On Monday, Volunteer Police Chaplain Brent Carlson was invited to speak at the Compassionate Friends candle lighting ceremony to remember sons and daughters who prematurely passed away. This is an annual event at Christmas time. Chaplain Carlson offered a message of Hope in Jesus Christ as the Light of the World. Chaplain Carlson is the pastor at Christ Community Covenant Church in Owatonna.

Extended Stay—Dating back to November 21st, an OPD officer took a call at Kwik Trip of a possible credit card fraud. Shortly thereafter, our detective was able to get on the trail of these two credit card scammers. The two suspects affected locations throughout Minnesota at the end of November and beginning of December. The fraudsters hit Kwik Trip stores alone for over $11,000. The work of our detective led him to notify MSP Airport police for their assistance locating the two suspects. Police located and arrested both in an airport bar, while they were comfortably celebrating their fraudulent work in Minnesota and awaiting their return flight back home to New York. Our detective met with Airport Police and took custody of both suspects and made reservations for them at the Steele County Detention Center. Alexandra G. Calderon, 24 of Jamaica, NY and Jevon B. Morgan, 25 of Cambria Heights, NY, were formally charged with Identify Theft and Financial Transaction Card Fraud — both Felonies. Bail is set at $40,000 for Calderon and $75,000 for Morgan. 

Student/Parent Driver’s Ed

On Wednesday evening, Sergeant Jason Petterson, OPD’s TZD Coordinator, was invited to speak at the OHS student driver’s education class and parent class. Education and Enforcement together make up half of the 4E equation to TZD’s safe roads coalition. Changing driver behavior is the focus of traffic safety education efforts. Driver’s education instructors and law enforcement working together can be an effective strategy to improve traffic safety and a “Point of Impact” on parents of novice drivers. TZD Sergeant Petterson raised awareness to parents and teens how young driver’s between 16-19 years of age are overrepresented in traffic fatalities. His presentation also covered distracted driving, provisional driver’s license laws, Graduated Driver’s License (GDL) provisions, Not a Drop, and crash prevention strategies.

Shop with a Cop—On Wednesday evening, officers from Owatonna, Steele County and the Minnesota State Patrol were paired up with 15 students at Target to Shop with a Cop — a program organized by the Salvation Army. Target donated about $2,000 in merchandise for the kids to shop for winter clothing and gifts for family members. Starbucks served hot beverages to those participating. Officer from OPD that participated were Officers Martin, Quinlan, Callahan, Satre, Smith, Vogel, Selvik, Ardorf, Travis Johnson and Berg.