News 21 November 2026 | English article

Salvation Army to Give Away 6,000 Copies of Luke's Gospel Across North West England This Christmas

A true story of faith under pressure. Read the first half below, then continue online.

KEY SPIRITUAL TAKEAWAY

"Its cover showing a bridge - and explains why the Army is doing more than handing out food parcels and gifts this year. Churches should be more intentional about explaining the spiritual motivation behind their practical work, he said, urging congregations to take opportunities during the busy Christmas period"

(Transliterated from the original Hindi.)

They had gathered only to pray. When prayer itself becomes the target, faith is proved not by words but by staying.

The Story - Part One

The Salvation Army will distribute 6,000 copies of Luke's Gospel through 54 churches across north-west England and the Isle of Man this Christmas. The campaign, run with Hope Together, will stretch from Crewe to Carlisle and put the story of Jesus into the hands of prisoners, homeless people, survivors of human trafficking and schoolchildren. Volunteers and ministry teams will pray over the books before a single copy is given away.

Major Ian Mountford, divisional commander for the Salvation Army's North West and Isle of Man Division, is the face of the campaign. In a video message released this week, he holds up the little booklet - titled simply "luke," its cover showing a bridge - and explains why the Army is doing more than handing out food parcels and gifts this year. Churches should be more intentional about explaining the spiritual motivation behind their practical work, he said, urging congregations to take opportunities during the busy Christmas period "to talk about the reason we're doing what we're doing."

The reason, Mountford says, is the love of God revealed through Jesus Christ. People associate the Salvation Army at Christmas with carols, food parcels, gifts for children and help for the cold and lonely.

Behind all of it, he insists, is a deeper motivation: the good news of Jesus Christ, which the Army beleives still brings hope, peace and life. His prayer is that recipients will read the Gospel, discover more about Jesus and use the QR codes on the front of each booklet to connect with a local church.

The copies will not be handed out bare. Participating churches plan to attach personalised invitations and stickers identifying nearby congregations, Christmas services, Alpha courses and Bible study groups beginning in the new year. A QR code will also direct readers to local churches and to The Chosen, the television series about the life of Jesus.

The idea is simple: a gift that opens a door, and a door that leads somewhere.

The Turning Point - What Happens Next

The story reaches a life-changing moment that changes everything -- and what seemed like the end is only the middle. Two reports disagree on the numbers, and one question is left unanswered: will the CCTV footage ever come out? Read the full story to find out what happens next.

PERSONAL REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When gathering to pray carries a real cost, what keeps a community coming together anyway -- and what would keep you coming?

2. The pastor's sister shielded him with her own body and fainted under the blows. What does costly, self-giving love look like in your own family or church?

3. When justice is delayed and a complaint is withdrawn under threat, how do believers hold on to truth without giving in to fear -- or to hatred?

READ THE FULL STORY

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