



Prayer  
Network

# Prayer MATTERS

**DECEMBER 2024**



# Dear Prayer Matters readers

Welcome to December's edition of *Prayer Matters*.

We are focusing lots of prayer on The Salvation Army's Christmas mission and ministry: our work with the homeless and those in need; our Toy Appeal; our carolling; our schools work; and our fundraising. Our Volunteer Engagement Manager, Lydia Kibaara, leads us in prayer for the thousands of volunteers who give their time and energy to serve in corps and centres up and down the territory, and Chief Secretary Colonel Peter Forrest leads us in prayer for the Territorial Carol Service at the Royal Albert Hall.

We're also praying for the North Scotland Division, and we're praying with the Core Recovery Team for those who may find Christmas particularly difficult due to addiction and loneliness.

Our Sunday Sabbath Prayers are all drawn from the 'Everlasting Light' Advent resources, which are available on the Resource Centre ([salvationist.org/resources](http://salvationist.org/resources)); and our Saturday Care for Creation prayer ideas come from Captain Vanessa Coleman, who's encouraging us

to find God out in nature, even in the chilly days of December.

One more thing, before we get on with the praying ...

Bookings are still open for our Encounter Prayer Gathering 2025, 24 to 26 January at The Slate Conference Centre in Warwick. Our theme is 'Stand', and we will be taking a fresh look at the topic of spiritual warfare. If you'd like to join us, please book at the following link: <https://form-eu.123formbuilder.com/73726/encounter-prayer-gathering-2025>

Thank you for joining us in prayer during this festive season, and may Christmas be for you a time of peace and joy.

Blessings,

Lyndall Bywater  
and the UKI Boiler Room Team

# DECEMBER



## **SUNDAY 1 DECEMBER: SABBATH PRAYER** **The Dawning of the Light**

Today we pray over our world, the darkness of war, sickness and poverty. As with the darkness that covered the earth in Genesis, we know that the Spirit of God is hovering over our world. Nothing is outside of his control. Everything must submit to his authority. His light has and will overcome the darkness. As we journey through Advent, may we bear witness to the light, may we belong to the light and may we radiate the light through our lives.

(Taken from Sermon Starter 1 in the 'Everlasting Light' Advent Resources)



## **MONDAY 2 DECEMBER: SHARING THE GOOD NEWS** **'Be a Star' Campaign**

The Salvation Army's Fundraising team is inviting people to 'be a Sally Army Star' this Christmas, raising money through Star Trees, festive coffee mornings, sponsored runs, crafting, festive e-cards and sponsored office Christmas outfit days. Let's pray that lots of individuals, businesses and organisations download the fundraising pack and do something to raise money to support Salvation Army social work this Christmas, and let's pray that they encounter the life-changing presence of God as they fundraise.

(Lyndall Bywater, UKI Boiler Room Team)



## **TUESDAY 3 DECEMBER: SERVING AND CARING** **Territorial Carol Service - 3 December**

Dear Heavenly Father, we pray for the Territorial Carol Service this evening at the Royal Albert Hall. As we celebrate your birth this Christmas, we pray you will birth in us – and all those attending the carol service – a deeper sense of longing for your presence as Christ, the Messiah, the King of kings, and a deeper understanding of the meaning of 'Everlasting Light'.

(Colonel Peter Forrest, Chief Secretary)



## **WEDNESDAY 4 DECEMBER: GROWING IN FAITH** **Core Recovery at Christmas**

Father God, we pray for those in recovery who find that Christmas stirs feelings of loneliness and sadness because of broken friendships and family relationships. We realise too that Christmas parties are places where alcohol is often served, and we pray that hosts of gatherings will be sensitive to the needs of others, especially those who are in recovery from alcohol abuse. We pray that those in recovery will seek support when temptations are strong.

(Major Jill Miller, Core Recovery Team)



## **THURSDAY 5 DECEMBER: INTERNATIONAL** **SALVATION ARMY - South America West Territory**

The territory comprises Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador and Peru, and the leadership team is Colonels Alex and Luz Nesterenko and Lieut-Colonels Raul and Lidia Bernao. We pray God's blessing on the Army's work in these nations, particularly as Salvationists share the good news of Christmas in word and deed in their local communities.

(Lyndall Bywater, UKI Boiler Room Team)



## **FRIDAY 6 DECEMBER: JUSTICE AND** **RECONCILIATION - Salvation Army Drop-In Centres**

Dear Lord, we pray for the many people who find refuge, safety, warmth and unconditional love when attending our drop-in centres. We pray that every service user will benefit from the care, support and practical assistance offered, and that individuals will not only see but also experience something of the love of Jesus.

(Mitch Menagh, Assistant Secretary for Mission)



## **SATURDAY 7 DECEMBER: CARE FOR CREATION** **Enjoying Creation - Feeding the Birds**

At a time of year when it can be hard to find signs of life, Jesus invites us to consider the birds (Luke 12:24) and to remind ourselves that it is God who provides for us. You could make a simple bird feeder: roll a pinecone in lard and birdseed, tie on some string and hang it in your garden to encourage wildlife to come, and so be part of God's provision for them. As you enjoy the beauty of nature, trust God to meet your needs too.

(Captain Vanessa Coleman, Woking Corps)



## **SUNDAY 8 DECEMBER: SABBATH PRAYER** **Witness to the Light**

Light a candle as a reminder of the light of Jesus. Watch how the air currents move it first one way and then another. Feel the warmth of it on your hands. Know the light of Christ is within you. Ask Jesus to let his light shine within you ever more brightly.

(Taken from Sermon Starter 2 in the 'Everlasting Light' Advent Resources)



## **MONDAY 9 DECEMBER: SHARING THE GOOD NEWS** **Sharing Christmas in Schools**

Lord, we pray for corps who have been invited into schools to share their faith and work during this busy Christmas term, that you will bless their encounters with staff and students. We pray that students will get to know more of you, Lord, and that they will be inspired to think of others. We pray that this will be the start of a meaningful relationship between the school and the corps.

(Fiona Johnson, Resource Coordinator including schools)



## **TUESDAY 10 DECEMBER: SERVING AND CARING** **Praying for Volunteers**

God our Father, we remember before you the kaleidoscope of people who offer their gifts and skills as volunteers. At this busy time of year, we pray particularly for the local officers who help organise our corps, and who may have so much to think about that they scarcely have time for their own worship. We pray for the loyal community volunteers who give their time and talents to bless others. We lift them up to you, asking for strength, joy and renewed energy.

(Lydia Kibaara, Volunteer Engagement Manager)



## **WEDNESDAY 11 DECEMBER: GROWING IN FAITH** **North Scotland Division**

Lord, we pray for Brechin Corps facing this season without officers. We pray that you will challenge people to serve and assist in leading the corps, so that the work of supporting and blessing their local community can continue. We pray for direction, guidance and opportunities as we all seek God's will for the North Scotland Division of The Salvation Army.

(Major David Womersley, Shetland Corps and Divisional Prayer Coordinator, North Scotland)



## **THURSDAY 12 DECEMBER: INTERNATIONAL SALVATION ARMY - Germany, Lithuania and Poland Territory**

We give thanks for the General's recent visit to Poland and pray that Salvationists there will continue to feel encouraged and supported as they seek to care for huge numbers of Ukrainian refugees. We pray for the whole territory, and for its leaders, Colonels Dean and Eirwen Pallant, that the Holy Spirit will lead them ever deeper into life in all its fullness.

(Lyndall Bywater, UKI Boiler Room Team)



## **FRIDAY 13 DECEMBER: JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION - Christmas Present Appeal**

Lord Jesus, as we continue to support families living in poverty and struggling to provide for their children this Christmas time, we ask you to bless those people who are so generous in giving toys and other meaningful gifts so that The Salvation Army can provide presents for children who might otherwise go without. May this practical ministry be a blessing to both the giver and the receiver.

(Mitch Menagh, Assistant Secretary for Mission)



## **SATURDAY 14 DECEMBER: CARE FOR CREATION Enjoying Creation - Flying a Kite**

How long is it since you've flown a kite? Look out for a windy day, then look online for instructions on how to make a kite using a plastic bag, string and sticks. Get outside and feel the wind blow the cobwebs away. Pray that the wind of God's Spirit will blow through you, sweeping out the musty and dusty, giving flight to your dreams, and lightening the mundane things of life.

(Captain Vanessa Coleman, Woking Corps)



## **SUNDAY 15 DECEMBER: SABBATH PRAYER Belong to the Light**

Write down or draw five things that you want to do which would help you grow as a child of light. What can you do to live according to the light? Where do you need to grow your discipleship? Are there areas of

your faith you need to give some attention to? Light is always brightest when it's joined by others. How can you work with others in your corps/church to shine your light together? As children of the light, we are all siblings and need to work together. Perhaps start by agreeing to meet with a couple of others to pray together every week of January.

(Taken from Sermon Starter 3 in the 'Everlasting Light' Advent Resources)



## **MONDAY 16 DECEMBER: SHARING THE GOOD NEWS** **North Scotland Division**

We pray for all activities taking place in all corps and centres in the North Scotland Division over the Christmas period: toy appeals, Messy Church, Café Church, Christmas Day meals and carol services. Father, we pray that, through all that takes place, people will be reminded once again of you sending love into the world, of the Word of God coming to life, and of your son Jesus Christ being light in the darkness.

(Major David Womersley, Shetland Corps and Divisional Prayer Coordinator, North Scotland)



## **TUESDAY 17 DECEMBER: SERVING AND CARING** **Praying for those who look after volunteers**

Lord, we pray for those who support volunteers, who are much in demand but who most of all need time to reflect and pray. Grant them wisdom, patience and a spirit of encouragement, and sustain them in their roles. Guide them to balance their responsibilities with grace and compassion so that volunteers feel appreciated and valued.

(Lydia Kibaara, Volunteer Engagement Manager)



## **WEDNESDAY 18 DECEMBER: GROWING IN FAITH** **Carolling**

Let's give thanks for the privilege of living in a country where it is legal to proclaim the message of Jesus in public places, and let's pray for all those who are out and about playing carols, holding collecting tins or swinging kettles. Let's also pray that our fundraising efforts will be accompanied by an enthusiasm to talk to people about the good news of Jesus, and to pray with and for the people we meet.

(Lyndall Bywater, UKI Boiler Room Team)



## **THURSDAY 19 DECEMBER: INTERNATIONAL SALVATION ARMY – Angola Territory**

Salvationists have been spreading the gospel of Jesus in Angola for 50 years now, and we thank God for every life touched through their witness. We pray for those who worship and serve with the Army in Angola today, that God will provide for their needs and encourage their hearts. We pray for the territorial leadership team, Lieut-Colonels Stephen and Theresa Malins and Majors Sérgio and Ana Nsumbu.

(Lyndall Bywater, UKI Boiler Room Team)



## **FRIDAY 20 DECEMBER: JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION – Christmas Meals**

Loving God, as corps and centres prepare meals and deliver food parcels to many people who might otherwise go without, may the food provided not only give nourishment but also open up opportunity for sharing something of the real meaning of the Christmas story.

(Mitch Menagh, Assistant Secretary for Mission)



## **SATURDAY 21 DECEMBER: CARE FOR CREATION Enjoying Creation – Rejoicing in the Rain**

God wants to be seen by you! The rain at this time of year can seem miserable, but what if we took it as a sign of God's faithful presence with us? Next time it rains, go outside and stand in it, letting it remind you of the relentless love of God. Hosea 6:3 says: 'Let us acknowledge the Lord; let us press on to acknowledge him. As surely as the sun rises, he will appear; he will come to us like the winter rains ... that water the earth.'

(Captain Vanessa Coleman, Woking Corps)



## **SUNDAY 22 DECEMBER: SABBATH PRAYER Radiate the Light**

A thought to reflect on in the coming days: To dwell in God's presence is the secret to radiating his light. Throughout the Christmas story, whether that's the shepherds, the magi, Simeon (Luke 2) etc – indeed, anywhere in the Bible where people are seeking to be in God's presence – they always manage to find it! And they are always welcomed. God isn't hiding from us – he wants to be found and he wants us to live all our life in his glory, to dwell with him.

(Taken from Sermon Starter 4 in the 'Everlasting Light' Advent Resources)





## **MONDAY 23 DECEMBER: SHARING THE GOOD NEWS** **The Joy of the Shepherds**

Jesus Christ, born into a world of sorrow that our joy may be made complete – help us today to treasure the joy of your coming, and to let it shape our interactions with those around us. Give us the exuberance of the shepherds; give us ears to hear the angels' song, and an irresistible joy in bringing the good news to all we meet.

(Lyndall Bywater, UKI Boiler Room Team)



## **TUESDAY 24 DECEMBER: SERVING AND CARING** **The Compassion of Mary**

Jesus Christ, whose mother sang a song of revolution, stir in us a longing for social transformation, that we might resist the temptation to pride and complacency; that we might work and fight for a world where the hungry are fed and the poor lifted up. Holy Spirit, grow in us a determination to build the Kingdom wherever we find ourselves.

(Lyndall Bywater, UKI Boiler Room Team)



## **WEDNESDAY 25 DECEMBER: GROWING IN FAITH** **The Devotion of Joseph**

Jesus Christ, whose earthly father allowed his life to be turned inside out and upside down to welcome you to this earth, give us devoted hearts today: remembering you in the busyness and the emptiness; turning to you often amidst the hubbub of company and the mundaneness of chores; making room for you at the centre of our celebrations; welcoming you afresh into our inside-out, upside-down world.

(Lyndall Bywater, UKI Boiler Room Team)



## **THURSDAY 26 DECEMBER: INTERNATIONAL** **SALVATION ARMY – Italy and Greece Territory**

We pray for the Italy and Greece Territory, giving thanks for the opportunities to share the gospel over the Christmas season in Italy, and onwards to the Orthodox celebration of Christmas on 6 January in Greece. We pray particularly for the territory's work in caring for refugees, that God will multiply personnel and funding for that work. We ask God's blessing on the territorial leadership team, Lieut-Colonels Andrew and Darlene Morgan and Major Cinzia Walzer.

(Lyndall Bywater, UKI Boiler Room Team)



## **FRIDAY 27 DECEMBER: JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION - Residential Supported Housing**

Father, we ask your blessing on those individuals who are experiencing homelessness and living in our supported housing accommodation. We pray that, in the midst of the challenges faced, people will find the resilience to rebuild their self-confidence and self-esteem, and that through the ongoing work of our Homelessness Services, people will start to experience something of life in all its fullness.

(Mitch Menagh, Assistant Secretary for Mission)



## **SATURDAY 28 DECEMBER: CARE FOR CREATION Enjoying Creation - Taking a Dip**

It seems counterintuitive to put yourself in cold water when it's cold outside, but research tells us that being in cold water for a short amount of time can be great for mental health. If you can get past the horror of the first minute or so, you'll feel invigorated. It's a reminder that sometimes it's the hard things we do that make us feel fully alive. In what ways is God reminding you to be fully alive, overwhelming you with his presence? Wild swimming is an increasingly popular pastime, so you could consider joining a group to give it a try. Alternatively, just stand under a cold shower for a couple of minutes. And don't forget to warm up with a cuppa afterwards!

(Captain Vanessa Coleman, Woking Corps)



## **SUNDAY 29 DECEMBER: SABBATH PRAYER Prayer of Gratitude**

Take some time today to reflect and give thanks for the things that have brought you joy this Christmas. You might even share your gratitude by writing some thank you letters for gifts you have received. Heavenly Father, in the stillness after Christmas, I pause to thank you for all the blessings this season has brought. Let this time of reflection renew my spirit and deepen my faith.

(Lieut-Colonel Jayne Roberts, Secretary for Spiritual Life Development)



## **MONDAY 30 DECEMBER: SHARING THE GOOD NEWS** **Prayer for Reflection and Renewal**

If possible, make some time today to rest in stillness, silence and solitude, even just for a short amount of time, and invite God's Spirit to guide you as you reflect on how Christmas has been for you. Dear God, thank you for the quiet moments that follow Christmas, when I can rest and reflect on the gift of Jesus, your son. Help me carry the peace of this season into each day.

(Lieut-Colonel Jayne Roberts, Secretary for Spiritual Life Development)

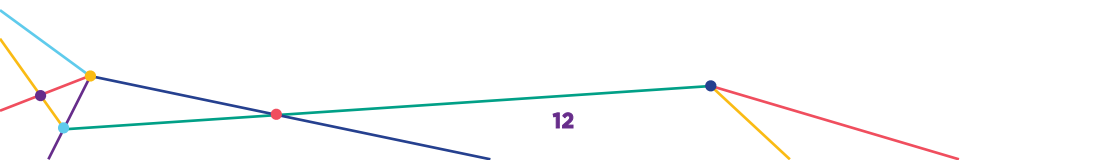
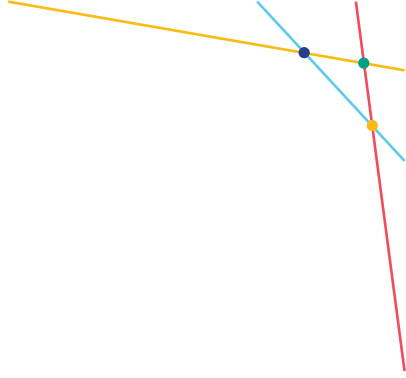


## **TUESDAY 31 DECEMBER: SERVING AND CARING** **Prayer for Peace in the New Year**

Take some time today to pause and pray for the coming week: the rhythms you will return to; the needs of those around you; the transition to a new year. Lord, thank you for the joy of Christmas celebrations. Now, as I prepare to return to daily life and new challenges, may I draw closer to you and feel your peace filling my heart. Guide me into the new year with love and gratitude.

(Lieut-Colonel Jayne Roberts, Secretary for Spiritual Life Development)

# NOTES





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