Christmas Gathering—

Theme: Silver Bells

Decoration:

- Have hall decorated in silver decorations, especially silver bells
- Use silver bells in the table centre pieces
- Send out invitations on silver paper cut in bell shape

- Place a mid-size Christmas tree in the centre of the room decorated with silver tinsel.
- This 'Prayer Christmas Tree' will be used for prayer time.
- Set up a table with a centre candle, and multiple tea lights surrounding it (have enough for one for each lady)

Option: If using this theme for your Christmas Sale, ladies could wear a silver bell corsage

Welcome: As ladies arrive, write name tags (Use bell shaped tags or use gift tags with the picture of Christmas bells on it)

Song: *Silver Bells* * **
          Prepare a handout of the words to *Silver Bells*. Share information regarding the song.

This Christmas song is a collaboration between composer Jay Livingston (1915-2001) and songwriter Raymond Bernard Evans (1915-2007). The song was used in a move entitled "The Lemon Drop Kid" starring Bob Hope and Marilyn Maxwell. Hope and Maxwell sang the carol as a duet in one of the scenes showing a Salvation Army Christmas Kettle Worker. The song was later recorded by such artists as Bing Crosby, Carol Richards, Tony Bennett, The Supremes, Elves Presley, Dean Martin, and Doris Day.

*See http://www.songfacts.com/detail.php?id=12352 for more information about the song, and its connection with The Salvation Army.

**A version by Bing Crosby and Ella Fitzgerald can be played or view a clip from the movie "The Lemon Drop Kid" on YouTube

Sharing:

Ask women to share their thoughts on the words of the song

<u>or</u>   as it is a joyful song, they may like to share their joyful memories of a past Christmas.

Song Suggestions:

Joy to the World	(Salvation Army Song Book 83)
O Come all ye Faithful	(Salvation Army Song Book 85)
Hark! The Herald Angels Sing	(Salvation Army Song Book 82)

Prayer Time: **"Prayer Bells"**

Materials required:

Silver cardboard cut into bell shapes (template is attached)
Punch a hole in the top of the bell and tie some ribbon through it.
Have a pen for each lady (this can be a little table favor along with a little note pad)

Ask ladies to write a Christmas prayer/name on their bells while instrumental music plays a Christmas carol. Then ask the ladies to place their bells on the 'Prayer Christmas Tree'.

Devotions: **"Light a Candle"**

Instructions: Darken the room. On a table display a single candle - the Christ candle, surrounded with tea light candles.

Read: John 8: 12

(Light the Christ Candle)

Leader: The centre candle represents Jesus Christ the Light of the World. We light it to signify that the Light has come.

Read: Ephesians 5: 8-10

Leader: We are the light of the world. These tea lights represent each one of us, being a light for others. Do you want to be God's representatives in a world where others need to know Christ? I invite you to come, take a tea light and light your candle and then return to your seat.

(Have appropriate music playing as ladies light candles. Suggestions: *Here I am to Worship*; *Light a Candle*; *Go Light Your World, 1000 Candles*); songs can be found on YouTube.

Leader: (As the room lights up, explain how we can be someone's light at Christmas time and together, we as God's people, can bring joy to another.)

Leader: Share a prayer.

Refreshments:

- Serve ladies a special Christmas supper.

- If having a less formal gathering, Christmas pudding and custard along with tea/coffee would be a nice treat or serve bell-shaped cookies iced and decorated with silver balls

As the ladies leave, give them some Christmas treats wrapped in silver cellophane, tied at the top with a silver ribbon.

Other ideas:

Include other 'bell' songs: *Jingle Bells, Come on Ring Those Bells*

Incorporate one of the suggested YouTube videos as a visual during the candle lighting or invite a vocalist to sing one of the songs.

Bell Template for Prayer Time