

March
2024

The Samaritan

Worship Themes

March 3 -
3rd Sunday in Lent /
Communion / .
Living Questions:
"What Is My Gift to the
Family of Earth?"

March 10 -
4th Sunday in Lent /
Living Questions:
"How Shall I Live,
Knowing I Will Die?"

March 17-
5th Sunday in Lent /
Living Questions:
"Who Are We
Together With God?"

March 24 - Palm/
Passion Sunday

March 31 - Easter
Sunday



Journey to Easter!



Intergenerational Ukrainian Egg Day
Saturday, March 16 from 2:00-5:00 pm
All ages welcome! Find out more and RSVP at
tinyurl.com/GoodSamEggDay.

Palm/Passion Sunday Worship - March 24
10:00 am in-person; 6:00 am or thereafter online
Join in the waving of palm branches as we sing our Hosannas and
then ready ourselves for the holy events of the coming week.

Maundy Thursday Worship - March 28
7:00 pm (in-person only)
Participate in Holy Communion as we give attention to the meal
Jesus had with his disciples, followed by his betrayal and arrest.

Good Friday Worship - March 29
12:00 pm or thereafter (online only)
This pre-recorded online Tenebrae worship includes
a meditation on the Stations of the Cross
(Facebook or www.good.org).

Easter Sunday Worship, March 31
8:30 or 10:00 am in-person; 6:00 am or thereafter online
Come as we celebrate together
the Good News of Christ's Resurrection.

OUR STAFF

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952-452-9395

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Pastor's Page

Lent is one of the oldest observations on the Christian calendar. It is a season of self-examination, penitence (expressing regret for sin or wrongdoing), fasting, simplicity, conversion, and Christian growth, all in preparation for Easter. These Lenten disciplines are meant to open us to God's transforming presence in our lives.

The metaphor of a journey is often used to describe the season of Lent. I like this image because it implies travel or movement from one place to another. It seems like I've gone on many journeys in my lifetime...physical ones where I travel from one place to another; and spiritual ones related to my faith where I move from one understanding to another.

I also like the image of journey because there are so many ways to go about the process of journeying in one's life. One can do all sorts of planning for an adventure before ever setting foot outside the front door, while others simply head on their way with the confidence that they'll be able to deal with whatever happens.

Whether you plan ahead or handle things on the fly, there are important considerations and choices to make on any journey...like who you are as a person when you set out, what abilities you bring or plan to gain along the way, who might journey with you, what choices you will face and the likely consequences, and where you plan to go.

The fun thing about a journey is that it is an experience...one that is not always the same for every person, even when there are similar starting and ending places. And the choices along the way make for an infinite number of possibilities...it makes any given journey in life a truly unique experience. So it goes for one's journey of faith, too.

If you were to do a quick self-assessment, where would you see yourself in your truly unique journey of faith? Do you see who you are and what abilities you bring? How about those you are journeying with? And what about the choices you are making? As John Wesley would ask, "How is it with your soul?" These prompts are very much like the Living Questions we are considering during our Lenten worship series. Questions such as, "Who Am I?" and "What Do I Love?"

The steps you take during a journey are as important as the destination you are traveling towards. As Rilke once said to his young poet friend, "Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer."

The thing about a journey is that it is never too late to jump on the path. As the ancient saying goes, "the longest journey begins with one step." So I invite you to examine your spiritual health during Lent. Look at who you are and where you are going. And journey together in faith here at Good Sam as we continue contemplating such meaningful questions about life.



On the journey with you,

Pastor Carol

Staff Parish Relations Committee

Editor's Note: The following letter announcing our next Lead Pastor was emailed February 25, 2024, and is included here for those not on our email distribution list.

February 25, 2024

Dear Members and Friends of Good Samaritan UMC:

It was nearly a year ago when we heard the news that we would have a pastoral transition in 2024. Our Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) has been working with conference leadership to prepare for this. The purpose of this letter is to share much awaited news related to this transition.

It is the intention of Bishop Lanette Plambeck to appoint the Reverend Max Richter as Lead Pastor of Good Samaritan United Methodist Church; and acting on behalf of the congregation, our Staff Parish Relations Committee has affirmed Bishop Lanette's intention. Each church member's supportive prayers and acts of kindness during the transition period will be greatly appreciated. This announcement is also being made at Pastor Max's current church, Champlin UMC, on Sunday, February 25. The new appointment will begin with Pastor Max preaching here at Good Sam on Sunday, June 30, 2024.



Our SPRC and additional discernment team members believe Max's leadership style, heart, and passion are the right fit to follow Pastor Carol Zaagsma's excellent ministry these past three years. Pastor Max brings with him 25 years of pastoral experience with strengths in children and youth; music and ritual; staff mentorship and volunteer development; and stewardship. Pastor Max describes himself as "a farm kid from South Dakota." He first heard his call to ministry as a teenager growing up in camping and Conference youth leadership; this calling only strengthened during his undergraduate years at Concordia College in Moorehead, MN. Pastor Max received his Master of Divinity from United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities in 1999 and has served urban and suburban United Methodist churches in the area ever since. Max is single, has a deep interest in vocal music, and loves on his three-year-old Pembroke Welsh Corgi named Pippin.



Please join me and the SPRC in welcoming Pastor Max to our community of faith and fellowship as Lead Pastor at Good Sam. We will be holding a welcome reception on Sunday June 30 after in-person worship, and scheduling neighborhood meet-and-greets for July through September so you can get further opportunities to get to know Pastor Max.

Questions may be addressed to me or any other SPRC members, including Candy Fox, Megan Leill, Lynn Timmer and Julie Young; or additional members of our discernment team, including Sarah Kumagai (representing CYF Ministries), Tony Branch (Church Council Chair), and Byron Olson (Finance Chair).

My Best,

David Litteken
Chair, Staff Parish Relations Committee
Good Samaritan UMC of Edina

Music

Maundy Thursday Open Choir



For our upcoming worship on Maundy Thursday, we welcome anyone interested in lending their voice as part of the Open Choir. No experience or special attire necessary - simply join Paolo and Mary Beth at 6:00 pm, March 28, in the Sanctuary to learn the anthem that will be sung at 7:00 pm worship. Singing is good for the mind, body, and spirit, and we hope you'll join us for a reflective and meaningful service.

Spring Social Event with Homeward Bound

Join Homeward Bound for a Spring Social Event Friday, April 12, in the Fellowship Hall. This will be a fun evening for all ages, so plan now to attend. You seriously won't want to miss this! More details will follow soon.



Save the Date!

Homeward Bound will be performing Monday, July 1, from 7:00-8:00 pm at Maetzold Amphitheater in Centennial Lakes Park, Edina. The band estimates this is their 10th annual performance in this free outdoor concert series, and we always have a great time and enjoy seeing so many Good Sammers there.

~Brad Carlin

Online Engagement

Digital Update: Jan Russell Goes Viral

This past fall we began to put more effort into building up our YouTube Channel as an additional home for online worship, as well as shorter content such as Time with Children, stand-alone sermons, prayers, meditative segments, and music. YouTube is an important part of a successful digital strategy as YouTube videos are often included in Google searches. We've been slowly picking up steam until February 20, when our Time with Children segment on the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant, from last fall, went viral.

As of Sunday, February 25, the video has received 18,293 views, with a total watch time of 64.3 hours for this four-minute video. The video alone has caused our channel to gain 69 subscribers, which nearly doubles our total subscribers. Most of the views came from YouTube suggesting the video to users.



Congratulations to Jan for the creative children's content she brings to Online Worship every week, and for the increased attention this one video has brought to Good Samaritan UMC. You can view our "famous" video by scanning the QR code to the left, or browse any number of other videos at www.youtube.com/@goodsamaritanunitedmethodi5195.



~Christian Nielsen

Congregational Care

Adrenaline for Your Souls

Hebrews 12:1-3 The Message

Do you see what this means - all these pioneers who blazed the way, all these veterans cheering us on? It means we'd better get on with it. Strip down, start running - and never quit! No extra spiritual fat, no parasitic sins. Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in.

Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed - that exhilarating finish in and with God - he could put up with anything along the way: Cross, shame, whatever. And now he's there, in the place of honor, right alongside God. When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story again, item by item, that long litany of hostility he plowed through. That will shoot adrenaline into your souls!

Hebrews is written to a community of believers whose faith is wavering. Therefore, this letter comes to them filled with energy and encouragement. Perhaps they have lost loved ones recently to persecutions by Rome; perhaps they have just grown complacent or apathetic due to the world of conflicting voices which bombard them daily. They need something to bolster their faith. And so, this letter was sent to do just that.

Encouragement is throughout this passage, but it is the last two lines which really grab my attention. "When you find yourselves flagging in your faith, go over that story again That will shoot adrenaline into your souls!"

I don't know about you, but my spiritual life isn't a steady climb, ever moving to greater heights with Christ. I've had powerful times in life, filled with devotion and growth, and then stagnant (even waning) times in life when I didn't remain close to God through study, prayer, worship, or service to others. After a while I'd look up and see that, indeed, my faith was flagging; my troubles and grief were getting the best of me; my self-focus was actually draining the life from me. Oh no, what should I do?

The answer: begin by revisiting the story of Christ again! Raise your eyes beyond your current circumstances and see a bigger picture of life, death, and eternity. Jesus never lost this perspective, and it enabled him to get through anything the world threw at him. If we never lose this perspective, the same holy energy will be ours to see us through life's dark times as well. Lent is the perfect time to revisit the story of Christ again!

Prayer: *Eternal Lord who sees beyond the here-and-now, remind my soul again of those greater realities. Lift my eyes past today, past myself, past whatever pains may be dragging me down or keeping me from fully and energetically living each day which you have given me. My spirit needs a booster shot of adrenaline. Let me hear your story again this Lent, so that I may continue to climb to new heights in my faith with you! Amen.*

Jim Beard
(he/him)

Director of
Congregational Care

jim@good.org
952-452-9396



Congregational Care

Look What's Coming!

Thanks to the many who participated on our Spiritual Growth Survey this past quarter. From it we learned your areas of greatest interest for spiritual vitality, along with information on timing, format, and availability. A second survey then went out to those interested in the general areas which scored highest, asking this time for interest in specific opportunities. In no particular order, here are the general areas along with the specific opportunities which came in with the highest levels of interest:



- Exploring the Bible 4 Witnesses to the Truth
- Exploring the Bible Demystifying the Book of Revelation
- Exploring the Bible Images of Paul

- Everyday Justice The Lorax and Other Eco-Justice Voices
- Everyday Justice Making Room at the Table

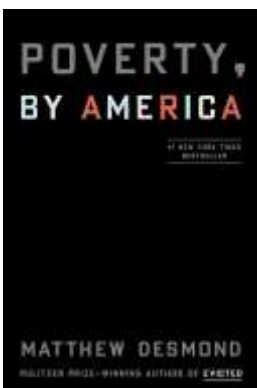
- Fellowship Gatherings Take a Hike
- Fellowship Gatherings Food, Glorious Food

- Spiritual Living Discover Your Spirituality Type
- Spiritual Living The Path (United Methodist spiritual disciplines)

Moving forward through 2024, these will be the options we will attempt to bring forward for you. Some will be short courses; some will be one-time workshops. Some will be in-house, some outdoors, some online. Some will be led by Good Sam staff, while others will be presented by outside speakers. You wanted a variety, so we will pay attention and do the best we can. Best laid plans can always change, but here are some opportunities we can look forward to sharing together. Along with all of the great existing ministries which Good Sam already offers, may these nurture your soul and bless your journeys of faith!

~ Pastor Jim Beard

Thursday Afternoon Book Group



Our next meeting is on March 14 at 1:00 pm in the Fireside Room. The discussion title is *Poverty, By America* by Matthew Desmond. This book is a powerful inquiry into why the United States is the richest country in the world with the largest amount of poverty.

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

Children, Youth and Family Ministries

The Spiritual Practice of Showing Up

One of the things we came to realize during the pandemic is how very busy our lives were. As we find ourselves post-pandemic, life has regained the breakneck pace.

We sometimes think the priority needs to be quality time. Yes, but, quantity time is important too. Showing up for someone is just as meaningful.

I got the opportunity to show up for three of our youth recently. It was wonderful to see the love of music and the commitment to teamwork and sportsmanship of our youth. It gave me insight into their lives. Seeing the smiles as they greet their friends post-concert; the willingness to step up and learn a routine in a short amount of time and to perform it with another team from their studio; the strong character of giving a hand up to a crosstown rival player who fell on the court.

We catch glimpses of what amazing people our youth are becoming. Showing up for each other is one of the ways we bring heaven to earth.

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

Palm Sunday

March 24
Meet in the Fireside Room at 9:45 am if you would like to participate in the palm parade.

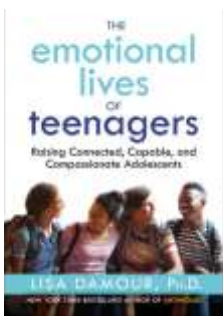
INTERGENERATIONAL UKRAINIAN EGG DAY

MARCH 16, 2024 2:00-5:00PM
FELLOWSHIP HALL

Bring the whole family and learn how to make your very own Ukrainian pysanka eggs. All supplies provided. We pray for peace and continue to support the people of Ukraine. Please RSVP by March 13 with the QR code or at tinyurl.com/GoodSamEggDay.

Contact Jan with questions - jan@good.org or (952) 452-9398.

Parent Book Study



The Emotional Lives of Teenagers: Raising Connected, Capable, and Compassionate Adolescents
by Lisa Damour

This is a great book that I read and want to share with you. - Sundays, April 14 and 28, 11:15 am to Noon. Dr. Damour dives deep into the changing emotional landscape of kids growing into their teen emotions. She offers great tools for both parents and their kids. Scan the QR code to sign up!



Camp Firelight
A SUMMER CAMP PHASE 2024
ADVENTURE WITH GOD

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

Missions

March is Minnesota Foodshare Month
February 26 – April 6



We invite you to join VEAP and Joyce Uptown Foodshelf to participate in the annual Minnesota FoodShare Campaign, the largest grassroots food and fund drive in the state. This spring drive brings together various community organizations, businesses, and faith communities to help stock nearly 300 food shelves statewide, including VEAP, and the Joyce Uptown Foodshelf. Watch for additional details in VEAP's March e-newsletter and in the Good Samaritan Highlights. Sue Ohman assists in our efforts with VEAP and Tony Branch works with Joyce Uptown Foodshelf. Bags and a drop-off area are in the Narthex and on the Lower Level.

~ Brian Boysen and Pat Deckas Becerra

Helping Many!

The Missions Team thanks you for the generous support of our projects – especially through the Christmas Offering. Your gifts are going to work to support VEAP's food shelf (\$1,000); Joyce Food Shelf (\$1,000); UMCOR international service project in Ukraine



(\$1,400); A Better Chance Edina to help minority students live up to their potential (\$500); Camphor Memorial UMC Scholarships (\$500).

In addition, funds were designated for the Ormsby School in Baiwalla, Sierra Leone in Africa where JoAnn Knutson and Pat Deckas Becerra will be going on March 11. This school was described in detail in the February Samaritan. Your generosity is greatly appreciated – it is what allows the Mission Team to support these important causes and other projects.

~ Brian Boysen and Pat Deckas Becerra



Serving
Opportunities

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

Friday, March 8 - 7:00-8:45 pm

Wednesday, March 13 - 9:30-11:15 am
(note time change)

Sign up with Jane Heimerl at
jane.heimerl@yahoo.com

by two days ahead. Space is limited!

Giving Hope

Pastor Jim made the Mission Team aware of a mother and her two girls, ages 7 and 9, who were coming out of homelessness so needed virtually everything for a new place to live. The Mission Team gave her a carload of many kitchen necessities including a microwave, along with books and toys for the kids, and the team even was able to collect and deliver some furniture, like twin beds and a dresser.



~ Brian Boysen and Pat Deckas Becerra

The Good Samaritan Foundation

Foundation Update



The Foundation Board held its first-quarter meeting on February 15. We welcomed new Board member Jane Kasiske! Based on the Foundation fund balances on December 31, 2023, the Board approved the 2024 withdrawal amounts from the Outreach Fund at \$13,900 and \$15,000 from the Evergreen Fund. Amazing fact: In 2020, the annual draw from the Evergreen Fund was \$7,000. Because of a generous legacy gift and other gifts, in four years the annual 5% draw has grown to \$15,000!

Do you have any questions about the workings of The Good Samaritan Foundation? Are you considering setting up a legacy gift to The Foundation? Would you like to suggest a grant in support of mission and ministry, or to volunteer your time by serving on The Foundation Board of Directors? Please contact Claudia at claudiaLboysen@gmail.com for more information.

Finance Team

Many Thanks!

As we start a new financial year at Good Samaritan, the Finance Committee would like to say... Thank You!

- 2023 – We finished the year better than Budget, requiring only a \$8,091 use of our Reserve Fund (over \$40k better than budget)
- 2024 – Thank you for your increased pledges - \$20k increase over 2023
- And we are thankful for those who both prepaid their pledge (\$80,882) and those who pledge via ACH. Both help with cashflow, especially in the leaner summer months

The Finance Committee made some decisions at our last meeting to invest some funds to maximize our assets (for example, we have \$35k in Capital funds we won't need until next year, so we will be putting those funds to work in a CD).

The table below reflects our financial state through the end of January. January income is larger than normal due to some members pre-paying their 2024 pledge in December. ~ Byron Olson

	January Actuals	January Plan	Year-to-Date
Income	\$119,201	\$120,829	\$119,201
Expense	\$53,161	\$57,283	\$53,161
Net	\$66,040	\$63,546	\$66,040

2024 Budget

Editor's Note: Following is the 2024 Budget, approved at the All-Church Conference held January 28, 2024. For any questions, please contact Byron Olson, Chair of the Finance Committee.

Good Samaritan United Methodist Church For fiscal year 2024

Description	2023 EOY	2023 Budget	2024 Budget
001 - INCOME RECEIVED			
Pledges-Current Yr-Rcvd This Year	449,805	481,170	500,000
Pledges-Current Yr-Ppd Last Year	79,030	78,830	80,882
Allowance for Uncollectable Pledges	0	-10,000	-15,000
Pledges-Prior Yr- Rcvd This Year	250		
Unpledged Income	49,525	70,000	50,000
Loose Offering	2,971	2,000	3,000
Reserve Fund	8,091	48,911	15,031
Interest Income	1,140		3,000
Facility Usage Fees	39,724	25,000	40,000
Creekside Pre-School	41,609	39,026	37,536
Misc Rev	3,855		1,000
Evergreen Fund (5%)	13,000	13,000	15,000
TOTAL INCOME	689,000	747,937	730,449
EXPENSE			
TOTAL APPORTIONMENTS & MISSIONS	92,678	92,678	94,140
TOTAL PERSONNEL EXPENSE	369,012	384,266	385,016
004 - PROGRAMS EXPENSE:			
Total Children's Program	4,505	6,350	5,650
Total Youth Program	3,586	5,950	4,900
Total Adult Program	691	1,000	900
Total Congregational Care	256	1,000	600
TOTAL WORSHIP	4,253	4,900	4,500
TOTAL FELLOWSHIP	2,300	3,000	2,550
TOTAL MUSIC	2,903	10,700	7,500
OTHER PROGRAMS:			
Library Expense	150	150	150
Marketing	1,717	2,000	2,000
Stewardship	0	200	200
Membership Committee-Expenses	0	150	150
Reconciling Committee Expenses	800	800	800
Missions	0	1,000	1,000
Lay member to Annual Conference	0	300	300
TOTAL OTHER PROGRAMS	2,667	4,600	4,600
TOTAL PROGRAM EXPENSE	21,161	37,500	31,200

2024 Budget, cont.

Good Samaritan United Methodist Church
For fiscal year 2024

Description	2023 EOY	2023 Budget	2024 Budget
005 - OFFICE EXPENSE:			
Postage	2,870	3,000	2,500
Equipment leases	25,948	25,000	21,500
IT Support	6,414	8,000	7,500
Elect Records Mgt	3,744	4,000	4,000
Printing/Copying-Expense	162	600	500
Office Supplies	1,047	2,000	1,500
Bank/Credit Card Fees	1,992	1,500	2,000
Other Office Expense	43	500	100
Audit of Good Samaritan Books	0	7,500	10,000
TOTAL OFFICE EXPENSE	42,220	52,100	49,600
006 - PROPERTY EXPENSE:			
Electricity	29,080	35,000	31,000
Gas	17,687	20,000	20,000
Telephone/Internet	3,924	4,000	4,000
Other Utilities	30,042	30,000	30,000
Snow Plowing	7,831	5,000	6,000
Grounds Maintenance	6,611	10,000	8,000
Insurance	22,240	24,000	24,000
Taxes/Assessments	9,066	10,000	9,500
Van Maintenance/Gas	964	200	500
Non-Recurring Expenses	2,625	5,000	3,000
TOTAL PROPERTY EXPENSE	130,070	143,200	136,000
007 - BUILDING EXPENSE:			
Equipment	15	1,000	500
Supplies	7,652	7,200	7,000
Maintenance	10,126	17,000	11,000
Building Repairs (non-recurring)	3,073	0	3,000
Mortgage	12,993	12,993	12,993
TOTAL BUILDING EXPENSE	33,859	38,193	34,493
TOTAL Expense	689,000	747,937	730,449
TOTAL INCOME OVER (UNDER) EXPENSE	0	1	0



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

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
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Electronic Service Requested



OUR VISION

INSPIRING
 Joyful Faith

BUILDING
 a Loving
 Community

SERVING
 Neighbors Near
 and Far

SUNDAYS

Worship
 10:00 am (In-person and Online)

Nursery
 9:45-11:30 am, Infants - Age 3

Children's Sunday School
 Held during worship following
 Children's Time. All are welcome!
 Exploring the Bible
 11:15 am "4 Witnesses to the Truth"

WEDNESDAYS

(Nursery care upon request)

- 6:00 pm
 - Chancel Chimes Rehearsal
 - Exploring the Bible - "4 Witnesses to the Truth"
- 7:00 pm
 - Chancel Choir Rehearsal

GOOD SAMARITAN OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
 Phone (952) 929-0049