. The creativity that I have seen from so many individuals and groups is incredible. Musicians of all genres and all demographics, making music and content simply by using their smartphones. It's truly awe-inspiring to say the least.

With this in mind, let's prepare for a new world of ministry. One that fully integrates technology, while at the same time focuses heavily on the people in our community. Both the community of musicians in our groups and the local community outside our church doors!

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MAGA

PANDEMIC, PRACTICE AND PRAISE

BY ROB BROWN



During these times of isolation, social distancing and COVID-19 constraints, we as Salvationist/Christian musicians find ourselves without church services, concerts or rehearsals. This can lead to a definite motivational void when it comes to practicing our instruments.

What do we do? Do we stop practicing? Wait until restrictions ease? Dream of better days?

We should take this negative situation and turn it into a positive opportunity. Romans 8:28 says, *"And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose."*

Let's use this time to improve our craft and focus our hearts and minds on Jesus, so that when the end of this pandemic comes, we can minister through our unique musical medium to a world that needs to hear the gospel message.

I am going to give you a boatload of suggestions to spice up your home/individual practice. If a couple of ideas hit and stick, then I have accomplished my mission.

The first suggestion is to have a goal and know what you are going to focus on during your practice time. Change your goal for each practice session and don't always focus on the same thing. Work on parts of your playing that need improvement. Don't always practice your strengths. It may make you feel good to play to your strengths, but it will not make you a better player.

The following are some concepts you may want to focus on during different practice sessions.

Long tones are super boring but super effective. They are the super vegetable of practicing. They improve sound, range, tuning, endurance, and more! Watch TV while you do this to stave off the boredom.

When practicing your articulation, start the notes with a "hoo" and when it's clean, add the tongue back in. What about your double tongue and triple tongue? Practice those techniques as well. The Arban's book has a myriad of exercises and it can be found online for free! Why not try a practice session without using the tongue and only using breath articulation? Think this is crazy? Try it for yourself. This exercise forces you to use your air properly, taking the focus off the tongue and onto the air-stream.

Practice your loud and soft playing. They both need attention. I heard one trainer say, "I could teach a chimpanzee to play loud." This may or may not be true, but the point still stands. It is much easier to play loudly than softly. Do you practice your soft playing? It is hard! If you can play softly then you really have control of your air. Practice it and you will get better.

Work on your lip slurs with flexibility ex-

ercises. Once again, these can be a great workout for your breath control. Work on technical studies, lyrical studies or find a new method book. Ask people you know for suggestions.

Use a cornet tune book as part of your warm-up routine. Play the tunes in as many octaves as you can. Low brass players - go for three octaves or even four! Why not have the words to the tune beside you as you play. Make it part of your devotions. Let's break that



perception that bandsmen don't know the words to the songs. Do a quick search on the tune and the lyricist. Why did they write the words and under what circumstances? What was God revealing, teaching or inspiring them to do? Allow God to speak to you through the words.

What about practicing in shorter time slots over the course of the day? Some of us are stuck at home so this is doable. Set yourself a daily timetable. At 10AM, do 15 minutes on lip slurs. At noon, do 15 minutes on hymn tunes which can also be tied in with your devotions. At 2PM, tackle some technical exercises for 15 minutes, then long tones etc... You get the idea. At the end of the day, you could have put in some serious time practicing on your horn!

Record yourself. People are doing some amazing things during these COVID-19 days. Jump on board. You don't have to post it, but you should record yourself. Get some friends involved and set up your own virtual duet, trio,

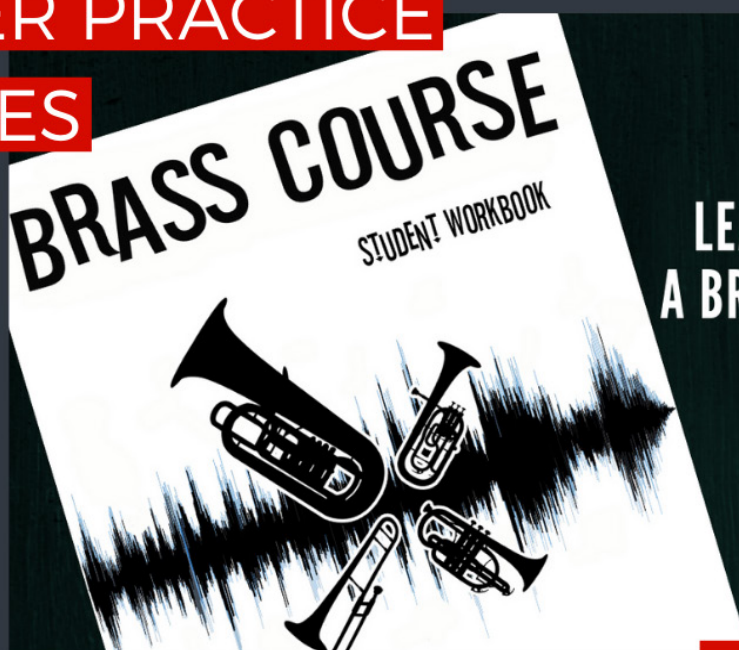
ensemble, band etc... There are a lot of great apps out there you could explore. Turn one of these friends into an accountability partner and do your hymn tune devotions with them.

Lastly, play through some solos. Work on one or two at a time. Break down a smaller portion of the solo and really woodshed it. Make listening to great players part of your routine. Copy them; it is the highest form of praise.

Mostly, copy Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:2).

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters...it is the Lord Christ you are serving (Galatians 3:23-24).

OTHER PRACTICE GUIDES



LEARN HOW TO PLAY A BRASS INSTRUMENT

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brass players of all ages.

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A photograph of Colonel David Hammond, an elderly man with glasses, wearing a dark Salvation Army uniform with a red 'S' badge on the lapel. He is sitting on a wooden bench in front of a brown upright piano. The room has a lamp and framed pictures in the background.

90 YEARS AND STILL LEARNING

One of the territory's longest serving bandsman, currently in isolation at his home at The Salvation Army's Meighen Retirement Residence in Toronto, Colonel David Hammond speaks briefly about his musical life with his bandmaster and MAGA's Rachel Ewing.

*RE: When did you start playing a brass instrument?
Who was your first teacher or leader?*

DH: I started playing in a little community called Nelson, British Columbia. I was 6 years old when I started playing and my teacher was Sam Neherney. My parents were officers and were stationed there.

RE: What do you remember about your early days of playing?

DH: I didn't really enjoy playing until I turned about 12 years old. I had my teeth straightened at age 12 and was told I would never play an instrument anymore. But the bandmaster thought a bigger mouth-piece would work so he gave me a trombone, and I just fell in love with it. I absolutely fell in love with the trombone and that was how I got started.

RE: You were part of the reforming of the Canadian Staff Band in 1969. What was this like?

DH: I arrived at my appointment at THQ the same day that Lieut.-Colonel Norman Bearcroft arrived from England. We formed a very strong friendship. It was

quite a turbulent time and there wasn't unanimous support for the reformation of the band. But Norman was a "British Bulldog" if you will, and if it wasn't for him, I don't think we would have had a reformed Staff Band. I didn't have to audition because Norman knew my capacity. I enjoyed two years in the band on 1st and 2nd Trombone before my appointment changed and I was moved to North York Temple which ended my time in the CSB. Overall, it was a beautiful experience and truly memorable.

RE: Did you enjoy playing under Bearcroft's leadership?

DH: I did. I loved playing under him. I think everybody did. He was such a great leader, and everyone worked hard for him.

RE: Can you describe some of the similarities/differences in banding from past to present?

DH: Well, there are a lot of similarities between Army banding. Of course, Army music has really developed to include different styles of music. A lot of the music is still similar and loveable. I loved it from the beginning, and I still love it now. I think one of the biggest differences is that people now are much less disciplined. In early days, we were very disciplined players and the expectation was a high standard.

RE: As a Salvation Army officer, how do



you think music has played a role in your ministry over the years?

DH: One of the things I started to do was play on the kettle by myself in front of one of the big stores on Bloor Street. I remember going to the manager and saying, "I've been asked to play by myself and I've never played by myself before. If

it's not up to your standard, you just let me know." And he said, "This is exactly what we need here." I played there every Christmas for a whole month for 8 years. It was the highlight of my ministry. Not only to play the trombone, but to make it a ministry. I was open to talk to people in between playing and I think it was the

best experience as a Salvation Army Bandsman.

RE: You still play in your corps band. What do you most enjoy about this?

DH: When I moved into the Meighen Retirement Residence, Commissioner Don Kerr asked me where I was going to go to church. I told him I would go anywhere as long as I could play my trombone. He encouraged me to attend North Toronto. I went there on a Sunday and the bandmaster, Paul Carew, came up to me and said, "We have 8 trombones but you're more than welcome to come and play." I'm there to this day and I'm so glad I decided to settle at North Toronto at this point in my life. At my age, I just want to play my trombone because I just love it and I've never lost my love for playing. I enjoy the Christian fellowship and I want to be a positive influence in the group. It keeps my mind sharp and keeps me engaged. When I was 20 years old, I bought my first trombone and I'm still using the same instrument. I remember saving up for a long time to buy that instrument.

RE: Obviously the world has changed right now because of COVID-19. Can you ever recall a time like this in your life? How are you coping with everything?

DH: This is a completely new experience for everybody. I've never experienced anything like it. The disadvantage is that you are cut off from everything. From your corps, from the band, from society. But I have a lot of time to practice and play and I'm grateful for that. It's not a hardship on me because I have these activities that distract me. I practice my piano every morning for an hour and then I practice my trombone for about a half an hour. Even though we have been staying in our rooms, I've been busy with my music. I hope it doesn't sound like I'm blowing my own horn; I don't want to give that impression. All I want to do is my best.

RE: All of us are like that. We invest so much time and energy and we just want to do our best for the Lord. I think

that's the message that you have given throughout your life.

DH: I've kept a record of attendance for the last 3 years. I haven't missed more than two or three Sundays. I don't boast about it. I love playing in the band and I love being at my corps. It doesn't matter if it's a large group or small group. I just want to give my best.

RE: You also decided to join the Cowbell Lane Band (North Toronto's Junior Band) to help out. What has that experience been like for you?

DH: Well, that is another great joy to be with those young people. I remember that I was once like them and I just want to do what I can to help them learn. It doesn't matter what age we are, we can all make music together to glorify the Lord.

RE: How do you see Salvationists responding when this pandemic is over?

DH: I don't think anybody knows how life will change after this. The uncertainty makes us feel uneasy. It will be good when it is over.

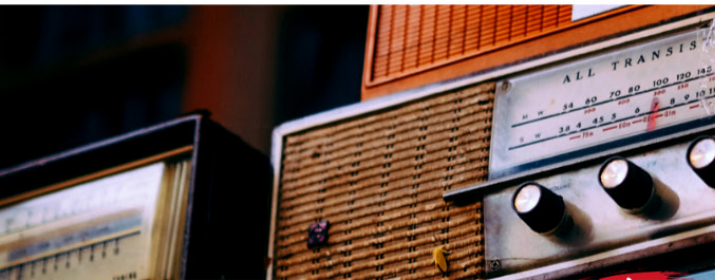
RE: Do you think there is anything that you feel God has been saying to you over the last few years of your life as you've celebrated your 90th birthday and you think about what lies ahead?

DH: God is reminding me that my cup is full and running over. I don't know whether I have one year or ten more years ahead of me in my life. I'm planning on another ten years! But I'm thinking that spiritually, they will be the best years of my life. I don't know what that means or what that is going to be, but I am a disciple of Jesus Christ and I just want to be the best I can be for the Lord.

AROUND THE TERRITORY

We don't know how long it will be until we can attend concerts and church services. Click on the images below for links to these online collections.

MIDWEEK mini concert



Midweek Concerts

A collection of old and new videos from across the territory. Watch the growing list on YouTube.

Hymn Sing Radio

Sing along to some of the most famous and adored hymns. With lyric sheets included, this is a perfect way to engage in singing.

Tim Purdy

Bandmaster Tim Purdy (Montreal Citadel) has released some piano improvisations and arrangements of Christian hymns and songs. All of these are available on YouTube.

Mississauga Temple Band

Mississauga Temple Band has released footage of their previous band weekends featuring some great soloists. Find it on their Facebook page.

CSB50

The Canadian Staff Band has released several videos from the CSB50 concert last March. Find them on their YouTube channel.



HOW I CAME TO THE ARMY

By Geoff Ho

It was six years ago, on December 14th, 2014, when I began my journey as a Salvationist. I was enrolled as a senior soldier at Yorkminster Citadel. Through the years, it has truly become more than a place to worship and fellowship. Yorkminster has become my home. But it hasn't always been that way.

As a bandsman, I've had so many incredible experiences and not all of them are even musical or spiritual. Some of these experiences have given me opportunity to simply share my story with others. Although I have to admit that sharing has never come easily to me (just ask my kindergarten teachers) and I've often have been confused as to why anyone would want to hear about my personal experiences. But as always, I begrudgingly agree to share and then I am left wondering, "Why me?" and also, "How on earth did I end up here?" Whenever I try to answer these questions sincerely, I must go back a little further than "in the past six years." To further introduce myself and to outline part of what makes me who I am today, I would tell you that I'm a follower of Christ, a son, a brother, a musician and a Salvationist. Six years ago, I would never have known that this is where I would be today nor would I have even dreamt of any of the blessings that God had already planned out for me.



Growing up, I was fortunate to have been raised in a Christian family who attended church regularly. My church has always been my family. Quite literally. My uncle was the pastor and my relatives lived nearby which allowed us the opportunity to worship together every week. Because the church was so small, everyone in the family had a role, except me. Out of my seven cousins and two sisters, I found myself being outmatched in every way possible in terms of productivity and skill. I was notoriously inadequate even with the smallest of things such as helping with the sound system or even changing PowerPoint slides. This never deterred me from enjoying my church-going

experience, but it always left me wondering if there was something more for me.

Music plays a very large part in my life today. Currently, I am in my undergraduate studies as a music student and I participate in four musical groups regularly throughout the year. I started playing the trumpet in elementary school when I was about 13 years old because it was a requirement in my school education. I absolutely hated it. Nothing came naturally to me and I basically felt the trumpet was only good for making my lips hurt. All of this changed when I graduated and started high school. I met two Salvationists who would change my life. These two men were my music teachers at Pierre Elliott Trudeau High School. Greg Colley and Cameron Rawlins became more than just “Mr. Colley” and “Mr. Rawlins” to me. What made them stand apart from everyone else was their genuine kindness for others and right away, I knew that something about them was different. Their passion for what they love and believe in was evident from the first time I met them. To say that they have had a profound impact on my life would be a massive understatement. I often found myself in the music room asking either of them to better help me understand what I was going through, and it was that constant struggle that I no longer had to face alone that changed everything for me.

As I continue to reflect on my path that has led me to where I am now, I find myself thinking back to times that have been difficult. The first time for anything can be scary. I know my first year of University was full of scary first times. It was my first time living alone and I had the feeling of complete freedom to do anything I wanted. Despite these changes, I knew I wanted to keep pursuing a life of worship. In memory of my two high school teachers, I decided to try going to a Salvation Army church. I remember vividly my first time at a corps band practice, or the first time I heard



a live brass band play. It was the Canadian Staff Band with guest soloist Jens Lindemann, so not too bad for my first concert! I also remember the first time I played around a kettle and my first music camp experience. The one thing that remains through all these memories are the people that surrounded me. They were always kind and caring and that meant a lot to me. As a struggling student, it meant the world when somebody believed in me. Being part of the OCE Kettle Band, I learned that I could look up to other young Salvationist musicians. In all the times I ever wondered where I belonged, it was always here in the Salvation Army surrounded by these special people.

Today, I am member of the Yorkminster Citadel Band and Songsters, the OCE Divisional Youth Band and the Canadian Staff Band. How did I end up here? I'd have to say it's because of the people. More specifically, the people that God has placed throughout my life to mentor, guide and comfort me. Psalm 150:3 says, *“Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet, praise him with the harp and lyre.”* It is my daily prayer that I may continue to share God's love just as those have shared His love with me.



COPING IN COVID TIMES

BY MAJOR LEN BALLANTINE
CANADIAN STAFF SONGSTER LEADER

Oh, the rhythm of life puts a tingle in your fingers! But when there's no rhythm to life, there's no tingle either. And like many others coping with COVID times, I've had to find my own rhythm.

For me, the discipline of practicing the piano has come as a surprising tingle for more than my fingers. It is something I haven't done in earnest for many years, not since early studies at the University of Toronto in the 70's. So, now in my 70th year of life, I've found a real tingle in the discipline which I left behind all those years ago.

The first thing I noticed was the ease in which hours slipped away. I can zone-in to work on fingering and routinize patterns. I can spend 15 whole minutes repeating a single turn of phrase until it finally submits to muscle

memory. It has been heaven. Not so much for the others in the house. That's where a digital piano and noise-cancelling headphones is a boon.

The next thing that I noticed was that playing is actually pleasurable. I don't think I've ever seen playing the piano as a pleasure. It has always been work. There was always a lesson to prepare for, a solo to worry about, or a contest in the offing for which new repertoire had to be learned. I honestly can't remember playing without the threat of impending scrutiny hanging over my shoulder and robbing me of the joy of the moment!

But in COVID times, I can relax. I can stay in the moment and have oneness with the music, without the stress of getting it right for the next "whatever." I can be patient and trust that if I play hands separately enough times, eventually I'll be able to put hands together! How life-giving this is! It's almost fun. Except it seems to take longer than it used to. But who cares!? It's COVID times.

When I left serious playing, it was because I couldn't see myself perfecting the art. How does Glenn Gould play this stuff without dropping the ball? What kind of mind does it take to stay focused through thousands of notes and not have a black-out? Whenever I performed, I used to wait for it, wait for that memory slip or that fumble. And then I'd pick myself up and continue to the end like a trooper. But that's no way for a professional player to think. And there was no psychologist coaching me on how to hone my mental approach. So, I gave it up.



What I didn't realize then, was that just getting that far as a player had already begun to prepare me for the life I would eventually come to as a writer, arranger and choral director. This, despite the fact that these new disciplines had nothing in common with Bach, Beethoven and Brahms. Or do they?

Through the lens of time I have come to value those early years of heart-breaking piano playing. I have now realized the better one becomes at one's principle instrument, the better it is for all the music making one will ever undertake. I may have failed to become a concert pianist, but I succeeded in becoming a musician. I have then been able to apply that musicianship to the greater world of creating music of my own, interpreting the music of others, and encouraging choristers to use the breath of God to sing His praises. So satisfying and redemptive to view a "failure" in this manner.

One more thing. When I was very little and still under the tutelage of my father, I was made to say a little speech introducing the piece I was about to play. I hated doing it. I worried more about those little speeches than about the playing. However, I gained a respect for the spoken word and a certain comfort in standing in front of an audience. That was a life lesson that has stood me in good stead to this day.

It seems true then, that energy is neither lost nor gained. The effort we put into our craft as musicians keeps spilling over into other areas of our lives. My journey as a piano player has benefited all the other areas of my life. And if there is any tingle in my fingers today, it surely is because through the grace of God, music has given my life a rhythm which sustains and pays benefits, even in these COVID times.

NOW IS THE TIME TO MOBILIZE

BY JOHN LAM
CANADIAN STAFF BANDMASTER

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you (Deuteronomy 31:6).

It's been over a year since I wrote an article like this, back when the CSB was celebrating its 50th anniversary by crisscrossing the country and joining forces with all other North American staff bands at Roy Thomson Hall. How the world has suddenly changed in just a few weeks at the hands of the deadly COVID-19 virus. Borders, businesses, airlines, schools and a large part of the world's economy are now closed. Many people find themselves jobless and quarantined in their homes while our health care professionals and essential services workers risk their well-being every day to get us through this unprecedented event. Now in the third month of physical distancing practices, with case numbers and death toll rising, it's easy to ask where God is in all of this. With our church buildings shuttered, and all worship services, large gatherings and camps cancelled until further notice, what is the role of the church during

this time? As church musicians and leaders, how can we still carry out the mission when so many doubts and fears abound?

I think we already know the answers to some of the questions. Knowing that God doesn't need bricks and mortar buildings to carry out His mission in the world, He has enabled His followers to mobilize online and in our homes on a global scale. I commend our territorial leaders and the creativity of our Public Relations, Communications as well as the Music and Gospel Arts Department for immediately providing a weekly online Sunday service to give us encouragement, inspiration and comfort. The same goes for the leaders at dozens of corps across the territory who have learned and adapted new technologies, tapping into the resourcefulness of their corps family to broadcast livestream services and use the latest online video conferencing technologies to keep worshipping together and supporting each other. I also marvel at our many musicians who have contributed their talent by way of recording solos, or duets and posting them on Facebook. You may never



know how much of a blessing you have been, but I guarantee that you have because your efforts have blessed me. All of this is proof that God is right here in this crisis with us, and we know that in His time He will make beautiful things out of the disease and brokenness of this fallen world.

I have to admit that when physical distancing rules came into place, it seemed a bit like a novelty. Who isn't in favour of a week or two off from the daily grind? We all have busy lives and are now gaining an acute perspective of just how stretched we were prior to the pandemic. However, as the days and weeks wear on, I realize how deeply I am missing my church family, and I begin to sense increased anxiety in my colleagues and friends. As I said earlier about increasing case numbers and the death toll, it hits home even harder when those numbers now include people we actually know and love. More questions and fear, and what to do?

I can only answer that as a musician and a leader. As a musician, I say play on! Now is not the time to lay down our instruments. Now is the time to mobilize any way we can to share the good news of the gospel even more and claim the words in the Bible and the songbook that our music was written for. This is the

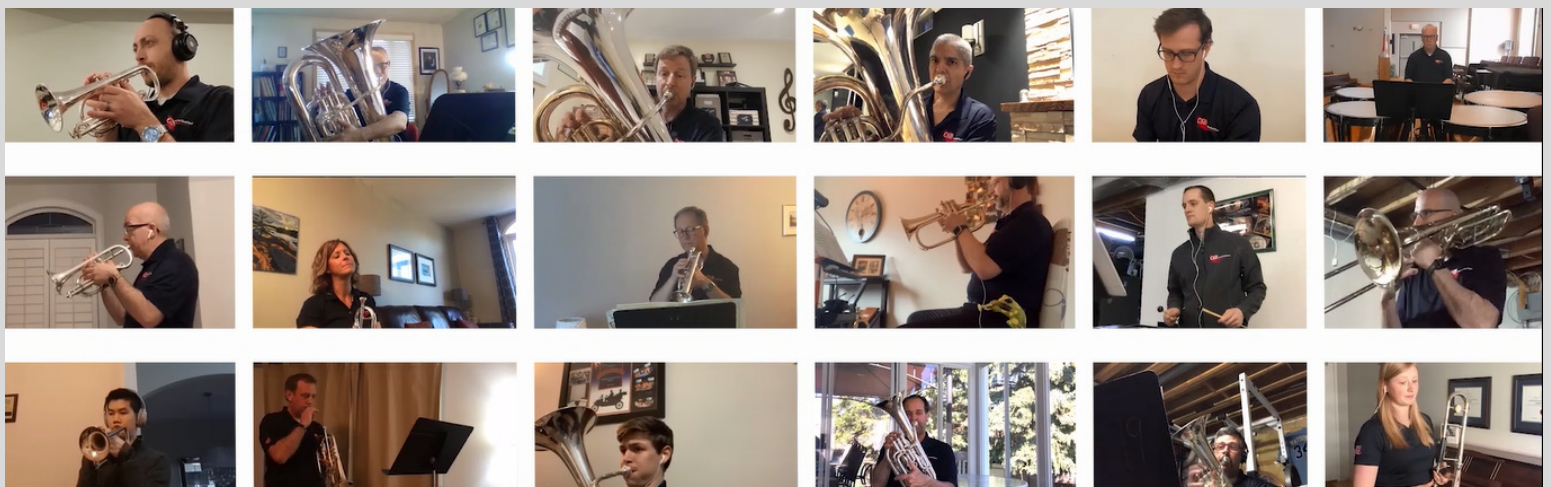
moment we were called to be present for, and the message is needed now, at this moment, more than ever before. As a leader I encourage you to take the advice given by Dr. Eugene Habecker with reference to crisis leadership:

"...in crisis situations, three things must be done exceptionally well: absorb chaos, give calm, and provide hope."

As I look and listen across our great territory, I see that happening everywhere, every day in all facets of the army's work. For our SA musicians and leaders, I encourage you to continue to lean on God's promise found in Deuteronomy 31, and lead the way in giving calm and providing hope.

The CSB will remain present on social media platforms, creating split-screen hymn tunes and marches. I'm also happy to say that we will be posting many portions of the recently released CSB 50 DVD from last year's celebration at Roy Thomson Hall. We hope this helps you to stay connected with us, bringing calm and hope in this time of great uncertainty.

Until we meet again.



Maple Leaf Brass

Recent Maple Leaf Brass titles:

No. 80	Song Arrangement	Cornerstone	[Simon Gough]
No. 81	Song Arrangement	Friend of God	[Marcus Venables]
No. 82	Festival Arrangement	Victory and Praise	[Ruben Schmidt]
No. 83	March	Abundant Grace	[David Rowell]

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COMMENTS & SUGGESTIONS

Feel free to send us your ideas, articles, videos, posters and pictures. This newsletter is meant to cover all music ministry types from across the territory, and we need your help to reach every corner. Forward any information to Marcus_Venables@can.salvationarmy.org and we'll do our best to put you in our next issue!



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