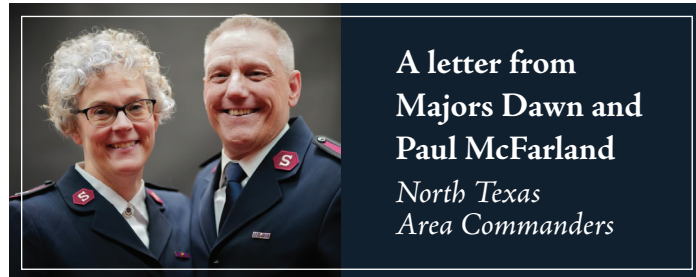


CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS

FROM OUR MAJORS



A letter from
Majors Dawn and
Paul McFarland
North Texas
Area Commanders

FOR THOUSANDS ACROSS NORTH TEXAS, the past year has been nothing short of challenging: Already tight budgets are being stretched to the limits as those experiencing poverty and homelessness try to pay for rising rent, increased food costs, access to childcare, and more.

With your support and compassion, our officers, staff, volunteers, and partners continue to work tirelessly to enable God-empowered transformation for our most vulnerable neighbors. As we head into the holidays and new year, we renew our commitment to uplifting our fellow man and showing them the love of Christ.

As you'll read in these pages, we have numerous plans to make the holiday season a little brighter for those in need

across the region. The donations we collect during the holiday season do more than give local families the Christmases they deserve — they help us consistently provide food, shelter, utility assistance, rehabilitation, counseling, spiritual support, mentoring and job placement, and more every day of the year.

This Christmas, join us in showing that love exists beyond the most difficult situations. In the new year, we will continue to respond to the everchanging needs of North Texans. Need knows no season, and neither does the work of The Salvation Army.

We thank you for your continued trust in the ongoing battle against poverty, addiction, and homelessness. 🇺🇸

Thank you,

Majors Paul and Dawn McFarland

North Texas Area Commanders

Thank you for your support over the past year. Because of you, we've been able to provide basic necessities for North Texans whose wages are now gone and who need to secure food, reestablish homes, and stabilize.

While things are returning to normal, many North Texans are still being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Salvation Army is providing aid at a time when North Texans are facing continued hardship.

To make a donation,
visit SalvationArmyNTX.org

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LOVE BEYOND THE HOLIDAYS

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON, The Salvation Army is keeping hope alive for the thousands of North Texans experiencing poverty, addiction, and homelessness.

With families facing rising costs, many have been forced to make tough decisions on how to stretch their household budgets to pay for essentials. Those choices may leave children without Christmas presents, families unable to cook a Thanksgiving meal, and individuals without a place to go.

The Salvation Army of North Texas' numerous holiday traditions are dedicated to making this time of year a little brighter for our most vulnerable neighbors in need.

🇺🇸 On Nov. 9, The Salvation Army hosted its signature fundraising event, the Doing the Most Good Luncheon, at the Hilton Anatole. Meredith Land, co-anchor of NBC 5 News, interviewed Cynt Marshall, CEO of the Dallas Mavericks and author of a just-released memoir, as she shared the intimate story of her personal connection to The Salvation Army.

🇺🇸 On Nov. 4, The Salvation Army kicked off adoptions for its Angel Tree program, which ensures children, seniors, and special-needs adults experience the joy of gifts under their trees on Christmas morning. You can adopt an Angel online or choose a Forgotten Angel tag off a tree at participating

Walmart and mall locations until Dec. 3. The last day to return your Angel's gifts is Dec. 5.

🇺🇸 On Thanksgiving and Christmas Days, The Salvation Army is hosting a holiday meal service at various corps for anyone in need of a warm meal.

🇺🇸 As you're out and about this holiday season, keep an eye out for our bell ringers at Red Kettles, which support The Salvation Army's ability to provide transformational services all year long. You might even spot some familiar faces Dec. 9 or 10 — local city leaders will participate in their annual county-wide bell-ringing competition to raise the most funds. Gifts made local stay local to help our most vulnerable neighbors in need.

Bell ringers, Angel Tree volunteers, and generous donors are essential to helping The Salvation Army show that love exists beyond the most difficult situations. We thank you for your support this Christmas — and this past year — to help us serve North Texas at a time when our help is needed more than ever before. 🇺🇸

To learn more about how you can help this Christmas season, scan the QR code or visit SalvationArmyNTX.org/north-texas/christmas.



RESTORING HOPE TO FAMILIES IN NEED

When Crystal was growing up, her parents were severely abusive. At 13 years old, her dangerous living situation took a turn when they kicked her in the ribs and punctured a lung. Child Protective Services stepped in, removing her from their custody and placing her in a stable environment with her grandparents, who took her to church and instilled positive values.

However, to escape the emotional pain of her upbringing, Crystal began self-medicating with alcohol when she was 14 years old. Eventually, she had her special-needs son, whom she asked her great-aunt to raise. Her drinking continued and ultimately led to two DWIs. The binge that led to her third and final DWI left her in a coma for five days.

“My brain was mush, and I couldn’t even tell you my cell number,” Crystal recalled.

While in prison for the DWIs, her abusive parents lured her son, who was by then in his early 20s, into their home. Using his disability to their advantage, they forced him to work long hours at a big box store and took the money he made.

Crystal was hopeless; she felt the odds were stacked against her. Then, when released from prison in 2020, she entered a six-month court-mandated addiction treatment program — and her life began to turn around.

“I came out of that program never wanting to drink alcohol again,” Crystal said. “I just wanted to protect my son, but I didn’t know how.”

Crystal patiently waited and found a time when her parents weren’t home to rescue her son. With nowhere left to turn, she took the advice of a friend, who urged her to seek refuge at The Salvation Army.

Upon arriving at the Family Life Center inside the Arlington Corps Community Center, Crystal instantaneously felt an



overwhelming sense of comfort, relief, and, most importantly, safety.

She and her son were given a room of their own and three meals a day. Crystal’s case manager signed her up for financial education and life skills classes, assisted her with job leads in the area, helped with the disability income, and aided in resources that could stabilize her mental health.

Crystal was excited that The Salvation Army was a Christian-based organization and appreciated the pastoral care she received. She frequently journaled and read her Bible, bringing her spiritually and mentally closer to God.

One job lead turned into employment as a pizza delivery person. While living at the Family Life Center, Crystal was able to save money and eventually bought a car. After four months of support from the Family Life Center, Crystal and her son moved into a place of their own in January 2021 through the Rapid Rehousing Program, which provided them with a permanent home rent-free for 12 months.

Since then, her son began working at the pizza shop, and she was promoted to the phone center. She still delivers pizza when needed but primarily works in the business office and is being trained by the co-owner to become the catering manager servicing large accounts. She is proudly living a sober lifestyle.

“If you are willing to change, then you are at the right place at the Family Life Center,” Crystal said. “You will receive all the tools you need here.” 🍷

THE IMPACT OF ANGEL TREE

In 1994, The Salvation Army came to visit the home of Maxie DeBlanc, bringing with them food, a Christmas tree, and gifts for all eight members of her family. It’s a day she cherishes to this day — not only was the spirit of the holiday illuminated by the giving of The Salvation Army, but it also was the last Christmas she spent with her little sister, who died the following March.

The holiday still holds a memory Maxie will never forget, even three decades later. The Salvation Army truck that arrived at her door brought more than gifts; it brought love and hope to a family amid a heart-wrenching time.

Today, that moment is more than a memory. Maxie is now known as Captain Maxie DeBlanc, an officer at The Salvation Army Carr P. Collins Social Service Center in Dallas. She has dedicated her life to proclaiming the gospel and serving, loving, and bringing hope to our most vulnerable North Texas neighbors.

It is because of the Angel Tree program that Captain DeBlanc was inspired to change the lives of families every day, and she aims to spread that inspiration to all those who hear her story. 🍷



A NEW GENERATION OF NEED

Since the pandemic began, The Salvation Army of North Texas has worked tirelessly to provide help and hope during a time of devastating hardship. Across the region, thousands are struggling with the triple threat of need: inflation, evictions, and changes in vital government assistance.

This past year, The Salvation Army saw a vast increase in requests for our services, with many families who never imagined they’d be asking for help finding themselves on the brink of distress and in need of assistance.

The Salvation Army of North Texas quickly adapted and expanded to serve this new generation of need, allocating resources to prevent a new wave of homelessness and help people keep roofs over their heads. Our four shelters continue to operate at and well above capacity, and 12 food pantries regularly feed 10,000 people per week.

To meet the growing needs of families experiencing homelessness in Denton County, The Salvation Army Denton Corps converted its single men and women’s shelter into a family shelter. The Corps is now providing three meals per day to residents due to the increase in families with young children.

Four Salvation Army shelters in North Texas continue to operate at and well above capacity. This fall, The J.E. & L.E. Mabee Social Service Center in Fort Worth served 291 individuals in the family shelter in one night — 385% over capacity.

“Fort Worth currently has more homeless families than the Houston metro area, something we’ve never seen before. This year, we saw a significant uptick in the number of children served at our shelters, from 581 to 1,061,” Deborah Bullock, director of Adult and Family Programs for Tarrant and Ellis counties, said. “We’ve had to evolve to more efficiently provide meaningful change to our neighbors struggling with poverty, addiction, and homelessness. Our ability to serve has been strengthened.”

The Carr P. Collins Social Service Center in Dallas houses nearly 350 people per night and is the largest Salvation Army multiuse facility in North Texas and the world.

Our footprint across Dallas, Rockwall, Tarrant and Ellis, and Denton Counties allows us to provide year-round support to those facing poverty, addiction, and homelessness wherever and whenever need exists. This Christmas The Salvation Army of North Texas will continue to enable God-empowered transformations that meet this new generation of need. 🍷