

**The Salvation Army
Positional Statement
SABBATH OBSERVANCE**

STATEMENT OF POSITION

The Salvation Army values and proclaims the scriptural teaching that God, our Creator, established a rhythm of life for our benefit. This is reflected in the Creation narrative (Genesis 2:2-3), the fourth commandment (Exodus 20:8-11, Deuteronomy 5:12-15) and in the teachings of Jesus regarding a balanced approach to life. Therefore, regardless of the day of the week on which it is observed, the principle of Sabbath observance provides that opportunity to rest, to give thanks and to worship.

The Salvation Army believes that individuals have the responsibility and privilege to live according to this scriptural framework. Furthermore, The Salvation Army holds that those whose religious beliefs will not permit them to work at certain times should be protected against unreasonable discrimination in recruitment, deployment or advancement of staff. In its recognition of Sunday as the Sabbath, The Salvation Army aligns itself with the custom of the Early Christian Church, which chose that day on which to commemorate and celebrate Christ's resurrection.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Human beings require adequate rest if they are to thrive in their work, meet their obligations and enjoy all that God has provided. Conversely, the absence of a day of rest denies the human need for physical rest and spiritual renewal. In the midst of increasing commercialism and an accelerating pace of life, the observance of a Sabbath, whether on Sunday or otherwise, reinforces the natural rhythm of rest and activity that the Bible endorses for the benefit of God's entire creation.

FOUNDATIONS FOR THE POSITION OF THE SALVATION ARMY

The Sabbath was ordained by God at creation and set aside as a holy day (Genesis 2:2-3; Exodus 20:8-11; Leviticus 23:3; Nehemiah 13:15-22; Psalm 92). Its observance became the fourth commandment, which was to be observed from generation to generation (Hebrews 4:9-11).

In the Old Testament, trade on the Sabbath was forbidden (Nehemiah 10:31; 13:15-22) because it diminished the spiritual importance of the day of the Lord. The Sabbath was considered a joyful opportunity to 'delight in the Lord' (Isaiah 58:13-14) and not simply another opportunity to pursue our own interests.



