

"I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I have hope." Psalm 130:5

Generally speaking, we are not very good waiters. Sometimes we wait impatiently at best. For example, I was trying to get back to church the other day for an important meeting. I had been at Valley Eldercare where the visit took longer than expected. So I had only a few minutes to travel back to the church. Now there were three stoplights between my meeting and me, and as luck would have it, a red light stopped me at all three intersections. If you ask my children they would say this is normal. Dad's luck is bad luck when it comes to stoplights.

As I sat at one light after another, waiting for them to turn green, I marveled how it can be so difficult for me to wait. I am a fairly patient person, especially when it comes to my children and my work with people, but when I am late for an appointment and the stoplight turns red, well, let's just say I am talking to the light, asking it to hurry up and turn green. This time, however, my waiting paid off. It was at the third and final stoplight that the theme for Advent this year became clear to me like a gift from heaven – WAIT FOR THE LORD.

I recall as a child how difficult it was for me to wait for Christmas to come. My sister Terri and I would sit near the Christmas tree pining for those beautifully wrapped presents that could not be touched until Christmas Day. I am convinced that parents do this as a mild form of torture for their children. Yet Christmas presents aside, the real question for me as we enter the season of Advent is this: How do we wait for the Lord? Or to put it another way, are we impatient for the Lord Jesus to come to us, or is patience a virtue that we possess?

The verse from Psalm 130 quoted above is not a patient one. If you look at the Psalm, it starts out like this, "Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice!" Implicit in this plea to God is the impatience of someone who is in deep distress and needs the Lord to come and help him. If you doubt this, then listen to this verse from the same Psalm, "My soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning." Picture here a walled city with sentinel posts. Each post has a watchman, who looks out for the enemy all night long.

Presumably, these watchman, provided they have not accidentally nodded off to sleep, are very anxious for sunrise. The dawn of the day and daylight, mean that their work night is over and they can go home and get some sleep. Watchman can hardly wait for morning. I think this also true for people in this world like the writer of this Psalm, who are suffering hardship and are calling and waiting on the Lord to help them. Their morning would be the coming of the Lord, to love them and help them through whatever is causing trouble in their lives.

In Advent, we think about waiting for Jesus. We know that Jesus came to Bethlehem long ago. He was born and lain in a manger, and grew up to be the Lord and Savior we worship today. However, we also understand Jesus to be at the right hand of God, and we want him to come back soon and help us. We know he will return at the end of the age to overcome sin, evil and death, but still, we look for him to come to us now in this life. It is something like sitting in our cars and begging the light to turn green. We really want Jesus to come and help us.



The truth is that he does. Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, comes to us in everyday life, to walk with us, lead and guide us, and help us prevail even as we face the hardest challenges of life. When we sing, "Joy to the World" on the third Sunday in Advent, we really mean it when we sing, "let every heart prepare him room". We believe that Jesus comes into the world to live in our hearts and lives. Sometimes when life is particularly bumpy, it feels like we wait too long. Yet the good news is that the light will turn green, and Jesus will be there for us.

You are in my prayers,

Pesto Om



Advent and Christmas Worship

The seasons of Advent and Christmas are times where Christian worship reflects on the Lord's coming into the world. Here are such opportunities this December:

Advent Worship – Wait for the Lord

Advent worship will be Sundays, November 30, December 7, 14, and 21, and Wednesdays, December 3, 10, and 17. Our theme this year is, "Wait for the Lord".

- The weekly themes are:
 - Wait with Patience in a "drive through" world it can be hard to wait
- Wait with Trust we believe God helps us even if it seems a long time in coming
- Wait for Grace the Lord enters into this ungracious world with his grace
- Wait for Jesus we look for Jesus to enter into our hearts and lives

Please join us for worship each week as we consider the hope we have as Christian people because God comes into our world in the person of his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Advent Candles

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Sundays and Wednesdays will include the lighting of Advent candles as part of worship. The names of the candles and their meanings are as follows:

- The Prophecy candle represents the **hope** Israel had for the coming of the Lord.
- The Bethlehem candle reminds us we are to **prepare** for the coming of the Lord.
- The Shepherd's candle represents the **joy** there is because the Lord has come.
- The Angel's candle reminds us the Lord comes into the world to **love** people.

Then on Christmas Eve we light the Christ candle to announce that indeed the Lord has come into the world through the birth of Jesus.



Candy Canes

Candy cane Sunday and Wednesday have become a staple at ULC. We will enjoy the legend of the candy cane, as well as enjoy the sweet, sugary taste of this tasty holiday candy at worship on Wednesday, December 10 and Sunday, December 14. Both the younger and older children of God look forward to this annual children's time.

Dedication of our Grand Piano

We hope you have been enjoying our new grand piano! We know that our organists, soloists, and the men's quartet, certainly have. We will officially dedicate this wonderful instrument to the worship and glory of God on Sunday, December 14, at our 10 a.m. worship service. At that point, we also hope to announce a series of concerts on the piano for the upcoming year. Thank you so much to our generous donor who has made all this fun possible. Also, if you are a piano player and would like to try the piano out for size, then feel free to stop by, check in with the office, and play!





Chapel Choir Returns in Advent

We would like to announce and welcome our new Chapel Choir director, Katie Holleman, to ULC. Katie grew up and went to school at Hawley, Minnesota. She is a sophomore at the University of North Dakota, working on a degree in Choral Directing. In addition to having a ton of musical talent, Katie brings her youthful energy and excitement to our congregation. We look forward to her being part of ULC and the choir for the rest of this year, and hopefully for years to come!

First rehearsal with Katie will be Wednesday, December 3, 7:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. All past and present choir members, and any new people who love to sing, join us!

Advent Devotions – Wait for the Lord

Henri Nouwen, one of the most popular spiritual writers of the last century, makes a wonderful Advent companion. He understood our sense of incompleteness and yearning, and gave it an articulate voice. As one who struggled with waiting and seeking his Savior over a lifetime, Henri Nouwen offers insights into our spiritual

Advent DEVOTIONALS

journey as we await the birth of the Christ Child in our lives. This Advent booklet is for all who long for a closer relationship with Jesus, the one who is to come. Look for these devotional books in the narthex.

Decorate the Church

Please join us as we decorate the church for Advent and Christmas on Friday, December 5 at 9:30 a.m. We will be setting up trees, wreaths, garlands, and two nativity sets. We also need a crew to set up the outside nativity scene. There is something to for all ages, so if you have the morning free, please plan to help us. Many hands make the work a lot quicker!

Christmas Brunch

Please join us for the WELCA Christmas Brunch at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, December 6. After enjoying a delicious brunch, we will enjoy a fun seasonal program followed by a Christmas carol sing-a-long. The Christmas Brunch is a truly traditional holiday event for our ULC family. It's a great way to start your holiday season off on the right foot!

Christmas Eve Service – Hope Is Born

Christmas Eve candlelight worship will be 5:00 and 10:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 24. We gather with the theme, "Hope Is Born". Both services include Christmas carols, Christmas Gospel, sermon, special music, Holy Communion, and the popular candlelight conclusion. The 5:00 p.m. service also includes a puppet play and a special gift for children.

More Christmas Worship

After the busyness of Christmas, come to worship on Sundays, December 28 and January 4 to further celebrate the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. These two services will be Christmas carol services with carols serving as the liturgy for the day. After those Christmas gifts are opened, the real gift of Christmas, Jesus, will emerge as the reason for the season.









Sharing the Fruit of the Spirit at Christmas

The Christmas season is always a favorite time for Christians to participate in acts of service for those who are less fortunate. Here are a few opportunities for you to consider:

Food Pantry Donations

This Advent season, we will help fill the shelves of the Salvation Army Food Pantry. We encourage you to bring the following items to church to feed local hungry people:

December 3 and 7: Canned fruits and vegetablesDecember 10 and 14: Any sort of boxed or canned mealsDecember 17 and 21: Canned soups and stewsDecember 24 and 28: Boxed cereals for kids and adults



Ring the Bells for the Salvation Army



Once again we will ring bells for the Salvation Army to help them raise money for their disaster relief funds. Here are the dates and places we are ringing:

- December 4: Inside the main door at Scheel's (9:45 a.m. to 7:45 p.m.)
- December 11: Inside the main door at Scheel's (9:45 a.m. to 7:45 p.m.)
- December 18: Inside the mall at Macy's (10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.)

The sign up sheets are available in the church narthex. Register for as many hours and as many days as you would like to participate.

Adopt-A-Family for Christmas

Visit the Giving Tree in our church narthex and choose a gift or two to help a family who is in need this holiday season. In our 23^d year with this program we are serving 8 families. We are purchasing gifts for adults and children. You can pick out a gift to purchase or you can give cash and someone will purchase a gift for you.

Here are a few other pieces of information:

- Please purchase a new item for the gift and wrap it.
- Attach the ornament you took from the Giving Tree to the wrapped gift.
- All gifts should be returned to ULC by December 14th
- We are also collecting money to purchase a \$50 Hugo's gift certificate for each family.



This is such an important project and a favorite one for us as well. When we are done, we will have purchased together over 100 gifts for our families!

Two Celebrations

This December, besides the celebration of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, we have two important congregational celebrations to enjoy:



Congratulations, US Citizen, Emerlyne Bucumi!

Emerlyne voted in her first US election this past November because in October she became a US citizen. We love Emerlyne and are so very proud of her! On Sunday, December 14, we will say congratulations to her with a party after worship during our fellowship time. Everyone is invited, of course, to congratulate Emerlyne, give her a hug, and share this reception in her honor.

Happy Birthday, Bernice Nielsen!

You are invited to a birthday party for Bernice Nielsen. On December 21, Bernice will be 90 years old! Happy Birthday, Bernice, and thank you for sharing your special day with us! After worship that morning, we will enjoy a birthday open house in celebration of her 90th birthday. Everyone is invited, of course, to congratulate Bernice, give her a hug, and share this reception in her honor.





Christmas Poinsettia Garden

Enclosed in this newsletter is our Christmas Poinsettia form. If you would like to contribute to our Poinsettia garden, please fill out this form and return it to the church office.

ULC Families Go Christmas Caroling

Please join us at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 20 for a Christmas caroling event. We will carol for about an hour and then come back to church for hot chocolate and Christmas treats. Please bring a Christmas treat to share! All ULC families, members and friends are welcome.





CONCORDIA CHRISTMAS CONCERT BUS TRIP has been scheduled for Sunday, December 7. We are sharing a bus with the GF Senior Center. The plans are to load the bus at the Senior Center at 12:15 for the 2:00pm concert. Our tickets are excellent - on the floor in the center section. After the concert, we will go to West Acres Mall for an hour to eat or shop. Cost of the trip is \$25 per person. This is for both the ticket and the bus. If you would like tickets, sign up for them in the narthex.



Adult Education

Here are a number of learning opportunities for you in the month of December:

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT CLASS

"All's Well That Ends Well! A Study of the Book of Revelation"

We will bring to conclusion this study of the book of Revelation. Through the book we have discovered that it is God's will to end sin, evil and death in our world, and that God is moving history in this direction. We have also learned that while Christian people will experience hardship in this world, that the Lord has a special protection over us just as the Lord provided for Israel in the wilderness. Please grab your Bible and join us for the amazing conclusion of the book of Revelation. Even if you have not been attending the study this fall, you will still very much enjoy and benefit from these last three weeks. So please join us on December 7, 14 and 21 at 8:45 a.m. in the lounge.



WOMEN OF THE ELCA BIBLE STUDY

"Faith in the Family"

"Transforming Life and Faith" is our women's monthly Bible study for 2014-2015. In this study, we will consider how our lives and our faith journeys are transformed by the events we experience and the people we meet. The topic for the month of December is "Faith in the Family". In this study, we will discuss biblical examples of faith formation in the family, as well as Martin Luther's idea that fathers and mothers are evangelists for their children. Finally, we will wonder how faith is formed in our families today. Join us for this study on Friday, December 12 at 10:00 a.m. in the lounge.

CALLING ALL MEN

"You Want Me To Do What? A Study of the Book of Jonah"

Please join us all you men out there on Saturday, December 20 at 8:30 a.m. for this Bible study on the book of Jonah. When we left Jonah last month, his preaching in Nineveh met with great success, and God forgave the people for their sins. In a very strange twist, we will discuss why Jonah is unhappy that his preaching worked. Why didn't Jonah want God to forgive the people? What sort of a God forgives people who have committed sins? We hope you will join us this month for breakfast pizza, prayer, and conversation, and to see how this great story ends.

THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Is God Calling You?



If you have ever wondered how God calls people to carry out tasks in this world, you will really enjoy this study. We have read and discussed God's call of Abraham, Moses, and Jeremiah. Now in December, we will look at God's call of the disciples, Paul, and Mary. Throughout this study, we are also wondering how we hear God's call too. Do we hear God's voice? Does God do specific things to get our attention? How do we open ourselves to hear God's call? Pastor Tom will share insights from his experience as well. Please join us Thursdays, December 4, 11 and 18 at 9:30 a.m. in the lounge.

Confirmation Notes

Here are a few Confirmation matters for you to consider:

- During December, Wednesday classes will meet on December 3, 10 and 17, and Sunday classes will meet on December 7 and 14.
- Keep up on your worship notes! Most of you are doing pretty well, but a few of you have a ways to go. You need 15 worship notes each year of confirmation!

Education Update - December 2014



Happy Birthday, Jeszy The University Lutheran Christmas program will be

Sunday, December 14th at 6:30 p.m.

This program is for all students (WWJ and Sunday School) preschool-6th grade. There will be a reception following the program. Please invite guests!

Christmas program practice will be on Saturday, December 13th at 10:00 a.m., practice will be over at approximately Noon. This practice is for all children in church school. Preschoolers-Kindergarten students may be picked up at 11:00, or they can stay until Noon, if they have siblings practicing until then. **It is VERY important that your child attend practice.** This may be the ONLY opportunity we have to practice with both Sunday and Wednesday students before the program. Students in 5th and 6th grade may need to stay a few extra minutes to practice speaking parts.



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There is no church school Dec. 17th-Jan. 4th. WWJ resumes on Jan. 7th and Sunday school on Jan. 11th. Have a fun and safe Christmas break!!!





DECEMBER

Youth News

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights. James 1:17



ULC Youth will be having a Christmas Craft and Bake Sale on Sunday, December 14th before and after church and at the Christmas program. All proceeds will benefit the youth program. If you enjoy baking we would be grateful for any items you would like to donate.

> Youth are selling God's Creation Calendars. The cost is \$10 each. Calendars will be available in the church office. Calendars are limited this year so get yours soon.



K - 6th Grade Christmas Party: Saturday, December 13th from 12:00-3:30pm

Youth in grades K-6 will meet at church immediately following program practice for a Christmas Party. Lunch will be provided: chicken nuggets, fries, jello cup, cookie and beverage or bring a bag lunch. The afternoon will include fun games, a craft, Christmas bible study, holiday treats, and the Veggie tale movie, "Merry Larry and the True Light of Christmas". Please come and bring your friends.

High School Christmas Party: Friday, December 19th from 5-7pm.

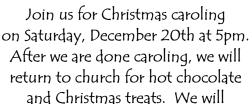
Youth in grades 9-12 will meet in the youth room for fellowship, fun games, and food. We will also be playing a fun gift exchange game. Please bring a wrapped \$10-\$15 Christmas gift that could be given to a guy or girl for this game. Friends are welcome to come. Hope to see you there.

Middle School Christmas Party: Sunday, December 21st from 5-7pm. Youth

Christmas Youth in grades 6-8 will meet in the youth room for fellowship, fun games, and food. Parties We will also be playing a fun gift exchange game. Please bring a wrapped \$10-\$15 Christmas gift that could be given to a guy or girl for this game. Friends are welcome to come. Hope to see you there.

On Thursday, December 18th

THE SALVATION middle school & high school youth will be ringing bells for the Salvation Armv. Middle & high school vouth will ring from 4-8pm. Please come help ring. We will be ringing inside the mall outside of Macv's. Hot chocolate and cookies will be provided. If you have questions about this please ask Heather.





provide the beverages and we ask you to bring Christmas treats to share. Please dress warm. Hope to see you and your family there.



Heather Kallestad: ULC Youth Minister ulcheather@midconetwork.com 701-775-4745 (church) 218-368-8073 (cell)



End of Year Stewardship News

Our **pledge events** this year were November 19 and 23. If you are still willing to turn in your commitment card for ministry in 2015, please bring them to the church office. We would love to receive them, because we do use them as part of our budgeting process for next year.

Our **general fund shortfall** at the end of October was \$21,889. We do not have numbers ready yet from the month of November. Our bills are paid thanks to our ULC Reserve Fund, but we need to pay this back by the end of the year. Thank you for all your gifts throughout this past year. Your generous giving is appreciated!

Included in this newsletter is a **"Catch Up" envelope**. Please plan on using it this month if at all possible, to help us with the shortfall. We would really appreciate any extra gifts you can share. December is usually a very good month for us, so we thank you in advance for your contributions.



Bad Weather : Announcements

In case of bad weather, tune into WDAZ TV (Channel 8) or KNOX Radio (1310 AM) for any changes to our schedule. Or, the most current information, you can also join our group at *facebook.com/ university/utheranchurch* and we will send you a message.

It is not always easy to make these decisions, so please be patient with us. If you are wondering what we are thinking, go ahead and call the church office. Most importantly, never venture out if it feels unsafe for you.



ULC WOMEN OF THE ELCA DECEMBER 2014 NEWS AND EVENTS



Jesus is the reason for the season. I hope and pray that each of you have a blessed Christmas season filled with love, health and happiness.

WOMEN OF THE ELCA Purpose Statement



As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit,

We commit ourselves to

grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the Church, the society, and the world.

MAKE AND TAKE CRAFT DAY

Our make and take craft day was lots of fun and a huge success. You have probably seen a lot of what our crafty persons (many who didn't know they were so talented) were able to do in a few short hours. Thanks to all who came and helped and especially to those who answered so many though questions: like "what do I do now?" or "show me how" and "will this be right?" Thanks to Seanne and Jen for being so patient with all of us new crafty people. We had a wonderful time and want to do it again!

FALL FESTIVAL

Our annual Fall Festival was Saturday November 22 and even though there was a lot going on in town we had a good turnout. By the time we cleaned everything up on Sunday, we made a good profit. Proceeds from the pulled pork sandwich luncheon was \$588, quilt sales were \$510, baked goods sales were \$1548.75 and cards, cutlery, crafts and plant sales were \$502.10 for a grand total of \$3148.85. Many thanks to everyone who baked, crafted, quilted, helped set up and tear down willingly giving of their time and resources. Thanks again to the youth who kept our dining room clean and fresh for our guests. Our dishwashers were superb as always! Thanks for helping make this event a huge success.





CHRISTMAS BRUNCH

The Christmas Brunch will be held December 6 in the fellowship hall at 9:30 a.m. Put the date on your calendar and join us for a morning of Christmas fun, food and fellowship. We will have the all-time favorite egg bake and lots of fun in wishing our church family a Merry Christmas.

GENERAL AID MEETING

We need all ladies of ULC to attend a short meeting at 11:30 on December 14 at which time we will vote on WELCA board members for 2015 and the benevolences to be paid for this year. This is a very important meeting when we need your input on officers and how we share our monies you have helped earn this year. Anyone with questions about the board member's responsibilities or the benevolences please contact any current leader. Please plan to come to the meeting as we need your votes.

THANKS FOR ANOTHER GREAT YEAR

Thanks again for a very busy and successful WELCA year. I have again enjoyed my position. Thanks to all of you who made my job much easier. You are so generous with your time and talents. God Bless You All!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year,

Evelyn Clark, WELCA President

WELCA Bible Study "Faith in the Family" Friday, December 12 10:00 a.m. in the lounge.

Naomi Rachel Circle Friday, December 12 11:30 a.m. at the church Mary Martha Circle Wednesday. December 17 9:30 a.m. Bev Lunde's home 2311 8th Avenue North

> **Ruth Circle** Tuesday, December 16 6:30 p.m. at the church



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	sday wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 6:00 WELCA Board Meeting 7:00 ULC Plays Cards	2 9:30 GF Conference Leaders Meeting 1:30 Pastors Text Study 5:15 Mission Endowment	3 11:00 TOPS 3:30 BLAST 5:00 Supper – Sloppy Joes 5:00 Worship/WWJ 7:00 Grade 7-9 Confirmation 7:30 Chapel Choir	4 9:30 Bible Study 9:45 Ring the Bells at Scheels 1:00 Quilting	5 9:30 Tree Decorating 1:00 Set-up for brunch	6 9:30 WELCA Christmas Brunch
7 8:45 Sunday School/Adult Class Grade 8 Confirmation 10:00 WORSHIP – Advent 2 11:00 Fellowship 12:15 Concordia Christmas Concert Trip 4:00 Bay Scouts 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	8 7:00 ULC Plays Cards	9 10:00 Staff Meeting 11:30 55+ Over Christmas Potluck 1:30 Pastors Text Study 5:30 Worship Ministry	10 11:00 TOPS 3:30 BLAST 5:00 Supper - Soups 6:00 Worship/WWJ 7:00 Grade 7-9 Confirmation 7:30 Chapel Choir	11 9:30 Bible Study 9:45 Ring the Bells at Scheels 1:00 Quilting	12 10:00 WELCA Bible Study 11:00 Naomi Rachel Circle	13 10:00 Program Practice 12:00-3:30 K-6 th Christmas Party
 Adopt-a-Family Gifts Due 8:45 Sunday School/Adult Class Grade 8 Confirmation 10:00 WORSHIP – Advent 3 Grand Piano Dedication 11:00 Fellowship Emertyne's Citizen Celebration 11:00 Youth Bake Sale 4:00 Boy Scouts 6:30 ULC Christmas Program 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous 	15 7:00 ULC Plays Cards	16 10:00 Staff Meeting 1:30 Pastors Text Study 6:30 Ruth Bible Study	17 9:30 Mary Martha Circle at Pauline Bondy's home 11:00 TOPS 5:00 Supper – Chicken patty or hamburger 7:30 Chapel Choir 7:30 Chapel Choir	18 9:30 Bible Study 10:00 Ring the Bells at Macy's 1:00 Quilting	19 5:00 – 7:00 High School Christmas Party	20 8:30 Calling All Man 10:00 Chicago Folk Rehearsal
 21 10:00 WORSHIP – Advent 4 11:00 Fellowship Bernice Nielsen Birthday Party 5:00-7:00 Middle School Christmas Party 7:00 Church Council 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous 	22 7:00 ULC Plays Cards	23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 11:00 TOPS 5:00 Candleight Worship 10:00 Candleight Worship	25 CHRISTMAS DAY Church Office Closed	26 Church Office Closed	27
28 10:00 WORSHIP 11:00 Fellowship 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	29 7:00 ULC Plays Cards	30	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE 11:00 TOPS	Memy	nistmas and	

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WELCA Christmas Brunch Saturday, December 6 9:30 a.m.

ULC Christmas Program Sunday, December 14 6:30 p.m.

Preschool-6th Grade WWJ and Sunday School Students

Christmas Eve Worship Wednesday, December 24 5:00 and 10:00 p.m.

Check inside for much more!!

There is something for everyone!

UNIVERSITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

United by faith, we lift high the cross of Christ through worship and service.



JOIN US THIS MONTH FOR:

WORSHIP Sunday at 10:00 a.m. Wednesday at 6:00 p.m.

B.L.A.S.T. Wednesdays at 3:30 p.m.

Chapel Choir Begins again Wednesday, December 3 at 7:30 p.m. Come and meet our new director!

Ringing Bells for the Salvation Army December 4, 11 and 18