

Commissioner William W. Francis **Territorial Commander – Canada and Bermuda**

William Francis, a second-generation Salvationist, was born and raised in Troy, New York. Upon graduating from high school, he entered Houghton College where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1966, having majored in music and history. In the summer of 1965, he studied at the Free University in Amsterdam, Holland. Upon completion of his undergraduate work, he attended Asbury Theological Seminary, graduating with a Master of Divinity degree in 1969. In May of 2002, Houghton College conferred on him an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree.

While attending Houghton College he met Marilyn (née Burroughs), a first-generation Salvationist, and they were married there in December 1965.

During the years 1969-71, William was employed as a field representative for The Salvation Army in Bergen and Passaic Counties, with headquarters in Newark, New Jersey.

In September of 1971, he and Marilyn entered the School for Officer Training in New York City as part of the “Blood and Fire” session of cadets. For their second year of training, they were given an advanced appointment as cadet-lieutenants in charge of the Danbury, Connecticut Corps. In 1973, they were ordained and commissioned as lieutenants and remained at the Danbury appointment where they ministered to a growing congregation and oversaw the construction of a new corps facility that was dedicated in May of 1977.

In August of 1977, William was the Divisional Youth Secretary for the Massachusetts Division until July of 1981 when he was appointed as the Assistant Territorial Youth and Candidates Secretary of the USA Eastern Territory, and subsequently, as Territorial Youth and Candidates Secretary in 1984.

William was also a member of the New York Staff Band, playing the Eb Bass brass instrument. During the summer of 1982, he played with the band on their world tour that included concerts in Norway, Sweden, Thailand, Australia, New Zealand and Hawaii.

In November of 1986, William was appointed as General Secretary for the Western Pennsylvania Division, with headquarters in Pittsburgh. In his position of second-in-command for the division, he also served as director of operations for Allegheny County.

In May of 1989, he was appointed as Divisional Commander for Northern New England, with headquarters in Portland, Maine. He was responsible for the administrative and ecclesiastical oversight of Salvation Army operations in Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine.

In July of 1992, William served as Training Principal at the School for Officer Training in Suffern, New York, until February of 1997 when he was appointed as Territorial Secretary for Personnel where he served as third-in-command of the USA Eastern Territory.

In September of 2000, William was appointed Chief Secretary of the USA Eastern Territory and gave oversight to the Army’s work and programs in 11 divisions from Kentucky to Maine, as well as the Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands Division. On April 1, 2003, he was appointed to International Headquarters in London, England, as International Secretary for the Americas and Caribbean.

On July 1, 2007, Commissioner William Francis assumed his current appointment as Territorial Commander for Canada and Bermuda.

William has conducted many tours to the Holy Land. His book “The Stones Cry Out” (The Salvation Army, USA Eastern Territory, 1993) takes a fresh look, through the eyes of modern archeology and biblical research, at 18 locations of Jesus’ ministry throughout the land of Israel. He is also the author of “Celebrate the Feasts of the Lord” (Alexandra, VA: Crest Books, 1997) and contributed to “Living Portraits Speaking Still” (Alexandra, VA: Crest Books, 2003), plus many others.

He has also been a zealous advocate for Christian higher education. Up until his appointment to International Headquarters, UK, William served as a Trustee for Greenville College and a member of the President’s Advisory Board at Houghton College. The Houghton College Alumni Association named Commissioner William Francis, along with his wife Commissioner Marilyn Francis, as Alumni of the Year for 1996. Commissioner William Francis presently serves as Chancellor of Booth University College in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

William and Marilyn have two adult children, Captain William Marshall and Susan Marjorie, plus six grandchildren.