



NEWS RELEASE

THE SALVATION ARMY • 1215 FULTON STREET EAST, GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503-3849 • 616.459.3433

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Merri Bennett

Divisional Public Relations Coordinator, The Salvation Army Great Lakes Division

merri.bennett@usc.salvationarmy.org

Christmas Need Up Donations Down in Kent County 2023 Red Kettle Christmas Campaign

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (December 19, 2023) – The Salvation Army in Kent County is reporting it is more than 13 percent down, in donations this year, as contributions are falling short of the nonprofit's fundraising goal for the 2023 Red Kettle Christmas Campaign. In comparison the number of households receiving holiday gifts and gift cards through the Army's Christmas Assistance program increased more than seven percent compared to last year. And year-round programs including food pantry needs have increased up to 265 percent.

This week, the Salvation Army in Kent County will provide Christmas gifts and meals to thousands of families experiencing hardship and financial insecurity through Thursday Dec. 21 and media is welcome to attend. Funds raised during the holiday season help with Christmas needs but also help support critical programs and services, including food, youth and senior programs, drug and alcohol treatment, and emergency disaster services.

With less than one week of bell ringing remaining, on Wednesday December 20, through New Year's Eve, all donations made to the Red Kettle Christmas Campaign will be doubled and fully matched, dollar-for-dollar up to \$100,000 thanks to an anonymous donor. This applies to gifts made to physical or virtual red kettles, text-to-give, phone, mail and online donations.

"This match comes at a critical time – with kettle donations down, every contribution, regardless of its size, makes an impact in our community. Thanks to this generous donor, this impact is now amplified twofold," said Major Tim Meyer, Grand Valley Area Commander. "The need is especially great this time of year – families in need are weathering the added costs of the holidays while struggling to make ends meet and put food on the table. The Salvation Army is calling on the generosity of Kent County residents to help us reach our goal and continue to provide vital support to those in our community that may need a hand up."

Salvation Army supporters can help by:

- Visiting SAkentcounty.org
- Sending a check, made payable to The Salvation Army, to: 1215 Fulton St. E
- Grand Rapids, MI 49503
- Returning any mail or digital appeals requesting donations

The Salvation Army also encourages individuals and families to sign up as volunteer bell ringers by visiting registertoring.com, where they have an option to sign up for a bell ringing shift or host a virtual red kettle and raise funds in the comfort of their own home. Bell ringing runs through Saturday December 23rd.

Contributions made during The Salvation Army's 2023 Red Kettle Christmas Campaign are tax-deductible, and all donations benefit local families and individuals in the communities they are given.

For more information go to SAkentcounty.org.

About The Salvation Army USA

Founded in 1865, The Salvation Army is a faith-based, non-profit organization dedicated to serving people in need without discrimination. In 2022, The Salvation Army in Kent County helped provide 7,714 meals to senior citizens, 7,058 individuals with groceries, 6,677 households obtain or maintain housing, 971 households with utility assistance, 1,674 in recovery outpatient services, 713 life-saving detox experiences, and 13,868 toys, 1006 teen gift cards, serving 1,524 households as part of Christmas assistance. The Salvation Army uses \$.86 of every dollar raised to provide direct services to people in need. For more information, go to www.sakentcounty.org

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