



# Devotional Periods

## Training Material

### Introduction

The Boys' Brigade is a Christian organisation and it requires that its leaders are at the very least sympathetic to the Christian ethos that undergirds its work. Therefore, the opportunity of worship together in devotional periods by its leaders-in-training with those providing their training is regarded as being very important. This not only sets the time which they will spend together properly into the context of this method for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom, but also provides a time for reflection and for bonding the group together in common purpose. It should also challenge the potential leader about their motivation for undertaking this work with its huge privilege of influencing young people at a vital stage in their development.

These periods should not be seen as training in leading worship or in sharing faith. This should happen elsewhere, but it is inevitable that those leading devotional periods will be providing a model for such activities and they will need to be well prepared. The material provided here is intended as a guide and a resource. Experienced worship leaders will have access to their own material and will no doubt use this constructively.

### Devotional Periods

The structure of YLT courses varies widely according to circumstances and numbers of students, ranging from the tradition two residential weekends to a series of evening meetings, sometimes on a one-to-one basis. Devotional periods will therefore need to be structured to fit in appropriately. In the latter case, a time of prayer, a Bible reading and a discussion possibly based on one of the address subjects below would be appropriate at the start of each evening. In the former case, a worship period, possibly including singing hymns or worship songs, Bible reading, prayers and an "address" would be appropriate at the beginning and end of the weekend, with evening prayers to close the first day and a short morning worship session to start the second day.

Whatever the structure of the course, it is advised that the first devotional period should be based on the theme of *How did you get here?* and the final period at the end of the course should include the challenge *Why are you here?*

### Using the Material

As noted, the material provided here is intended as a guide and a resource to be used and supplemented as the worship leader feels appropriate. Worship leaders should be aware that students are liable to be at very different stages in their faith journeys and may come from widely different theological standpoints. The devotions should therefore be constructed to be affirming of each individual in the work of the Brigade as far as possible.

Those leading devotional periods are encouraged to use the sample prayers as a basis together with with prayer topics appropriate to the situation in which the training is taking place and the events of the world at the time. Where appropriate students should be encouraged to offer their own prayers. Times of silence for reflection or inward prayer can be very valuable.

Bible readings should be taken from an accessible translation, such as the New Revised Standard Version, New International Version, New Century Version or Good News Bible. Note that this list is not meant to be exclusive of other versions!

The addresses touch on aspects of leadership using examples from the Bible and elsewhere. Although they can be read verbatim, it is best if the leader restructures them with their own words, adding from their own knowledge and experience so that they are rooted in the leader's own faith journey. Again, experienced worship leaders will be able come up with other examples.

Worship songs should only be used where someone has suitable verbal or instrumental skills to provide a good, strong lead.

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**Prayers**

**(A) Prayers of Approach**

Creator God,  
We live in a wonderful creation  
fashioned by you according to your will.  
We have been given the great privilege  
of being able to enjoy this world  
and the great responsibility  
of looking after it.  
It's a wonderful world of  
sights, sounds, smells, flavours and touch.  
Sights which delight the eye;  
sounds which stimulate our emotions;  
smells which cause expectations;  
flavours which make us eager for more;  
and touches which comfort and heal.  
As we come before you  
create in us a sense of wonder;  
enhance our sense of being at one with you  
and with your work in this world.  
*Amen*

Loving God,  
You have made all things good.  
You sent your Son Jesus to be a beacon in our lives,  
to draw us nearer to you  
and to show us how to live your way  
in a world full of distractions.  
So we come to worship you  
through this same Jesus  
who lived as a Boy and grew into manhood  
to be our example and friend.  
*Amen*

Wonderful God,  
Leader, Captain, Shining Star  
instil in us your love for humanity,  
created in your image,  
whom you call us to serve  
for your glory.  
You call us to work in different ways,  
ways for which you have equipped us  
through your bountiful love.  
May we always serve you in everything we do.  
May whatever sense of satisfaction we feel  
be the satisfaction of knowing that we have fulfilled your calling

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by loving and caring  
and by showing you in our lives.  
So may this time of worship further equip us for your work with young people.  
*Amen*

God of life,  
To come before you is a privilege.  
To know that you listen to us is a privilege.  
To know that you respond to our prayers is a privilege.  
May our response to that privilege be worthy of you in this time of worship and throughout our lives.  
*Amen*

**(B) Prayers for the World, Others and Ourselves**

God of life,  
We pray for young people everywhere.  
We hear so much about young people  
caught up in the horrors of war  
or victims of violence and terror.  
Our hearts go out to them,  
but we struggle to understand what we can do to help.  
In our country, here in ....., we know that young people also lead lives of deprivation. Some are deprived of  
money, but more are deprived of love.  
We know that we could and should respond to their situation, but sometimes it is difficult to know how what  
we can do.  
Part of our response is that we have chosen to work in this great organisation of The Boys' Brigade. Help us to  
ensure that we are open to all, not just the nice kids, those easy to work with, but to all those who need to  
know you.  
Strengthen us and equip us for this service  
in your name.  
*Amen*

Caring God,  
We pray for children.  
In particular, those children who are sick, at home or in hospital and especially those whose lives are cut short.  
We pray for those who look after them, especially those who provide care in Hospices so that their lives may  
be lived to the full.  
May your healing touch be on your children in whatever way they need.  
We pray for parents, brothers and sisters in such situations that they may be given the courage and strength  
that they need.  
We pray for children in good health that they may be able to live their lives to the full and that they may be ever  
thankful for the gifts that they have been given.  
*Amen*

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Providing God,

We thank you for The Boys' Brigade and for the opportunity that you give us to serve you in it.

We thank you for all its members and pray that all will find fulfilment in their individual Companies.

We thank you for those who work in Companies and in the structures of the organisation and pray that they may be given wisdom and courage as they provide leadership.

We thank you for full-time workers at National, Regional and local level that they have devoted their lives to this work and pray that their work may prosper, fuelled by their zeal for you.

So may we too be fired by the driving of your Spirit.

*Amen*

Loving God,

We pray for the situations from which we have come.

We pray for our families, that they may be supportive of us as we are called to spend time in your service with The Boys' Brigade. Help us to balance their needs with the calls that will be made on our time.

We pray for our Churches, that the Gospel might be proclaimed, not just from the pulpit, but in all its work, not least within and through our Boys' Brigade Companies. May we reach out to young people for whom church is something of which they know little or nothing, or which they perhaps regard with hostility.

We pray for the young people in our care, that they may experience something of the warmth and caring of a Christian life, which is powered by the message of the Gospel and by love for you. Also we pray that they will simply have a jolly good time enjoying themselves in a safe and loving environment and that they will be valued for what they are.

We pray for ourselves, that our motivation for this work stems from love for you and not from any sense of glory for ourselves; that we will be given the strength, courage and skills necessary to fulfil this task you have set before us.

We thank you for the encouragement we have been given by others in coming to this work and for the support we have received and will receive from those who have chosen to walk this path with you through their lives.

*Amen.*

### **The Boys' Brigade Prayer**

Bless, O God, The Boys' Brigade, and give to it greater power to advance Your kingdom throughout the world. Grant in Your mercy, that every member, past and present, may prove steadfast in his fight against evil, and true in his allegiance to You.

Help us in times of temptation; make us strong where we are weak; give us courage in difficulty, faithfulness in duty, loyalty in friendship; and finally, by Your mercy, bring us into Your everlasting kingdom.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

*Amen.*

### **Prayer for The Boys' Brigade**

We thank you, our Father, for The Boys' Brigade:

For the vision and example of our founder,

For those who have lived their lives and given their service to this cause,

For those who now give leadership to us,

And for every member of this movement.

We ask you, our Father, for The Boys' Brigade:

To guard and guide us in the way we go,

To bless us in the work we do and the service we give,

To help us to live as you would have us do,

And to use us for the building of your Kingdom.

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Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

### Addresses

#### 1. How did you get here?

*Bible passage: Psalm 121*

How did you get here? I don't mean did you come by car, bus, bicycle, foot or whatever. What I mean is, how come you are sitting here? What is it that pulled you in out of the *sun/rain/wind*, away from the football, television, shopping or whatever to sit here this *morning/afternoon/evening*?

Is it just by happenstance, or is it rather more purposeful than that? And how did you find out about us?

Some of you may have been members for some time - in the BB as a Boy or a Girl; some of you will have been helpers for some time, but some of you will be fairly new.

I guess for many of you, you will have made the journey here because of one particular person. Perhaps it's that leader who inspired you as a Boy, who had something about him or her that made you say "I want to be like that"; maybe you feel you want to give something back for what you got out of your time in BB, or maybe another Christian youth organisation. Perhaps as a parent of a member, you were asked if you could just help out with football, first aid, stories, games, cooking or whatever and then found yourself drawn in. Perhaps your Church appealed for help in the notices of a Sunday morning. Or there may be another reason entirely.

Whatever the reason you are here may be, in most cases, one person will probably have said something like "You should become a leader". Then you found out you needed to do some training, so here you are.

You are probably a bit apprehensive, wondering if you have made the right decision, wondering if you will be up to it. If you were inspired by a leader, perhaps you are wondering if you could possibly live up to that inspiration and can really be like them. Perhaps you feel that your skills are not good enough. Perhaps you are a bit worried about controlling a group of lively young Boys or Girls.

The psalmist in some ways must have felt like that. Worried, wondering where he was going to find the strength to go on. In some Bibles this psalm is called "A song of ascents" – a psalm to be sung or chanted on a journey through the wild hill country, heading on a pilgrimage to the Temple in Jerusalem. But the psalmist realised that God would guard him as he came and went "now and for evermore". If he trusted in God, he would be protected – not by some magic means, but by being given the strength and courage to face up to the dangers of the journey. So this is the message he seeks to pass on through the medium of poetry.

In this journey ahead of you, you too will be given the tools and encouragement you need to carry out this rewarding work. It will make demands of you. There will be times when you get depressed when things don't work out as you had intended, when the kids just will not sit still for two minutes.

This training course will give you some of the skills you need in these situations. But trusting in God to help you will give you more than just the skills – it will give you the reason for doing the work. And then you will reap the rich rewards when everything just comes together.

You did not just come here. You were called here. God wants you here. You are needed here.

#### 2. Why are you here?

*Bible passage: Matthew 28: 16-20*

The Object of The Boys' Brigade begins "The advancement of Christ's Kingdom amongst Boys" and the Constitution states that "The Boys' Brigade is a Christian uniformed youth organisation. The evolution of The Brigade over the years has resulted in many successes in delivering Christian children's and youth work into the community as well as introducing many young people to faith and the life of the church. The Brigade is committed to Christian outreach work within our communities."

You are nearing the end of your basic Youth Leadership Training, although there will be other training opportunities for you if you stick with it. However, this training does not make you a Leader (with a capital "L"). Finishing this course is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for you to be appointed as an Officer in your

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Company, but the final decision to nominate you for appointment lies with your Church, assuming of course you decide you want to be appointed.

Before you take this step, I want you to examine your own motives. At their Ordination, Christian Ministers in most denominations will have to publicly answer a question along the lines of “Are zeal for the glory of God, love for the Lord Jesus Christ, obedience to the Holy Spirit and a desire for the salvation of the world [your] chief motives in ministry?” (The actual words vary from denomination to denomination, but the sentiment will be the same). That’s a pretty big challenge!

A Leader or Officer in BB offers a ministry to the members of their Company. Many Boys and Girls in your Company will have no contact with the Church, except through you. Many will not see what it means to live a Christian life, except through you. Many will not hear the story of Jesus, except from you. Many will not experience disinterested love, except from you. Many will only see Jesus in you. If the organisation is to reach out into our communities in a Christian way, the outreach needs to be spearheaded by people of Christian character, and that means you.

Are you prepared to fill this role?

To be a leader in BB does not mean that you have to be a theologian, or to be a brilliant orator, able to produce a well-turned sermon at the drop of a hat. It does mean that you should live your life in a way of which you will not be ashamed - that you will try to live as Jesus would want you to. It means that you should be faithful in worship, both publicly and in your private life. It means that when a Boy or Girl asks you about your faith, you should be prepared to talk to them about it. Children often have a deep understanding of such things.

To be a leader in BB does not mean that you should be a goody-goody. Jesus expects you to be a normal human being, enjoying life to the full, but living your life in a fulfilling and honourable way, trying your best to live up to the high ideal that is the Christian life.

The Bible passage is often known as the Great Commission, a sort of mission statement that Jesus gave to his followers after his resurrection. BB follows that commission – it motivated our Founder, William Alexander Smith many years ago when he started this great work among Boys, and it still motivates our Officers today. If you are only here to experience some sort of authority or power over children, you will not find what you seek here. If you are here to serve children in the name of Christ, you will without doubt experience rich rewards.

May God bless you in this work for his kingdom.

### 3. Moses

*Bible passage: Exodus 3: 1-6 and 10-15*

It is often the case that when we consider the stories of great leaders, especially those whose stories are told in the Bible, we find that they became leaders almost by accident. Somehow or other, they seem to have been just in the right place at the right time (or should that be in the wrong place at the wrong time?) and there is God, cajoling them into doing something.

This certainly seems to have been the case with Moses.

When we hear that name Moses, those of us who were brought up in Sunday School probably immediately think of the little baby floating in a basket on the River Nile (if you don’t know the story, it is in Exodus Chapter 2. You may have heard the story start as “Pharaoh’s lovely daughter was bathing in the Nile/ found the infant Moses wearing nothing but a smile./ Took him home to Daddy, said she’d found him on the shore./ Pharaoh simply smiled and said he’d heard that one before.” ). Maybe, more seriously, we think of Moses up on top of Mount Sinai, alone with God as God writes the Ten Commandments on tablets of stone. Perhaps we remember his leading the children of Israel through the desert for forty years seeking the promised land.

Moses’ story is a wonderful one (that is it is literally full of wonders, like plagues of frogs, rivers of blood, food from the sky and so on) and it is the tale of a leader of men over many years.

Returning to the passage in Exodus 3, what do we find? There is certainly something of wonder there in a bush that burns without being burned up! But that’s not what concerns us today. Moses seems to have stumbled across this sight while simply minding his own business, out in the desert looking after his father-in-law’s sheep.



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Curiosity pricked, he trots over to look at this amazing sight. And then as Moses gazes at it, God speaks, saying to him “You are going to lead my people out of Egypt”.

Talk about a bolt from the blue! Here’s this poor lad without a care in the world and God tells him to go to Pharaoh and inform him that he is taking his slaves away from him. You can just imagine the double take – “who am I to do this?” And it probably was not very reassuring when God said that the proof that it would happen would be when it had happened (verse 12).

Moses, the reluctant hero, the reticent leader: “Who, me?” Yet his trust in God is sufficient for him to play along with it, despite the obvious dangers and the doubts he must have had.

It seems to be quite a common trait among really great leaders that they doubt their capacity for fulfilling the role of a leader until someone points out to them that they are indeed capable of doing it and encouraging them to do it. Their faith in themselves has to be reinforced from outside themselves.

One of the great reinforcers of faith is Jesus himself. Many leaders find that time spent in prayer and in exposing their doubts and worries to God strengthens them in their service and helps them to overcome their doubts and worries and helps them to act as leaders.

Possible discussion topic: identify other leaders throughout history who took the role reluctantly. What made them succumb to the call they received?

### 4. Gideon

*Bible passage: Judges 6:39 – 7:8a*

Gideon is a leader whose story has come down to us in the Old Testament, or Hebrew Bible. He appears to be closer to how we might picture a conventional leader than some other figures like Moses. Gideon is a warrior who lived around the 11<sup>th</sup> Century BC. He was a victor, leading the army of the Israelites against their enemies the Midianites, who came from the shores of the Gulf of Aquaba in what is now Saudi Arabia.

However, there are a number of rather less conventional aspects to Gideon’s story. Before looking at some of these, we should ask the question: what was the threat facing the Israelites at this time? Well, it was an entirely new form of warfare. A secret weapon wielded by the great enemy of the Israelites. And what was this weapon? Camels!

No one else seems to have realised that riding on camels meant that the Midianites could strike swiftly and then get away before the enemy could recover. This surprise tactic allowed them to sweep north up towards the land of Israel as far as Gaza.

Gideon, under the guidance of God, rallied his troops to face up to this formidable challenge. However, even he needed signs to be sure that God was on his side and to convince the troops that God was with them. The most striking sign that God sent is described in the story of the dry fleece on wet ground which is described in the Bible passage.

On God’s prompting, Gideon decided that, in order to achieve a signal victory that would be recognised as not having been too easy, he would pare his troops to a bare minimum. The story tells how he selected those who would fight with him. Later passages in the book of Judges describe the tactics that Gideon used to achieve the victory he sought.

Gideon is a skilful leader, not just in the tactics needed to defeat a more powerful enemy, but in being able to motivate his troops. He uses the various ruses to thin down their numbers whilst still convincing the remainder that this is not weakening them, but rather is strengthening them to make the victory more assured. Being selected to be one of the elite does wonders for the ego.

A good leader will not rush into things, but will carefully consider the best way to tackle the task in hand. The best way may not be the most obvious way, but on the face of it may even seem somewhat foolhardy or devious. It may be unconventional or even controversial, using methods that some might feel could not possibly work. In the modern parlance, such ideas may be “off the wall” involving “thinking out of the box”. But the leader will have considered all the options and be convinced that the signs are pointing the right way.

In the work of The Boys’ Brigade we do not fight physically, but seeking to find imaginative ways to catch the attention of our members so that we can get our ideas across is a useful tactic.



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Empowering young people to make real decisions about the way a Boys' Brigade Company works or even about the operation of the organisation at National level may seem to some to be foolish or counterproductive. But having faith in people is an important part of our leadership skill set. Jesus had faith in his unconventional group of followers. God has faith in us, and in our capabilities as leaders. Perhaps that is the most surprising "off the wall" thing around!

Possible discussion topic: do we know any other examples of unconventional leaders. If so, why were they respected?

### 5. Eli

*Bible passage: 1 Samuel 3: 1-10*

Eli was not a good leader. He was the chief priest of the Temple at Shiloh, about 20 miles north of Jerusalem. Shiloh was an important place in the 11<sup>th</sup> Century BC, for its Temple housed the Ark of the Covenant and God was supposed to live in the Ark. Soon, the Ark would be captured by the Philistines, an enemy tribe and removed from Israel. It was eventually returned and transferred to Jerusalem during the reign of King David. But that was in the future.

Eli was not a good leader for he was unable to control his sons who were also priests. They lived a life of debauchery and stole meat from the pilgrims, so that they brought shame on the elderly priest. Eli either could not, or would not, take any action to halt this wickedness and just seemed to be content let it all run on, out of control.

But Eli was still a leader of the children of Israel, for he was the chief priest at Shiloh and this hereditary office gave him status in the land.

The small boy Samuel was given by his parents Elkanah and Hannah into the service of Eli in the Temple, in grateful thanks to God for providing them with a son and heir late in life. For the Jews at this time, it was shameful for a woman not to have children, and her life had been made miserable by her rival Peninnah, another wife of Elkanah by whom he had fathered several sons and daughters.

It seems that Eli treated the boy well and he grew up in the service of God in the temple. The passage that we read recounts how God called to Samuel in the night, but it was not until the third time of calling that Eli realised what was happening and told Samuel to listen, for it was God who wanted to talk to Samuel.

Sometimes even poor leaders can recognise the right course of action to take. To his credit, Eli responded in the correct way. He did not seek to put Samuel down and tell him to go away and not bother him, hearing things in the night, or try to muscle in on Samuel's moment in the spotlight and hear what God had to say for himself. When Samuel later relayed what God had said about Eli and his family to the old priest, Eli accepted the message and did not rail against Samuel for delivering it. Eli realised that Samuel was going to be someone special.

An important task of a leader is to discern the spark of leadership in those whom they lead and to encourage them to develop their God-given talent for this. Sometimes that can be difficult, because there is always the possibility that the pupil will eventually become the leader themselves. It takes a good leader to recognise, accept and even facilitate this transfer.

It is easier when a leader recognises that the position they hold comes to them as a gift from God, and not through their own merit, so that when the time is right, God may transfer that gift to another. That does not mean to say that a leader should just sit back and wait for things to happen. For with God's gift comes responsibility - responsibility to develop their gift, to work at using it in the best possible way, and the responsibility for grooming a successor. Seeing and accepting God's calling in another is the supreme act of leadership.

Possible discussion topic: How do we discern signs of leadership in our members?

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### 6. Peter

*Bible passage: Matthew 16: 13-20*

Simon Peter is one of those men about whom people must have been astonished when he turned out to be selected as a leader. Perhaps that is why he appeals to so many people even today: they see so much of themselves in him and the way he reacts to circumstances.

He appears, according to the Biblical record, to be one of those over-the-top, somewhat bumbling characters who always seem to get hold of the wrong end of the stick and then over-react. He was a big, brash, rough-hewn fisherman who probably found it difficult to fit into the social situations that he blundered into when he became one of the small group of wandering supporters of the charismatic teacher Jesus.

Peter often opened his mouth to blurt out the first thought that seems to have come into his head – “I will never let you down! I will die for you”. He failed to realise his limitations – jumping out of the boat to try to walk on water like Jesus. He was impetuous – he is the one who drew his sword to cut off the high priest’s ear in the Garden of Gethsemane. He acted in a cowardly way after Jesus’ arrest.

Yet he also had insights – it was he who first publicly recognised Jesus as the Messiah. And he was favoured – his mother-in-law was one of the first people Jesus healed.

All-in-all, Peter is a complex character and, as mentioned, many people can identify with him in many ways – he mirrors their own characteristics.

Jesus clearly saw that, beneath this blustering exterior, there was a real strength of character just waiting to be given the opportunity to display itself. Unless, in a sense, forced to take the responsibility of leadership Peter’s innate talent might have stayed hidden forever and he might have remained as Simon, going down as little more than a footnote in history as a buffoon.

That did not happen because Jesus identified Peter as the rock on which he would build his church – an enigmatic phrase that has caused controversy down the ages as to what Jesus actually meant. Here is not the place to get into a discussion on this. What is important for us here is that Peter lived up to the trust that Jesus had in him, displaying previously hidden qualities as he led the fledgling church through its turbulent, early history. It was he who prepared the ground on which Paul would build the intellectual foundations for the theological understanding of Jesus’ place in God’s plan.

A wise leader acts as a facilitator so that others are able to discover for themselves and then exercise their own leadership talents and capabilities.

Possible discussion topic: How can we act as facilitators for others?

### 7. Sadhu Sundar Singh

*Bible passage: Ephesians 3:7-12*

Sundar Singh, as his name implies, was born into a Sikh family in India in 1889. His mother had hopes that he would become a Sadhu – a holy man, but these hopes seemed to be dashed when she died when he was fourteen. Not long before that, Sundar had left the school which had recently opened in his village when he discovered that he was expected to study the New Testament. He felt that he was being cheated into studying another religion in the guise of education. After his mother’s death, he felt so strongly about this that he publicly burned a copy of the Gospels.

However, he felt troubled by what he had done and during a sleepless night when he contemplated suicide, he had a vision of Jesus which brought him a deep feeling of great peace and joy. He was baptised and consequently was rejected by his horrified family. He started to attend a Christian Boys’ School and soon declared himself to be a Christian Sadhu.

Unlike many converted Christians in India, he never adopted Western dress or customs. He travelled on foot around vast areas of India, Kashmir, Afghanistan and Tibet dressed as a traditional holy man, but preaching the good news of the Gospel. He was determined that the form of Christian life that he would preach would not be a watered-down version of European culture, but would be deeply rooted in the culture of his own people so that they could relate to Christ in a way that was really meaningful to them. It would not be something grafted

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on from the outside. He quickly became a respected and deeply loved figure because of his evident sincerity. He was able to lead many to a knowledge and love of Christ.

To this day, in many remote villages of the Indian sub-continent, people will testify how Sadhu Sundar Singh brought the gospel to their grandparents or great grandparents and to them, he is still a very real and great leader and holy man.

In 1929, despite being ill, he set off to cross the mountains into Tibet. He did not arrive and was never seen again.

Sundar Singh realised that he needed to start where the people were and that the best way in which he could share with them the deep peace he had received was to show them how Jesus could give a new dimension to the life they knew and understood.

In the Bible passage, the Apostle Paul writes that although he regarded himself as the least of people, God was able to use him to get the message of God's love expressed through Jesus across to many people. Similarly, Sundar realised that the ordinary people had to recognise him as one of them if they were going to listen to him. A good leader does not seek to impose, but to build on what is there.

Possible discussion topic: What aspects of youth and children's culture can we use to further our work?

### 8. Les Isaac

*Bible passage: Luke 10: 25-37*

Perhaps this is a name that is not familiar to you, but Les Isaac is a man of our time. He is a black minister in London who was moved to do something about street violence following the shooting of four teenage girls outside a hairdressers in Aston, Birmingham on New Years Day in 2003.

He became convinced that the best way to do this would be to have trained Christians patrolling the streets late at night providing prayer, support and protection to young people. He believed that this would play a part in stemming youth violence, and it has.

From a small beginning in London, by 2009 over 1000 people of all races and cultures, have been trained as Street Pastors and operate in over 60 towns and cities across the UK. Areas where Street Pastors regularly patrol the streets include London, Birmingham, Manchester, Blackpool, Leeds, Perth, Inverness, Southend, Norwich, Swindon, Portsmouth, Maidstone, Chester and Weston-Super-Mare. The idea is also spreading abroad to the Caribbean, USA, Pakistan and Sweden.

Les Isaac gave up his position as a church minister to run Street Pastors full time.

Rev Isaac says "Many of the communities where Street Pastors patrol the Streets have said that they feel safe when we are around and say that we have restored their faith in human nature. The Christian gospel is about hope and transformation, and any believer seeking to practically impact peoples lives, and help young people caught in the grip of crime and violence change their life direction should consider becoming a Street Pastor."

Street Pastors provide a comforting, helping hand mainly to young people who find themselves in often bewildering situations late at night on the streets of our towns and cities having spilled out from late-night pubs and clubs. The Pastors provide water, space blankets and flip-flops to help with physical discomfort. They telephone parents, call for taxis and so on to help young people to get away from potentially dangerous situations to the safety of their homes. Pastors work with the police but in a non-threatening way. They provide a real presence of Christ on the streets. Not preaching the Gospel, but living the Gospel. A real incarnational ministry.

A leader will discern a need and have a vision of how that need might be met. That is the easy part. Putting the vision into practise requires drive, determination, skill and often sheer tenacity to see it through. That is a hallmark of a real leader.

Further information - <http://www.streetpastors.co.uk>.

Possible discussion topic: What are our visions and how do we make them reality?

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### Worship Songs

There is a plethora of worship songs, both old and new, which are readily available and suitable for use in leadership training courses. Worship leaders should be aware of the restrictions on reproducing words due to copyright and be aware of how to receive permission to produce photocopies, print-outs, etc. Advice will be available from churches or from Brigade Headquarters.

A few suitable songs, among many others, are -

Be still for the presence of the Lord  
Father God I wonder  
From heaven you came  
Go forth and tell! O church of God awake.  
Great is your faithfulness  
How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him  
I am a new creation  
I want to serve the purpose of God  
I want to walk with Jesus Christ  
Jesus is Lord  
Jesus is the name we honour  
Jesus you are changing me  
Lord, speak to me that I may speak  
Lord, you give the great commission  
Make me a channel of your peace  
One more step along the world I go  
Rejoice, rejoice  
Restore, O Lord  
Send me out from here  
Soften my heart  
Take my life and let it be  
The church is wherever God's people are praising  
Will you come and follow me  
You have called us  
You laid aside your majesty