

GOING DEEPER: Thursday 30 March 2023

INTRODUCTION

As part of our Territorial Strategic Framework, He Waka Eke Noa, The Salvation Army across New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa is committed to developing and deepening our spiritual life and our connections with our loving, creator God.

By 'praying together', we desire to go deeper together, celebrate God in our lives and seek direction for the future.

Each of our online prayer meetings and these Going Deeper pages will have a scripture to reflect on, a spiritual practice to implement and prayer points to focus on. Thank you for participating in this journey with us. Perhaps consider who else you might want to share Praying Together with.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE *Drawing*

- Imagine that you are looking out a window at your favourite tree. On the back of this page, draw what you see.
- Imagine that the tree represents your life.
- What are the 'fruit' of your life that others around you see? Write these on the tree.
- Did you draw roots for your tree?
- What keeps you connected to Christ, the source of all life?
- Write these on the roots of your tree.

REFLECTION

- Read **Jeremiah 17:7-8**
Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, who put their confidence in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.
- How strong, deep and vital are your roots?
- How are you connected to the life-giving stream of God's grace?
- What are your life-giving networks or people who strengthen and encourage you and help you to grow in Jesus? Add them to your picture.
- Are your roots holding steady? What might you need to do to strengthen these?

PRAYER POINTS

- For all who are connected to The Salvation Army to go deeper in Christ.
- For an openness to discover new ways to connect with God.
- That the message of Jesus, the hope of the world, will be shared widely over the Easter period.

- For protection for the young people and their leaders as they attend Easter Camps, and that they will encounter the Holy Spirit in a radical way.

PRAYER by Carol Penner

Help us to learn from the trees to be your people.

Like the strong oak with its deep roots, establish us in your word, in community, in prayer.

Like the graceful willow bending in the wind, strengthen us to withstand tumults and trials.

Like the tall jack pine, true and straight, make us pure and single-minded, always looking to you.

Like the rustling poplar, shining and shimmering, give us joy in the winds of life.

Like the stately sycamore lining smoggy city streets, empower us to grow where we are planted, regardless of conditions.

Like the delicate peach tree, make us fruitful and sweet in the lives of those around us.

Like the aromatic cedar, evergreen in hard seasons, allow us to produce the fragrance of mercy even when we are broken.

Remembering the tree of Calvary, teach us the value of taking up our cross daily in service for others.