

Salvation Army

Soon after beginning his ministerial career in England in 1852, William Booth abandoned the concept of the traditional church pulpit in favor of taking the gospel of Jesus Christ directly to the people. Walking the streets of London, he preached to the poor, the homeless, the hungry, and the destitute. When fellow clergymen disagreed with Booth's unconventional approach, he and his wife Catherine withdrew from the church to train evangelists throughout England. The couple returned to the East End of London in 1865, where many followers joined their fight for the souls of lost men and women. Within 10 years, their organization, operating under the name "The Christian Mission," had over 1,000 volunteers and evangelists. Thieves, prostitutes, gamblers, and drunkards were among their first converts to Christianity. And soon, those converts were also preaching and singing in the streets as living testimonies to the power of God. When Booth read a printer's proof of the 1878 "Christian Mission" annual report, he noticed the statement "The Christian Mission is a volunteer army." Crossing out the words "volunteer army," he penned in "Salvation Army." From those words came the basis of the foundation deed of The Salvation Army. From that point onward, converts became soldiers of Christ and were known then, as now, as Salvationists. They launched an offensive throughout the British Isles that, in spite of violence and persecution, converted 250,000 Christians between 1881 and 1885. Their message spread rapidly, gaining a foothold in America and soon after Canada, Australia, France, Switzerland, India, South Africa, Iceland, and Germany.

The Salvation Army in Texas was started by an Italian Naval Captain named Adam Janelli. Janelli met The Salvation Army while on a trip to Calcutta, India. There he attended one of the meetings and was so touched by the message that he became one of the most unassuming Salvation Army personalities Texas and the United States have ever known.

Today, The Salvation Army is active in virtually every corner of the world and serves in over 126 countries, offering the message of God's healing and hope to all those in need.