

November
2024

The Samaritan

Worship Themes

November 3 - All
Saints' Sunday /
Communion / "And
Again I Say Rejoice"

November 10 -
Generosity Sunday /
"Generous Lives"

November 17 - New
Members Sunday /
"Encouraging Lives"

November 24 -
Gratitude Sunday /
"Grateful Lives"



A Gathering of Spirits © Jan L. Richardson. janrichardson.com.

For Those Who Walked With Us

For those
who walked with us,
this is a prayer.

For those
who have gone ahead,
this is a blessing.

For those
who touched and tended us,
who lingered with us
while they lived,
this is a thanksgiving.

For those
who journey still with us
in the shadows of awareness,
in the crevices of memory,
in the landscape of our dreams,
this is a benediction.

~Jan Richardson

OUR STAFF

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Pastor's Page

November is here! As we move into the holiday season I want to highlight these opportunities in our worship life together.

11/6 All Saints Sunday

We will honor our loved ones who have died since this service one year ago. We'll name these saints in worship: Don Amren, Mary Lund, Jan Quick, Marlys Rech-kemmer and Lu VanBenthuisen.

Everyone will have opportunities to light candles in honor of loved ones in the Great Cloud of Witnesses. We will also celebrate Holy Communion.

11/10 Generosity Sunday

We will bless our estimate-of-giving cards for 2025 as we re-dedicate our prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness for the new year ahead. Your on-going support of our ministries makes a difference not only in our congregation but also in the community and world as we share our gifts together. Watch for a letter with details.

11/17 New Member Sunday

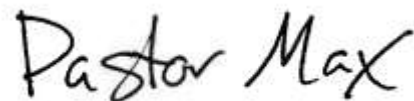
We will welcome new members and kick off the holiday season with a gratitude-themed service. Membership Exploration sessions will be held after worship in the Fireside Room on 11/3 and 11/10. You are welcome to attend one or both sessions. Please see me to sign up or email your RSVP to max@good.org .

11/24 Gratitude Sunday

We will give thanks for God's many blessings in our lives throughout November. We have so much gratitude to embrace: honoring loved ones no longer physically here, celebrating the opportunity to give back from the abundance of our lives, and welcoming new people into the family of Good Samaritan with you.

As I close this cover letter, a word of thanks to our Staff Parish Team for the thoughtful basket of caramels and apples in honor of Pastor Appreciation Month. I am blessed to be in ministry with you!

With gratitude and love,



Worship

Looking to Advent



Join us for this wonderful, long-standing tradition at Good Samaritan where we decorate our sanctuary for the Christmas season! Music will be provided at this family-friendly service by our own Orchaband.

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 or 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 December 1 at 3:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. It's great fun! Contact Sarah Kumagai with questions - 952-944-2683.

On Sunday, December 8, during our 10:00 a.m. worship, we will celebrate Advent with a Family Worship service. More details will follow in the December newsletter.



As we prepare our hearts for the Christmas season, we warmly invite you to join us for a beautiful evening of Lessons & Carols on Sunday, December 15 at 4:00 p.m. This beloved service will feature our music ensembles Chancel Choir, Chancel Chimes, and Homeward Bound as well as readings of the Nine Lessons and singing of traditional carols.

Following the service, we'll gather for a festive reception to share in the joy of the season and fellowship with one another.

There's still time to be a part of this year's Lessons & Carols service! If you've been thinking about joining the choir, we'd love to have you sing with us. Rehearsals for Lessons & Carols are Wednesdays 7-8:30pm beginning on November 20.

Bring your loved ones, invite your friends, and let's celebrate together the hope and joy that Christmas brings! We look forward to seeing you there!

Confirmation

We celebrated Confirmation Sunday on October 6 during our morning worship. Many blessings to our Confirmands, Finn and Emma! Thank you to Confirmation Sponsors, Beth Hutson and Janet VanBenthuisen.



Janet, Finn, Emma, Beth, Pastor Max



Jan Russell, Finn, Emma, Pastor Max

Congregational Care

Are You Really Going to Eat THAT?!

This is that month again, when we gather together as families, carve up a roast beast, and stuff ourselves silly! But I know that not all family gatherings are like Norman Rockwell paintings, full of peace and harmony. Indeed, they can be rather trying experiences of judgment and bickering. If it is any consolation, dinner table troubles were a major source of contention back in the early church days as well. So much so that Paul wrote the following to his congregation:

Pastor Jim Beard
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"For instance, a person who has been around for a while might well be convinced that he can eat anything on the table, while another, with a different background, might assume he should only be a vegetarian and eat accordingly. But since both are guests at Christ's table, wouldn't it be terribly rude if they fell to criticizing what the other ate or didn't eat? God, after all, invited them both to the table. Do you have any business crossing people off the guest list or interfering with God's welcome? If there are corrections to be made or manners to be learned, God can handle that without your help...."

So let's agree to use all our energy in getting along with each other. Help others with encouraging words; don't drag them down by finding fault. You're certainly not going to permit an argument over what is served or not served at supper to wreck God's work among you, are you? I said it before and I'll say it again: All food is good, but it can turn bad if you use it badly, if you use it to trip others up and send them sprawling. When you sit down to a meal, your primary concern should not be to feed your own face but to share the life of Jesus. So be sensitive and courteous to the others who are eating. Don't eat or say or do things that might interfere with the free exchange of love." Romans 14:2-4, 19-21
The Message

Paul is confronting an issue we probably don't understand all that well: holy dietary practices. In olden days, God's followers believed that certain foods were prohibited, that everything with the lifeblood in it and any animal that was not "normal" should be strictly avoided. When the good news of Jesus spread to new areas of the Mediterranean, however, these holy dietary practices were either not known, or not accepted as necessary. Bring this new family of God together to eat, and look out! Paul wants the fighting over these issues to be set aside for the higher calling of God. He doesn't say that one side is right, and the other is wrong; instead, he says to let each other follow the religious practices of each one's conscience and focus on sharing the love of Jesus with each other.

Are there things dividing us today within Christ's church? Then we should step back and honestly ask ourselves what Paul and Jesus would say about our bickering. The issue may not seem trivial to us at the moment, and we may want to fight strongly for what we believe. But is the issue about the free exchange of love and sharing the life of Jesus, or is it simply about rule-following, personal taste, or right behavior? And maybe, just maybe, there's some wisdom from all of this that we can apply around our family Thanksgiving tables as well.

Prayer: God of glory, as we come together this month to celebrate your gifts of life and love and freedom, keep all things that divide us from you and from each other far from our tables of community and fellowship. Help us to release our judgments of others so that we can love them as deeply as you have loved us. Amen.

Congregational Care

Thursday Book Club

Our next meeting is on November 14 at 1:00 p.m. in the Fireside Room. We will be discussing *Symphony of Secrets* by Brendan Slocumb, a novel about a professor who uncovers a shocking secret about one of the most famous American composers of all time. Please join us for fellowship, discussion and refreshments! Questions: Contact Vicki Dunn, victoria.dunn@q.com, 952-930-3431.



Pickleball Fun

The Good Sam Pickleball Club invites interested adult Good Sam members to join in the newly added introductory/beginners pickleball sessions. The sessions will be held in the church gym each Saturday from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. No previous experience is necessary. Paddle equipment will be available. Regular pickleball play time is Monday and Thursday from 3:15 to 5:00p.m. and Saturday from 11:00a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Registration is required for ANY/ALL sessions. Registration forms are available in the church office or at the gym. For more information contact Ed Hammersten (612)201-0161.



Tuesday Bible Study

Tuesday Bible Study will not meet on Tuesday, November 5, Election Day at Good Samaritan. We will also not meet on Tuesday, November 26, Thanksgiving week. On November 12 and 19, Mary Ellen Nielsen will help us explore feminist theology. All are welcome. We meet in the Fireside Room from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Missions

Reconciling Event at Good Samaritan



On Thursday, November 7 at 7:00 p.m., Minnesota Reconciling Congregations will host a Zoom event, "Welcoming LGBTQ+ Congregants" with Dr. Ellie Krug. The Good Samaritan Missions Team will host the Zoom presentation at our church in the Fireside Room. They invite you to join them at 6:30 p.m. for light refreshments before the meeting and a discussion after the Zoom presentation.

Ellie brings her personal experience of transitioning from a straight, cisgender male to a member of the LGBTQi2+ community at age 52. She will share tips on how churches can be more welcoming and talk about challenges that queer people face, including the idea that one's gender or sexual identity is a "choice". To learn more about Ellie, visit her website www.elliekrug.com. Some of the Team has heard Ellie on the radio. Her message is very uplifting.

If you can't attend at Good Samaritan, go to ttsu.me/zvdb3 to register for the link to participate at home. Contact Brian Boysen for more information – (612) 220-3795 or bteambackup@earthlink.net.

The next meeting of Minnesota Reconciling Congregations is Thursday evening, November 14 at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom. Check it out and contact Brian

Missions



Serving
Opportunity

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

Friday, November 8 - 7:15-8:45 p.m. (new time)
Wednesday, November 13 - 9:30-11:15 a.m.

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

Good Samaritans were part of a contingent of 14 persons on October 9 able to pack 23 boxes of meals. The full production of the session was 67 boxes packed which converts to 14,472 meals and feeds 39 children a daily meal for a year. Thanks to Jane Heimerl and all for supporting this project. All are invited to sign up for the dates above.



Thanks to all for the generous support of the many missions Good Samaritan contributes to. Throughout this year, the Missions Team has authorized disbursements as indicated:

- \$1,000 to UMCOR for Turkey/Syria earthquake relief
- \$3,000 each to VEAP and Joyce Uptown Foodshelf with the intent to capture matching funds that may be available through MN Foodshare
- \$3,000 for the general fund of Simpson Housing Services



Doing Good

Good Samaritan is one of the congregations supporting Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative. Here is a summary from the Beacon website of the impact of Beacon so far:

- 700+ deeply affordable homes in operation
- 1,200+ individuals safely housed
- 110 congregations engaged in Beacon's work.

You can be a part of the action. Join Beacon's community of housing advocates and be the first to discover how you can help advocate for safe, affordable housing. Sign up to receive Beacon emails and start making a difference. More information is available at their website: www.beaconinterfaith.org.

A Benefit for Beacon and You

The State of Minnesota is providing an opportunity to help Beacon and benefit yourself at the same time. The State of Minnesota will provide an 85% state income tax credit for every dollar you contribute to the Housing Tax Credit Program (minimum of \$1,000.00, maximum of \$2,000,000). You will receive an 85% tax credit on your state income tax. For instance, if you contribute \$2,000 to the program, you receive a reduction of your state income tax of \$1,700. Information about the program can be found at: Support Housing and Qualify for a Tax Credit (mnhousing.gov).

Check out the information at Beacon Interfaith Housing: www.beaconinterfaith.org/mnhousingtaxcredit/. You can benefit Beacon by specifying that your contribution goes to Prairie Pointe or Bimosedaa. Any contribution not directed to a specific program goes into a general fund for affordable housing.

The contributions and applications for the tax credit must be made by early December.

Children, Youth and Family Ministries

Let's Bake a Cake!

I recently read *The Book Woman from Troublesome Creek*. The main character bakes a scripture cake. I thought your family might have fun baking one as well. Look up the scriptures as you bake!

Scripture Cake

- ½ cup butter - Judges 5:25
- 1 ½ cups white sugar - Jeremiah 6:20
- 3 eggs - Isaiah 10:14
- 2 cups all-purpose flour - 1 Kings 4:22
- 2 teaspoons baking powder - Luke 13:21
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon - 1 Kings 10:10
- 1 teaspoon ground mace - 1 Kings 10:10
- 1 teaspoon ground cloves - 1 Kings 10:10
- ½ teaspoon salt - Leviticus 2:13
- ½ cup water - Genesis 43:24
- 1 tablespoon honey - Proverbs 24:13
- 1 cup figs - 1 Samuel 30:11
- 1 cup raisins - 1 Samuel 30:11
- ½ cup almonds - Genesis 43:11

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). Grease a 9x13-inch baking pan.
2. Blend butter, sugar, cinnamon, mace, cloves, and salt in a mixing bowl. Beat egg yolks in a separate bowl, then add to butter mixture. Sift in flour and baking powder, then add water and honey; mix well.
3. Pulse figs, raisins, almonds, and a pinch of flour in a food processor until coarsely chopped. Fold dried fruit mixture into batter.
4. Beat egg whites to stiff peak in a clean bowl. Gently fold into cake batter. Transfer batter to the prepared pan.
5. Bake in the preheated oven until an inserted toothpick in the center comes out clean, about 1 hour.



Jan M. Russell (she/her)

Director of Children, Youth
& Family Ministries

jan@good.org
952-452-9398



Vacation Bible Camp
June 23-27, 2025



Mission Trip Dates
July 12-20, 2025

The Good Samaritan Foundation

Passing on the Blessings



The month of November is a time when many of us give extra thought to the many blessings in our lives. The Board members of The Good Samaritan Foundation are grateful for the privilege to act on behalf of the Good Samaritan congregation to award Outreach grants amounting \$13,900 this year to local, national and global non-profit organizations whose work is in the areas of education and training, housing, food stability, and disaster relief.

As stewards of the Cornerstone and Evergreen funds, we care for the gifts given to The Foundation that boost Good Samaritan operations and upkeep beyond the annual budget. Extra thanks to the Investment Committee for their watchful eye of the fund investments.

The balances in the funds listed below include the output, input and investment growth as of October 15. As a point of reference, the beginning total of the funds as of January 1, 2024, was \$655,379.

Outreach Fund	\$303,587
Cornerstone Fund	\$ 76,685
Evergreen Fund	<u>\$356,435</u>
Total	\$736,707

Even with this great news, the reality is that gifts to The Foundation are important to the future work that is done. The Board is inviting you to make a donation to the fund of your choice. Checks can be made out to Good Samaritan UMC with the name of the fund (Outreach, Cornerstone, or Evergreen) in the memo line. If you are interested in giving using a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD), consult your financial and/or tax consultant for the best way for you to give. (This may take a little extra time so start soon.) Pick up a Foundation brochure that contains the church FEIN number on the Welcome Table or the church office.

The Good Samaritan Foundation is but one vehicle to realize the vision of Good Samaritan – Inspiring Joyful Faith, Building a Loving Community, Serving Others Near and Far. Thanks be to God for those who make it so! ~ Claudia Boysen

Finance

Financial Update

Thank you to everyone for your continued financial support. Making your contributions on a timely basis helps from a planning perspective, which we greatly appreciate. September Year-To-Date Net Income is \$5,648 favorable, slightly above breakeven, resulting from YTD Revenue being \$27,617 less than budget, but mostly offset by expenses being \$21,482 under budget. See the table below for the financial results through September 2024.

The Finance Team is looking to grow its membership. So if anyone is interested in helping us monitor the church finances and prioritize budgets, come check us out. It's more fun than you think! We have a great team. ~Kent Holmes

	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Variance	Annual Budget
Revenue	528,702	556,319	-27,617	730,449
Expenses	523,054	544,536	21,482	730,449
Net Income	5,648	11,783	-6,135	

Note from Cindy Bergstrom in the Church Office: Turning in your 2024 pledge and other donations by the end of November or beginning of December really helps Kim Hill, our Bookkeeper, and me close out the year much more smoothly. With mail delays and processing times from financial institutions, if we receive 2024 donations in January, it becomes very complicated. Thank you!



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 Christmas Eve. All the plants will be 8" red or white double poinsettias. The cost is \$27.00 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 1, 2024.

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 a.m.-1:00 p.m. 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 care upon request)

6:00 p.m.

- Chancel Chimes Rehearsal

7:00 p.m.

- Chancel Choir Rehearsal

7:00 p.m.

- Youth Group

GOOD SAMARITAN OFFICE HOURS

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