

Only Connect

by Richard Morgan



This Fall we are launching ‘Vision 2020’ – a description of where we’re hoping to grow as a church over the next two years. It can be summed up in one word: Connection.

We announced in the communication from the vestry at the end of June a new expression of our church’s purpose (or mission) – ‘to be transformed by Christ to love God and our neighbor.’ I hope that there is nothing essentially new or controversial in that statement. It’s a good description of what it means to be the Church of the Good Samaritan. The story of the Good Samaritan begins with Jesus asking an expert in the law for a summary of the law. ‘Love God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind; and love your neighbor as yourself,’ he replies. It’s the question ‘who is my neighbor’ that elicits the famous story. We know that to be able to love God and our neighbor we need the transforming power of Christ at work within us.

Vision is less enduring than purpose. It’s about where you see the gap between where you are today and where you need to be in order to fully live out your purpose. So, purpose endures but vision changes according to what the next most important step is in living into that purpose. Our vision is ‘to connect those who are here and not yet here to Christ and his church so that they grow in love of God and neighbor.’ The key word is ‘connect’ and it’s qualified by that connection having two focuses – ‘those who are here’ and ‘those who are not yet here.’ There’s also a recognition that transformation is not simply a personal spiritual affair that happens in isolation, but it’s something that happens within the community of the church – hence ‘Christ and his church.’ So the connecting we want to do has two directions – to help people develop a relationship with God and to help people grow in relationship within the church.

Which brings us to the gap. We’re identifying that we need to grow in our reaching out to draw others in, and also in our connecting and including each one of our current members. That is to say that at the moment we don’t do as good a job of reaching out to others with the good news as we could, and we also have a growth area in reaching out to those within our own community. We’re sorry if you’re a member of Good Sam and are feeling disconnected and unable to find your place to belong and to serve. We want to help – it’s a priority. And we know that the life of the church is the power for the transformation of the world – so we want to be effective in our mission to share Christ with the world and get you connected, envisioned and empowered for that mission.

How are we going to do that?

To reach out better to those who are not yet here we identified that we’d like to be better welcomers; to help people share their stories of faith; and to connect everything we do as a church with our purpose of transformation. I’d like us to become a congregation of evangelists. I’m not so much interested in attracting to Good Sam those who are already Christians and part of another church – I’m interested in those who are unchurched – and who need to be connected to Christ. I’d like us to think of church not as something we come to, but a community that we’re sent out from. We’re each on a mission from God in the world and we gather together to encourage and support one another in that mission.

The practical steps to help us achieve these goals in reaching out are to create two teams – an Invite Team and a Welcome Team. Ben Capps will champion the Invite team and Jonathan Hobbs the Welcome team. **Invite** is about helping us be better at connecting with our neighbors and helping them connect with Good Sam. **Welcome** is about ensuring that once they’re invited they’re welcomed.

To connect those who are already a part of Good Samaritan better we identified a need to strengthen our small group life – especially in terms of developing leaders of groups to be effective lay pastors; to grow in our ability to connect people relationally to discipleship groups and service opportunities; and to make sure we communicate these things well. Currently, we provide great programs through which people are able to belong, grow and serve. But people don’t always find their way into these programs. I’d like us to recognize that every member matters and therefore we need to not just provide great programs but work relationally with every single member of Good Samaritan to help them find their place of belonging and service.

The practical steps that will help us achieve that are establishing a Connect Team and a Networks Team. I will champion the Connect team, and John Whitnah will champion the Networks team. **Connect** is about extending our newcomer ministry so that the team will not just connect newcomers to the life of the church, but will work to connect every single member to the life of the church. **Networks** is about identifying the networks of relationship that currently exist within the life of the church and developing stronger systems of support and training of leaders within these networks so that they are able to be effective lay pastors for their group members. *continued on page 5*



Alpha is a series of sessions exploring the basics of the Christian faith. Typically run over several weeks, each session looks at a different question that people can have about faith and is designed to create conversation. It's just an open, informal and honest space to explore and discuss life's big questions together.

Alpha is run in local communities all around the world, and everyone's welcome. It runs in cafés, churches, bars, prisons, parks, universities, schools, homes—you name it. No two Alphas look the same, but generally they have three key things in common: food, a talk and good conversation.

Food

Whether it's a group of friends gathered around a kitchen table, or a quick catch-up over coffee and cake, food has a way of bringing people together. It's no different at Alpha. Most sessions start with food, because it's a great way to build community and get to know each other.

Talk

The talks are designed to engage guests and inspire conversation. Usually around thirty minutes long, they can be given as a live talk or played as a video, all for free. They explore the big issues around faith and unpack the basics of Christianity, addressing questions such as Who is Jesus? and How can I have faith?

Discussion

Probably the most important part of any Alpha: the chance to share thoughts and ideas on the topic, and simply discuss it in a small group. There's no obligation to say anything and there's nothing you can't say (seriously). It's an opportunity to hear from others and contribute your own perspective in an honest, friendly and open environment.

Childcare is available by reservation.
Contact Ted Klenske (tklenske@hotmail.com)
or Dianne Moretzsohn (dgmlaw@aol.com)

or

[Register here.](#)

Children's Music Program

by Joy Schauer

Good Samaritan's Children's Music Program is a training program for students in grades K through 8 that uses the graded Voice for Life series developed by the Royal School of Church Music as its curriculum. Classes meet weekly from mid-September through the end of May.

Beginning in the fall, the program will expand to two choirs:

The Cherub Choir will enroll students in grades K through 2, and will meet weekly from 4:30 to 5:15 on Thursday afternoons in the choir room. This choir will use the white Voice for Life book as its foundation for teaching musical, vocal and choral basics, and will teach those basics through games and other fun activities. This choir will perform occasionally on Sunday mornings and at special services such as the children's Christmas Eve service.

The St. Nicholas Choir will enroll students in grades 3 through 8, and will meet weekly from 5:30 to 6:30 on Thursday evenings in the choir room. This choir will use the entire graded Voice for Life series to teach more advanced musical, vocal and choral concepts to participants. The choir will perform once a month during the weekly Eucharist, and will also perform at special services such as Christmas Eve and Easter.

Both choirs will also have the opportunity to participate in social, service, and cultural events during the year.

All children in grades K through 8 are invited to become part of the Music Program regardless of musical experience. If your child or children would be interested in singing with us, please contact Joy Schauer for an enrollment form. Any questions should also be directed to Joy at joyschauer112@gmail.com, or at 610-742-7247. We look forward to welcoming your child this year!



Education for Ministry

by Diane Gibson & Joy Schauer

EfM-Education for Ministry--a small group seminar that provides an opportunity to explore through study, prayer and reflection how we might respond to our call to Christian service and carry out our ministry in the church community and the wider world. Seminars also provide an opportunity to increase your knowledge and understanding of the Bible, church history and theology. We are currently looking for students to form a seminar group this September. Classes will meet on Wednesday evenings from 7:00-9:30pm beginning September 9, 2018 through June 2019. Weekly reading and preparation for the seminar group requires approximately two to four hours. Tuition is \$350 per year, which includes all necessary seminar materials. Scholarships are available through the diocese, through the church or through the mentor. Please contact Diane Gibson (tiggerific8585@yahoo.com / 484-678-7109) to register or with questions.



Second, the community that we share creates opportunities for lively and wide-ranging discussions about our readings. At Good Sam, we have students enrolled in three of the four years of study, so each meeting is an opportunity to not only share the material that I've reviewed during the week, but to get insights into the topics that the other years are studying, and to see how their lessons tie into my own. We've had some animated conversations, not just about the readings themselves, but about how they relate to current events and to our personal lives.

And last, but definitely not least, EfM is challenging my notions about my faith and making me think about the Bible in an entirely different way. Growing up, I learned stories about kings and prophets who seemed to be so perfect and blameless that I felt I could never live up to the standards that they set. As I studied the Old Testament this year, I was amazed to find out how utterly human these people were, how they tried to live out God's will for their lives, and sometimes succeeded, but often failed – just like me. I discovered that I loved reading the prophets, and found their words to be particularly relevant to our current times. I started reflecting on what I believed, why I believed it, and whether it was still something that I needed to believe in order to grow as a Christian. I've started to unbind myself from ideas that were holding me back, and have begun embracing those that feel like little lights illuminating an unknown path.

If EfM sounds like something you'd like to be part of, we have room for you in the class that will be starting in September. You can get more information about the course generally by checking out the EfM website at efm.sewanee.edu, or about Good Sam's class by contacting our mentor, Diane Gibson, or any current student. Come join us and explore what your faith holds for you!" - Joy

From Joy Schauer, EfM Class Member

"A few weeks ago, while I was mindlessly scrolling through my Facebook news feed, a meme caught my attention: it was a parody of a military recruiting poster, but with the Son of God substituting for Uncle Sam. Jesus' eyes and index finger were pointing right at me as He said, "I want YOU to think for yourself." What a perfect description of Education for Ministry!

For those of you who haven't heard of EfM, it's a four-year program of theological study that was developed for lay people to help them gain a deeper understanding of the Christian faith as they live out their call to service. Each year features a different focus for study – the Old Testament in the first year, the New Testament in Year Two, church history in Year Three, and theology in the final year. In addition to the core materials, students also read and discuss additional texts which tie together key theological themes.

As someone who's just completed her first full year of the course, there are many things that I love about EfM. First, I love the community created by our EfM class. We share spiritual biographies at the beginning of the year, use personal experiences as the basis for our theological reflections, and take turns leading the worship time that we share at the beginning of each class. We eat meals together, discuss families and vacations, and pray for each other when we're going through tough times.



InSight for Life – Studying Scripture Together Fall 2018 Study for Women

by Pam Bennett

Exactly in the middle of the book of 1 Samuel we read this thought-provoking verse: “To obey is better than sacrifice... rebellion is as sinful as witchcraft, and stubbornness as bad as worshiping idols.” (1 Samuel 15:22-23)

What do we make of a verse like this in our modern world? What are our present-day idols? Where in life have we been bewitched by something that isn't God? And is unflinching obedience to God really better than any sacrifices we could make in His name?

Welcome to the fascinating book of 1 Samuel! We invite all women to join us on Wednesday evenings or Thursday mornings on this 10-week study of one of the most adventure-filled books of scripture. Together we will examine –

- What does true obedience look like?
- What difference does it make to inquire of the Lord before making decisions?
- What does godly leadership look like?
- How do I respond to the holiness of the living God?
- How can I live with complete trust in God – even amidst the battles of life?
- How do I learn to wait on God to lead me, and how can I trust Him in the waiting?

Beginning on Wednesday, September 19 at 7:00pm and Thursday, September 20 at 9:15am in Rooms 263/264, we will meet for worship, teaching, small group, and prayer as we discover together how to Hear and Obey God's Word.

[Register now](#) or contact us with questions at goodsamin-sight@gmail.com

Walking The Mourner's Path

by Susan Starke, Parish Nurse

Some paths God never intended us to walk down alone. The path of grief is like that: God goes with us, and often provides fellow travelers to walk with us.

This fall we will once again offer the grief work series *Walking the Mourner's Path*.

WTMP is an 8-week grief group for anyone who has suffered a significant loss and would like to process it in a group setting. Loss due to death is always difficult. The support group invites those who have suffered the loss of a loved one to come into God's loving presence, to process, heal and be loved. While the Mourner's Path is a non-denominational ministry, it is distinct from many other bereavement programs in that it is Christ-centered, scripturally and spiritually based. *Walking the Mourner's Path* is not group therapy but is spiritually directed. We believe that grieving is not a lack of faith, but a natural part of living. Through the eight-week program (complete with workbook), mourners learn ways in which they may honor their loved ones, seek spiritual direction and discover God's promise of comfort in community.

This grief group will begin **Monday, October 1, from 5:00 – 6:30pm (time is subject to change)** and run for 8 weeks (ending November 26). It will meet in Room 215 and will be led by trained facilitators, including Susan Starke, Parish Nurse. The cost is \$50. (There is financial assistance available.) Registration is required by Wednesday, September 19. If you would like more information for yourself or a friend or loved one, or to register for the course, please contact Susan: susan.starke@good-samaritan.org or 610-644-4040 x207.



God's Affirming Grace

by Tracy Defina, Director of Family Ministries



One morning out on the playground one morning a parent approached me to let me know how much her son, entering 5th grade, had enjoyed VBS.

Now, you have to be familiar with both 5th graders and VBS to know that they often do not go together like peanut butter and jelly. In fact, here at Good Sam we invite our 6th graders to be helpers and it is amazing how engaged they can be with that responsibility.

Anyway, this child had so taken to the worship music that he was sharing it with his mom with great enthusiasm. She even reported hearing him alone in his bedroom singing the songs. I can just hear him now “through the storm, you never let go of me.”

This VBS program with 125 kids, 50 youth volunteers and 25 adult volunteers takes just what you'd think it takes to pull off, and then some more. I'd do it every day to know a ten-year-old boy was shouting praises to God alone in his bedroom!



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To support all of these, Dwight Wilson will champion leadership development – especially working with staff on developing clear structure and accountability; a caring environment; and making sure that we communicate well with one another. Dwight has already done some great work with the staff team and we look forward to that continuing in the fall.

A couple of weeks ago we heard a powerful sermon from Chris Hall (or John if you were in the chapel) on Romans 12. In Romans 12:5, Paul reminds us that ‘in Christ we who are many form one body and each member belongs to all the others.’ I’m praying that we will grasp hold of that mutual obligation – that each of us belongs to all the others. That discovery will breathe life into us as we each find our place of growth in connection to God and to one another.

In the novel ‘Howard’s End’ E. M. Forster has the protagonist reflect on the phrase ‘Only Connect’ – for which he has in mind integration within oneself as well as connection with other individuals. It’s not a bad phrase to use to reflect on the alienation we suffer in modern society from one another and even from our own selves. We are called to walk a path of real connection – to one another, so that we reflect God’s life in our shared life; and a growth in our spiritual life – so that we become grounded human beings rooted in the life of Christ. And that connection extends outward to a world that needs us to extend Christ’s love to each one we encounter.


Richard



Good Sam Family Fest

Saturday, September 8

10:00am-12:00pm

Green Tree Park, Malvern

Join us for the first of our Family Fests; a Blessing of the Backpacks. No RSVP required, just show up - plain and simple. Bring your backpacks, some friends, and whatever else you'd like to enjoy a couple of hours at the park. Hope to see you there!

Women's Bible Studies Fall 2018-Spring 2019

Tuesdays 11:30am-2:00pm **Mature Women's Bible Study** shares lunch, fellowship, the Bible and prayer together. Join us as we study the 4 Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Room 223. Contact: Mary Ann McClarnon, mcclmak133@hotmail.com

Wednesdays 10am-12pm **Rest & Renewal Bible Study** is a teaching study based on the Word of God that examines different scriptural passages each week. Its focus is always: Who is the Holy Spirit? What is He like? What are His ways? How can we know Him better? Drop ins are always welcome. Location: Room 223 Contact: roxydunning@gmail.com

Thursdays 7:00am-8:00am **Business Women & Breakfast with the Bible** is a concise, year round, in-depth study of books of the Bible and how God's word applies in all situations for women on the go. Currently studying the Book of John. Open to join anytime. Location: Our Deli, Rt. 30, Paoli Contact: Annette Toebe, 610-952-3512 or agerbaek6@hotmail.com

Tuesdays 9:30am-11:30am, starting September 18, **Joy of Living** is a Scripture Focused Bible study attracting women from many denominations as well as those who are unfamiliar with the Bible. This year's study on the Book of Revelations includes lessons from a Study Guide, small groups, lecture time, commentary, and fellowship opportunities. Free children's Program available for infants to preschool. Location: the study gathers in the church, then breaks into groups. Pre-registration requested. Contact: nancyhcarlson@gmail.com

Welcome New Staff Members



Dan Edwards, Co-director College and Young Adult Ministry: Dan graduated with his Master of Divinity from Palmer Theological Seminary in May. For the last few years, he has been working as a campus safety officer for Corning Community College and is ready more than ever to put his education into practice. He is excited to walk with college students on their journey of faith and discipleship, as well as serve under the leadership at Good Sam. Dan and his wife Libby are looking forward to returning to Church of the Good Samaritan and the greater Philadelphia area. They both agree it will feel like coming home.



Derek Murr, CCO Fellow: Derek is currently in a one year fellowship position with CCO and Good Sam. He graduated from Shippensburg University in 2017 with an economics degree. After a year of discernment and a lot of encouragement from his wife Katy, he decided to pursue campus ministry. Derek loved being a part of his campus ministry group in college, especially doing outreach and wants to see more college kids know Jesus personally. He is also a huge Phillies and Eagles fan so he is really excited to be in this area.



Fall Kick Off Pancake Breakfast

September 9

Ashton Hall

Sponsored by Men's Ministry

Sign up to serve

mensministry@good-samaritan.org



Small Groups

find a place to connect

Kickoff Sunday is September 9! That morning will be the kickoff for CLUB 56 and the class for 7th & 8th graders (with a new name that will be announced soon!)

Youth Group Kickoff is that night at 4:00 and goes to 6:00 pm. This year's theme is "Masquerade." Come with a mask or make one when you get here. IT'S FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!!! Feel free to dress up (or... not... there will be everything from t-shirt & shorts to ballgowns. We will go through the calendar of the coming semester. We help make sure everyone is on the same page. We also have a BLAST together. Oh... and dinner will be served!

BREAKAWAY is our annual Middle School Retreat in the fall. This year it will be October 5-6. We join more than 500 other students and leaders from all over the tristate area. It's a FANTASTIC weekend and we hope all of our 6th-8th graders can join us! (OH! And invite your friends!!!) Contact Jonathan to sign up! (jonathan.hobbs@good-samaritan.org / 484-868-8642).



Man Up Dinner with Dave Weidis

Wednesday, September 19
6:00-8:00pm
Ashton Hall

*Dave Weidis founded ServingLeaders in 2007 to provide a respite of care, training, and encouragement for those facing ministry challenges. Dave is a counselor, attorney, teacher, and elder. He has a Master's Degree in Christian Counseling from Cairn University and a J.D. from Villanova Law School. In addition to his full-time counseling practice, he regularly speaks at churches, pastors' conferences and retreats. He appears as the host of the TV show, "Joy In Our Town" on the Trinity Broadcasting Network, WGTW and has produced and guest hosted "PTL" specials on providing pastoral care to pastors, handling grief, and the necessity and challenges of taking a pastoral sabbatical.

***Dave is also leading the Men's Retreat October 12-14!**

Small groups are one of the best ways for people to get to know each other and to grow in faith together. That's especially true in a large church like ours where we have multiple services and come from a large geographical area.

The good news is that we have more than 20 groups already meeting in various locations at various times of the week. There are men's groups, women's groups, and mixed groups. Some meet weekly while others meet alternate weeks. Some discuss the sermon series passages while others do other Bible studies or topical studies.

In addition to the groups that are already meeting, it has become apparent that there are a number of us who are not currently actively involved and would like to find a way to participate. We would love to have new groups get started this fall.

Small group hosts/facilitators are especially needed! Please contact [Jeanne Lomano](mailto:jeanne.lomano@samaritan.org) or [John Whitnah](mailto:john.whitnah@samaritan.org) for more information, or fill out [this form](#) and Jeanne will contact you.



Twice Is Nice Consignment Sale

September 26-27
Ashton Hall

Weds 9am-1pm & 5pm-8pm

Thurs 9am-1pm Half Price Sale

Children's toys, books, clothes and furniture
Consignor information is available on the Good Sam Day School website goodsamdayschool.org



THE CHURCH OF THE
GOOD SAMARITAN

212 West Lancaster Avenue
Paoli, Pennsylvania 19301

September 2018 Events Calendar

September 3
Labor Day / Office is closed

September 9
Fall Kick Off Pancake Breakfast
Elementary Sunday School resumes
Youth Fall Kick Off

September 10
Good Sam Dance Academy Classes begin

September 12
Healing Meeting with Dr. Frank Sizer

September 15
Caring for Caregivers Support Group

September 16
Alpha Course begins

September 19
Retired & Refired

September 19
Man Up Dinner

September 26
PRAXIS

September 26-27
Twice is Nice Consignment Sale