



EVERYONE  
NEEDS  
AN ARMY





Even in dark times, God's light shines bright.

For many people, the COVID-19 pandemic was the darkest of times. Those who were struggling before found life even more difficult. Others lost their jobs, had hours cut, or got sick, putting them in a position they never could have imagined. Longtime donors became clients.

At The Salvation Army, an increase in need means an increase in service, and last year we served 2.6 million people in Canada and Bermuda, more than ever before in our history.

However, for us, a light illuminated the darkness of the pandemic. It was the overwhelming generosity all around. In every community, mission partners, donors, corporate sponsors and government agencies went above and beyond the call of duty to ensure that there were no gaps in our services, and we could help those who needed it most. We are truly humbled by the dedication, hard work and kindness of our volunteers, employees and officer personnel.

In this book, we have compiled just a few of the thousands of stories of kindness and generosity shown during the pandemic. Our heartfelt thanks to all our sponsors and supporters.

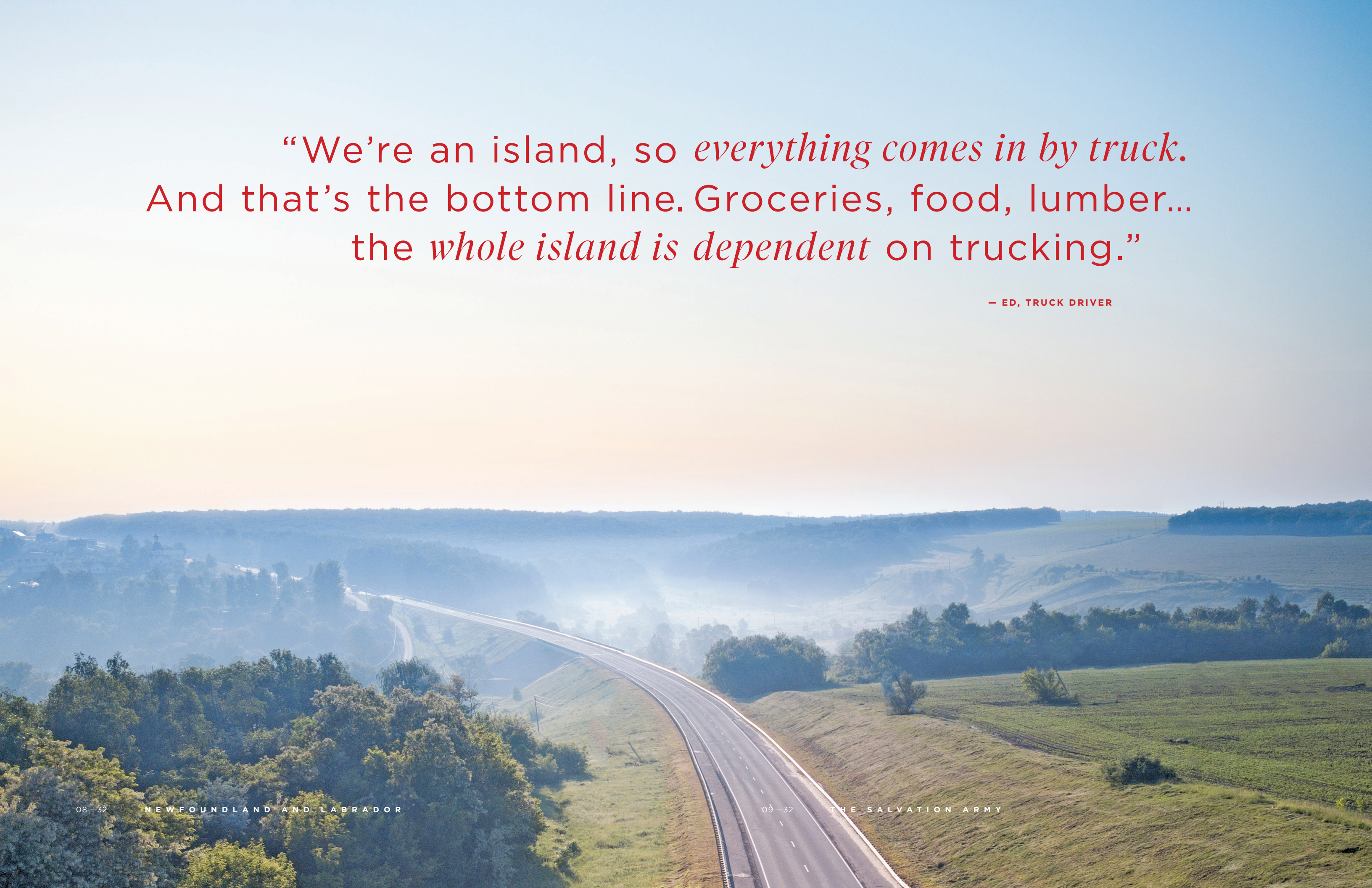
As we say, everyone needs an army. Even us.

May God bless you.

Sincerely,

**COMMISSIONER FLOYD J. TIDD**  
TERRITORIAL COMMANDER  
CANADA AND BERMUDA

The COVID-19 response from The Salvation Army  
was its largest *since World War II*.



“We’re an island, so *everything comes in by truck*.  
And that’s the bottom line. Groceries, food, lumber...  
the *whole island is dependent on trucking*.”

— ED, TRUCK DRIVER



During the height of the pandemic, restaurants around the country had to close because they couldn't operate safely. For the truck drivers who carry goods across Canada, this posed a huge problem—they rely on restaurants and rest stops to feed themselves while they're out on the road.

This was even more worrisome in Newfoundland and Labrador. The island portion of the province relies completely on truckers to bring everything they need. With businesses closed, how could the truckers keep bringing in critical supplies?

The Salvation Army and the townsfolk of Channel-Port aux Basques stepped in to keep the local truckers fed. Together, they made nutritious, home-cooked meals and delivered them by the side of the highway. Volunteers prepared meatloaf, turkey dinners, baked chicken, spaghetti, and many more delicious hot meals for the truckers to enjoy.



They did this all through the winter months to ensure those whose work keeps the island of Newfoundland fed, clothed and heated could know how appreciated they are in the community.

One of our volunteers, Jessie, was happy to be able to help. "We were all very proud, all of us, to be part of this project because it showed the true spirit of the Newfoundland people. We help whenever and wherever we can. It was a wonderful thing, it brought the community together."

*"Every time, they were so happy to see us, and they were so appreciative of what we were doing for them."*

— JESSIE, SALVATION ARMY VOLUNTEER



“When Jake called, my first thought was: *how are we going to build a hospital in two weeks?*”

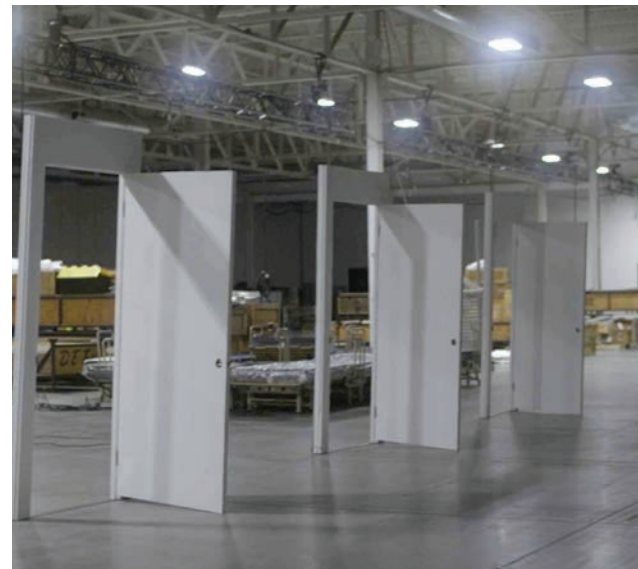
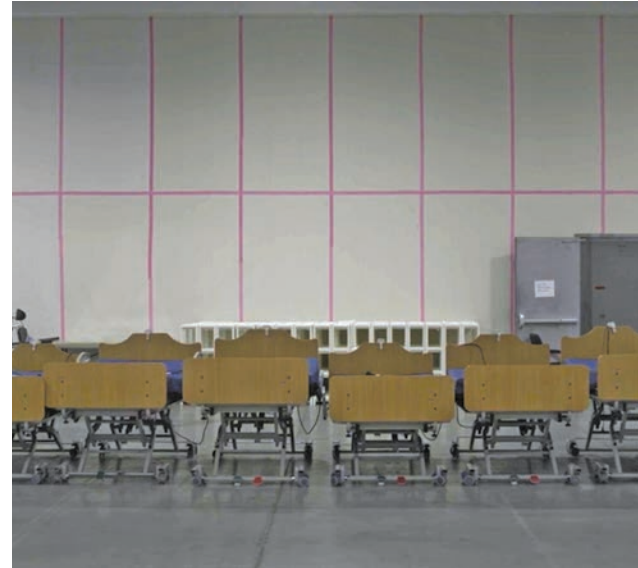
— PATRICIA, CHIEF NURSE, TORONTO GRACE HEALTH CENTRE





On December 14, 2020, Jake Tran, president and CEO at Toronto Grace Health Centre, got an urgent call from the Ministry of Health. They were in desperate need of space for long-term care beds. COVID-19 was making its way through residences across the province, and more space was needed quickly to ensure everyone's safety. Could The Salvation Army help?

Imagine building a hospital from scratch. First, Jake found space at the Toronto Congress Centre in Etobicoke. A team of 50 people started working non-stop to get the space ready, installing walls, pipes, sinks, beds. Then they had to find nurses, social workers, therapists, and more. They needed to ensure they had the resources to take care of a vulnerable population, not just physically, but socially, mentally and spiritually as well.



On December 27, the Specialized Care Centre officially opened. It had gone from an empty warehouse space to a 90-bed facility with private rooms in two weeks.

It quickly became clear that something special had been created. The clients were enamoured with the caring staff who went out of their way to make everyone feel at home. Kathleen, a resident at the Special Care Centre, says, "When I came here, I just loved the staff, and they were so kind to me. They made you feel comfortable, and they made you feel liked."

Being able to step in and fill a need in the community is why we do what we do. The impact of the Specialized Care Centre has been overwhelmingly positive and has generated so many special moments for everyone involved.

*"You come here and everybody is on your side. I felt like I was in a safe place."*

**— KATHLEEN, SPECIALIZED CARE CENTRE RESIDENT**





At the beginning of the pandemic, the messaging was clear—community living was going to have new challenges. In Victoria, this led to a mass exodus from sheltered living to parks and the creation of tent cities.

Staff at The Salvation Army's Victoria Addictions and Rehabilitation Centre knew there was little they could do to bring people back, so they decided to meet them where they were. With restaurants and food banks closed, they wanted to ensure that everyone living outside had something to eat, every single day.

They started by setting up a rolling kitchen, which drove to parks throughout the city, handing out 600 meals a day. As Jeffrey Baergan, executive director of the centre, says, "Food is not optional."

The next step was ensuring people had access to basic hygiene.

The City of Victoria put out a call, and The Salvation Army answered. A mobile shower unit was built and driven around the city to local parks. Jeffrey says, "We would show up in the morning with a hot shower, they'd get into a clean set of clothes, and they left clean and dry and warm. We did that on a daily basis, so it was extremely well received."

**"The two staff that were employed at this trailer are the *two most popular people* in all of Victoria. It's a pretty great opportunity for *people who love people.*"**

**— JEFFREY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, VICTORIA ADDICTIONS AND REHABILITATION CENTRE**

We did our best to make tent living a little bit easier and more humanizing for whoever felt safer there, doing what we could to restore dignity to the lives of others.



**"Once I received my recovery and my mind was straight, I just went into The Salvation Army and decided to stay there. It's like it was automatic I was going to help somebody."**

**— MAXWELL, COORDINATOR, SALVATION ARMY HARBOUR LIGHT OUTREACH PROGRAM**



After finding his way to The Salvation Army Harbour Light in Bermuda, a drug and rehabilitation centre located in the island nation's capital city of Hamilton, Maxwell Assing knew he had found his calling. The Salvation Army gave him a second chance and he wanted to use that to help others.

The gracious spirit of Bermuda is reflected in the work that Maxwell and the Harbour Light do. Lifting up people in need of help, no matter their circumstances, is what makes our work meaningful. Seeing them take that help and turn it into doing good themselves makes it even better.

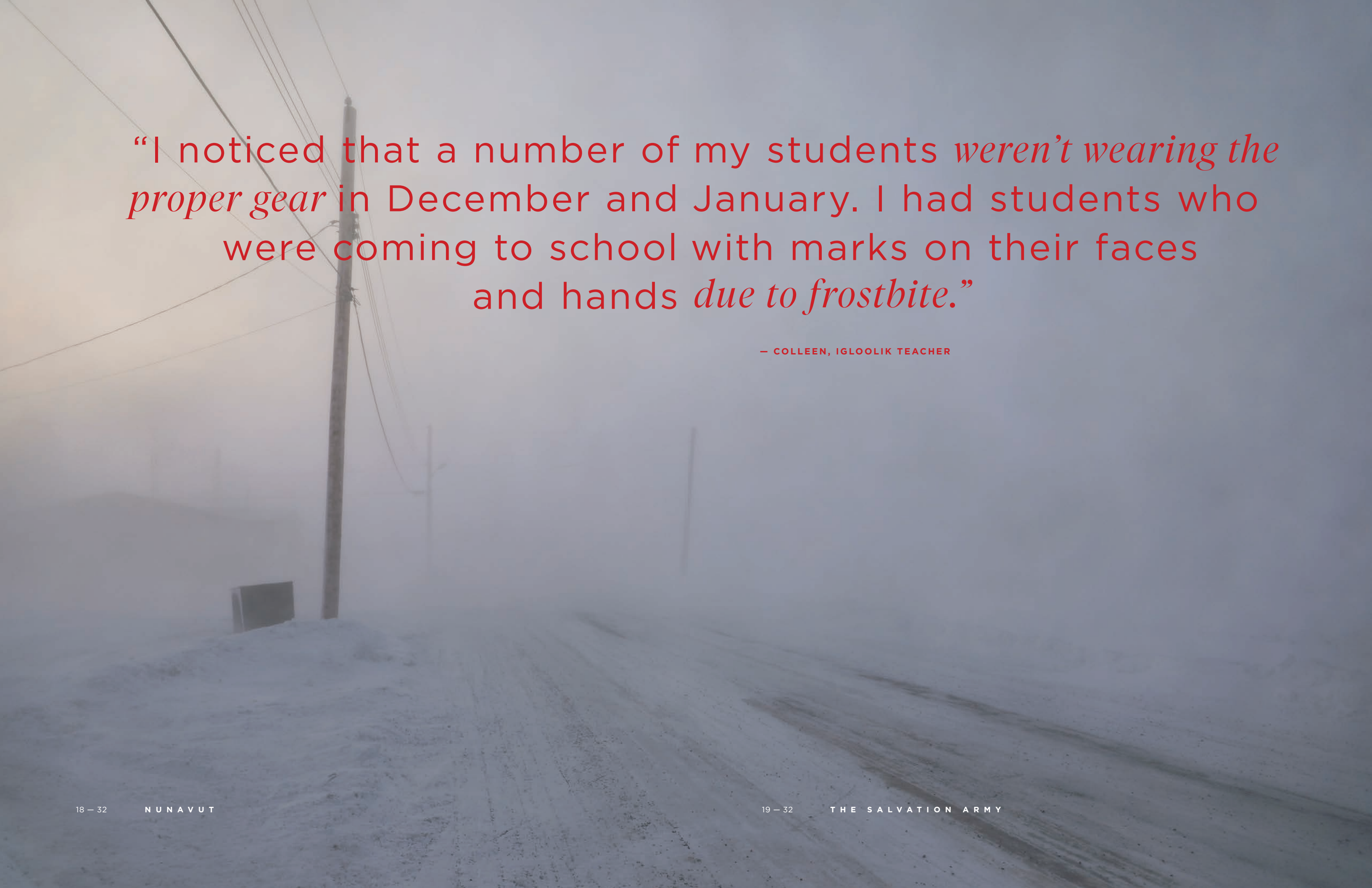
Before the pandemic, Maxwell, who now serves as the coordinator of the Harbour Light's outreach program, drove his van around the outskirts of Hamilton, handing out soup, sandwiches and toiletries to whoever was in need.

Once COVID-19 hit, his clientele grew exponentially, which led him to constantly be on the move. "Calls came in abundance," Maxwell says. "I just didn't stop."

Maxwell feels that he gained so much from The Salvation Army and felt strongly about reciprocating that kindness within his community. He's not the only one who wanted to pay it forward after receiving help.

An elderly lady who needed groceries brought to her was so thankful, she baked him a cake to take to someone else in need.





“I noticed that a number of my students *weren’t wearing the proper gear* in December and January. I had students who were coming to school with marks on their faces and hands *due to frostbite.*”

— COLLEEN, IGLOOLIK TEACHER



For a community already struggling with poverty, food insecurity and intergenerational trauma, the families of Igloolik, Nunavut, were hard hit by COVID-19. It left them even more isolated than they were before.

During the pandemic, Colleen Chau began teaching at an elementary school in Igloolik, where she noticed students coming to school underdressed for the brutal winter weather. Some of the children were even showing signs of frostbite. Concerned, she reached out to The Salvation Army, and we set a plan in motion.

Knowing the generosity of the Weston Family Foundation and their continued commitment to The Salvation Army, including a \$2.5-million donation at the beginning of the pandemic, we reached out to Joe Fresh of Loblaw Companies Limited for help.

To our delight, they agreed to help not just her class, but all three schools in Igloolik. Several pallets of warm winter clothing were airlifted in and volunteers set up a massive market, filling it with warm clothes, music and snacks.

Families were able to choose from racks of sweaters and pants, towering piles of coats and rows of boots. The market was full of smiling faces and the excited chatter of children showing off new outfits to their friends. "I think it was a really exciting time for them," says Colleen, "to go shopping and be able to have these options, be able to pick something ... as a kid."

The Salvation Army is constantly in search of ways to reach farther and wider. Being able to help these remote families was a big moment for us.



“They’re excited to be outside playing, and they have jackets that are warm and boots that fit them. *The kids really are delighted* by the clothing that they received.”

— COLLEEN, IGLOOLIK TEACHER

“How would I feel *if this was my own child*, and they weren’t able to have lunch or access that nutrition in the middle of the day *because of COVID-19?*”

— ERIN, VICE-PRINCIPAL,  
THOMSON COMMUNITY SCHOOL



One of the first responses to the COVID-19 pandemic was the closure of schools. Across the country, children moved their learning online.

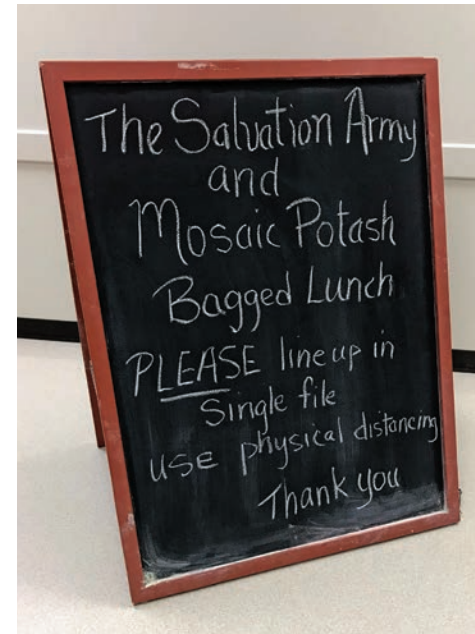
For Erin Geddes, vice-principal at Thomson Community School in Regina, the school closure came with worry about her students' well-being. Her main concern was their nutrition.

Before the pandemic, 70-90 of her 200 students relied on the Salvation Army bagged-lunch program to ensure they were getting a midday meal. Without that program, those students would go hungry.

When Erin reached out to The Salvation Army for help, the bagged-lunch program was turned into a daily midday food truck in the school parking lot. Anyone could come by and pick up lunch, even non-students.

As the program progressed, it grew from one location to four across the city, serving 800 students and families every weekday. It then expanded into sending home weekend food bags.

We understand that children cannot learn without first having their basic needs met, which was a concern for Erin. "I don't think that we would be able to reach students educationally without having support nutritionally from The Salvation Army."



*"You treated them like they were your own kids. I wanted to share some good fortune with them, because the better they are now, the better they'll be in the future."*

— FRED, SALVATION ARMY VOLUNTEER



Before the pandemic, The Salvation Army ran the Hope Café in Saint John, New Brunswick, a daily drop-in breakfast service for anyone who needed it. This was used as an opportunity to do wellness checks, help people get into affordable housing and provide social interaction.

Then, COVID-19 hit, and the café had to close. The community members who relied on it still needed help, so we adapted to meet their needs.

Thanks to a very generous donation from the Rogers family, a large passenger van was purchased and put into service as a multi-functional mobile unit.

The van is used to deliver groceries, emergency items and beds, and serve food, hot chocolate and coffee in the

downtown area of Saint John. In addition, workers provide warm clothing in the winter, transport seniors and those with disabilities to medical appointments, and even bring iPads with Wi-Fi to community members who otherwise cannot access online resources.

The most important thing for The Salvation Army in Saint John is to make sure community members are all right. "It's not just about the food," says Major Tracy Goyak, corps officer at Saint John Hope Community Church, "it's about their mental health."

We are so grateful for the financial assistance of the Rogers family in purchasing this mobile unit. It has made taking care of the community far easier—we can help more people and bring more happiness to everyone who needs it.

*“At the end of the day, if we can say that we played a positive role in an outcome in someone’s life, then we consider that to be a very good day.”*

— MAJOR TRACY, CORPS OFFICER, SAINT JOHN HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH



For Montreal volunteer David, COVID-19 was a wake-up call. Looking around, he realized that people in his own community needed help. He decided this was his opportunity to step up and be of service at a local level. So, he called The Salvation Army.

As it turned out, the local chapter was desperate for more volunteers. The pandemic had exacerbated the needs in the community, and more people were necessary to fulfill the added demand. David signed up immediately.

He began by distributing food at the Booth Centre for people who face homelessness, addiction or mental-health issues.

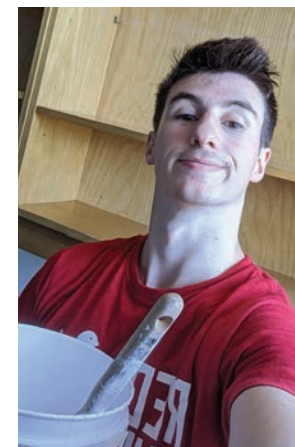
He then started painting residents’ rooms, participated in the Christmas campaign and helped manage food distribution at the warehouse where they sort donations.

For David, volunteering is incredibly powerful. It made him feel useful, and “one task led to another, that led to an improved life.” He is moved by seeing the direct impact his work can have on the lives of others. David believes that by volunteering, “you will become someone better, more empathetic, and you’ll get skills that you’ll be able to use then in your personal life and that can potentially improve [the lives of] others.”



*“Feeling useful by volunteering is one of the best things ever. It’s where you can see the most direct impact of your specific actions towards something that has an impact on your community.”*

— DAVID, SALVATION ARMY VOLUNTEER





Ontario's South Muskoka has a reputation for being an area for the wealthy, but that isn't the case for everyone. The region has many service industry and seasonal workers, as well as people who are on disability and cannot work. These community members rely on The Salvation Army South Muskoka Ministries, which serves the communities of Bracebridge and Gravenhurst and its food banks, to meet their needs when money is tight.

When COVID-19 hit, operating the food banks became even more difficult, as these community members were hit the hardest by the restrictions.

For many years, South Muskoka Ministries was equipped with only large, old chest freezers to store frozen food. These were unreliable and did not offer nearly enough storage to fit the needs of the community.

Thanks to a generous donation from Agriculture Canada, the Army was able to

purchase several large commercial, stand-up freezers—two for each location.

Along with more storage space came donations of frozen protein, which is an incredible commodity for food banks. We received whole chickens, chicken breasts, a huge shipment of frozen salmon, as well as fresh local produce, including lettuce, onions and strawberries, which also supported Ontario farmers.

Giving people high-quality food is such an incredible feeling. Captain Kam Robinson, community ministries officer for South Muskoka Ministries, says, "It's exciting to watch their happiness, and that makes their day, it really does, that they're able to eat something like that."

This variety of fresh, nutritious food makes such a huge difference. It takes clients from merely surviving, to thriving.



*"I think we're not just handing someone food and meeting their hunger need; we are forming relationships, creating that love and that care for each other."*

— CAPTAIN KAM, COMMUNITY MINISTRIES OFFICER, SOUTH MUSKOKA MINISTRIES

Thank you to our very own *Army of Givers* for stepping up during the pandemic. You're the reason we're able to *do what we do*.



Weston Family Foundation



Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

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JOE FRESH

Baffinland

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SALVATION ARMY'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19 OR TO DONATE, VISIT [SALVATIONARMY.CA/COVID](https://salvationarmy.ca/covid) OR CALL 1-800-SAL-ARMY.



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