

Giving Hope Today
A Christmas Story

article by Rob Studiman, Director - The Salvation Army Centre of Hope

Here at The Salvation Army in Abbotsford, we proudly wear shirts displaying our Salvation Army crest along with three simple words: "Giving Hope Today." Those words represent so much of what we try to do every day. The story below is one I would like to share this Christmas because, to me, it shows what "Giving Hope Today" can truly mean.

15 years ago, a young family in our community found themselves facing an incredibly difficult Christmas. With two young children at home, both parents had unexpectedly lost their jobs a few months earlier. As Christmas approached, they didn't know how they would provide Christmas dinner, let alone gifts for their children.

I wasn't the Director of the Centre of Hope at the time, but through a fellow PAC member in the school district, I heard about their situation. As a member of The Salvation Army Church in Abbotsford, I brought their story to our Corps Officer. Without hesitation, he said, "Certainly, we can take care of them through our Angel Tree Program."

I had the privilege of helping select gifts for the children and putting together a large Christmas food hamper, complete with a turkey, potatoes, carrots and everything needed for a wonderful Christmas dinner. I personally delivered everything to their door. The family had no idea who had recommended them for help. With tears in their eyes, they received the gifts and food, overwhelmed that someone cared enough to make sure their children could experience the joy of Christmas.

Fast forward to Christmas 2025

I was working at a Salvation Army Christmas kettle at Costco in Abbotsford when the father approached me. He told me their family was now doing very well. Over the years, they had slowly rebuilt their lives and had recently been able to purchase a new home and a new vehicle. He wanted to make a substantial donation to The Salvation Army as a way of giving back. With tears in his eyes, he thanked me and said, "If it wasn't for The Salvation Army giving us hope, I don't know how we would have made it through that Christmas. It gave us hope moving forward into the future." This is what "Giving Hope Today" means to me.

Here in Abbotsford, The Salvation Army provides hope not only at Christmas, but throughout the entire year. Whether it is providing food, shelter, practical assistance, encouragement or simply being there for someone during a difficult time, your support allows us to continue helping people when they need it most.
Thank you so much for your generous donations throughout the year, and especially during the Christmas season. Your generosity truly does give hope today—and sometimes that hope lasts for years to come.

God Bless

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More Than a Food Hamper: Walking Alongside Julie

"Julie" is a young mother doing everything she can to provide for her four children. Each week, she comes to The Salvation Army Centre of Hope in Abbotsford to access the emergency food bank, helping ensure there is enough food on the table for her family.

With the rising cost of groceries and the many demands of raising four children, making ends meet can be overwhelming. The support Julie receives through the Centre of Hope provides more than food. It offers relief from the worry of how she will provide for her children and helps her move through each week with greater stability and hope. But the support does not stop with a food hamper.

At The Salvation Army, practical assistance and faith experiences come together to care for the whole person. Through programs such as Messy Church, Just Show UP and the Gathering Markit at Cascade Community Church, families have opportunities to build relationships, find community and experience a welcoming place where they belong.

At the Centre of Hope, the Lunch and Food Cart Program provides meals while also creating opportunities for connection, kindness and encouragement. These programs are part of a larger network of support that surrounds individuals and families as they navigate difficult seasons.

For Julie, this kind of support means knowing that she and her children are not alone. Alongside practical help, she can find community, encouragement and opportunities to experience faith. Each interaction can offer a reminder that her family matters and that there are people willing to walk alongside them.

Every food hamper represents more than groceries. Every meal represents more than food. Every gathering represents more than a program. Together, they create a community of care that supports people in practical ways while offering connection, dignity and hope.

Through these faith experiences and wraparound services, The Salvation Army comes alongside families like Julie's, helping meet needs today while creating space for hope for tomorrow.

UPCOMING EVENTS







Each year, the cold rolls into the Fraser Valley, and brings with it many challenges for those we serve daily at the Centre of Hope. Your donations of new or gently used winter items will make a difference in the lives of men and women here in Abbotsford & Mission. Thank you for your support!

UPCOMING EVENTS





STORIES OF HOPE IN EVERY STAT

~100,000 hot meals	~13,000 nights off the street	~1500 patients seen on site	14 bed Supported Recovery Facility

◯ YES, I want to help build the capacity our community needs.

THE SALVATION ARMY CENTRE OF HOPE Abbotsford Mission

Please use my gift to support the vital programs and services of The Salvation Army, serving Abbotsford and Mission, BC.

Here is my gift of:

- ◯ $100
- ◯ $250
- ◯ $500
- ◯ $_____

OR:

To set up a monthly gift, or to give online, visit: salvationarmyabbotsford.ca or scan this QR code >>>

My payment information:

- ◯ Cheque, payable to **The Salvation Army Abbotsford**
- ◯ Visa ◯ Mastercard

Card Number: _____

Name on Card: _____

Expiry Date: _____ CVV: _____

My contact information:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Province: _____ PC: _____

Phone or Email (optional): _____