

FRLC GOOD SAMARITAN GROUP

In 2010, the Good Samaritan Fund was created as an option for member contributions. At that time, there was controversy within the ELCA which ultimately resulted in many churches and individual members leaving the ELCA. Members of French River Lutheran Church sought a solution which would keep our church together. After many discussions and prayerful consideration, the Good Samaritan Fund was created to allow members who may disagree with some aspects of the ELCA Mission to actively support the mission of French River Lutheran Church while following their conscience. At the 2010 FRLC annual meeting, the congregation overwhelmingly ratified the Good Samaritan group as an auxiliary of our congregation. Although the Good Samaritan Fund originally began as a means to keep our congregation together, individual reasons to support it now vary.

Every individual within FRLC has a choice in allocating the benevolence portion of their financial support. Over the years the Good Samaritan Fund has evolved to become a way for individuals to personally designate what projects and organizations receive their benevolence contributions. Another method is to authorize benevolence through the General Fund which is directed to synod and churchwide ministries (Northeastern Minnesota Synod and Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, respectively) for disbursement at their discretion. Both ways consolidate individual interests into a larger pool to maximize impact.

Members who contribute through the Good Samaritan Fund equally support the operating budget for French River Lutheran Church along with members who contribute through the General Fund.

Each year during the budgeting process the French River Lutheran Church Council sets an amount for benevolence. The congregation approves the budget during the January annual meeting. The amount of benevolence dollars the Good Samaritan Fund members have available to designate is based on their portion of total giving in the prior year. This percentage is used to determine the percentage of the new budget amount for benevolence that may be designated by Good Samaritan Fund members.

The Good Samaritan Fund group meets shortly after the annual congregational meeting. At this annual Good Samaritan Fund group meeting, members suggest local and global organizations they would like to support. The group discusses the merits of each recommendation and narrows the list based on consensus. The available funds are allocated to the selected organizations.

Examples of past Good Samaritan donations are CHUM, Smile Train, Second Harvest of Duluth, Heifer International, Union Gospel Mission, FRLC Post-secondary Scholarship Fund, and Lutheran World Relief.

If you are interested in being part of this group, contact the church office.

1/24/2021