

Welcome to Bassline

Each of our days are made up of countless decisions, some big, some small. Some clearly significant, few are inconsequential. We use hundreds, thousands, maybe even millions of points of data to make these decisions – whether consciously or not.

What if we think of our lives as a musical, and the life we live, the melody? We play out this tune, seeking to be in harmony with the notes played around us. But as we move through different spaces, as the people around us play out their own tunes, it can be hard to find our own song, to make music that is truly in tune with who we're created to be.

Rob Bell has said, 'Over time when you purposefully try to live the way of Jesus, you start noticing something deeper going on. You begin realising the reason this is the best way to live is that it is rooted in profound truths about how the world is. You find yourself living more and more in tune with ultimate reality. You are more and more in sync with how the universe is at its deepest levels.'¹

What if we helped our young people tune into that ultimate reality? To find a point of resonance; to lock in to the bass line that provides the constant, pulsating, driving rhythm we can layer our melody on top of? Weaving the notes of our everyday with the deepest notes of God's truth.

Bassline, the Salvation Army's weekly discipleship material for young people will seek to do just that. Over the course of a three-year curriculum, young people will be given the opportunity to engage with the whole Bible providing the theological bass notes for their faith. Informed by the doctrines of The Salvation Army, the theological bass note will carry the richness of our ecclesiology and by layering the five Mission Priorities through means young people journeying through this material not only understand what and why we believe but how we live that out as Salvationists.

While the cacophony of sound will continue to play out in an everyday, Bassline offers that deep and full foundation, resonating beyond the noise, allowing young people to tune in, lock in and join in with their melody, part of God's beautiful symphony.

How does it work?

Bassline is available to view and use directly online or can be downloaded to print if you prefer to work from paper copies. Sessions will be uploaded in themed blocks – usually 4-6 weeks long with major Christian themes such as Easter and Advent covered as long as key moments in The Salvation Army's calendar like Covenant Sunday.

Each session is broken into five sections:

¹ Bell, Rob (2005), *Velvet Elvis: Repainting the Christian faith*. Zondervan, p4



Beat – the main accent or rhythmic unit in music or poetry

The 'Beat' section sets the tempo and rhythm for the session. It enables the group to check in with each other through an introductory activity linked to the session theme.



Amplify – increase the volume (sound) or enlarge upon or add detail to (a story or statement).

In 'Amplify' the young people will focus on the key scripture for the session and explore its Biblical meaning and context. They will turn up the volume on the themes raised by God's word and hone in on the detail of the text.



Sound Check – a test of sound equipment before a musical performance or recording to check that the desired sound is being produced.

After amplifying the message of the key scripture, the young people will take a sound check and consider how to apply the session's theme to their day-to-day living. Which elements of their faith do they need to check in with before living out the message of the session in harmony with God's purpose for their lives?



Selah – a Biblical musical term that meant to 'pause' or 'contemplate' – similar to the current rest notation used in a musical score.

In the 'Selah' section there will be a moment to pause and contemplate the themes covered throughout the session and how they interconnect with previous learning. The young people will also identify the foundational bassline added to their faith during the session and take a moment for prayer and reflection.



Coda – the concluding passage of a piece or movement.

In a piece of music, the coda brings the different aspects of the melody, harmonies and bassline to a conclusion. It pulls together the different themes and often, but not always, brings resolution to a piece of music. The coda section provides the opportunity for the group to do this at the conclusion of each session – taking a moment to review what you've learned and share it with the rest of the group.

As well as these five main sections, throughout the sessions you'll also find additional, optional activities called a 'bridge.'



Bridge – a section of a song that contrasts with the rest of the song and prepares the listener for the return of the song's main themes.

The 'Bridge' provides additional, optional material that gives the group the opportunity to develop and explore a theme in more depth. Each section will contain its own 'Bridge' to take the group in a new direction if they want to consider another aspect of the theme.



Helpful tips

The material is ready to use and contains everything you need to run a session. It's always worth checking through a couple of days in advance to make sure you understand the flow of a session and have identified the questions and activities that will work best for you. There are supporting resources that you'll also need to be prepared for. You should look out for –

- Handouts/additional pages
These will be available for you to download and print or look at digitally.
- Videos/music
There will be links to videos and music that will help expand on the teaching or create opportunity for moments of worship or even fun. Again these will be available for you to access and share on your own device or for young people to have on their own. You'll need to think through what works best for your group and the tech available to you.

Beyond those practical things, your familiarity with the material will also help build your confidence with it. While these outlines have been created with a great deal of planning and thought, the knowledge you have of your group is the key ingredient to making these work. The reality is that the main aim of these times together as small group is *not* to get through this material! It's to create a space for the young people to explore the theme of the day as it relates to their everyday lives. Be encouraged to be led by your young people. Find out what resonated, what challenged, what rings true and what doesn't make sense. Don't be afraid of inviting the possibility of questions you don't know the answer to. No one knows everything and sometimes there simply aren't answers! Beyond the specific questions outlined in each session, here are some questions and phrases that could serve you well...

- What do you think?
- Tell me more!
- That's a great question!
- Shall we all have a think about that and come back to it later/next time?
- I don't know
- Does anybody else have any thoughts about that?

And finally, but maybe most importantly, don't be afraid of the times when no one (even you) says anything at all. If you can help your group become comfortable with silence, you might find some gold in those moments!

If you have any questions or feedback about the material, feel free to drop us an email at childrenyouth@salvationarmy.org.uk.