

November
2023

The Samaritan

Worship Themes

November 5 - John Wesley's "The More Excellent Way" / All Saints Day / Communion

November 12 - John Wesley's "The Use of Money"

November 19 - John Wesley's "Catholic Spirit" / Pledge Sunday

November 26 - A Season for Giving Thanks



Hanging of the Greens

A FAMILY ADVENT CELEBRATION

Sunday, November 26 4:00 p.m.

Join us for this wonderful, long-standing tradition at Good Samaritan where we decorate our sanctuary for the Christmas season!

Music will be provided by our own Orchaband and Children's Choir.

We will be collecting unwrapped gifts for infants through 8-year-olds to donate to STEP (St. Louis Park Emergency Program). Target gift cards in amounts \$5 to \$25 will be collected as well. Bring items to the service or contact Jan (jan@good.org).

Anyone who plays a string or wind instrument (young and old) is invited to join the Orchaband. Pick up the music ahead of time from the reception area by the Church Office. We will rehearse November 26 at 3:00 p.m. It's great fun! Contact Sarah Kumagai with questions - 952-944-2683.

OUR STAFF

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952-452-9395

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Pastor's Page

The Road Ahead

Rev. Cindy Gregorson joined the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) for our October meeting to share the process and next steps related to appointing the next Lead Pastor of Good Samaritan UMC.

One of the first steps is to complete a church profile with demographic and historical data, along with particular ministry needs of the congregation and neighborhood, as well as skills needed of a Lead Pastor to lead the congregation into the future. SPRC, with help from the Church Council, has completed this step. Three primary areas of skill needed by our next Lead Pastor include strong and adaptive leadership, clear and transparent communication, and an authentic and relational connection for strong partnerships with lay members.

During our conversation with Rev. Gregorson, three opportunities emerged for the congregation and our next Lead Pastor to focus on: 1) developing a more intentional process around the visitor experience and follow-up; 2) building a discipleship process that encourages each person to grow deeper in their faith; 3) dive deeper into social justice ministries and perhaps identify a signature ministry that we might be known for in the community.

At the same time churches are working on their profiles, pastors also complete an individual profile which outlines the gifts and skills they bring. Both the congregation and pastor profiles will be instrumental in identifying a good missional match for our church. A deep level of discerning and prayer accompanies both churches and clergy in this whole process.

Once a few potential candidates are identified, SPRC will be given a chance to review the pastoral profiles of each candidate (without names or other clearly identifying information) to determine which candidate to invite to an introductory meeting. The introductory meeting is like an interview, but more for the purposes of discerning together between Good Sam leaders, pastoral candidate, and the annual conference leadership that this will be a good appointment for everyone. If this introductory meeting goes well, then an announcement would be made soon after that. We are hopeful that this will happen in February or March.

Pastoral transitions are always tender times. It can be hard to say good-bye, while also kind of exciting to imagine the skills and gifts the next leader will bring. Please know that you are in my prayers every single day; and if you're not already, I hope you will begin praying also for this transition ahead, that God will bring just the right next leader here, so that our community, congregation, and pastor will be blessed by some amazing ministry together.



Pastor Carol

Worship

All Saints Sunday

Come together for in-person worship Sunday, November 5 at 10:00 a.m., as we remember those Saints who have gone on before us in the last year. This worship service also features a slide show in remembrance of these loved ones and a dedication of memorials, the invitation to light a candle in memory of a loved one, as well as Holy Communion.

In a journal entry from November 1, 1767, John Wesley, founder of the Methodist movement, calls it "a festival I truly love." And then in 1789, he adds that it is "a day that I peculiarly love."

Hebrews 12 encourages us to remember that a "great cloud of witnesses" surrounds and encourages us, while even cheering us on.

And yet, All Saints Sunday is also a day to celebrate those saints who live among us, inspiring us to grow deeper in our faith, and encouraging us to live a life of discipleship. Great hymn-writer

Charles Wesley reiterates this sense in verse one of "Come, Let Us Join our Friends Above" (UMH 709):

Let the saints on earth unite to sing,
With those to glory gone,
For all the servants of our King
In earth and heaven are one.

On All Saints Day, may we give thanks for who have gone on before us as well as those among us today. Come and be a part of this holy day.

~Pastor Carol



Music



Children's Project Choir

It's not too late to join us! Children in K-6th Grade are invited to join Children's Choir rehearsals are Wednesdays from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. to prepare for singing at the beloved Hanging of the Greens on Sunday, November 26 at 4:00 p.m. and at Family Christmas Eve Worship on Sunday, December 24 at 4:00 p.m.

Feel free to invite any friends, grandchildren, etc. All are welcome! Sign up at tinyurl.com/GSchildrenschoir.

Contact Cindy Bergstrom at cindy@good.org with questions. We look forward to singing with you!

A Thousand Tongues Returns!

Last May, Good Samaritan UMC hosted *A Thousand Tongues*, a concert of songs and stories reflecting on AAPI experiences, featuring four incredible guest artists and our very own Chancel Choir. The concert was an incredibly meaningful experience.

I'm pleased to share that it will be returning, with all the same guest artists and a combined Good Sam/Hennepin Ave UMC choir, sponsored by the Philippine Study Group of Minnesota, on Friday, November 3 at 7:00 p.m., at Hennepin Avenue UMC (511 Groveland Ave, Minneapolis).

Order tickets at bit.ly/athousandtonguestickets or with the QR code here. Hope to see you there! ~Paolo Debuque



Congregational Care

Soul Feasting

*O, taste and see that the Lord is good!
Happy are those who take refuge in God!
~ Psalm 34:8*

November is upon us, turning the attention of many to the Thanksgiving feasts around which many will gather later in the month. Tables will be laden with platters of harvest goodness, and thanks will be shared communally for the abundance that is before us.

As you prepare to partake of these banquets for your bodies this season, I encourage you to **consider them in a new way ... consider them** as banquets for your soul and for the souls of your loved ones. Marjorie J. Thompson, in her book *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life*, concludes with these words:

It is my prayer that you will have found something in these pages to encourage and guide your spiritual quest. The practices described are means of grace, paths to the food and drink we crave in our inmost being. God can use them to nourish us. Together they offer a true soul feast. Since you cannot indulge in a feast all at once, but only in courses and over time,

I trust you will choose and savor each food for the unique nourishment and delight it can give. Resist the temptation to



be greedy at this table. Its bounty will not be depleted by many hungry seekers. Indeed, the

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more the children at the table, the greater the abundance of supply: God's economy is not based on scarcity. The richest sources of spiritual nurture are permanently set upon the table of our lives. While it would be folly to ignore or refuse them, there is no need to rush or grab. Take and receive as you have need. Enjoy each to the full.

And so give thanks for the sweetness of dear Christian friends as you place the bowl of sweet potatoes on the table; remember the blessings from selfless volunteering which arose within you as you lay forth the basket of rolls; consider how prayer covered your life with warm richness as the gravy tureen is filled; and give thanks for all those times of worship and bible study as the roast beast is carved thin, plattered and placed in the center.

Savor and give thanks for these blessings from God for both your body and soul. Invite as many as you can to this table of friendship and love. Do not starve yourself any longer, for the Lord's bounty is available for all.

Oh! And be sure to leave room for pie, remembering that the best is yet to come! Whether alone or in the company of dear ones, may you taste once again and see that the Lord is good.

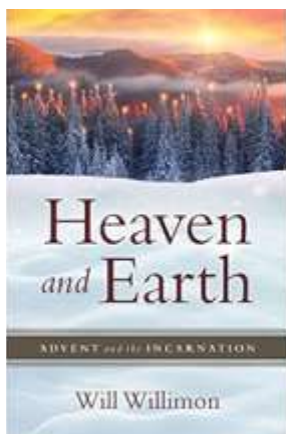
Holy Provider of our every need, we give you thanks once again for including us at your heavenly banquet, for setting a table of abundant life, for giving us the opportunity to feed our hungry souls, and for the spiritual means to be fed by you daily. We pray for those who feel left out from this invitation or are unable to attend. Thank you for those who have provided all of this for us, especially Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Congregational Care

Conference-Wide Advent Study

Watch out. Get ready. God is on the way. Join Bishop Lanette Plambeck for a four-session Advent study! United Methodists across the Dakotas-Minnesota Area are invited to read "Heaven and Earth: Advent and the Incarnation" by Will Willimon and to join her for conversation via Zoom on Tuesday evenings, Nov. 28-Dec. 19.

It's not within our own power to make a fresh start. If we're to have a future different from the past, it must come as a gift, something not of our devising. What we need is a God who refuses to be trapped in eternity, a God who not only cares about us but is willing to show up among us and do something with us, here, now.



In *Heaven and Earth: Advent and the Incarnation*, Will Willimon introduces you to the God who does just that, bringing heaven to earth and changing everything. In Advent, we celebrate and anticipate the earth-shaking, life-transforming good news that God is coming to us. Watch out. Get ready. God is on the way.

The schedule is:

- Nov. 28, 2023, 7-8:15 p.m. Central, Chapter 1: Meanwhile (Mark 12:24-37), pages 1-36.
- Dec. 5, 2023, 7-8:15 p.m. Central, Chapter 2: Surprised (Mark 1:1-8), pages 37-70.
- Dec. 12, 2023, 7-8:15 p.m. Central, Chapter 3: Light (John 1:6-8, 19-28), pages 71-94.
- Dec. 19, 2023, 7-8:15 p.m. Central, Chapter 4: Rejoice (Luke 1:26-55), pages 95-140.

Order your book from Cokesbury or Amazon, and register at <https://mnumc-reg.brtapp.com/AdventStudyHeavenandEarth>.

Thursday Afternoon Book Club

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, November 9, at 1:00 p.m. in the Fireside Room. We will be discussing *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison. It is the story of a young African American girl who yearns for blue eyes which she equates with "whiteness."



Please join us for the discussion, refreshments, and fellowship! Questions: Contact Vicki Dunn, 952-930-3431, victoria.dunn@q.com.

A Poem by Joyce Rupp

I look to the openness
of trees,
branches spread wide,
receiving,

and I wonder
about the openness
in me,

if my branches
are tightly twined
around myself
or reaching out,
receiving.

It is time I untwined
what I can.
It is time I spread wide
a heart
much in need of
receiving.

Children, Youth and Family Ministries

Dear Good Sam Families,

There has been a lot of hard news to hear recently. It is hard not to hear about the difficulties in the Middle East. Our kids know something is up. I thought you might find these tips helpful for sharing hard news with children. You can use these tips for any tough topic.



Jan M. Russell (she/her)
Director of Children, Youth & Family Ministries
jan@good.org
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- Be honest and tell the truth. Certainly, we need to speak to their level of understanding, but being clear and honest is the best option.
- Think about what you are going to say. Practice it with another adult, in the mirror, or in your head. (I am always willing to listen and work with you. Give me a call.)
- Use direct eye contact.
- Pick your time to talk when there is time and space to have this conversation.
- Ask them what they have heard or what they know. You can tailor your response from there.
- Be loving and give comfort; let them know they are safe.
- Listen to them, and accept their feelings. They can run the gamut.
- Make sure they know they are not responsible or at fault.
- Give them a chance to ask questions.
- Brainstorm ways you as a family can help. (Praying is always a good first step.)
- Praise your child for having this conversation.



Hopefully, this is helpful for you. Raising thoughtful, caring and resilient children is a hard job that takes a village. I am honored to be in your village.

~ Jan

It's Care Package Time!



Parents of young adults – it's care package time! Please send Jan (jan@good.org) your 18- to 24-year-

old's address (gap-year, college, grad school, working, or military). Wherever they are on their journey, we want them to know that Good Sam is with them!



Missions

What Food Shelves Need



In all the years we have donated food to VEAP or Joyce Food Shelf, most of us have never asked what the people who go there might have to say.

Someone did ask and below is what people said they want and need. Please note that money is always welcome at the food shelves since they can buy in bulk. However, buying in bulk can limit the variety of items; i.e., maybe they can only buy the cans of plain tomatoes, and the ones with spices are more appreciated.

Also, buying items yourself is really a good experience, especially for kids and grandkids to do, so they become more aware of the many needy people out there.

- Spices or salt and pepper would be a real Christmas gift.
- Boxed milk is a treasure, as kids need it for cereal.
- Everyone donates pasta sauce and spaghetti noodles, so give other things.
- Donate can openers or buy cans with pop tops.
- Oil is a luxury but needed for Rice a-Roni, which is often at food banks.
- Feminine hygiene products are a luxury and women will cry over that.
- Tea bags and coffee make them feel like you care.
- Sugar and flour are treats.
- They fawn over fresh produce*.
- Everyone loves Stove Top Stuffing.
- They rarely get fresh meat*. Hamburger Helper goes nowhere without ground beef.
- Tuna and crackers make a good lunch.
- They get lots of peanut butter and jelly but usually not sandwich bread.
- Butter or margarine is nice too*.
- Everyone donates Kraft Mac and Cheese in the box, but milk and butter are rare at food banks*.

- Cake mix and frosting makes it possible to **make a child's birthday cake** – did you know that a can of Sprite can substitute for eggs and oil to make a cake?! Write this tidbit on the cake mix.
- Dishwashing detergent is very expensive so always appreciated.
- Seeds are nice in the spring and summer.

*Check with your food shelf to see if they accept refrigerated items such as meat, dairy, etc. as VEAP and Joyce do not. Fresh produce is welcomed at VEAP. Websites often list what is accepted at each food shelf.

~Pat Deckas Beccera

Reconciling Report

In case you missed it, the Reconciling Ministries Network Convocation happened in Charlotte, NC, October 13-16. This event usually happens every four years in the fall of the year before General Conference in the United Methodist Church. Check in at www.rmnetwork.org for perspective on preparation for General Conference.



November 14, 7:00 p.m. is the next Minnesota Reconciling Congregations regular meeting via Zoom. All are invited and if you want an email notice of monthly meetings, contact minnesotareconciling@gmail.com.

November 20 is Transgender Day of Remembrance. Austen Hartke spoke at the April 29 MRC Annual Gathering program. A recording of that event is available on the MRC website - mnrucmc.org. Austen's book is titled *Transforming: The Bible & the Lives of Transgender Christians*.



For questions or resource information contact Brian Boysen at bteam@earthlink.net.

Missions

Building Homes and Hope



Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, a group of about 100 churches, temples, and synagogues whose goal is to provide affordable housing, is building homes! Please help us count the ways:

1. Construction on Emerson Village is underway in North Minneapolis. Stay tuned as \$150,000 is still needed from private sources to build Emerson Village.
2. Swift action of Beacon advocates and local allies in Shakopee is moving the plan forward for more than 40 high-quality professionally managed apartment homes for low-income families. Ground-breaking is anticipated next spring. Prairie Pointe is the project name.
3. Next up is Aster Commons in Richfield. The vision of Aster Commons focuses on providing 40 apartment homes for neurodivergent young adults who have or are at risk of experiencing homelessness, especially low-income BIPOC individuals.
4. Help Unlock the Metro: Beacon has worked for years to change the Met Council's annual plan so that it awards project-based vouchers (PBVs) automatically every year. You can email your Met Council member to let them know what a good idea this is.

For more information, you can contact Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative by phone at: 651-789-6260 or online at: <http://www.beaconinterfaith.org/>

Stonebridge Teacher Arrives

The evening before school started this fall, the two of us went to the airport to welcome delightful, 27-year-old Niyousha Monfaredmanesh. She is the new Iranian teacher who came to teach the 4th grade at Stonebridge World School. We took her to Martha Kouatli's home where she stayed the first 10 days. We arranged rides for her to and from school each day and drove her to get a bank account, a Social Security Number, and all the other details that needed to be done. Sue Cleaveland and Kent Holmes then welcomed her to stay at their home. We then started apartment hunting! We got the perfect apartment at a nice location on a bus line that goes straight to Stonebridge and got a bike donated for her since she is without a car. We also got her furniture and all the necessities, all donated, to set up an apartment and delivered them to her new apartment on Friday, October 20. She is now on her own but has four American "mothers" and two "fathers" watching over her and ready to help when she needs it. We look forward to her cooking a promised Iranian meal for us. Watch for her, and give her a warm welcome, when she visits Good Samaritan soon on a Sunday morning! Thank you to all who housed Niyousha, donated items, and helped us deliver them – Sue, Kent, Brian Boysen, and Mike Olason.



~ JoAnn Knutson, and Pat Deckas Becerra



Service Opportunities

Volunteer at the Chanhassen site (18932 Lake Dr E) for food packing:

Wednesday, November 8 - 9:00-10:45 a.m.
Friday, November 17 - 7:00-8:45 p.m.

Sign up with Jane Heimerl at jane.heimerl@yahoo.com by two days ahead. Space is limited!

The Good Samaritan Foundation

A Big Thank You!

In October 2022, The Foundation Board put forth a challenge to match the starting balance of The Living Trust in celebration of its founding 30 years ago - \$30,000. In May of this year, an anonymous donor proposed an additional challenge to our congregation by offering to match donations up to \$10,000. On October 15, Foundation Sunday, we celebrated achieving *both* those goals! Thank you to all who participated – this is a terrific response!

WOW! Additional donations have come in since Foundation Sunday. As of October 20, all donations have totaled \$47,706!

With the distribution of the \$10,000 match, the breakdown for each fund is as follows:

- Outreach Fund - \$3,933 + \$1,850 match
- Cornerstone Fund - \$13,870 + \$2,450 match
- Evergreen Fund - \$19,904 + \$5,700 match



Through gifts to The Foundation, Good Samaritan can continue to make a positive impact for our church family and communities near and far. Gifts are welcome at any time as contributions today or as planned giving in the future. If giving by check, please make the check out to Good Samaritan UMC and on the memo line, please indicate which fund you would like to support. You may give securely online at good.org/give/give/the-foundation/ and select the fund of your choice. Every single contribution is precious and a statement to your commitment to the future of Good Samaritan and our ministries.

If you are interested in learning about serving as a board member of The Foundation or have any questions about The Foundation, please contact Claudia at claudialboysen@gmail.com.

Finance Team

Finance Update

Thank you for your support of our church. We appreciate the September increase in contributions – it really helps! With this contribution increase, we had a good month in September but can still use your help as we are “short” YTD.

If you have a balance on your pledge, consider paying that before the end of the year. If you have fulfilled your pledge, and can give an additional amount, that would be much appreciated! Thank you! September financials are listed below.

~ Mac Lewis

	September Actuals	September Plan	Year-to-Date
Income	\$74,829	\$42,898	\$503,305
Expense	\$60,947	\$63,608	\$513,028
Net	\$13,882	(\$20,710)	(\$9,722)

Stewardship

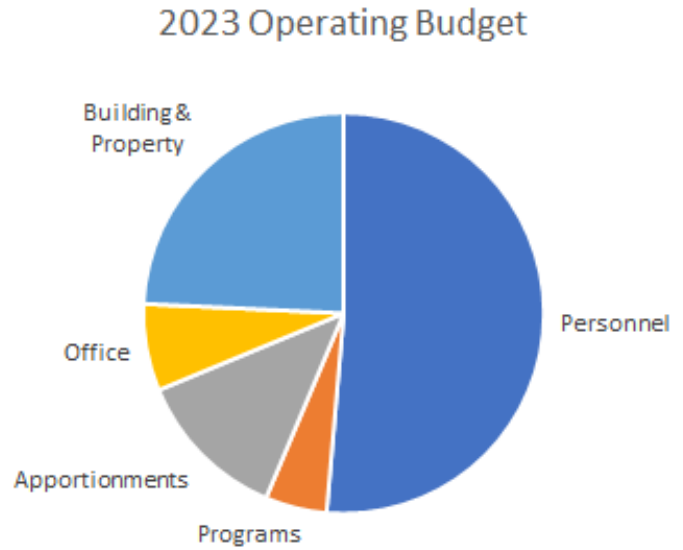
Annual Pledge Drive

Please watch your mailboxes! Stewardship letters containing pledge cards will be mailed early in November.

All families on our mailing list will receive this invitation to make a pledge commitment for the 2024 calendar year. Please be prayerfully considering how God is calling you to support the ministries of Good Samaritan UMC, and with that, helping to sustain all the ways we make a difference in this neighborhood and beyond.

Here is a pie chart that illustrates our budgeted expenditures in 2023. A little over half of our expenses are for personnel. The remainder of our budget is divided almost equally between ministry expenses, and building & property utilities and maintenance.

Let's join together to enter the coming year with a financial strength that matches our growing faith.



Staff Parish Relations Committee

Church Conference

A church conference for the purpose of setting Pastor Carol's 2024 salary will be held in person after worship on Sunday, November 26. We'll plan to begin this relatively short meeting at 11:00 a.m., and all are welcome to attend.

Marketing

Election Hospitality

Edina will hold an election on Tuesday, November 7, 2023 and Good Samaritan is a polling place. As in years past, Good Samaritan will feed lunch and dinner to our judges and provide refreshments throughout the day to one and all who come through our facility. We need folks to help greet and direct the voters and help with food and beverages. A shift is only about 150 minutes.

If you can help, please contact JoAnn Knutson (612-240-9372) or Dave Knutson (612-859-2940). A signup on our website will be provided at a later date. You will enjoy the experience! We guarantee it!

Christmas Poinsettia Order Form

Christmas Poinsettia Order Form

Poinsettias are said to symbolize good cheer and success while bringing wishes of laughter and celebration. Order a poinsettia for display in the Sanctuary in honor or memory of a loved one. They will adorn the Sanctuary for the Christmas Pageant and Christmas Eve. All the plants will be 8" red or white double poinsettias. The cost is \$25.00 each (payable to GSUMC; note "Christmas Flowers" on memo line.)



Fill out this order form, include payment and put it in the offering plate, or mail to the church office (5730 Grove St., Edina, MN 55436) by December 3, 2023.

NAME (Please print) _____

PHONE _____

Please note quantity:

Red _____ White _____

In Memory of:

In Honor of:

You may pick up your plant(s) after the 9:00 pm service on Christmas Eve or the following week during office hours from 9:00-1:00pm. Thank you.

_____ I would like to donate my plant(s) to a homebound member.



Good Samaritan United Methodist Church
 5730 Grove Street
 Edina, MN 55436

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OUR VISION

INSPIRING
 Joyful Faith

BUILDING
 a Loving
 Community

SERVING
 Neighbors Near
 and Far

SUNDAYS

Worship
 10:00 a.m. (In-person and Online)

Nursery
 9:45-11:30 a.m., Infants - Age 3

Children's Sunday School
 Held during worship following
 Children's Time. All are welcome!

WEDNESDAYS

(Nursery open from 5:45-9:00 p.m.)

- 6:00 p.m.
- Chancel Chimes Rehearsal
 - Children's Choir Rehearsal
 - Caregivers (2nd Wednesdays)

- 7:00 p.m.
- Chancel Choir Rehearsal
 - Youth Activities

GOOD SAMARITAN OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
 Phone (952) 929-0049