

November
2025

The Samaritan

Worship Themes

11/2 - All Saints'
Sunday / Communion /
"Blessed Are You"

11/9 - "Transformed
Life"

11/16 - "New Creation"

11/23 - Gratitude
Sunday / "Grateful
Living"

11/30 - Advent 1 /
Pastor Jim preaching



Hangings of the Greens

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30 | 4:00 P.M.
IN THE SANCTUARY

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 Orchestral Band.

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 Orchestral Band. Pick up the music ahead of time from the reception area by the church office. We will rehearse right before the service at 3:00 p.m. in the **Sanctuary. It's great fun! Contact Sarah Kumagai with questions - 952-944-2683.**

Falala!

OUR STAFF

Rev. Max Richter
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952-452-9395

Rev. Jim Beard
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Pastor's Page

Welcome to November at Good Samaritan with a rich variety of worship and service experiences ahead! November marks the end of "ordinary time" that lasts from Pentecost to the beginning of the new liturgical year with the first Sunday of Advent.



Throughout the month, on our 30th anniversary of becoming a reconciling congregation, we will also honor and reaffirm our commitment to be a welcoming and inclusive community for all people.

- 11/2 - All Saints service honoring the loved ones of our congregation who have died in this last year - Jean Zivkovich, Barb Kerr, Judith Leill, Tom Howden, Bill Moyer, Larry Schedin, Sue Pat Seay, and Mary Parsons; special video presentation of our departed saints by Rev. Dandy Lewis; opportunity to light candles for all departed loved ones as you come forward for Communion or invite someone to light a candle on your behalf; Chancel Choir will sing; Tour of Joyce Uptown Food Shelf tour will follow (see page 9).
- 11/9 - Chancel Chimes leads us in worship; "Fill the Van" food drive for Joyce Uptown Food Shelf
- 11/16 - Joint service with Aldersgate UMC featuring both Aldersgate and Good Samaritan bell choirs and our Chancel Choir
- 11/23 - Gratitude Sunday as we give thanks for all of God's blessings including memorial gifts received in this last year; Homeward Bound leads our worship
- 11/30 - Advent begins! 10:00 a.m. morning worship with Pastor Jim preaching; 4:00 p.m. Hanging of the Greens with reception to follow

I give thanks for all of you that are part of this church family as we prepare to welcome new siblings from Aldersgate as part of the new Good Samaritan. Watch your mail for the official merger information later this month right before Thanksgiving in preparation for the final congregational vote on December 14.

Blessings,

Pastor Max

New Cluster Conference Format

This year, all of our UMC churches were invited to be part of "cluster conferences" with five or six other congregations in our district for worship, conducting church business and hands-on mission. Tony Branch, as Council Chair, and David Litteken, as Staff Parish chair, will represent Good Samaritan with Pastor Max at Messiah UMC in Plymouth on November 22. Breakout church conferences will care for the annual pastoral salary approvals with clergy presiding over one another's compensation rather than gathering as whole congregations this year.

Staff Updates

Welcome, Cynthia!



We're excited to welcome Cynthia Betz as our new Organist/Accompanist! Cynthia has been accompanying weekly choir rehearsals and has played on several Sunday mornings as she transitions from her previous leadership role.

A native of Minnesota, Cynthia holds a B.A. in English from the University of Massachusetts - Amherst and an M.A. in Liturgical Music from Saint John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota. She has worked in music ministry in the upper Midwest for nearly 30 years.

Cynthia believes that "those who sing, pray twice." The act of communal music allows us to express and affirm our praise of God, while binding us to one another. As such, she's very excited and honored to work with the musicians and congregation of Good Samaritan in making music together "Soli Deo Gloria."

Cynthia lives in Eden Prairie with her husband, Jerry. They have two college-age sons. When not making music, Cynthia enjoys tennis, quilting, and coaching high school debate.

Welcome, Noemi!



We're also delighted to announce our new Coordinator of Online Engagement, Noemi Dooley! Noemi and her husband, Kyle, have been attending Good Samaritan since last January. Noemi will officially begin with us on November 3.

Noemi Dooley is a creative and community-driven professional who loves connecting people through meaningful stories and experiences. A graduate of Minnesota State University, Mankato with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design and Photography, she brings both artistry and heart to everything she does.

Living in Minnetonka with her husband, Kyle, and their two dogs, Rocky and Mac, Noemi finds joy in creativity, relationships, and faith-filled community. She's passionate about public relations, social justice, and using her gifts to uplift and inspire others. Known for her positive spirit and outgoing personality, Noemi strives to keep Christ at the center of her life and work, pouring her heart and soul into every project she takes on.

Chancel Choir

You're Invited to Sing with the Chancel Choir!

We'd love for you to join us for our special Lessons & Carols service and Christmas Eve celebration! Rehearsals are Wednesdays from 7:00–8:00 p.m. in the Choir Room in the lower level Music Wing.

Lessons & Carols – Sunday, December 14

- Call Time: 3:00 p.m.
- Service: 4:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve – Wednesday, December 24

- Call Time: 8:00 p.m.
- Service: 9:00 p.m.



Come make music with us this holiday season — all are welcome!

Congregational Care



Brooding Eagles,
West Yellowstone
2023, photo by
PJBeard

Pastor Jim Beard
(he/him)
Director of
Congregational Care
jim@good.org
952-452-9396



Distrusting the Olive Branches

"In the course of time, the king of the Ammonites died, and his son Hanun succeeded him as king. David thought, "I will show kindness to Hanun son of Nahash, just as his father showed kindness to me." So David sent a delegation to express his sympathy to Hanun concerning his father. When David's men came to the land of the Ammonites, the Ammonite commanders said to Hanun their lord, "Do you think David is honoring your father by sending envoys to you to express sympathy? Hasn't David sent them to you only to explore the city and spy it out and overthrow it?" 2 Samuel 10:1-3

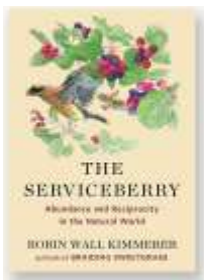
King David is rising in power, and his armies have been defeating many. However, right now, David is truly in a generous, peaceful mood. The story before this recalls David giving Jonathan's son, who has been disabled, (aka the grandson of Saul, the one who tried to kill him) all the lands that once belonged to Saul

himself. The gift is received with great humility. In this story, however, David is doing something similar for the son of another friend, Hanun. However, this news is received with suspicion and distrust. Instead of humility, the response is to humiliate the messengers and send them back disgraced. Consequently, this leads to retaliation by David and destruction of the Ammonites army.

The Ammonites were probably justified in being suspicious, given David's past actions. However, when an olive branch is being offered, tar and feathers are not the appropriate response. Rebuilding trust is a delicate process that will take much time and many safe interactions. A "thank you," albeit with reservations, is a better response than a slap-in-the-face based on paranoia. Jumping to a false conclusion can be deadly. Even if you are wrong, the shame falls on the deceiver, not the deceived.

Lord, life is hard to discern. What is another's true motivation? Help me to respond with wisdom and yet always with a spirit that hopes for and desires peace. May your will reign between us. Amen.

Thursday Afternoon Book Club



Our next meeting will be on Thursday, November 13, at 1:00 p.m. in the Fireside Room. We will be discussing *The Serviceberry* by Robin Wall Kimmerer, a bold and inspiring vision of how to orient our lives around gratitude, reciprocity, and community based on the lessons of the natural world.

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

Congregational Care

Flowers for the Homebound

Thank you to all who, in the past, have generously purchased poinsettias for our Christmas altar and then donated them to be delivered to those in our faith community after Christmas. However, based on feedback, the Caring Ministries team will be making some adjustments this year. Small, tabletop-sized poinsettia plants will be more suitable for many with limited space. Also, receiving them at the beginning of Advent instead of afterwards allows our constituents to enjoy them more throughout the entire season. Your generous giving at Easter for similar flowers resulted in enough funds to cover this year's Christmas poinsettias as well.



Therefore, no special gifts will be collected this season, but rest assured, our homebound friends are not being forgotten! If you know of someone from our faith community who would appreciate a gift of love from the Caring Ministries Team, please contact Pastor Jim at jim@good.org.

Poinsettias to decorate the Chancel for Advent and then taken home after Christmas Eve can be ordered on page 11.

Good Samaritan Now Recycles Food Waste and Compostables

You may have noticed new green bins next to our blues recycling containers throughout Good Samaritan Church. These along with the compostable bags are from a grant that we secured from the state of Minnesota, as we strive to become even better stewards of the earth.

Organic waste, primarily from food, accounts for close to one-fourth of the material in a landfill where, when it decomposes with trash, traps heat and is responsible for 58% of the methane gas emissions (EPA 2025). When we recycle organic refuse, it becomes nutrient rich compost, and reduces methane gas production, making it an important part of our pollution reducing efforts.

Our kitchen is now stocked with compostable coffee cups, water cups, plates and white napkins. These are identifiable by the designation on the plates and cups of "BPI" or "Compostable." After use these can be put into a green bin. Listed below are common organic and recyclable items:



Look for this symbol on paper plates, cups, utensils, etc.

Organics Belong in Green Bins

All food
Meat, fish bones
Eggs, shells, paper egg cartons
BPI-certified paper plates, cups
Coffee grounds and filters
Napkins, paper towels, tissues
Pizza boxes
Food-soiled paper
Flowers and houseplants

Recycling Belongs in Blue Bins

Plastic bottles and tubs (#1, 2, or 5)
Plastic milk jugs (lids on)
Milk, broth, soup cartons
Metal cans
Glass jars (no lids)
Cardboard
Office paper
Magazines

Find a detailed list of what can be composted at hennepin.us/organics#food. Scroll down to "What you can compost - detailed yes and no list." Questions? Contact Kathy Clark at kjcclark@icloud.com or Cindy in the church office at cindy@good.org.

Children, Youth and Family Ministries

Continuing from the book study of *The Hopeful Family*
by Ameilia Richardson Dress

Chapter 8 - Silence - Experiencing Peace

Silence isn't the first thing you think of with children.

God talks to us in so many ways. Silence is one of them. To become more comfortable with silence, we need to practice!

Try this together:

Sit quietly someplace comfortable. At first you will be wiggly, but soon you will settle down. To help you settle down faster, try focusing on a candle. You can also repeat a word like "Peace" or "Jesus". Or you can count your breath. Set a timer for 60 seconds. Take a deep breath together and be silent.

At the end of the minute, ask how that went for your family.

Silence is a tremendous act of faith.

Silence doesn't have to be a BIG EVENT. Finding some quiet time in you day is the goal. Remember perfection is the enemy of good.

Here is Ameilia's blessing for a time of quiet:

*As you step into the great unknown
May the silence welcome you like a friend.
Enfolding you in Peace, holding you in Love and sending you out in Joy.*

I am praying for you and your family ~ Jan



Jan M. Russell (she/her)
Director of Children, Youth
& Family Ministries

jan@good.org
952-452-9398



Photo: Brett Sayles on pexels.com

YOUTH GROUP
1st and 3rd Sunday
of the month*
4:30-6:00 p.m.
November 2 & 16

We will partner with
Shepherd of the Hills
Lutheran Church.

**Fellowship
Food Fun!**



It is Gratitude month! You can pick up a set on the Welcome Table in the Narthex, or Jan can email it to you! Let her know at jan@good.org if you would like a copy.

Missions

What Have We Been Doing?

Housing: We continue to advocate with Beacon Interfaith Housing on the importance of affordable and supportive housing to keep people in their homes as Congress continues their work on a budget. Good Samaritans put together two baskets for the Hearts & Hammers silent auction fundraiser.



Food Security: Feed My Starving Children – In September and October, we helped pack 107 boxes of food that translates to 23,112 meals - enough to feed 62 children a daily meal for a year. And Good Samaritan drivers delivered meals to homebound folks for Edina Meals on Wheels twice in October.

Education: In September, we asked, and you came through to support the Ormsby School in Baiwalla, Sierra Leone. For the 2025-26 school year, we have been able to send them over \$14,000. *Thank you!*

A dedicated team of volunteers supports teachers and students at Stonebridge World School in their library. This year they have been learning how to use a new system at the library at in south Minneapolis.


What impact do our Missions dollars make? Here is an example!

Dear Good Samaritan UMC,
On behalf of Neon/Wesley Foundation at the University of Minnesota, please accept our heartfelt gratitude for your generous financial donation.

Thanks to support like yours, the 2025-26 school year is off to a great start! 125 students

attended our launch event. 75 students attended our freshmen event, and 80 students attended our second event. Our retreat this fall has 30 students registered.

Students are responding well to God's love as expressed by people like you as they hear powerful speakers talking about social justice and spirituality. They are strengthened and inspired by being in community with people with shared values. Thank you so much for helping make this all possible!

 Sincerely and in faith,
Linda Hammersten
Neon/Wesley Team

Coming Up

More from Neon!



Thursday, November 6, 2025 • 7:00-9:00 p.m.
Coffman Memorial Union at the U of M
www.neonstories.org

A powerful night of immigrant stories about celebrating strengths, sharing struggles, and finding solidarity by seeing the sacred in each and every one of us.

All are invited - whether you're an immigrant or an ally, a student or a community member, we can all support our incredible immigrant neighbors and storytellers.

Missions



Serving
Opportunity

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

Wednesday, November 12 @ 9:30-11:15 a.m.
Friday, November 21 @ 7:15-8:45 p.m.

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

We will deliver Meals on Wheels on Friday, November 21. Interested in being added to the list of potential drivers or need a different date to participate? Contact Vicki Dunn at victoria.dunn@q.com or 952-930-3431 for more information.



VEAP will hold its annual Gala Fundraiser on Saturday, November 8, from 5:30-9:00 p.m. Details and tickets can be found on their website at veap.org.

Opportunities to Serve! Are you looking for opportunities to volunteer without having to serve on a committee?! We are looking for you! From time to time, we need more hands - helping a family move into new housing, delivering new furniture to a family who has found a new home, organizing our donation shelves, taking items from the donation shelves to an organization, serving a meal at Simpson. These are just a few of the things that need more hands. Are you interested in being on an email list to know when there is a need? Please contact Brian Boysen, Janet VanBenthuisen or JoAnn Knutson to be added to our list of potential 'Good Samaritans in Action.'



Good Samaritan UMC is a reconciling congregation that pledges our love and acceptance to all persons, and especially those who have felt hurt or abandoned by the institutional church.



30 years

This year, Good Samaritan marks our 30th year of being a Reconciling Congregation. How did we make that commitment 30 years ago? What does it mean to members of our congregation to be an open and inclusive church? In November, we will

learn more about how we became a reconciling congregation, what that means for us, and give thanks as we reaffirm our commitment to being inclusive of all of God's children.

The Reconciling movement is still growing. This year another church, Glendale UMC in Savage became a reconciling congregation. Good Samaritan supports both the Minnesota and national reconciling organizations. If you are interested in learning more about what is happening, check out the Minnesota Reconciling Committee website at www.mnrcumc.org.

Missions

Joyce Uptown Food Shelf Tour and Food Drive

An Open House just for us! Come learn more about Joyce Uptown Food Shelf on Sunday, November 2nd from 12:00-1:00 p.m. We want to “Fill the Van” on November 2 with people for the open house and “Fill the Van” again on November 9 with food to be delivered to Joyce for their emergency food bags. More details and tour sign-up in the Narthex or contact Tony Branch at tbranch5129@gmail.com.



Meals on Wheels Empty Bowls Fundraiser

Sunday, November 2, 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at Normandale Lutheran Church

Empty Bowls is an event that brings the community together to share a meal of homemade soup, bread, and dessert donated by local restaurants, served in handmade bowls donated by local artists. Community members eat together and take a beautiful bowl home as a reminder of our neighbors who need food and shelter.

This event will support the Crosstown Meals on Wheels goal to continue to improve the health and quality of life of seniors and others in need by providing nourishment and social connection. Meals on Wheels is serving a record number of meals. An aging population, stubborn inflation, and cuts to benefits like SNAP and Medicaid continue to put more vulnerable older adults at risk of going without food.



The Good Samaritan Foundation

Count Your Blessings



As Pastor Jim wrote in his October 15 Prayer Chain message, "The throes of autumn are definitely upon us in

this corner of God's creation. Now is a good time to count your blessings and give thanks, before the north winds dost blow!"

How true! The Foundation Board members encourage you to join them in including the existence of The Good Samaritan Foundation and those who give generously to it in your prayers of thanksgiving. Also, include those who receive some relief or support, and that we have additional ways to maintain our church property and offer assistance to our annual budget.

Gifts to The Foundation are important to the future work of serving God's children. The

Foundation Board is inviting those who are able to make a year-end donation to the fund of your choice. Checks can be made out to Good Samaritan UMC with the name of the fund to receive your gift in the memo line: The Outreach Fund, The Cornerstone Fund, or The Evergreen Fund. Consider using a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from an IRA account for your donation if you are 73 years old or older. 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.

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 Team

Looking to Year-End!

We are heading into the final months of the year in good financial shape. We encourage everyone to fulfill their pledge by the end of the year. [Please turn in all 2025 donations by the first part of December. Thank you!] If you are able, please consider an extra donation in 2025. We have NOT used any of the budgeted reserve funds, and we are hoping we won't have to :). See table below for Actuals and Plan (Budget).

Looking for a way to get involved in our Church? The Finance Committee is seeking a few more members – no financial experience needed! Contact Byron Olson at lolson6@comcast.net if interested.

	Sept Actuals	Sept Plan	Year-to-Date Actuals
Income	\$73,705	\$43,289	\$552,716
Expense	\$57,632	\$55,993	\$520,941
Net	\$16,073	(\$12,704)	\$31,775

Poinsettias

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 during Advent in honor or memory of a loved one. The cost is \$24.00 each (payable to GSUMC; note "Poinsettia" 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 Sunday, December 7, 2025.

NAME (Please print) _____

PHONE _____

Please note quantity:

Red _____ White _____

In Memory of:

In Honor of:

Please note that these plants will not be donated to our homebound friends. Caring Ministries will be delivering smaller plants. See page 5 for details. Please take home any plants you order.

You may pick up your plant(s) after the 9:00 p.m. service on Christmas Eve or the following week during office hours from 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Thank you.



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

9:45-11:30 a.m.
 Nursery - Infants - Age 3
 10:00-11:00 a.m.
 Worship - In-person and Online
Children's Sunday School
 Held during worship following
 Children's Time. All are welcome!
 4:30-6:00 p.m.
 Youth Group - 1st & 3rd Sundays

WEDNESDAYS

(Nursery care upon request)

- 6:00-7:15 p.m.
- Chancel Chimes Rehearsal
- 7:00-8:30 p.m.
- Chancel Choir Rehearsal

GOOD SAMARITAN OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
 Phone (952) 929-0049