



DOING THE
MOST GOOD™

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Cynthia Skaggs-Becker
Marketing & Communications Director
314-646-3230
Cynthia.Skaggs-becker@usc.salvationary.org

Shawn Martin
Communications Manager
314-603-2713
Shawn.Martin@usc.salvationarmy.org

The Salvation Army Midland Division Sets Out to “Rescue Christmas” Due to Immense Impact of COVID-19

Across the nation, the largest social-services organization launches iconic holiday fundraising campaign earlier than ever to meet increasing need

SAINT LOUIS, MO. (September 18, 2020) – For the first time in 130 years, The Salvation Army is starting its annual holiday fundraising campaign early across the country in order to rescue Christmas. The funds raised through the organization’s iconic red kettles are at risk this year due to COVID-19 while requests for services are at an all-time high.

Based on the increase in services already provided in response to the pandemic, the organization could serve up to 155 percent more people in 2020 with Christmas assistance, including putting food on the table, paying bills, providing shelter and helping place gifts under the tree – assuming the resources are available.

At the same time, due to the closing of retail stores, consumers carrying less cash and coins, and the decline in foot traffic, The Salvation Army could see up to a 50 percent decrease in funds raised nationally through the red kettles, which would limit their capability to provide services for the most vulnerable. To put this in perspective, last year \$126 million was raised nationally through about 30,000 red kettles. The Midland Division that covers Missouri and Southern Illinois raised 3.8 million during the red kettle campaign.

“People who were already struggling before the coronavirus pandemic have been hit especially hard. We know at Christmas the need for these families will be greater. The Salvation Army is beginning fund-raising with kettles right away. However, The Salvation Army Midland Division will not commence bell ringing until November” said Salvation Army Midland Division Commander Lt. Colonel Bob Webster.

Since March, The Salvation Army Midland Division has provided more than 120,000 meals, 13,410 nights of safe shelter, and emotional and spiritual support to over 4,087 people in need. Now more than ever, they’re making it safer and simpler to donate in order to support the most vulnerable in Missouri/Southern Illinois:

- The best way to ensure that these vital services continue is to enlist in Love’s Army with a sustaining monthly gift of \$25 per month.
- To help ensure the safety of bell ringers, donors and partners, The Salvation Army has adopted nationally mandated safety protocols.
- Donate digitally with Apple Pay or Google Pay at any red kettle in Missouri/Southern Illinois.
- Ask Amazon Alexa to donate by saying, “Alexa, donate to The Salvation Army,” then specifying the amount.
- Give any amount by texting “KETTLES” to 91999.
- Donate physical gifts in bulk.
- Adopt additional Angels to give hope and joy to kids and families in need through The Salvation Army’s Angel Tree program.

Every donation provides help and hope to those in need, and all gifts stay within the community in which they are given. Visit RescueChristmas.org to donate or learn more about how you can help The Salvation Army rescue Christmas this year. If you need services or know of someone in need, please visit salarmymidland.org to find a location near you.

About The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army annually helps more than 23 million Americans overcome poverty, addiction and economic hardships through a range of social services. By providing food for the hungry, emergency relief for disaster survivors, rehabilitation for those suffering from drug and alcohol abuse, and clothing and shelter for people in need, The Salvation Army is doing the most good at 7,600 centers of operation around the country. In the first-ever listing of "America's Favorite Charities" by *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*, The Salvation Army ranked as the country's largest privately funded, direct-service nonprofit. For more information, visit SalvationArmyUSA.org. Follow us on Twitter @SalvationArmyUS and #DoingTheMostGood.

###