

Do we have support from our leaders at Divisional & Territorial Levels for this transition to Cell? (added 9th May 2002)

Our proposed plans were presented to The Divisional Strategy Council and then to Territorial Headquarters. Their support is indicated by the fact that we were awarded a grant of £20,000 towards the cost of developing the ideas through the appointment of Martyn and Susan. Both Divisional and Territorial Headquarters have been very encouraging and supportive of the concept of Cell Church within the Salvation Army and are looking with interest at how it works and what the implications might be for the wider denomination. In the forming of the Salvation Army Cell Coalition we also have established an informal network representing Salvation Army Corps who are at various stages of exploring the Cell Church concept.

The Salvation Army: Nottingham Arnold **OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

THE SALVATION ARMY IN ARNOLD EXISTS TO BE A CHRISTIAN WITNESS, TO BEFRIEND ALL PEOPLE, AND TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO BECOME FULLY COMMITTED DISCIPLES OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

RESOURCE
LEAFLET

02



Frequently asked questions

Frequently asked questions about Cell Church

As we have explored the concept of Cell Church within the Salvation Army Context a number of questions have cropped up more than once.

In this leaflet we try to give a simple answer.

For fuller answers we would encourage you to get hold of one of the books or cassettes about Cell Church and get the bigger picture.

Questions have come from a range of sources. Those marked May 2002 came from the Corps Reception Evening and have a fuller answer on the cassette recording of that gathering.

Can I join a Cell if I'm not a Church member?

You may find it helpful to also read the companion leaflet "What is a Cell Church"

Yes, is the short answer!

Our *target* group of people are our friends and/or family who are without a relationship with Christ at the moment, they are the people whom God places on our hearts when we ask Him, "Who?"

Attending a cell group meeting will probably not be the first point of contact for someone who is an unbeliever, (see **What is Cell Life?**).

Our *target* group of people **are not** those from other Churches although sometimes our friends will include members of other Churches who would value some extra discipling – these people will obviously not be able to become Cell Group Leaders or Assistant Leaders, but they are able to participate as fully as their church allows.

What is Cell Life?

Cell life takes place outside of the regular cell meeting. This is another way of describing Christian Community, where cell members are involved in each other's day to day lives through regular contact and where members seek to support one another and to keep each other accountable for individual spiritual growth and for our contact with our non-Christian friends. The aim is to build up relationships with unbelievers in more *natural* environments (where our unbelieving friends are already enjoying life), with the intention of bringing them along when they are ready for more! It is therefore very likely that a friend is brought along to a cell meeting (or a people-sensitive Big wing meeting) when they are very close to conversion and then are nurtured in the small wing until they are ready for the Big wing.

A Cell Church is both Cell and Celebration. In the same way that a biological cell is the basic building block of all living things so the spiritual cell is the basic, essential building block of the cell church

What if someone doesn't want to go to a cell?

Of course, nobody will be forced to attend a cell (little wing) and if for whatever reason someone doesn't want to be part of a cell, they are still welcome to attend and participate in Sunday worship (Big Wing) as always. For them therefore, nothing will change.

However, our resources will be focused on Cell as this is the way forward for Arnoldarmy, and we must do all we can to support it. Naturally, It will take a lot longer for some people to be able to attend a cell than others, (for example some people are doing several jobs in the Corps and so have no spare time). Ultimately, we hope that everyone who wants to join a cell will be able to do this by the beginning of 2005.

As the membership of our Corps grows beyond the 200 barrier it will become even more important that everyone becomes an active member of a small group because in these small groups, individuals will:

- 弈 Receive pastoral care,
- 弈 Continue to grow spiritually,
- 弈 Be trained and encouraged to explore ministry opportunities.

What if someone doesn't want to come to the Big wing?

This would usually apply to some of our new people who become Christians through cell life; It may take longer for some people to attend the Big wing than others, (for example some new Christians may find the whole Big wing experience very intimidating and foreign to them). Ultimately, we hope that everyone who participates in a cell will also join in the Big Wing (Sunday celebrations). The big wing is considered just as important as the little wing in our church.

What does "every member in ministry" mean? (added 9th May 2002)

One writer answers this question like this:- "A fundamental belief is that all Christians should be growing in discipleship by being mentored and mentoring someone else. This provides discipleship and rapid growth at all levels of maturity. Mentoring helps to fulfil the biblical mandate for all Christians to be equipped for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:11,12) and multiplies the discipleship process down into the cell. The result of all-member equipping and ministry is a natural lifestyle evangelism. Also the concept of every member in ministry encourages and validates those with a sense of market place ministry, breaking down the sacred/secular divide." [From <http://www.cellchurch.co.uk/Magazine/Issue1/definiti.htm>]

Isn't this just another name for bible study groups?

Cell groups aren't simply another name for a Bible study or fellowship group. They are a group of believers who have banded together for a season in life to reach the lost, minister to the hurting and each other, and discover their leadership potential. Sure, cell groups study the Word, but they do so in order to live out what they read and use it effectively to penetrate a dark world with the light of Jesus Christ . . . which is quite different from studying a passage each week for general knowledge. Cell groups also have lots of fun together . . . but this fellowship is specialised in that it usually exposes unbelievers to a group of fun, Jesus-loving people. In other words, cell groups even use fellowship as an evangelistic tool! And last, it wouldn't be right to call a Sunday morning experience a cell group. A cell group should meet in a place and time that is comfortable for both the believers and unbelievers visiting, and provide enough time to share deep concerns and pray for one another. Rarely can either of these things be done within one hour at a church building, early on a Sunday morning. [adapted from <http://www.touchusa.org/whatis.asp>]

Isn't this a charter for church anarchy—every group just doing their own thing maybe even getting into heresy? (added 9th May 2002)

A Cell church is no less led by its leaders than a traditionally structured church. The structure is designed so that each cell has a leader, each group of up to 5 cells has a coordinator and (as we grow) each of those coordinators of 5 cells will also be grouped in fives. Thus, the leadership of the church—which for us will still be the Commander Officers with the Leadership Team and PCC—is as strong though it is exercised through the church by a network of accountable leaders.

To read the doctrine statements of The Salvation Army see our web site www.arnoldarmy.org , order a copy of The Handbook of Doctrine or see the inside back cover of our red song book.

How will the services look in 2007. Will there still be time for reflection and response? (added 9th May 2002)

By the grace of God the most noticeable characteristic of the celebrations in 2007 will be that they will be much bigger—after all one goal is “to multiply through seeking the Lost”. However, we need to make sure that using the word Celebration doesn’t give the wrong impression. Celebration is simply a name and description of the big wing gathering(s). The content will be very similar to what we have today; that is worship, prayer, ministry opportunity, personal prayer—the use of the mercy seat in response and so on.

Although the cells are the main focus of church life, all the cell groups in the wider body of the church come together for a whole church celebration. The cells and celebrations are the two wings of the church.

How will we mix and match the cells and then manage the “split” when a group gets too big? (added 9th May 2002)

The actual constituency of a Cell group can be varied. One leader of a Cell Church puts it this way : “ some cells were single-sex, whilst other reflected a particular age range. Most had a broad cross-section of the church. The object was to help people feel they belonged, and to feel comfortable in sharing their faith with others. The principle in forming cells seems to be “Do whatever works””. This seems sensible as the premise of cell church is building relationships. Managing the multiplication of a cell can be difficult but of course every cell *knows* that one of their objectives *is* to multiply. So when the time comes to multiply out it’s a cause for celebration and joy. The management problem is with cells that don’t multiply properly.

What about our Planting Plans. Are we still going to plant a cell? (added 9th May 2002)

Cell Church is built on relationships. This is no more true than in the evangelistic side of Cell life. In the first instance Cells will reach out to those not-yet-Christians closest to them, their circle of family, friends, work colleagues, neighbours etc. However, it is also true that there are a vast number of people who are at the moment outside the influence of anyone who belongs to our church. In fact there are whole *groups* of people who are not yet reached by our ministry and outreach. It is our plan to intentionally plant a cell into this kind of as yet unreached environment. Our vision is to see a second Charity Shop and furniture store as a base in a new community from which we will build cell life through relationships made there. At the time of writing we are still seeking a building in the Sherwood area to host this outreach strategy. Watch this space as opportunities unfold.

Many people already have a very negative impression of *church* and will take a long time before they feel comfortable committing to regular attendance in an established church – the initiative for change must come from us, as the Church, to make our Big wing services more accessible and relevant to them. We must be a Corps that truly exists for *Lost people*.

As we become more Cell orientated the initial entry point to the church will generally be through cell life, then cell group meetings and then celebrations. The ideal is that all people will attend the Big wing services regularly – this will obviously require a transitional time which will be greater or lesser according to the individual concerned.

What will our future Membership look like?

As before, members will be required to

- attend at least one Sunday meeting
- attend a cell (small group)
- Find their spiritual gifts and use them
- give sacrificially to the Lord’s work

Also, there will be an expectation that members will agree with, and sign, the commitment of becoming an adherent or Soldier in this Corps of The Salvation Army.

Our goal is that EVERYBODY will be involved in some form of ministry within the church.

Each member will also be encouraged to be committed to their personal spiritual growth through the use of what has been called an “equipping track” (discipleship material designed for use both individually and with a partner).

When should we expect to see results from our decision to go

A cell group is... the basic building block of the church into which non believers are absorbed through a network of relationships.

Cell?

It is not an instant success strategy – try to think of it as a marathon!

We have mapped out our route and identified key points along the way.

Our plan is to therefore complete the transition stage of our journey by January 2007. Results will be visible along the way (we won’t need to wait until 2007!) but exactly what these will be – watch this space!

Are we going to close everything (all our activities)?

The short answer is a definite 'NO!'

In fact it may appear that nothing is changing at all for a while!

As we understand it, Cell group based churches do not require everything to close, **they do require** that everything is done for the right reasons and with the right heart. For Arnoldarmy this is measured by the agreed list of 6 things that really matter to us as a Corps (our 6 values).

Over the years Arnoldarmy has closely monitored all of its activities using the RED measure, (**R**eaching, **E**ncountering &/or **D**iscipling). As a result of this pruning process the activities in our Corps are in good shape.

Any changes or additions to our activities that may take place over the years will **only** be based on, and brought about because of the agreed list of 6 things that really matter to us as a Corps (our 6 values).

Values: What matters to us?

The six value statements that run through everything

- **Jesus is at the centre.**
- **Every member is in ministry.**
- **Every member is growing spiritually**
- **We are an authentic Christian Community**
- **We multiply through reaching the lost**
- **We demonstrate the sacrificial love of Christ.**

Are there other churches who have gone cell?

There are countless examples of churches around the world where transitioning to cell church has meant deep spiritual growth within the existing congregation. We have been in touch during the last year with churches in Ely, Walsall, Belfast, Luton, St. Albans, Bradford as well as an organisation called CellUK which facilitates training and vision building amongst churches in the UK and abroad.

Those of you with internet access might like to do a simple search on cell church and see the thousands of churches that would describe themselves as cell churches. As far as the Army is concerned, we are amongst the first corps in the UK to consider the subject and we are also the founder members of the Salvation Army Cell Coalition.

Is this Army?

The concept of small groups is most definitely "Army".

In the very early days of our movement a system known as the "Ward System" was in place in which all the soldiery of the corps were sub-divided into small wards of no more than 12 soldiers. In these small groups people were given pastoral care and attention, as well as teaching and direction under the supervision of the Commanding Officer. In addition the concept of being a "Go to Them" kind of church as opposed to a "Come to Us" kind of church is very much at the heart of our movement, which was born as a direct result of such a need in society. The cell church concept does not present a threat to the true "spirit of Salvationism".

What about uniform?

Only members will be able to purchase and wear items carrying The Salvation Army logo and/or SP&S uniform. As more people get "mobilised for ministry" we can see a day when uniforms will be used more effectively as a tool for evangelism.

How will we avoid cliquiness of cells when they come together in the Big Wing? (added 9th May 2002)

This question reflects what would be a serious "illness" in any cell group or "big wing" church for that matter—that of becoming inwardly focused. The illness is avoided by the whole church embracing the value of "being an authentic Christian community" and this has to be worked out in both the small and big wing expressions of church. The other really practical thing that helps avoid this "illness" is that Cell groups are intentionally temporary. One of their key dimensions is that they grow and multiply into two new cells. In a healthy cell this happens every year or so and therefore people throughout the whole church family have opportunity to get to know a wide range of people, thus avoiding this illness.

What's the difference between a church where everyone is in a cell (2005) and a fully cell church (2007). (added 9th May 2002)

In the transition to becoming a fully developed Cell Church there are several streams of things happening. One goal is to get everyone who wants to be into a cell (we are saying we want to achieve that by 2005). Another goal is to transition the churches' systems—for example what staff do—where we place our financial resources—how we work leadership—to reflect our two winged approach and emphasis on Cell as the basic building block of the church. So, to be a fully integrated cell church will take us until 2007.