

God's Work. Our Hands.

– Making New Connections

(A three-year capital and programmatic effort to sustain an outward focus in mission at Good Sam and support other Metro DC congregations doing New Connections work.)

Rationale – (action / reflection / integration)

Real growth and change in our lives often comes about through experiences and actions that are outside of our normal routine and patterns. Sometimes we talk about this process of change as an Action / Reflection model. We go out to experience and we come back to reflect on that experience. In the process of reflecting on what was most meaningful in our experience (actions), we begin the process of integrating these discoveries or new values more deeply into our lives. It is also true to say that action, reflection and efforts at integrating new thinking happen in their own time and order. We hope to build programming, events and activities that support these natural processes of learning and growing in our faith lives, individually and collectively.

We might say our value (motto) is to work at “Finding Christ in our Shared Journeys of Faith and to Tell the Stories.” Our overall purpose would be to confirm and sustain our identity at Good Sam as a Mission Center for faith development. By these efforts, we acknowledge we are becoming a mission centered congregation where growing in our own faith and sense of being used by God in the world around us is an ongoing learning process we are actively supporting in our lives together.

Activities

Goal – establish a programming rhythm of mission activity with emphasis in personal growth and discipleship. This programming rhythm will always include exploration of our own gifts for serving Christ with our neighbors outside of the church walls along with personal and collective reflecting on our experience and God's work among us.

One national or international (high adventure) mission trip each year.

Establish, promote and conduct one national or international mission trip (20 to 30 individuals) annually. The focus of which will be to go, serve and connect - building relationships where God can work through us in the lives of others; and at the same time, grow in us a greater sense of how God is walking with us and in our faith. There will also be an emphasis on returning to share what happened and what was learned with the Good Sam Community. These opportunities for reflection, telling stories and sharing personal perspectives will also encourage the integration of the learnings that were made.

Three or four local mission activities each year.

These activities are to offer regular local mission events or activities that help develop a culture at Good Sam of going into the community meeting others and making a difference, while learning to demonstrate our faith. These are intended to supplement the ongoing partnerships and relationships we have with community groups where our membership can go to serve like Reading Tutors at Carver, 3rd Saturday Breakfast at St Mary's Caring, Feed the Families, and the like. These activities might easily include an emphasis on inviting other congregations and community efforts to

join us in our endeavors to be in mission and in our reflecting on what God is doing with us and in us. Many of the brainstorming ideas the congregation has offered would fit in these activities.

Two times a year offer a retreat or 4-6 class sessions on developing our own faith lives, looking after how we grow in faith, asking; what exercises our faith, what feeds our faith and where are we individually in our own faith journeys. These activities will have emphasis on sharing, personal reflection and integrating the experiences we have (or will have) in service or mission events. It can include encouragement for finding our own local and recurring activities where our faith finds regular expression, encouragement and exercise. Brainstorming ideas for what activities our individual members will find meaningful will be part of this.

Resources Needed annually

- Support for major mission trips to reduce the overall costs and help those who need financial assistance \$ 4,000
 - Line Item for supplies, promotion, leader training, books, \$ 1,000
 - Staff Position 10 hours per week \$ 8,000
(10 hours a week X \$15/hr. X 50 weeks)
 - Miscellaneous costs \$ 333
- Total \$13,333

Three-year Budget Total \$40,000

Capital Growth Goal

A Three-Year Campaign to raise money to support the establishing, promoting and exploring of a strong programming identity in mission and personal growth at Good Sam. The goal would be to raise \$60,000 over this three-year period. One third would be forwarded to the Metro DC Synod for New Connections efforts in other congregations and two-thirds would stay at Good Sam for developing our “God’s Work. Our Hands. – Making New Connections” efforts.

Engagement Goal

What is “engagement?” We call it developing vital connections with our neighbors as we live out our faith lives. It is our hope that through the shaping of our mission and personal growth programming that a clearer program identity begins to form at Good Sam. But more than this we hope to collectively become better at building connections with the community we serve and with the friendships we develop working side by side. We believe this will produce a growth in the numbers of Active Participants in our community life in these ways; 1) local mission activities will raise awareness of Good Sam in the local community; 2) Increased vitality of members will be more attractive to visitors looking for a church community; 3) new contacts and relationships will come out of these experiences among those who serve together and among those whom are served. We hope to grow our active participation numbers from 302 at the end of 2016 to 347 at the end of 2019. This would be a growth of %15 or 45 active participants.