

October
2024

The Samaritan

Worship Themes

October 6 - World
Wide Communion /
Confirmation / Bible
Sunday / "Do Not
Hinder Them"

October 13 - "A Bold
Faith"

October 20 - "True
Greatness"

October 27 - "Take
Heart"



And the Table Will Be Wide

A Blessing for World Communion Sunday

And the table will be wide.
And the welcome will be wide.
And the arms will open wide to gather us in.
And our hearts will open wide to receive.

And we will come as children who trust there is enough.
And we will come unhindered and free.
And our aching will be met with bread.
And our sorrow will be met with wine.

And we will open our hands to the feast without shame.
And we will turn toward each other without fear.
And we will give up our appetite for despair.
And we will taste and know of delight.

And we will become bread for a hungry world.
And we will become drink for those who thirst.
And the blessed will become the blessing.
And everywhere will be the feast.

~ Jan Richardson

United Methodist pastor, poet and visual artist



The Best Supper © Jan Richardson. janrichardson.com

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Pastor's Page

We are off to a great fall at Good Sam! On October 6, we have Confirmation and World Wide Communion to look forward to along with our full music ministries and continued mission in our local community, nation and world. Congratulations to our confirmands Finn Holland and Emma Wallenberg-Kirch and their families!



October is a time to savor the emerging fall colors, the end of the fall harvest and prepare for the holiday season just around the corner.

November New Member Classes

Are you interested in learning more about Good Samaritan UMC and possibly joining? I am offering two membership exploration classes November 3 and 10 following worship from 11:30 am-12:15 pm in the Fireside Room. Discussion will include getting acquainted, an overview of United Methodist history and theology and plenty of open time for questions. Kids, youth, and adults are all invited for the discussion. We'll welcome new members on November 17 during our Thanksgiving Service. Please contact me with any questions and sign up for the classes at max@good.org.

Generosity Sunday

In gratitude for all the good gifts God entrusts to us we will bless our estimate of giving cards for 2025 on Sunday, November 10 during the service. Watch your home mailbox for a pledge card as we recommit to share our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness through the ministries of Good Samaritan United Methodist Church.

Yours together in ministry,

Pastor Max

Mark your calendars now for these special Advent/Christmas services:

December:

- 1 - 4:00 p.m. Hanging of the Greens featuring the Good Samaritan OrcaBand; Light refreshments to follow.
- 8 - 10:00 a.m. Advent Family Worship
- 15 - 4:00 p.m. Lessons and Carols Scripture and songs with Chancel Chimes, Chancel Choir, Homeward Bound band
- 24 - Christmas Eve
4:00 p.m. Family Service with Homeward Bound band
9:00 p.m. Candlelight Service with Chancel Choir

Worship

Digital Ministries Update

As we move into the fall, I'm excited by all the things we've accomplished so far this year, and I look forward to growing our digital ministries while focusing on sustainability of these ministries.

The past few months have been a busy time for our Digital Team:

- We've started working with the organization Reach the Lost to increase our Google search results, improve our website visibility, and help us take advantage of thousands of dollars in free Google advertising each month. This has been a collaborative effort across several teams and disciplines, with Dave Knutson and Dandy Lewis taking a great deal of leadership.
- Our Online Worship is now available on cable on-demand platforms from Southwest Community Television (Channel 15 SD, 799 HD), airing four times a week to cable subscribers in the Southwest Metro. This should be a great way to increase our visibility in the community, as well as reaching those who may not be as tech-savvy. I know from my years of working with seniors, this is a great way to connect to people who are mostly at home.
- We continue to provide a high-quality, intentionally produced Online Worship experience, creating sacred and intimate space for those who can't attend worship in person or may be in places where they don't feel comfortable attending in-person service. Segments from these worship services, especially our Children's Time and music, receive many plays as stand-alone videos. I'm grateful for all those who collaborate to produce these experiences.
- Our YouTube Channel and Facebook Pages continue to increase in followers, and our Good Samaritan Online Community is growing more slowly but is fostering some

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great online conversation. Some of our Facebook and Instagram Reels have been viewed over a thousand times. If you are a user of Facebook, YouTube, or Instagram, please follow our pages and consider joining our private Facebook group.

- We're also offering ways to participate in our education classes remotely through Zoom and video recording, and hybrid experiences such as Take A Hike, which combines in-person experience with digital devotional guides.

How You Can Help

There are many ways to support our online ministries with your service - on Sunday mornings we need in-person worship AV support; during the week you can help with Zoom support, camera operation for online worship, reading for online worship, and other areas. Reach out to me at christian@good.org to find out more.



Congregational Care

Stop the Giving!

So, Moses sent out orders through the camp: "Men! Women! No more offerings for the building of the Sanctuary!" The people were ordered to stop bringing offerings! There was plenty of material for all the work to be done. Enough and more than enough. Exodus 36:6-7 MSG

The Ancient Israelites have escaped from Egypt's Pharaoh and are traversing the wilderness under Moses' leadership in search of the Promised Land, which is envisioned to be flowing with milk and honey. Even though the people were poor and basically homeless, they apparently had plenty. These people were once slaves, and yet now they generously give to the construction of their tabernacle, their traveling church building and tribute to God. So much came in that Moses had to send out an edict to stop giving! That which the people gave was of highest value – gold, gems, oil, imported woods, purple fabric – things which were expensive and rare.



Today, we give money, a universal standardization of value. But I wonder if giving the actual item imparted more ownership than what we experience today. Furthermore, I wonder how our generosity to God compares to those who followed Moses. Do we give just as much or even more, but the church simply keeps needing more and more? Or do we give less, and therefore no edict of restraint will ever be heard by us?

Prayer: Dear and gracious Lord, may our hearts be so overwhelmed by your lavishness on us that our response overwhelms you. Help us to give excessively to you and your work in order to build your kingdom here today. Amen.

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Give a Book - Read a Book!

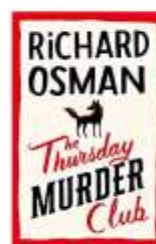
We once again have an opportunity to donate new books to the Good Samaritan Library. The Library Group - Vicki Dunn, Joan Hursh, Mary Lewis, and Marcia Willett - have established a list of books that would be good for the library to have available for the congregation for checkout.



The list of books to choose from is online - tinyurl.com/GSLibraryDonate - and displayed in the library. If you would like to donate and have purchased the new book, it can be dropped off in the reception area by the Church Office.

Please include a note with your name and contact information so we may send you a donation receipt and a thank you. If you have questions, please contact anyone on the library group. Thanks for your help as we try to stretch out the budget with new and current books.

Thursday Afternoon Book Club



Our next meeting is on Thursday, October 10 at 1:00 pm in the Fireside Room. The discussion title is *The Thursday Murder Club* by Richard Osman, the story of four senior citizens who find themselves at the center of a murder investigation. Please join us for discussion, refreshments and fellowship Questions: Contact Vicki Dunn, victoria.dunn@q.com or 952-930-3431.

Children, Youth and Family Ministries

Just when I think of a topic that I want to bring to your attention, Traci Smith writes an article about it, and says it so very well. There are so many tough issues vying for our attention, and our kids hear and see these issues too. Here is a way for you to have those tough conversations with you family. ~ Jan

Faithful Conversations on Tough Topics *How to bring faith into the hard conversations with your children*

By Traci Smith, shared with permission

As parents, we're faced with the sacred responsibility of helping our children navigate the world around them. There are days filled with joy and laughter, but there are also moments when tough questions arise—questions about loss, fear, injustice, or even doubt. How do we guide our children through these difficult topics while also nurturing their faith? How can we be a source of both truth and comfort when the world feels uncertain?

The key lies in creating space for faithful conversations. These are conversations where faith is not just a backdrop, but a tool to engage with life's big questions. In these moments, we're called to offer both vulnerability and hope, showing our children that God's love is present, even in the most challenging times.

1. Begin with Honesty and Vulnerability

When our children ask tough questions—about death, injustice, or fear—it's tempting to shield them from the complexity of it all. Yet one of the most powerful things we can do is show them that we, too, are grappling with these questions. There's a deep holiness in admitting that we don't have all the answers. Rather than offering quick solutions, start by creating a safe space for the conversation. You might say, "That's a really important question," or "I've thought about that, too." By sharing your vulnerability, you show your children that it's okay to feel unsure or sad, and that faith can be a companion in that uncertainty.



Jan M. Russell (she/her)

Director of Children, Youth
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When your child knows it's okay to ask hard questions and express tough emotions, you build a foundation of trust and openness. And from there, you can begin to weave into your faith a faith that doesn't promise easy answers, but one that is present in every question.

2. Use Simple, Grounding Rituals

During these conversations, creating a small ritual can be a comforting way to ground your child. For example, you could light a candle as a symbol of God's presence with you during the conversation. Lighting that candle every time you talk about something difficult could become a family practice, a way to physically remind your children that even in tough times, God is near.

Rituals give children something to hold onto in a world that often feels chaotic. A short prayer, a moment of silence, or even holding hands together can make difficult conversations feel sacred. They serve as a tangible reminder that God's love surrounds your family, even in the hardest moments.

3. Lean into Scripture Stories and Faith Practices

Rather than treating faith as an afterthought in difficult conversations, weave it into the heart of your discussions. Use scripture stories to offer

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Children, Youth and Family Ministries

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comfort and context. Stories like Jesus calming the storm or God's promise to be with us in Isaiah 41:10 can be powerful tools to remind your children that faith doesn't ignore the tough parts of life—it embraces them.

Instead of saying, "Don't worry, everything will be okay," you might say, "I know this is hard, but do you remember when Jesus' friends were scared in the storm? They called on Jesus, and Jesus was there with them. We can do that too."

This approach shows your child that faith is an active, living part of their lives—not just something they do at church, but something that walks with them through the tough questions.

4. Don't Be Afraid of Silence

Sometimes, after a difficult question, the best thing you can do is pause and sit in the silence together. You don't need to rush to offer an answer. Silence can be deeply holy—it can be a space where God speaks in ways we can't anticipate.

You can tell your child, "Let's sit with that for a minute," or "Let's take a moment to breathe and listen." This practice teaches them that silence isn't something to fear, but something to embrace. It also shows that faith isn't just about talking—it's about listening for God's voice in the quiet.

5. Offer Hope, Not Certainty

When your child is struggling with big, tough questions, resist the urge to offer certainty. Instead, offer hope. Rather than saying, "This will get better," you might say, "God is with us, even when things feel hard." Instead of promising that bad things won't happen, affirm that love and faith remain.

Hope reminds your children that even when the world feels shaky, there is something steady to hold onto. Faithful conversations are less about giving the "right" answers and more about offering the truth that God is always with us, loving us through every doubt, every fear, and every question.

Care Package Season!

We would like to send care packages to the young adults in our lives. Whether in college, the military, working, taking a gap year, or whatever, we want to let our 18- to 24-year-olds know we care and are thinking of them. Please email Jan at jan@good.org with their mailing address.



Missions



ASP 2025

Appalachia Service Project
Information Night
Thursday, October 10, 6:30 p.m.
Fellowship Hall

2025 will mark Good Samaritan's 44th year of participation in ASP, traveling to a location in Appalachia to help make critical repairs to a family's home. Since COVID, the number of ASP volunteers has decreased, but the need in Appalachia has not diminished and neither has our commitment to serving the wonderful people of this area. We welcome youth who have completed 8th grade on up, college students/young adults, and any other interested adults. Church membership or construction experience are not requirements. Gather friends and family and join us as we repair homes, develop relationships, and build hope. If interested, please email Jan at jan@good.org so we can add you to our email list. Our 2025 trip dates are to be determined.



VEAP Golden Gala 2024

VEAP (Volunteers Enlisted to Assist People) Food Bank is thrilled to invite you to the most dazzling event of the fall. Join them the evening of Friday, November 8, 2024, at the Radisson Blu Mall of America for their 50th Anniversary Golden Gala. Together, we'll celebrate five decades of creating pathways to stronger, more hopeful communities through access to healthy food, housing stability, and supportive services. Don't miss out on this golden opportunity to make a difference! Get more details and purchase tickets at veap.org/blog/events/veap-golden-gala-2024/.

Continued Support for Joyce

Thanks to your continued support, the Missions Team voted at their September meeting to contribute \$1,000 to Joyce Uptown Foodshelf.



October Reconciling Report



Summer flew by but not before an August 24 Worship of Reconciliation & Celebration hosted by First UMC of the St. Cloud Region in Sartell. It was a celebration and time to share and plan. Good Samaritan was well represented and the gathering was a productive event.

We celebrate the recent addition of The Well - Rosemount and First UMC - Stillwater as reconciling congregations. The total on our website is now at 33 including two campus-based communities. For more information go to www.mnrcumc.org.

The work ahead involves the process of ratification of regionalization provisions from General Conference.

Minnesota Reconciling Congregations met on September 12 to among other things, plan an event scheduled for November 7, 2024, from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. on Zoom. The topic will be **"Welcoming"** and feature **Ellie Krug, a trans woman** who leads seminars on transphobia. Please watch for additional details as the date approaches.

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 14, 7:00 p.m. by remote access. Questions or comments: contact Brian Boysen: 952-937-0624 or 612-220-3795 or email at: bteambackup@earthlink.net.

Missions



Hearts & Hammers Success!

Hearts & Hammers is a local organization that assists low-income homeowners with free exterior restorations to keep them in the homes they love.

Good Samaritan had a volunteer day on Saturday, September 7 this year. These photos are of the finished product! Thanks to all who made it happen, including Karen Bach for her planning, leadership, and recruitment; Roy Moeller for leading the power washing; Mike Olauson for leading repairs; all those who volunteered and followed the leaders to completion; and our helpful and gracious homeowners who made it a wonderful experience. Thanks also for the weather as it was exceptional and very helpful. And thanks to the entire congregation for supporting this work. Stay tuned for our 2025 project!

~ Brian Boysen



A Place to Call Home

Grand Opening of Vista 44 in Hopkins

Good Samaritan supported this 50 units of deeply affordable, supportive housing that had its Grand Opening on September 12.



The word "Wow!" has been echoing in the entrance of Vista 44 as new residents move in. Get an inside glimpse and see for yourself by visiting beaconinterfaith.org/blog/housing/overview-vista-44/.

Beacon's work doesn't stop once a building is created. It takes about \$1,000 for Beacon to ensure quality supportive services to the residents of one Vista 44 home each month. These services assist parents and children with everything from goal setting, family well-being, and financial literacy to finding employment or improving mental health. See the website above to donate.



Serving Opportunity

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

Wednesday, October 9 - 9:30-11:15 a.m.
Friday, October 18 - 7:00-8:30 p.m.

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

Missions

Pastor Judith Gaima from Baiwalla, Sierra Leone Visits Good Samaritan

While living in the US for 18 years, Pastor Judith (Banya) Gaima inspired many with her determination to live out her dream to build the first secondary school in her remote village of Baiwalla, which has no electricity or running water. About 50 Methodist churches in Minnesota and many friends provided the funding through OC Ministries. In 2019, the school opened with 10 teachers and 124 students. For the 2024-2025 school year, there will be 32 teachers and nearly 500 students! Their first class of 17 students graduated this spring. They had to travel to another town to take the West African Graduation Exam, which they all passed. This totally validates this school which has become a model school for the whole area.



On Tuesday, September 17, we had a fabulous evening with Pastor Judith. We enjoyed a delicious African Ground Nut Stew, which consists of chicken, potatoes, peanuts, and peanut butter! Ask JoAnn Knutson or Pat Deckas Becerra for the recipe and try it yourself! We also had tiny, cute rolls, a nice green salad with a fruit salad for dessert – no cake or cookies for an African meal! Pastor Judith was in Minnesota for a few weeks and joined



us that night. After the meal she did a very informative PowerPoint presentation about her school. You can access her presentation from our good.org website or at tinyurl.com/GSBaiwalla.

The official name is the Richard Ormsby School because he was the Minnesota pastor responsible for raising a good portion of the initial funding for this beautiful school. The community had to chop down

the trees in their rainforest to make room for it - plus make all the bricks by hand; we learned the best bricks are made of sand from their two-foot high ant-



hills! The parents now also express gratitude for the 44 jobs the Ormsby School offers to community people, besides the teachers. This school is revitalizing the community!

Thanks for being generous! The people of Good Samaritan have certainly given good financial support in the past, and we hope that will continue with donations of any size. \$350 provides a Student Scholarship to support a child for one year. \$150 pays for their lunches for one year. If you have an IRA, check with your financial planner about using your required deduction, your RMD, to send part of it to help this worthy cause. Here are three other ways to contribute:

1. Give online by going to ocministriesmn.org and pay with a credit card.
2. Mail a check to Minnesota Annual Conference, 122 W. Franklin Ave., Suite 400, Minneapolis, MN 55404. Put in the memo line: "Baiwalla Children's education" .
3. You can write a check to Good Samaritan UMC, but please indicate "Baiwalla School" in the memo line.

Good Sam Pickleball Club

Let the Play Begin!

The Good Sam Pickleball Club is seeking players!!

The Good Samaritan fall pickleball season is here and we would like *any* adult church member who has *any* interest in playing the fastest growing, most versatile paddle ball game to join us on Saturday mornings.



For those of you unfamiliar with the game, it's a paddle ball game that has been described as kind of like a combination of tennis (without all the running), table tennis (without the table), and badminton (without the shuttlecock) and it's fun.

To play with us you need NO previous paddle/racket skills, just a desire to have some fun, get some exercise, and learn the game. We have two courts in our gym. On Saturdays only, on one court we will offer *Good Samaritan members* instructions on fundamental skills and beginners play. The second court will be for play by our church members only with game skills and those who seek an opportunity for competition.

We will begin our no-cost, *church members-only*, instruction and play sessions on October 5 from 10:00-11:00 a.m. in our Good Samaritan Gym.

For church members who wish to play beyond the Saturday 10:00-11:00 a.m. schedule, we have *free-will* offering play for all Good Sam Pickleball Club members (church members and registered guests) on Mondays and Thursdays from 3:15 - 5:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Should you wish to join us and have no equipment, we have paddles and balls available for your play.

For participation in any/all sessions, you will need to be registered to play. Registration forms will be available in the Gym or the reception area outside the Church Office.

We hope to see you ON the court, NOT IN COURT!

For further information contact (call or text) Ed Hammersten (612-201-0161) or Rev. Paul Caseman (520-468-9894).



Trustees

Maintenance Minute: Fall Happenings

Happy start of the school year to all your kiddos out there and especially to you parents! My son, Mason (15) has a birthday coming up on October 31st. He just started his sophomore year of high school and my daughter, Paisley(11), is in her first year of middle school. Crazy how fast these kids have grown up. When I started at Good Sam, Mason was not even one year-old yet!



Our preschool at Good Samaritan, Creekside Children's Place, also started up again after summer. It's always great getting some more company in the building. The school year for Creekside usually starts with a few tears and sad faces from the kiddos (and parents) when being dropped off. That's typical. I know Mason and Paisley did this as well at that age. In my experience with Creekside, as basically an outsider looking in, the tears usually only last a week or two.

Creekside's teachers and director, Danielle, show so much love and compassion for these little ones. You can definitely see why it does not take a long time at all for them to get settled in and go from being sad at drop off to being super excited to be at school!



As I transition to fall, in early October I contact our irrigation company to have our sprinklers turned off and winterized. They bring a large capacity air compressor in and blow out the water from each of our 17 zones. This ensures they are completely clear of any water that could potentially cause the line to freeze and burst. It was a great year for saving money on our water bill due to the rain we got, unlike last year's drought. This was also in part due to our upgraded system being able to detect the

amount of water that has fallen and adjusting itself from that on how much time to water each zone.

Dan Green
(he/him)

Building Engineer

danrg@good.org
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I'm also preparing our snowblowers for winter. I check the slides, scraper blades, and paddles and make sure they are running well after having their fuel stabilized in early spring. One key note I have for this is that if you use a gas-powered snowblower, always use non-oxygenated fuel. It is more expensive, but in the end, using it is best to make sure your carburetors do not get gummed up with bad gas causing issues with how it runs. I was told this many years ago by a professional mechanic and have never used anything else since. You can use it in anything with a small motor. You will find you won't be sending your equipment in for tuneups as much. I tune and clean the carbs on our equipment at Good Sam myself, but instead of yearly, I only need to do this about every 4-5 years since starting the use of non-oxy fuel.

Since I've started writing these articles I've received so much great feedback from so many people. I really appreciate this! If there is anything you may be interested in in the building or grounds, there's a high chance I know something about it, so please reach out to me at danrg@good.org. I'd love to know what you may be interested in!





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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 care upon request)

6:00 p.m.

- Chancel Chimes Rehearsal

7:00 p.m.

- Youth Group

7:00 p.m.

- Chancel Choir Rehearsal

GOOD SAMARITAN OFFICE HOURS

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