**Congregational Prayers for Toddler Groups**

Father God,

We thank you for all those who come into contact with our toddler groups: parents, grandparents, children, carers, volunteers and so many more. You know each and every one of them by name and you love them each with an unconditional love.

Help those of us who run such groups to also show an unconditional love, welcoming people into our buildings and activities. May your light shine through us, so that our communities can see we do what we do because we love you.

We thank you for the precious toddlers who inspire us with their endless wonder and bring us joy with their quirky little ways.

Fill our groups with light and love and help us to build your Kingdom. Amen.

**Captain Naomi Kelly, Middlesbrough Citadel**

Lord God,

We thank you for all those who help run toddler groups within The Salvation Army throughout the UK. We thank you for their dedication and commitment to serving you in this way. May they take the opportunities presented to them to share the good news of God’s love, grace and mercy to those who attend these groups. Amen.

**Major Ann Stewart, Divisional Intergenerational Officer, North Scotland**

Lord Jesus,

Use those who are involved in the ministry of parent-and-toddler groups, in whatever role they may play – welcoming families through the door, serving drinks or sharing stories of you with families who attend. May everyone see your love shared with them in these very practical ways, that they may want to know more about you.

Amen.

**Shelley Gallagher, Divisional Intergenerational Worker, South East Division**

Dear Lord,

We thank you for families. We thank you that from the very youngest to the very oldest, we are all welcome in the Kingdom of God.Lord, we thank you for the privilege of being able to spend time getting to know people, to build relationships with families who come into our various programmes, including those who come into our parent-and-toddler groups. Lord, just now we ask that all those attending these groups will know that our parent-and-toddler groups

are more than just an opportunity to meet with other parents, but that they are also a missional opportunity – a time when people see God at work, a place where people can feel they belong and can feel valued.

Lord, we thank you for everyone who volunteers within these groups, who willingly give up their time to build relationships with families. We thank you for providing the resources we need to make these groups a possibility.

Lord, we ask now that you will continue to work through parent-and-toddler groups, that people will come to see you through the ministry of the volunteers, that people’s lives will be changed through this vital ministry. Amen.

**Captain Clare Davis, Leigh-on-Sea Corps and Divisional Children’s Officer, South East Division**

Heavenly Father,

We thank you for the comfort and compassion you show to all your children.

We bring to you all those who may be new to parenthood, those struggling with the responsibility this new role brings, or with loneliness. We also pray for those who may be new to the area or country and in need of a safe and welcoming environment.

We ask that our toddler groups will provide that safe place where they find love, acceptance, support, and friendships that last.

In the name of your Son Jesus, we pray. Amen.

**Lieutenant Sharon Stevens, Londonderry Corps**

Creator God,

We thank you that we are all created in your image and are loved by you.

May this truth be lived out in our toddler groups as we seek to show and tell of your love.

May our toddler groups be places of belonging and safety where families can come as they are.

We thank you for volunteers and leaders who invest time and energy in this ministry. Give them a passion to see lives changed by the love of God.

As we meet each week – in the ordinary, in the chaos, in the messiness, in the joys, in the tears – we know you are ‘God with us’. Amen.

**Captain Rachel Dunham, Plymouth Exeter Hall Whitleigh Corps.**

Lord Jesus,

We thank you for the ministry of our toddler group.

Each week, as adults and children attend, may they feel part of your family, as our leaders welcome them into this church.

May our toddler group be a safe place where everyone can express themselves and their own personalities. May it be a place that shares one another’s joys and sorrows. May it be an environment that gives love and support in practical ways as its leaders reach out and show the love that you give to all people.

We thank you that you come alongside each individual person, knowing their needs, their vulnerability, their pressures and their worries. You see each person even when they try and hide from you, and we thank you that you notice us and are never too busy to spend time with us.

In the busyness of life and the things that crowd our lives, may our church see all people as you do and come alongside them, giving them time and opportunity to share what life is like for them.

As adults and children attend our toddler group, may they sense your love and your acceptance from the whole of this church, and we ask you to help and equip its leaders each week as they take the time to listen, to talk and to guide them nearer to you.

We thank you, Lord Jesus, that you came to seek and to save the lost. Please give us that desire to follow in your footsteps as we welcome one and welcome all.

In your precious name we pray,

Amen.

**Major Claire Hill, Winton**

Dear Lord,

We are so thankful that children are important to you. We learn from your word how you welcomed them and blessed them.

Today we pray for our parent-and-toddler groups. We are thankful for each child who attends, and we pray that as they come, as they learn about you, they will know how much you love them.

We pray too for our leaders who look after these groups week by week. As you have blessed us with the joy and care of children, may our hearts be open to the needs of the families who attend our groups. Help us to show your love to all. Amen.

**Major Sally McBride, Belfast North Corps**

Lord Jesus,

We thank you that you set us the example of welcoming children and valuing them for your Kingdom.

We thank you for all the babies, toddlers, parents, grandparents and carers whom we have the privilege of welcoming each week to our toddler groups.

Thank you for the opportunities we have of showing and sharing your love, of being a safe space for parents to come and meet, and where our toddlers can grow and flourish.

Guide us in the conversations we have with our toddler families. Help us to be bold but sensitive, in speaking of our faith and the difference you make to our lives.

May we constantly look for ways of being your light and a beacon of welcome and acceptance.

We praise you for this valuable ministry and ask your blessing upon every toddler family that we are able to support.

We make our pray in the powerful name of Jesus. Amen.

**Major Sharen Furlong, Enfield/North London DHQ**