

April
2025

The Samaritan

Worship Themes

April 6 - Lent 5 /
Communion / "Work It
Out"

April 13 - Palm/Passion
Sunday / "Songs of
Loudest Praise"

April 17 - Maundy
Thursday / "Streams of
Mercy"

April 18 - Good
Friday / "Prone to
Leave the God I Love"

April 20 - Easter
Sunday / "Run Toward
Hope"



Holy Week at Good Samaritan



Sunday, April 13

10:00 a.m. Palm/Passion service with Chancel Chimes and Chancel Choir

From the palm processional to the beginning of Jesus' final journey toward the cross, we begin Holy Week together.



Thursday, April 17

7:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday service with Holy Communion

We remember Jesus' last night with his disciples around the table.



Friday, April 18

After 12:00 p.m. Online Worship (good.org)
2:00-8:00 p.m. In-person Stations

Good Friday Worship will include our tradition of a special online film experience, featuring music and the practices of *Visio Divina* ("Holy Seeing"), *Lectio Divina* ("Holy Reading"). We're also offering an additional self-guided stations component at church for those who can attend in person. Join us whenever or wherever you may on this day of reflection and meditation.



Sunday, April 20

After 6:00 a.m. Easter Morning Sunrise Online Service
10:00 a.m. Easter Festival Worship with Chancel Choir and Brass Ensemble
11:00 a.m. Fellowship time with full-size donuts!*

Please note there is one in-person Easter service this year.

(*donut not
actual size)



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Pastor's Page

April is here and soon we will celebrate Holy Week. Easter is based on the lunar calendar and shifts each year to fall on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the Spring Equinox.

You won't want to miss the variety of meaningful services we have planned throughout Holy Week. See the cover for full details.

Holy Week is an excellent time to invite friends and family to worship with us as people may be looking for a place to experience the depth and hope of Holy Week.

As we wrap up Lent and move into Holy Week, I'll ask the time-honored Wesleyan question of "How it is with your soul?" How have your spiritual practices been going? Are there new insights you're experiencing? Where do you see signs of transformation?

Who do you know who could use a word of encouragement? Are you taking time to fill your own cup as you care for others?

Know that amid the messiness of life, Jesus is right beside us, calling us to care for one another, challenging that which is unjust and harms abundant life and showing us that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God.

Holy Week Blessings to you and yours,

Pastor Max



Our Lenten Theme

Marketing

Reaching Our Community

We all believe that Good Samaritan has a terrific message to offer others. From our Beliefs statements to all the “Good” we do with neighbors near and far, we know we have a message and Church unique for our times. However, getting our message out to others is time-consuming and difficult. In 2023, Good Samaritans who attended the Leadership Institute at Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas, were introduced to a company helping churches get their message out. That organization is “Reach the Lost.” In July 2024, Good Samaritan contracted with Reach the Lost to help us.



REACH THE LOST

We contracted with them to improve search engine optimization with the Google search engine (making sure Good Sam is displayed early in the results when people search for a Church). Google also has a program with charitable organizations where they will provide \$300 of free Google ads if the organization meets certain requirements. Good Samaritan met those requirements and we have been utilizing the free Google Ad Grants.



So how have we done? Has the expenditure been money well spent? Three weeks ago, we had a Zoom meeting with the members of Reach the Lost and the results are encouraging. They reported that 45% of our website traffic was due to our free Google Ad Grants. We have used \$12,000 in free ads on Google. 112,000 people saw Good Samaritan ads online. 4,370 people clicked through our Google Ad Grant. And 835 people took the next steps after finding us online. Over 3,000 people saw our Christmas Eve ads.

Good Samaritan has a goal of reaching people who have been hurt by the institutional church by creating an environment that is loving and accepting of all people. 450 people have found us when searching for mental health topics.

What is in the future? We are considering retargeting our Google ads to YouTube, where 77% of Gen Zers use YouTube. We all want change to come quicker but this is a process and it does take time. It is still true that the best way to get new people to attend Good Samaritan is for each of us to invite a friend, acquaintance, or relative to worship on Sunday. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out. ~ David Knutson



Congregational Care



Pastor Jim Beard
(he/him)

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Easter Morning, 2018 photo by PJBeard

Dead or Alive?

I'm telling you these things while I'm still living with you. The Friend, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send at my request, will make everything plain to you. He will remind you of all the things I have told you. I'm leaving you well and whole. That's my parting gift to you. Peace. I don't leave you the way you're used to being left—feeling abandoned, bereft. So don't be upset. Don't be distraught. ~ John 14:25-27 MSG

Since the children are made of flesh and blood, it's logical that the Savior took on flesh and blood in order to rescue them by his death. By embracing death, taking it into himself, he destroyed the Devil's hold on death and freed all who cower through life, scared to death of death. ~ Hebrews 2:14-15 MSG

It is several weeks before the Passover. Jesus is talking to his disciples, and he gives them the news that he is going to die soon. But he doesn't want them to be sad or depressed or scared; he wants them to feel at peace about this. Years later, the writer of Hebrews reminds us all of Jesus' ultimate purpose – He came to rescue all of humanity. "Rescue us from what?" you may ask. The answer ... from our fear of death, of course.

For many, the fear of dying is still alive and well today. Although we were created in order that we might have life and have it abundantly (cf John 10:10), our fear of death can destroy much of that abundant life. But what if you knew, really knew, that death was not your ultimate end, nor the end for those you love?

What if you knew, deep down in the depths of your being, that dying on this earth wasn't your ultimate destiny? What if you knew this truth, and wanted everyone else to know this truth as well, so they could get on with living life to its fullest, as it was intended to be lived? The best way to convince your loved ones of this would be to not only say it, but to show it, prove it, do it. Make it real, even just once, so that all whom you love could stop being scared to death of dying. Wait a second... isn't this what Jesus did?! He died, and then proved that death wasn't the end. God even has death under control, so there is nothing to fear. Isn't this the truth we need to know?!

Eternal Lord, I pray that this truth goes to the depth of my being and casts out whatever fears are lingering there. I pray that death no longer ruins how I approach life. I pray for this truth to free all those whom I love so that they too may live with ultimate joy and peace and abundance. Thank you, Lord, for proving once and for all that death is not the end, nor to be feared. Perhaps now I can live like I was made to live! Amen.

Congregational Care



UKRAINIAN EGG DAY

YOU'RE INVITED!

SATURDAY, APRIL 12
2:00-5:30PM

Dear Friends,

We want to be good stewards of resources, and with the current food insecurities, we are donating the equivalent of 5 dozen eggs to both VEAP and Joyce Food Shelf.

However! The intergenerational fun will continue! We will be doing alternative Ukrainian crafts, playing Ukrainian games, listening to Ukrainian music, and supporting the UMCOR mission in Ukraine.

Please RSVP by April 5
to jan@good.org.



RSVP for your spot at this year's Spring Social!

Friday, May 2
7:00-9:00 p.m.
Fellowship Hall

This event features Good Sam's band, Homeward Bound, for an evening of family-friendly music, fellowship, and fun. The

band will play two sets of music in Fellowship Hall with a short intermission. Coffee, lemonade and desserts will be served. A free-will offering will benefit our music department. All are welcome.

RSVP at tinyurl.com/GSSpringSocial2025 or with the QR code above.



HOMeward BOUND

homewardboundband.com

Other Homeward Bound Dates

Mark your calendars!

Sunday, June 1, 5:30-7:00 p.m.
Lake Harriet Bandshell, Minneapolis

Monday, July 28, 7:00-8:00 p.m.
Centennial Lakes Amphitheater, Edina

Share Your Skills

Calling all knitters and crocheters! Your skills are needed to make prayer shawls. These are given to church members when hospitalized or recovering from illness in care facilities or at home, letting them know they are being thought about and wishing them well. They can be made the size you wish and dropped off at the church office. Thank you! Contact Sue Ohman with questions - 952-994-5262.



Thursday Afternoon Book Group

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, April 10 at 1:00 p.m. in the Fireside Room. The discussion title is *The Lemon Tree: an Arab, a Jew, and the Heart of the Middle East* by Sandy Tolan, a true story of a simple act of faith between two young people - one Israeli, one Palestinian - that symbolizes the hope of peace in the Middle East.



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

Children, Youth and Family Ministries

Visio Divina - Praying with Pictures

A spiritual practice you might like to try out with your family is *Visio Divina*. This practice uses images, photos or works of art to connect with God in a deeper way.

First, look at an image. You can use one from this article or find one that speaks to your family. What stands out to you? What are the details of the image? What is the image saying to you? Ask your child what story is being told in the image.

Second, we meditate on the image. What connections can we make to the story in the image and our lives? Can we imagine our family in this story? For older kids, what might the colors and symbols mean in the artwork?



Jan M. Russell (she/her)

Director of Children, Youth
& Family Ministries

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Christ: The Mother Hen
by Kelly Latimore

Next, let's pray about what is happening in this image. For example, from *Christ: The Mother Hen*, "Thank you God for gathering me and my family into your safe and loving hug. You protect us and keep us safe."

Finally, leave some time at the end of your prayer to think deeply about what God is teaching us with this image and our prayer.

Sometimes we think this kind of exercise is above our children's understanding, but it is absolutely within their ability to observe, think, speculate, ponder and wonder about art and our connection to God! While this can be somber, it does not need to be. In fact, art and prayer are meant to bring joy, peace and connection to the Divine!

I am praying for you, Jan



Rainbow After Rain
AI Generated, stockcake.com



Supper at Emmaus
by James He Qi

Children, Youth and Family Ministries



For April: Lent + Easter Reflections

Available on the Welcome Table in the Narthex. Let Jan know if you would like a copy emailed to you - jan@good.org.



Palm Sunday Palm Parade

If you would like to participate in the palm parade during worship on April 13, please meet in the Fireside room at 9:50 a.m.



Youth Group Lock-in!

With Lake Harriet UMC. Activities include blacklight dodgeball, tie blanket service project, blacklight laser tag, and more, more, more! All meals provided. Sign up with QR code!



Vacation Bible Camp June 23-27, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Join us in a fun-filled adventure on the open road, taking all the kids (Travelers) on thrilling journeys to exciting destinations. Led by the Navigator and an adventurous pup Scout, kids will learn that God is always with them. Through engaging stories from the Navigators' Guide (the Bible), Travelers will delve into timeless tales of faith from the Old and New Testaments. Get ready for twists, turns, and excitement as they face new challenges and find strength in God's presence on this unforgettable trip!

The cost is \$25 for one child or \$50 for a family - scholarships are available. Register to attend (4-years - 4th grade) or volunteer (5th grade and up) at goodsamaritanedinna.mycokesburyvbs.com/.

Missions

What Have We Been Doing?

Good Samaritans and friends gathered twice at Feed My Starving Children in March. Thanks to Jane Heimerl for the leadership and support.

Missions members attended the Rent is Due online Zoom meeting with Beacon Interfaith Housing and emailed key legislators to support their needs.

Good Samaritans delivered hot and frozen meals for Edina's homebound residents through Meals on Wheels. Thanks to Vicki Dunn, our driver coordinator, Jane Heimerl, who helped pack up all those meals, and all the drivers.



At the March Minnesota Reconciling Congregations meeting it was confirmed that April 1, 2025, marks 30 years of Good Samaritan UMC being a Reconciling Congregation!

And more to celebrate! Minnesota Food Share Month was great! A huge thank you to all who brought in food for us to pack Express Bags for VEAP and Joyce Uptown food shelves on Sunday, March 23, after worship. Watch the May Newsletter for our grand totals!

Ever tried to find out what the Missions Team is doing on the good.org website? Well, it's gotten a bit out of date, so we're working to update the information on the organizations we work with and contacts for each group in the church. Check it out and let us know where you might want to be involved!



Did you know? In 2024, Good Samaritan donated \$6,075 to VEAP and \$6,426 to Joyce Uptown Food Shelf, in addition to food dropped off to the church year-round. Thank you for helping your neighbors in need of food!

Coming Up in April

Wednesday, April 2: Beacon Interfaith Housing: 'Rent is Due' Zoom meeting – first Wed of each month, 8:30-9:00 a.m. The meeting is always just a half hour and packed with info and an easy task to assist with their lobbying efforts. To learn more or to register go to beaconinterfaith.org.



Saturday, April 5: all are invited to the MN Reconciling Congregations' Annual Spring Gathering on Saturday, April 5, from 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at Eden Prairie UMC, 15050 Scenic Heights Rd. This is an opportunity to gather with other Reconciling United Methodists to share lunch (bring a dish to share) and hear a program presented by Rev. Carol Zaagsma and Becky Bolland. They will provide information about Regionalization and other Constitutional Amendments coming before the Annual Conference in June and about the next steps to take toward inclusiveness. Contact Brian Boysen 952-937-0624 or bteambackup@earthlink.net for more information.



Serving Opportunities

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

Wednesday, April 2 @ 9:30-11:15 a.m.
Friday, April 11 @ 7:15-8:45 p.m.

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

Missions

Friday, April 18: Meals on Wheels. Good Samaritan drivers deliver meals on the 3rd and 5th Fridays of each month. The pickup from Normandale Lutheran is at 10:45 a.m.



We now have six routes each month, so additional drivers are welcome! Contact Vicki Dunn if you are interested in being added to the list of potential drivers each month. victoria.dunn@q.com. 952-930-3431.

Throughout April: The work of the Missions Team is supported by two primary funding drives – the Christmas and Easter offerings. Watch for the Easter offering letter coming soon with stories about the impacts we have made and the ripples that continue thanks to your generosity.



Make Every Day Earth Day

Spring is here and so is Earth Day on April 22. It is a time for reflection and a time for action. For some it has become Earth Week, or even Earth Month! At Good Samaritan, we have a member who has found a way to make every day, Earth Day. Emma Hutson started to get involved with environmental issues in high school through Project Earth, the environmental club at Edina High School. She then received a B.A. in Environmental Policy from Loyola University Chicago. Since then, she has continued to promote sustainability through her work as the Assistant Sustainability Coordinator for the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs.

Emma shares the following thoughts:

I am proud to call Good Samaritan my church home for many reasons, including our accepting and loving congregation, incredible music program, and our commitment to serving our neighbors. Environmental stewardship is one of the many ways we can serve our neighbors.

When I started my "sustainability journey," I felt pressure to achieve perfection as if the fate of the world was in my hands. While fear can be a powerful motivator, hope offers inspiration and resilience. Greta Thunberg, a climate activist, said, "Once we start to act, hope is everywhere. So instead of looking for hope, look for action. Then, and only then, hope will come."

This Earth Day, I encourage you to find one small thing you can do to show appreciation for the Earth. This could be as simple as bringing a reusable bag to the grocery store, walking or biking instead of driving, or recycling your bulletin after church.

Good Samaritans are invited to make Earth Day 2025 a time to decide how each day can be Earth Day in their own lives.

Organics Recycling!

In the coming month, you should start to see new recycling bins and signs around our church. Good Samaritan will begin to recycle organics (food waste, compostable plates and cups). Watch for more information about this effort!



The Good Samaritan Foundation

Consider Planned Giving



The Board of Directors of The Good Samaritan Foundation met for their first quarter meeting on February 20. At that meeting the financials of the three Foundation funds were reviewed. The 2025 five percent draw amount for The Outreach Fund was set at \$14,700 and at \$17,500 for The Evergreen Fund. The Board also reviewed a grant request by Oasis for

Youth and awarded \$3,500 in support of their programs serving youth and young adults ages 16 to 24 in the Bloomington, Edina, and Richfield areas.

The importance of planned giving was discussed as the most transformational way to give to The Foundation. Typically, this involves donors making gifts to any of the three funds of The Foundation through their financial or estate plans. The various forms of giving are through bequests in wills, trusts, or designated beneficiaries on life insurance policies or assets such as stocks or bonds. Most gifts are realized after the donor's death so as not to draw on their daily cash flow needs. These gifts are responsibly invested for long-term gain.

The benefits to the donor include the joy of giving back to Good Samaritan and upholding the ministries that impact our church and community, knowing that their gift ensures that Good Samaritan receives financial support beyond their lifetime, and tax advantages that may reduce estate taxes and other tax liabilities.

The planned giving process can open the door for discussions that encourage you to approach end-of-life plans positively and productively. Seek guidance from estate planning attorneys and/or financial advisors to choose a plan that best fits your wishes. Pastor Max is willing to discuss planned giving and how you can support your passions and love for Good Samaritan. Feel free to direct questions to Claudia Boysen as well - claudiaLboysen@gmail.com.

Finance Team

Finance Update

Paying pledges and other contributions early or evenly throughout the year helps Good Samaritan's finances be at or favorable to our budget plan. February revenue of \$42,617 is \$9,060 below plan. This is reflected in the YTD revenue of \$162,599 to be \$9,895 below plan. February Net Income is (\$12,656) compared to plan of (\$4,357) for a variance of (\$8,299). This brings YTD Net Income to \$47,226 a positive number, but \$13,625 below plan. The table below reflects our financial status through the end of January. ~ Kent Holmes

	Current Month Feb Actuals	Current Month Feb Plan	Year-to-Date Feb Actuals
Income	\$42,617	\$51,677	\$162,599
Expense	\$55,273	\$56,033	\$115,373
Net	(\$12,656)	(\$4,357)	\$47,226

Trustees

Maintenance Minute: Keeping Good Samaritan Safe

Happy spring everyone! I hope I don't jinx myself by saying that in the middle of March as sometimes it snows in April.

Dan Green
(he/him)

Building Engineer

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Between the end of February and the beginning of May, Good Sam has many mandatory life safety equipment inspections that take place. Only qualified technicians can perform these inspections on certain equipment. This includes the hood suppression system in the kitchen, and our fire panel which includes all fire alarms, strobes, smoke detectors and fire extinguishers. We also have a company come to inspect our fire sprinkler system. They inspect the sprinkler heads for any leaks and test the water pressure in the pipes. These inspections need to be done yearly and after they are done everything is submitted to an online compliance engine where the fire department can make sure the inspections took place. If we are even a couple days past due inspections the fire department is on top of contacting me to make sure they were either done or scheduled to be done.

I am in charge of inspecting and testing our safety lights and exit signs monthly. These stay lit during a power outage, helping direct folks out of the building. I test these lights by pushing the test button, which cuts power to the light, putting it into battery operation. If the light does not stay lit after pushing the test button, the battery is dead and needs to be changed. If the light gets even slightly dimmer when pushing the test button, it means the battery is starting to go bad, so I will change those at that point as well. I always have these batteries on hand since they do periodically go bad.



I take the safety of everyone that enters Good Sam very seriously! In my opinion it is the most important aspect of my job. I'm confident that if there ever was a power outage or fire in the building, all safety equipment would perform satisfactorily, and everyone would be able to get out in a safe manner.



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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) 6:00-7:15 p.m. • Chancel Chimes Rehearsal 7:00-8:30 p.m. • Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00-8:30 p.m. • Youth Group (2nd & 4th Wed.)
	GOOD SAMARITAN OFFICE HOURS	
	Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Phone (952) 929-0049	