



THE SALVATION ARMY UNITED KINGDOM TERRITORY  
WITH THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

**POSITIONAL STATEMENT**

**ETHNIC AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY**

In its understanding of the source of diversity, The Salvation Army affirms Christian belief and teaching that God is Trinity – three persons in one Godhead. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are distinct and different but not divided or separate. Within the mutual, loving relationship of the Trinity, diversity is seen at its richest and unity is expressed at its fullest.<sup>1</sup>

All human beings are created by God in his own image, uniquely reflecting his nature and character.<sup>2</sup> His creative intention is that members of the human family are fulfilled in community, living in relationship with him and with each other. God's infinite creativity is evident in the glorious diversity, variety and goodness of everything he has made.<sup>3</sup> God loves and values every person, investing each one equally with dignity and worth.<sup>4</sup> He commands us to love and value each other.<sup>5</sup>

However, humanity has fallen very far from God's intention. Sin has resulted in disharmony throughout the whole created order, causing inner conflict, separation from God and divisions and hostility between people.

God's grace is freely offered through Jesus.<sup>6</sup> At the heart of the Christian gospel is reconciliation so that broken relationships with God and each another can be restored. A ministry of reconciliation has also been entrusted to the Christian Church, the Body of Christ.<sup>7</sup> The Church should be an inclusive community where it is evident that all belong to God and all belong to each other.<sup>8</sup> Together Christians look forward to the fulfilment of God's purpose when all of creation is united in Christ.<sup>9</sup>

In response to the gospel, The Salvation Army is committed to upholding and respecting the dignity of each person. We seek to empower each person to celebrate their uniqueness in Christ. In our worship, our community work and our social service we are challenged to welcome, embrace and discover innovative ways to develop and draw upon the rich variety of experience and gifts which ethnic and cultural diversity brings to the body of Christ. We recognise that when this happens in practice, our worshipping community is enriched, our community and social endeavour is strengthened and the values of the Kingdom of God are demonstrated.

The Salvation Army opposes any attitude or discriminatory practice which denies the God-given value of any person. We strive to uphold justice for every person and will take positive action to combat stereotyping, prejudice, marginalisation, unjust discrimination, racism, exploitation and oppression.

The Salvation Army has in place an Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Policy and Procedure.<sup>10</sup> This is designed to provide a framework for monitoring the delivery of our services to ensure that these are consistently relevant and accessible to the diverse needs of the people we are seeking to serve or whom we employ.

## **Footnotes (Bible Quotations from Today's New International Version 2005)**

<sup>1</sup> (Jesus said) 'The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you' (John 14:26).

<sup>2</sup> 'Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created human beings in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them' (Genesis 1:26-27).

<sup>3</sup> 'God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning – the sixth day' (Genesis 1:31).

<sup>4</sup> 'Then Peter began to speak: "I now realise how true it is that God does not show favouritism but accepts those from every nation who fear him and do what is right" ' (Acts 10:34-35).

<sup>5</sup> 'He (Jesus) answered, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbour as yourself' (Luke 10:27).

<sup>6</sup> 'For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus' (Romans 3: 23-24).

<sup>7</sup> All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18).

<sup>8</sup> 'There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus' (Galatians 3:28).

'In Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others' (Romans 12:5).

<sup>9</sup> 'He made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfilment – to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ' (Ephesians 1:9-10).

<sup>10</sup> The Salvation Army United Kingdom Territory (UKT) Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Policy and Procedure (23 June 2009).

**APPROVED FEBRUARY 2015**