

Prayer from the Heart

by Pastor Beverly Berry

“Have faith in God,” Jesus answered. “I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.” Mark 11:22-25

Jesus exhorts His disciples with these verses following His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, the cursing of the fig tree, and His cleansing of the temple. (Mark 11:12-21). It should cause us to take notice that, when Peter points out the fig tree withered from its roots as they are leaving Jerusalem, Jesus offers not one word of explanation about why He cursed the tree, or why He cleared the temple. Instead, Jesus talks about prayer. We should take to heart what Jesus has to say. I ask you to consider this question: How is your prayer life today?

A couple weeks ago, Chris Hall preached from Mark 1 and pointed out that prayer was central to Jesus’ life and to His connection with His Father. Jesus got up early to go to a solitary place to pray, even after a very demanding day that found Him teaching in the synagogue, healing a demoniac, healing Peter’s mother-in-law, and healing the crowds. Prayer was crucially important to Jesus, and so it should be central to our lives, too.

There are (at least) three points we may take away from Jesus’ teaching on prayer in Mark 11. First, we should pray with confidence and boldness, having faith



in God and trusting Him who desires only the best for His people. Part of that confidence comes as we nurture our relationship with God, and learn to hear the guidance from His Holy Spirit. We learn how to pray rightly: “Thy will be done” should be the prayer of our hearts, for God’s will for our lives, in every situation, is what we should joyfully seek.

Secondly, we should pray from a state of forgiveness. God sent His only Son, Jesus, so that we might have the opportunity for forgiveness of sins and for eternal life. Jesus said, “If you have anything against anyone, forgive him.” That’s pretty comprehensive and so we should seek help from the Holy Spirit to see clearly when we need to forgive someone, and when we need to ask forgiveness from someone. Unforgiveness is a block to the healing of body, mind, and soul that God desires for us.

Thirdly, we should intentionally seek to begin prayer with praise and thanksgiving. Jesus does not speak directly about this in Mark 11, but praise should arise naturally out of who God is and what He has already done for us and through us in Christ. A prayer life that includes praise and thanksgiving is good and pleasing to God.

As we enter the Lenten season this year, one of my disciplines will be to read a book on forgiveness and, more importantly, to examine my heart and mind for areas where forgiveness is needed. Another challenge for me will be to look intentionally for reasons to praise God and give Him thanks, daily. Christianity is all about a relationship with a real person, and that person is Jesus. Prayer is one way we stay connected to Jesus. Will you join me in drawing closer to one another and closer to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, through prayer, praise, and thanksgiving?

GoodSamYouth Update

February was a busy month for GoodSamYouth. The month began with a middle school winter weekend at Paradise Lake, with a group skiing and snowboarding at Shawnee Mountain, and time for tubing and broomball on and around the frozen lake. The group considered the challenge of making each minute count, and enjoyed times of worship, discussion, group games, and a late-night bonfire.

A high school Super Bowl party at the Figgins gave a chance for group members to grieve the defeat of the Eagles and celebrate the Steelers' victory. The following weekend, the high school group traveled to Pocono Plateau for a weekend of fellowship and winter sports.



Broomball on Paradise Lake

Skiing and snowboarding at Jack Frost was matched by competitive games-playing in the lodge. The theme of "Fear Not" allowed time for Fear Factor challenge games, memorization of the 23rd Psalm, and conversation about how God is with us in our times of fear and ready and able to free us from fear.

An Everything Party over President's Weekend celebrated presidential birthdays, past youth group leaders, Valentine's Day, and our recent alumni. Students, leaders, and a patient parent baked almost 1000 cookies to send to sixteen college freshmen, along with personalized handmade cards.



This is what 1,000 cookies looks like!

The month will end with a new youth group series, Quest, designed by Youth for Christ, Vancouver as an outreach tool for middle and high school students. During the seven weeks of Quest, students are encouraged to invite friends. Youth who have not been involved with youth group are invited to come talk about the Christian faith in an interesting, informative format.



Making greeting cards for alumni college freshmen

Confirmation classes for youth in eighth grade and above start on February 22, with the confirmation service scheduled for June 8.

Notes from the Parish Administrator

by Jeff Moretzsohn

With the recent passage of a 2009 budget, and having confirmed the members of the Discernment Committee, we have taken a giant step forward as we continue to Forge our Future, Together.

It is important to note that in both cases the entire process was covered by and surrounded with much prayer and a real sense of the guiding of the Holy Spirit. So for me, the lesson continues to be one of coming into the presence of the Lord and inviting His guidance and presence into each step we take. It is important to remember that as we Forge our Future...the Together is you...me...and Him!!!

While it's true that with the guidance of the Holy Spirit there comes a peace and confidence that is otherwise unattainable, it does not diminish the hard work in front of us, nor the pain of hard decisions that must be made. We can however rest in the faith that God already knows how we will meet our mission and ministry objectives in the midst of diminished resources, and He already knows who the next Rector will be here at the Church of the Good Samaritan.

The Annual Meeting will provide an opportunity to review and reflect on how God has and continues to work in and through His people here at Good Sam. We have much to be thankful for, and we have even more to be hopeful for.

With a newly elected Vestry and Discernment Committee, in the coming months we will continue the strategic visioning process, articulate the ministry priorities, as well as align staffing to meet the vision and priorities identified. Included in this process will be the important step of developing a Parish Profile that will require considerable work on the part of the Discernment Committee, as well as input and involvement from the entire congregation. Through it all we must continue to pray that His will be done.

As we proceed, we will seek to be diligent in providing accurate and timely information. One step that you may already have noticed is the website has been redesigned to incorporate information regarding the "Rector Search Process." I want to personally thank Craig Russ and Barb Hohorst for their technical expertise in this update process. While we have dreams of developing a completely new website, finances continue to hinder our ability to implement this change in the short term. Craig and Barb have worked hard to improve our current website in order to make it more user-friendly and informative.

May God continue to bless His Church here at Good Samaritan.

Discernment Committee Selection

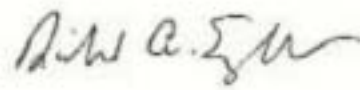
Thank you for praying for our parish, clergy, staff and Vestry during these times of transition. Your prayers have lifted up all of us and for that we are grateful. Thank you also for your ongoing commitment to the mission and ministry of our church through your tithes and offerings.

My note to you today is to let you know that after much prayer, your Vestry has come to a decision as to whom God has called to serve on our Discernment Committee. I also want you to know that we had an incredible group of people who either offered themselves to serve or whose names were put forward by you our parishioners. I believe that the twelve who were chosen are a good representation of our parish family. Please hold them up in prayer in the coming days. Those called to serve in this important ministry are listed below in alphabetical order:

Hartley Connett, Linda Davis, Mary Ernst, Judy Farrell, Mike Figgins, Dina Gibson, Charles Howard, Mac McCausland, Richard Parry, Betty Pehlman, Charlie Smith and Dave Tower.

It is our plan to commission them for service at the Annual Meeting of the Parish on February 22, 2009. This important meeting begins at 6:30pm and is preceded by a potluck dinner at 5:30pm. At this meeting, we will have time to review the past year, go over the budget and look forward with expectation to both the challenges and opportunities that God has in store for us at the Church of the Good Samaritan in 2009 and beyond, as we forge the future together. Please make every effort to attend.

In His Name,



Rich Englander
Rector's Warden

Thrift Shop News

by Rose Smith

I thought I would take this opportunity to enlighten you with some amazing facts about the New Life Thrift Shop.

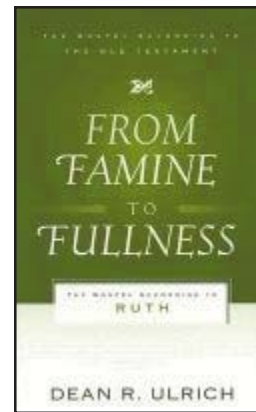
- It takes 50-60 volunteers per week to run the shop.
- Donations are processed every Monday, items are sorted, priced and put out for sale. Juliet Cooke brings students from the Devereux School to help hang the clothing.
- The shop carries clothing and shoes for women, men and children, household items and small appliances, bric-a-brac and collectibles, books and music.
- Our electrical department tests donations to make sure they work.
- Excess clothing is sent to The Free Church of St. John in Kensington and City Team in Chester
- The shop is always available to assist in disaster situations by providing clothing and household items to our local community.
- Since opening in our new location in 2007, we have extended the operating hours to 4:00pm during the week. The shop is now open on Saturday from 10:00am-4:00pm. The new hours have allowed many new customers access to our shop.
- Our sales have increased steadily each year from \$32,000 in 2003 to \$57,000 in 2008!
- All the profits from the shop are used for Outreach Missions such as Partnerships with the Diocese of North Dakota, Kitgum and Bolivia, assistance to short term missionaries as well as international and national full time missionaries, City Team, Bridge of Hope and Good Works
- Our bargain prices benefit our local community through your generous donations. Many customers return every week and have told me that we have the best shop in the area.
- Every Monday we stop to pray for all our missionaries.

If you have been thinking about volunteering at Good Sam, but haven't found the perfect fit for you, please consider the Thrift Shop. For only three hours per week, you will meet many nice people, have lots of fun and get first dibs on the merchandise. At the moment I am in need of someone to take the Friday afternoon shift from 1:00-4:00pm. If you feel you cannot commit on a regular basis please consider putting your name on our substitute list. If you would like more information about the Thrift Shop or volunteering please feel free to call or email me: Rose Smith, 610-651-2858, ted.rose@verizon.net.

New Women's Bible Study Offered

Women's Ministries is excited to offer a new Women's Bible Study of the Book of Ruth. This class will be held on Fridays, from noon -1:15pm in Rooms 263/264 at Good Samaritan, beginning March 6. The class will conclude on May 29 and it's designed so that you may join us at any time.

Pastor Beverly and Karen Adams will be leading this study, using a text written by The Rev. Dr. Dean Ulrich, called "From Famine to Fullness: The Gospel According to Ruth." This is a well-written and very readable text on the timely subject of God's provision for us in difficult circumstances.



Pastor Beverly has some copies of the book available for purchase for \$12.99. Please RSVP to Pastor Beverly at beverly@good-samaritan.org or 610-644-4040 x213, so that we may be sure to have enough copies

of the book. The class format will include 20-30 minutes of teaching, followed by discussion based on the reflection questions in Dr. Ulrich's book. You may bring your lunch if you like. We hope to see you there!



Caring for Caregivers

Caring for Caregivers will meet for monthly nourishment and support on Saturday, March 21, 2009, from 1:00pm-3:00pm in Room 258. Please join us!

If you have any questions, please contact Susan Starke, Parish Nurse, 610-644-4040 x207 or susans@good-samaritan.org

What is Ugandan Gold?

by George Scheffey



Ugandan Gold is a great-tasting, premium coffee, but it is also a great mission opportunity for us and an excellent example of a business model that truly makes a difference to the people of Uganda.

Almost ten years ago, a Christian non-profit organization planted a coffee farm in the Bunyoro-Kitara region of Uganda, leasing the land from the Church of Uganda. The Christian East African and Equatorial Development Trust (CEED) was determined to deliver permanent change to this small corner of Uganda, very close to the area included in the Kitgum Diocese. They developed an enterprise that brought jobs (forty-two permanent workers) and foreign exchange for further economic development, health and education in the region. Among recent projects enabled through this partnership are the digging and rehabilitation of water wells and contributions to a much-needed operating theater in the local health clinic.

As for the coffee, it is organically grown, hand-picked and sun-dried in Uganda, and then shipped to the U.S. for roasting and distribution. Every dollar in excess of the cost to grow, ship, process, package and market the coffee is returned to Uganda for reinvestment, making this a more efficient operation than most fair trades.

Good Sam became involved with CEED about a year ago when the Men's Ministry was looking for alternatives to Starbucks' coffee for Café Good Sam. Beginning in the fall of 2008, we've been serving Ugandan Gold on a weekly basis, at a considerable cost savings and with a much more Christian impact. Due to numerous inquiries from the congregation, we recently began offering the coffee for sale by the pound. You can now purchase regular (ground or whole bean) and decaf as well as flavored coffee (hazelnut, french vanilla and cinnamon sticky bun) for \$9 a pound (Starbucks is about \$11). In addition to the money sent back to Uganda by CEED for Good Sam's bulk purchases, Men's Ministry also allocates \$2 for every pound bought by the congregation to our Kitgum Diocese mission fund.

As you can see, this is a win-win-win situation for our partners in Uganda, for CEED, and for Good Sam. Please look for the coffee sales in Ashton Hall during Café Good Sam, usually on the first and third Sundays of the month. If you'd like to help with sales, or establish a standing order, please contact George Scheffey at mensministry@good-samaritan.org. For more information on CEED and Ugandan Gold, visit the website at www.ugandangold.com.

Church of the Good Samaritan *performing arts series*



"Musical Benches" Friday, March 20



"Musical Benches" returns Friday, March 20 at 7:30pm, featuring Christopher Garven and former artist in residence with the Boston Pops orchestra, Glenn Priest performing music from Chopin to Sousa at the organ and a piano. Tickets are not required for this event.

Good Friday, April 10, 2009, 7:30pm

"Requiem" by W.A. Mozart featuring the choirs of Good Samaritan under the direction of Christopher Garven.

Thursday, July 16, 2009, 7:30pm

Organ concert featuring internationally renowned organist Sophie-Veronique Cauchefer-Choplin, Organist Titulaire, Saint Sulpice, Paris, France.

**Aiding Romania's Children shares with us Mary Veal's Homilies from Bucharest, Romania.
Here is an excerpt from her most recent Homily, on the Gospel of Mark 1:29-39.**

"Sometimes we find ourselves thinking that miracles and saints are all in the past, only the stories we read in the Bible or people who lived long ago. But history is a continuum, lives lived and events recorded, and it will continue long after we are gone. But for our generation, we seem to live mostly in the era of 'Now'.

We look back in awe at the story mentioned in this reading, the healing of Simon's mother-in-law, because this is a personal story, from one who was part of Jesus' ministry. Maybe that is what it takes to slow us down, and remind us that miracles and blessings are 'Now', not just in the past...that the Good News is still being proclaimed, and God's great mercy is still with us each day.

As many of you know, I work in a hospital with HIV/AIDS patients. One of my first young friends here many years ago was Alexandra, an abandoned girl who was later adopted by my Romanian Catholic friend, Aliz, and I was asked to be Alexandra's godmother. After her early years of sickness and misery, Alexandra went into Alix's loving family, then the wonder drugs, the antiretrovirals, appeared. For years she had a normal life, went to school in the village where they lived, having all the hopes and dreams of any young girl.

But eventually her good fortune ran out, as she began to show signs of neurological dysfunction, unfortunately an all too common problem for many of our HIV kids. Despite all the efforts of the doctors, she became very ill, and eventually became blind, a frustrating, horrible condition for her. She would cry, and be filled with despair, but on good days, she would talk about going back to school someday, when she could see again. Aliz and I would shake our heads sadly when she talked about her vision returning, as we knew all too well what the doctors had said, that her sight was forever gone.



The only thing we were able to do was to help provide the special expensive medicines that she needed. Her older brother would come to the hospital to get them for her, and a few weeks ago I met him in the corridor. He smiled when he saw me, and announced that Alexandra could see! He said there were good days and bad days, but that she could actually see.

That, my friends, is a miracle! I could only think of how sure Alexandra had been that she would see again, and how disbelieving her mother and I had been, despite our being very religious. Our faith simply didn't stretch as far as the completely trusting faith of our Alexandra. What a lesson this was, and what a blessing!

Jesus' statement 'There is more to be done' remains his mission statement to us today. There are still the sick, the distressed, the downtrodden, those in need all around us, and we, like the disciples, are the ones who must help. Time and again, as with today's gospel stories, Jesus is shown conquering sickness and death, and at the end, he conquers death on the cross, with the Easter miracle of the Resurrection.

We tend to ask for miracles to end suffering and need. But there are other small, everyday miracles... seeing a baby smile, watching a kitten play, embracing the person we love... these are miracles of the moment, and all too often we fail to see them for what they really are.

Let us remember to appreciate the everyday miracles, and likewise, be prepared, together, to listen again to Christ when he says to us, 'There is more to be done.' Let us pray that we will have the resolve to do what we should to help others. But most of all, like our Alexandra, let us really believe in miracles, and live in faith and hope."

~Mary Veal, Bucharest, Romania, February 7, 2009

Scouting News

by John Eppinger, Jr

Our own Boy Scout Troop 106 has had a very active winter culminating with an indoor winter camping trip to Camp Horseshoe in February. Camp Horseshoe is part of the Horseshoe Scout Reservation in Rising Sun, Maryland. The weekend of February 6-8 featured an indoor hockey game in the Kindness Center, a 6 mile trail hike, and great food! The night's entertainment was a rousing, competitive game of Scout Jeopardy which ended with Team One winning with 111 points!

The following weekend was highlighted by Scout Sunday at Good Sam where the Scouts helped as ushers and provided a color guard for both the procession and the recession. After the 9:00 service the Scouts and leaders retreated to Ashton Hall where they participated in a charter presentation ceremony. Good Samaritan's Chartered Organization Representative John Eppinger, Jr. conducted the ceremony and Fr. Todd Cederberg received the troop's charter for the year 2009 on behalf of the congregation. The troop has now been chartered to Good Sam for three years and is in very good health.

Future plans for the growth of Scouting's programs in the church include the addition of a Venturing crew for high school students in grades 9-12. The Venturing program is a coed program designed for the older Scouts and non-Scouts to provide positive experiences to help youth mature and to prepare them to become responsible adults.



Please join us for our
Winter Welcoming Dinner
 hosted by the Greeters ministry
 at the home of Tracy and Mike Defina
 on Saturday, March 7 at 5:30pm
 Children welcome.

RSVP by Wednesday, February 25
newcomers@good-samaritan.org
 or 610-644-4040 x701.



Episcopal Day School

We have openings in our two-year-old and three-year-old classes. Come take a tour of the Day School and see how much fun our children are having! Enrollment for 2009-2010 has already begun. Stop in the Day School Office and pick up a form or call Barb Condit to set up a tour, 610-644-6181.

"Twice is Nice"
Consignment Sale
Tuesday, March 3 - Thursday, March 5
9:00am-1:00pm
Ashton Hall



Connecting: Life at Good Samaritan March 1 - March 29

10:25am-11:20am, Room 223

This series of classes is intended for those who may be interested in pursuing membership at Good Samaritan. The class consists of five topics:

- * Introduction: Vision and Mission of our church
- * Basics of Anglican Christianity
- * All about the Book of Common Prayer
- * All about the symbols: The Sanctuary, vestments & colors
- * Connecting: All about Life at Good Samaritan.

For more information contact
 Tracy Defina, Newcomer Coordinator
newcomers@good-samaritan.org
 or 610-644-4040 x701



The Church of the Good Samaritan

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Winter 2009 Events Calendar

February 22	Potluck Dinner & Annual Meeting	March 7	ACM Handbell Festival	March 21	Caring for Caregivers
February 23	Prayer with the Vestry	March 13-15	Women's Retreat	March 23	Prayer with the Vestry
February 25	Ash Wednesday	March 13	Guy's Night	March 27-29	Remix Conference
February 28	Financial Seminar	March 17	Samaritan Deadline	March 27-28	FAC Mini Camp
March 3-5	"Twice is Nice" Sale	March 20	Musical Benches	March 31	Pittsburgh Project Orientation
March 6	Book of Ruth Bible Study begins	March 20	Girls' Night		UrbanServe Orientation