

February  
2024

# The Samaritan

## Worship Themes

February 4 -  
"I AM the Bread of  
Life" / Communion

February 11 -  
"I AM the Resurrection  
and the Life" /  
Transfiguration

February 18 -  
"Who Are You?" /  
1st Sunday in Lent

February 25 -  
"What Do I Love?" /  
2nd Sunday in Lent



## *Ash Wednesday Worship*

*February 14, 2024*

*7:00 p.m.*



Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, which is a time of fasting, repentance, moderation and spiritual discipline. The two central themes include our sinfulness and our human mortality, along with a recognition that we overcome these through Christ.

Ashes used in worship are often prepared by burning dried palm **branches from the previous year's Palm Sunday worship. During worship**, you are invited to receive the sign of the cross on your forehead or the back of your hand.

We welcome any and all members interested in lending their voice to our worship as part of the Open Choir. No experience or special attire necessary. Join Paolo and Mary Beth at 6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary to learn the anthem that will be sung at 7:00 p.m. worship. Singing is good for the mind, body, and spirit, and we hope you'll join us for a reflective and meaningful service.

## OUR STAFF

Rev. Carol Zaagsma  
Lead Pastor  
carol@good.org  
952-452-9395

Rev. Jim Beard  
Dir. of Congregational Care  
jim@good.org  
952-452-9396

Jan Russell  
Director of Children, Youth  
and Family Ministries  
jan@good.org  
952-452-9398

Christian Nielsen  
Coordinator of Worship Arts  
and Online Engagement  
christian@good.org

Paolo Debuque  
Chancel Choir Director &  
Music Coordinator  
paolo@good.org

Mary Beth Berg  
Organist/Accompanist  
marybeth@good.org

Kate Graber  
Chancel Chimes Director  
kate@good.org

Brad Carlin  
Homeward Bound Director  
bradleypcarlin@gmail.com

Cindy Bergstrom  
Office Manager  
cindy@good.org  
952-452-9393

Kim Hill  
Bookkeeper  
kim@good.org  
952-452-9394

Dan Green  
Building Engineer  
danrg@good.org  
612-889-4015

Dandy Lewis  
Media Specialist  
dandy@good.org

Good Samaritan UMC  
Office: 952-929-0049

# Pastor's Page

## A Lesson in Contrasts

As December 2023 turned into January 2024, our worship themes had us looking at one of my favorite spiritual images: Light. On Christmas Eve, we took a closer look at the African American Spiritual "This Little Light of Mine," and noted in particular that Jesus is like a candle, while our role is to be like a mirror, reflecting his light into the world.

Then we celebrated Epiphany on the first Sunday of the new year. Music during in-person worship that day included "Star Carol" by John Rutter, along with the hymn, "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light," while we focused on the star as it led the magi to Jesus. The week after that, we began our current worship series on the I AM statements of Jesus, starting with "I AM the Light of the World." Light is a central image in scripture, and indeed, our very faith journey. So perhaps it will surprise you that I want to spend just a moment here focusing on the dark.

In some ways, we've been enculturated to fear the dark. The darkness can bring uncomfortable times of wrestling with deep soul questions. It can be a time ripe for feeling deep sorrows. It can also be frightening, especially when you don't know what is lurking beyond what you can see. Because of this, many of us try to avoid it - you need only count the number of night-lights in your house to see evidence of this.

In contrast, Barbara Brown Taylor, in her book *Learning to Walk in the Dark*, invites us to take a deeper look at the darkness of our lives. She writes, "I have learned things in the dark that I could never have learned in the light, things that have saved my life over and over again, so that there is really only one logical conclusion. I need darkness as much as I need light."

The prophet Isaiah seems to recognize this as he writes, "I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the Lord, the God of Israel, who call you by your name." (Isaiah 45:3)

I know that for me, I have found this to be true - that God will call you by your name...especially in your darkest moments. So while our dark days or nights can be uncomfortable, they also enable us to lean differently on a God who is there, calling you by your name.

What can light possibly mean without dark? In fact, Martin Luther King Jr. noted that "Only when it's dark enough can you see the stars."



If you're walking in a moment of darkness, please know that you are not alone; and that while the darkness can be frightening, it is also what can enable you to see the light more clearly. So try to embrace it rather than run from it. Be open to what you might learn while it surrounds you. And trust that God has not abandoned you.

Pastor Carol

# Staff Parish Relations Committee

## Pastoral Transition Discernment Process Underway

Your Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) members have been working diligently as we are amidst the discernment process for our new Lead Pastor who will succeed Pastor Carol as she moves to a new leadership appointment within the Minnesota Conference.



Prior to Christmas, SPRC worked on our church profile, which contains demographic information about our community, historic information about our congregation, and identified leadership strengths needed for the emerging areas of focus and ministry opportunities here at Good Sam. We also developed our questions for the in-person discernment meeting. In addition, we had a start-up meeting with Rev. Cindy Gregorson, Director of Connectional Ministries and Clergy Assistant to the Bishop for the Minnesota Conference. She is also serving as our church's Superintendent, so SPRC met with her to discuss the missional needs of our congregation.

The New Year started off quickly for us, as we reviewed the credentials of the three highly qualified Lead Pastor candidates in mid-January; we provided feedback on each candidate to Rev. Gregorson who will review this feedback with the Minnesota Conference Bishop and Cabinet. The next step of the process is for the Cabinet to take our feedback and narrow the discernment to the sole pastoral candidate. Then Rev. Gregorson will meet with the pastoral candidate to share the missional needs of Good Sam UMC and why the Cabinet believes her/him/them to be the best candidate.

Our tentative plan is to have an in-person discernment meeting with the Lead Pastor candidate in mid-February where the pastoral candidate and the SPRC each have the opportunity to affirm the Bishop's intent to appoint this person to Good Sam, or to ask for a reconsideration. Once agreed upon, we will announce the news during the following Sunday's church services along with a letter sent to the congregation immediately following the announcement.

We ask for your continued prayers during this time of discernment as we prepare for Good Sam UMC's next leadership chapter.

-David Litteken, Chair

## Music

### "That's Amore!"

On Saturday, February 24 at 7:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall, the handbell quartet Toll Free will be presenting "That's Amore! A concert of love and happiness."



Good Sam's own Kate Graber (Chancel Chimes Director) and her friends will delight and entertain you with love songs new and old. Free will offering.

### Save the date!

On Friday evening, April 12, Good Samaritan UMC will host an all-church social event featuring refreshments and music from Homeward Bound. Watch for more details!





# Congregational Care


## Spiritual Health & Vitality

Whenever I take a health check-up these days, they have me complete a form online beforehand so the doctor can more readily identify needs and areas of concern. What strikes me is that the form not only asks questions regarding recent pain or problems, but also covers such areas as family history, mental health, exercise routines, levels of stress, financial burdens, and the like. These answers are correlated with statistics they collect from my weight, height, waist measurements, and blood sample. A report comes to me with a health score, warning flags, and recommendations for even greater health and vitality. I often think, "Wouldn't it be great if the same kind of report could be generated for our spiritual health and vitality as well?!"

In a simplified manner, it does. Whenever I lead Confirmation, I begin by laying out a basic model that the class will follow and explain that it can easily be applied to the rest of their lives. Jesus is concerned about ALL of you, your entire spiritual well-being, not just one part of who you are. Therefore, we need to pay attention to ALL parts, namely your HEAD, HEART, HANDS (both right and left), and FEET. In spiritual terms, these areas look like this:

 HEAD – growing in one's knowledge of God and the world, including such things as Bible study, theological thought, history and context, and other holy readings;

 HEART – connecting with the holy both publicly and privately, including such things as attending and actively participating in praise and worship experiences, receiving devotional and inspirational messages, going on spiritual retreats, attending Christian concerts, and an active prayer life;

 RIGHT HAND – reaching out (like a handshake) to be in community with others, including times for fun and fellowship, building trust, sharing of personal matters, offering care and support, learning about conflict resolution, and making friends outside one's usual circles;

Jim Beard  
(he/him)

Director of  
Congregational Care

jim@good.org  
952-452-9396



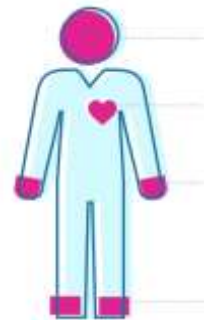
LEFT HAND – reaching out to serve others, including helping the needy around the block and around the world, volunteering at church, sharing talents strictly for the benefit of others, and building God's kingdom wherever it is found;



FEET – putting one's faith into everyday action, including such things as involvement in social justice activities, witnessing, evangelizing, tithing, and making ethical decisions at work, school, and home.

I discovered that kids often excelled in one or two areas, and these varied from teenager to teenager. It was great to see each find their passion and continue to strengthen it. But I also warned them not to neglect the other areas after they were confirmed; yes, thrive in the parts that energize you but make sure the other areas of your spiritual life receive some regular attention. For example: dive in and sing weekly in the youth choir, but also participate in at least one Bible Study each year; sign up to help at Habitat for Humanity one day each summer; go to at least two fun events annually to stay in touch with each other; joyfully praise God with others somehow each week; etc. You may not love every activity, but your spiritual health and vitality will score high if you do.

So, how about you? Is it time for your spiritual assessment? Jesus is concerned about ALL of you!



# Congregational Care

## Good News for All



Why in the world is the “greatest story ever told” not told in the same way by our four Gospel writers? The story told in each gospel is certainly as gripping and dramatic as any we could hope to hear, but they clearly

give strikingly different versions of the same events regarding Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. Was one witness more accurate in relaying the facts than the other three and therefore is “the more reliable truth”? Should we only consider elements that are present in all four as “the unquestionable truth”? Or perhaps if we meld them all together does the composite reveal “a more complete truth”? Actually, a more satisfying and ultimately more engaging approach will be for us to take each one of the four accounts on its own terms, and allow each witness to speak “the gospel truth” (aka the Good News) in his unique and powerful ways. Join us as we let the truths which each Gospel witness has to share come alive, not only for the people of that day but for us as well. Pastor Jim Beard will be leading this 6-session course.

Two options are available:

Sundays, Feb. 18 – Mar. 24, 11:15am – 12:15pm  
OR

Wednesdays, Feb. 21 – Mar. 27, 6:00pm – 7:00pm

Location: Fireside Room

Pre-Registration: Highly Encouraged (In-person class limits: Min. 8 – Max. 20). Sign up at [tinyurl.com/4Witnesses](https://tinyurl.com/4Witnesses).

Virtual Attendance: Available (link sent upon registration)

Childcare: Available with advance notice

## Multiplying Love Lenten Study

Feb. 14-March 31. Join Bishop Lanette Plambeck and the Dakotas and Minnesota Appointive Cabinets in a study around the book *Multiplying Love: A Vision of United Methodist Life Together*, by Paul Chilcote. There will be videos and an Easter message from Bishop Lanette.

This is a resource for independent study or your small group to use on your own. Go to [minnesotaumc.org/2024-lenten-study](https://minnesotaumc.org/2024-lenten-study) for further details.



## Caring Resources

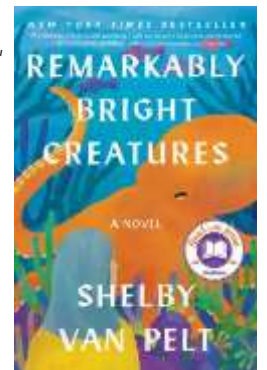


CareNotes are located in the rack next to the name tag table in the narthex. These small booklets have inspiring messages about many issues like grief, illness, and family life to name a few. They are free. Take some for yourself and to give to others. The Caring Ministry team keeps the rack stocked and is open to suggestions for new topics.

~ Joy Montgomery

## Thursday Afternoon Book Group

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, February 8th at 1:00 p.m. in the Fireside Room. The discussion title is *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby Van Pelt. It is an exploration of friendship, reckoning, and hope, tracing a widow’s unlikely connection with a giant Pacific octopus. Please join us for fellowship and refreshments. Contact Vicki Dunn, [victoria.dunn@q.com](mailto:victoria.dunn@q.com), 952-930-3431, with any questions.



# Children, Youth and Family Ministries



*The Middle School Car Line*

There is one thing that drives me to anger and frustration faster than anything else: the dreaded Middle School Car Line at drop-off time. I am past that stage in my parenthood journey, but it is not easily forgotten. Until I started seeing it differently.

I was at a conference that talked about finding small pockets of time to connect with your children. It dawned on me that perhaps we could change those ten minutes that I dreaded so much into something special. After all, we were all captive in the car, so we could try to make it meaningful. I started asking my kids what they were looking forward to that day, what they were anxious about and how could I pray for them during the day. When we were two cars away from our turn to "tuck and roll" I would remind them that they were deeply loved by their parents, other trusted adults, and, of course, God. No matter what happened that day, that would never change.

Some mornings we would forget to have this check-in time, because either I didn't have enough coffee in me or they were not awake enough to really connect, but we did our best.

Finding pockets of time to connect and bless your kids takes a perspective shift. I was grateful for that conference that reminded me of this, changing something that was a burdensome task into an opportunity to support and encourage the children God has entrusted to my care.

I am praying for you and your family!  
Grace and peace, Jan



Jan M. Russell (she/her)

Director of Children, Youth & Family Ministries

jan@good.org

952-452-9398

**Need a Sub  
for the Super Bowl?**



The ASP mission trip youth will be taking orders for sub sandwiches on Sunday, January 28 and February 4 at a table in the Narthex. Subs will be available for pick up on Super Bowl Sunday, February 11, after the service.

Cost: \$10 for a 6" sub.  
Options are ham, turkey, or veggie.

ASP Mission Trip Info Night  
February 7:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.  
Come learn about our upcoming Mission trip to Appalachia, June 15 - 23, 2024.



Save the Date!  
Vacation Bible School  
June 24-28, 2024  
4 years to 4th grade

# Missions

## “Feed the Hungry”



Feed My Starving Children is a Christian non-profit organization that packs food for children all over the world. It depends totally on donations without any government assistance. Good Samaritan volunteers pack food every second Wednesday from 9:00 to 10:45 a.m. and an occasional Friday evening.

On our January 10th visit, nine of us packed food. We packed 16 boxes. Each box holds 36 packs and each pack is six meals. So if you do the math, that's 3,456 meals! There are other groups packing at the same time and together we accomplished the following:

Boxes packed: 161  
Meals: 34,776  
Kids fed a daily meal for a year: 95  
Cost: \$10,085.04



Some of the ways people describe the experience: exhilarating, satisfying, sense of accomplishment, friendly competition, great conversations with fellow volunteers, fun! It really brings to life, "Feed the hungry". ~ Roy Moeller

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

Wednesday, February 14, 9:00-10:45 a.m.

Friday, February 23, 7:00-8:45 p.m.

Sign up with Jane Heimerl at  
[jane.heimerl@yahoo.com](mailto:jane.heimerl@yahoo.com) by two days before.  
Space is limited!

## Book Drive Success - Now Seeking Shipping Help!

We have received donations of over 1,000 books for the Ormsby School in Baiwalla, Sierra Leone! We have run out of storage space, so we are going to halt the collection until we get these ready for the Baiwalla libraries and raise the funds to ship them. Thank you for being so generous with your book donations!

To help with shipping the books to the students they were intended for, give securely online at [www.good.org/give](http://www.good.org/give), and select GS Missions from the fund menu, and then Baiwalla Sierra Leone School from the Sub-fund menu; or clearly mark "Baiwalla School" on the memo line of your check.

~Missions Team



# Missions

## Fundraiser for Baiwalla School



The Ormsby School in Baiwalla, Sierra Leone is a mission of The UMC Minnesota Annual Conference. All the teachers are paid by O.C. Ministries (ocministriesmn.org). The teachers at these elementary and secondary schools are paid from \$1,500 to \$2,500 per year! Unfortunately, O.C. Ministries is out of money. There will be a fundraiser on March 2 at Applewood Pointe, 8341 Lyndale Ave S in Bloomington. Ann Carlson, who heads the school connection here in Minnesota will speak and show a video about the school. The money will be specifically for teachers' salaries for the Ormsby School. Pat Deckas Becerra and JoAnn Knutson will be traveling to the school in Baiwalla, Sierra Leone in March, along with two others, with a mission to set up a school library, teach the school how to operate and use it, and encourage the teachers and students to read, read, read! We hope to fill our suitcases with playground equipment, reading posters, and materials to help the instructors teach reading. If you would like to attend the fundraiser, would like a ride, or to give online, contact Pat Deckas Becerra or JoAnn Knutson.



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## Minnesota Reconciling Congregations Report



- Spring is coming and so is our Spring Social gathering - April 13, 2024 at Hennepin Ave. UMC. Save the date and watch for additional details.
- Watch for General Conference information as it is happening in Charlotte, NC from April 23 to May 3 of 2024.
- Minnesota Annual Conference May 29-30, 2024 - Bloomington/Minneapolis.

We continue celebrating 40 years of the Reconciling movement and the work of the Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN). It is a celebration of a movement and a people purposed for justice. We invite you to join us to boldly claim the future of the Church for all God's children. There's work to do, and there's joy to share. For more information, go to the websites at [www.rmnetwork.org](http://www.rmnetwork.org) and [www.mnrcumc.org](http://www.mnrcumc.org)

For additional questions please contact Brian Boysen at [bteambackup@earthlink.net](mailto:bteambackup@earthlink.net). The next Meeting of Minnesota Reconciling Congregations (MRC) is March 14, 7:00 p.m. with remote access. Join us!

# The Good Samaritan Foundation

## Foundation Update



The first quarter Foundation meeting will be on Thursday, February 15. If you have an idea for a grant for a non-profit from The Outreach Fund, please contact Claudia Boysen at [claudialboysen@gmail.com](mailto:claudialboysen@gmail.com) to discuss how to make a grant request. The dates for Foundation board meetings in 2024 are tentatively set for May 16, August 15, and November 14.



# Trustees

## Sure-Footed

It's been a slow start to winter this year, to say the least. I know there are plenty of people that don't mind the lack of snow. I, however, have been patiently waiting for it (along with my snowmobile)!

I know you hear it often, but always be careful when out walking after a snowfall, especially when it stays warm and then cools off significantly. That's when thin layers of black ice will form.

Always practice the "penguin shuffle" when you are unsure of your footing.



Also something important if you are coming by to visit the Peace Garden: the start of the walkway near gym entry door #8 can not be salted at all due to the special type of concrete used (exposed aggregate) along with keeping all the perennials healthy in that area.

The stairs leading down to the garden closest to the building will also be closed. I will clear the path of snow, but always watch your step on that sidewalk. Luckily that side of the building gets the most sun, so it melts naturally quite quickly with the right outside temps.

Dan Green  
(he/him)

Building Engineer  
danrg@good.org  
612-889-4015



# Puzzle Fun

## JESUS IN A FEW WORDS

R F U U W P R T R F G Z G P Z M H O E H Y I Z W  
B W D L O T G L A O Q Y Q R S F J L E J J W V S  
O M R K A P X I L J Z Q G A N X F Q U U E M R Z  
S H G M M L T K H Q Y J N I L B A P R A Y S E M  
V G R W O H X R O O T V S S W C I O S Q V P H E  
O Y R G G F Y N E E L E N E I F T C L O O H T E  
N L E D N C Q P V H R Y H Z Q P H D C H R I A J  
D Q D J I R B C O M T E K I N G F G Z N X A F E  
M T E Y T E V S L N T X T Z S Q U L U M W E T N  
K S E O S A B S M P K G I L X U L I I E V P Y O  
O D M W A T W U X X T X E U U B G D S S N N Z Z  
L F E W L O F O U K Z C R F N U A B X E Q W O H  
H G R J R R D E N H V F O R W O S F O N L H R B  
J X X S E Y P G E F O P I E W R J A I Q B B O K  
M O H S V Q X A P Z T N V D N L B O V D G S I Y  
U I C U E H L R K Y A D A N P S N K G I H V O B  
P M O O X E D U B N W A S O Z Z J N B L O I Y Q  
F Q N E R F B O L A M B D W C A D X A C K U G S  
A C Z T Z Y V C G L J L O R D G L K J G G N R K  
Q X L H T D E R W W F H V M X R U D B T G G Y K  
R R E G N E Q M Q R L Y O J O B C O H F O F M W  
I A Z I S J K F W C H K O U R V M E S Q F H G N  
C K N R X T R U S T W O R T H Y Q T S I R H C W  
G Q X Z A K E Y R A D L G U Q D P U Q A C U O C

redeemer

righteous

king

lamb

healer

faithful

wonderful

lord

holy

savior

christ

creator

father

saviour

trustworthy

pray

praise

worship

everlasting

joy

bible

love

faith

hope

courageous

# Easter Flower Order Form



## 2024 Easter Flower Order Form Help Beautify our Sanctuary!

Order plants below. Indicate color and quantity.  
Orders and payment are due by Sunday, March 3.

Simply tear out this page and put in the offering plate or mail to  
the church office (5730 Grove St, Edina, MN 55436)  
**with payment to Good Samaritan UMC marked "Easter Flowers."**

	Quantity	\$ Subtotal
Easter Lily (white) \$12	_____	\$ _____
Asiatic Lily \$15	_____	\$ _____
	(yellow) (orange) (pink)	
Azalea \$25	_____	\$ _____
	(pink) (white) (bi-color)	
Hydrangea \$30	_____	\$ _____
	(blue) (pink)	
Tulip \$15	_____	\$ _____
	(yellow) (purple) (pink)	
Mum \$15	_____	\$ _____
	(yellow) (white) (purple)	
Donation for additional flowers to deliver to our homebound members		\$ _____
ORDER TOTAL		\$ _____

\_\_\_\_\_  
YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

\_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE NUMBER

IN MEMORY OF --- or ---  IN HONOR OF (check one and fill out line below)

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to donate my plant to a homebound member.

*Plants may be picked up after the 10:00 a.m. Easter worship service.*



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

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION  
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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)

11:15 a.m. "4 Witnesses to the  
 Truth" Bible Study (see page 5)

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 care upon request.)

6:00 p.m.

- Chancel Chimes Rehearsal
- "4 Witnesses to the Truth" Bible Study (see page 5)

7:00 p.m.

- Chancel Choir Rehearsal

### GOOD SAMARITAN OFFICE HOURS

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