



*Good Samaritans are followers of Jesus who focus on loving, serving, and including all people. These are the ways we believe God is calling us to love, serve, and include all in our community right now. The example of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37 serves as our guiding scripture.*

## **How is God calling us to “go and do likewise” and explore who we are as “Good Samaritans” in 2018?**

The following is our particular focus for growth in 2018:

### **1. Our Regional Presence and Growing Diversity**

We believe all people are made in the image of God and we eagerly seek to connect with the rich variety of God's people in our community. As followers of Jesus, we will connect with the growing diversity in our neighborhoods and become a more regional presence by:

- Understanding Good Sam's “neighborhood” to include NE Hendricks and NW Marion counties.
- Learning, telling and celebrating our own stories of diversity.
- Learning how to connect and build relationships with new people, especially people with different life experiences than our own.
- Partnering with neighborhood and community organizations and groups which are diverse in different ways.
- Experimenting with at least four public offerings (e.g. Pub Theology, one-time worship services) in locations other than Brownsburg.

### **2. Children and Youth Ministry**

We value children and youth and view them as full participants in our community. We believe our children are ministers and that they are called to do ministry in the world. We will expand our ministry with children (ages 3-11) and youth (ages 12-18) and walk alongside them and their families as they grow by:

- Selecting and implementing curricula for all ages and training our leaders to lead it.
- Incorporating multi-generational opportunities for learning whenever possible.
- Hiring a part-time Director of Youth Ministry no later than January 31, 2018.
- Developing our own youth group and making connections with at least two other groups of youth in our area in 2018.

### **3. Serving Our Community**

We value and center our spiritual identity on serving all of God's creation. We believe our service can take the form of addressing physical, financial as well as spiritual needs, and is characterized by attitudes of generosity and gratitude. We are called to serve as companions and to enhance the ministry already taking place in our community. We will become more intentional and reflective servants in our community by:

- Identifying our core service themes and partnering with specific groups in the community to focus intentionally on those themes.
- Developing a structure and framework for responding to special needs and spontaneous opportunities in our community so that we can be flexible as needs arise.
- Growing in awareness of the underlying issues and systemic forces behind the needs in our community.
- Integrating simple opportunities for personal connection, spiritual reflection, and prayer with every act of service we do.
- Generating opportunities to support and show gratitude to those who serve the marginalized in our communities.

#### 4. **Spiritual Development**

We value the process of exploring spirituality and seek to grow in our relationship with God by deepening our understanding of what it means to follow Jesus. We believe everyone is in a different place in their spiritual journey and that God is made known to us in a variety of creative and surprising ways. We will create different opportunities for everyone to go deeper and explore their relationship with God, developing clear pathways for this spiritual growth by:

- Aligning our current formation offerings in easy-to-enter pathways for people exploring, growing, deepening, and centering their life in Christ.
- Starting at least three new pilot groups and gatherings for Bible study, reflection, fellowship, and prayer. We hope this will also include spirituality and the arts and spiritual creativity.
- Continuing to explore different and creative liturgical expressions of our worship as an expression of our spiritual development.

#### 5. **Congregational/Community Culture**

We believe that God has a calling for each person to “go and do likewise” and be a Good Samaritan. We are called to cultivate our spiritual gifts in our daily lives, to give generously of our resources, and to share this love with the world. We will foster a healthy congregational culture where everyone embraces our mission and where our leaders are transparent, open and collaborative by:

- Establishing strong communication processes and feedback loops.
- Pursuing training for staff and lay leaders through Center for Congregations.
- Developing measures of our vitality and success of mission beyond Sunday worship attendance.
- Growing our ability to meet pastoral needs which includes training for lay people and making arrangements to have space options available for funerals, weddings and private counseling as needed.
- Inviting every Good Samaritan to give intentionally and generously to support our common life and mission as our start-up grants come to an end.

### **Hopes for three years from now....**

**By January 1, 2022:**

- **We have become a regional “destination” faith community** meeting all over the West Side, with multiple small groups meeting in different locations, at least two worship weekly services at two different locations, creative expressions of art and spirituality in multiple locations, and micro-targeted outreach projects in neighborhoods.

- **We have strong partnerships** with regional organizations and other nonprofits, especially those that work with youth and share our values of inclusion and outreach/service to others.
- **We are expanding our concept of servant ministry** to include ministering to people's spiritual needs and questions (e.g. grief support group, divorce support group, LGBTQ parents' group).
- **We are lead facilitators in addressing systemic injustices** and major community needs on the West Side of Indianapolis.
- **We have a thriving system of small groups and spiritual growth activities** with clear pathways so that everyone knows how to get involved and take a next step.
- **We are giving generously to support all of our own common ministry and mission costs** and no longer need outside financial support from sister churches or the Diocese of Indianapolis.
- **We have begun fostering and growing leaders for ordained ministry**, walking alongside them in their discernment process.

## **Dreams for us in next five years....**

By January 1, 2024:

- **We are a hub for collaboration and connectivity** on the West Side, known for excellent ministry that focuses on addressing human needs, systemic injustices, and community issues. We are known for our multi-generational service and inclusion.
- **We are a church of multiple worship services/sites and sustainable small groups** that maintains the "personal" feel of Good Sam's that we like now.
- **We are a resource for spiritual growth** in the communities we serve.
- **We are generous with our gifts, sowing seeds for new faith communities.** We are in the position to help the Diocese of Indianapolis plant the seeds of another new church, or an extension of Good Samaritan as an act of thanksgiving.
- **We are evaluating our options for a long-term building**, asking ourselves: How do we stay Good Sam's, even if we have walls?