

SAMARITAN MINISTRY

NEWSLETTER SPRING 2021

Our mission...

“Our church should be a beacon of light and hope, by way of Christ, to anyone who suffers from or has family or friends who suffer from HIV”.

A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER....



2020 UPDATE... and COVID-19

The year is behind us and we are working to get 2021 up to speed.

Since last March we have been operating without in-person contact for the most part, with cancellations of most all of our usual gatherings.

We did not meet with our Support Group, and we cancelled our Summer Cookout and Thanksgiving Banquet.

Our staff and volunteers worked hard to stay in contact with our friends, making many phone calls and sending lots of texts and emails! We also mailed a bunch of cards and letters!

With our awesome team of volunteers, we continued grocery deliveries each month, however, often supplementing with a grocery gift card.

Now, with vaccines flowing and a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel, we are hoping to regain some of our footing, and begin again to interact in-person with those we serve.

Beginning in April, we will re-start in-person HIV and Hepatitis C testing.

In May, we will hold our first Support Group meeting in

months and will be looking toward hosting a Summer Cookout in June.

Many things remain virtual, and as we enter summer we will still miss gathering together at conferences that will NOT meet in person.

We still need your prayers as we make these decisions.



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Support Group

We are getting back in the groove with our monthly meetings in May.

We are planning our Summer Cookout in June.



On The Move - Together for Hope

Our Newest partnership-

The **Together for Hope** initiative is part of the Global Missions outreach of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Our partnership with TFH allows us to interact with churches and church leaders that serve communities in some of the poorest areas of Appalachia.

Please join us for a unique opportunity to stay healthy, and to support TFH and Samaritan Ministry at the same time!

Register for the (Virtual) **On The Move Walk-Run-Ride-Swim-Go** event that starts May 15. Part of your registration fee will support Samaritan Ministry.

[REGISTER HERE!](#)

Science in the News

Our Treatment/Prevention Update

Thanks to our friends at [Positively Aware!](#)

PrEP in the News

There is much news about the medications that are used to prevent HIV. These medications fall into a group called pre-exposure prophylaxis or PrEP. Currently there are two oral medications that have FDA approval for HIV prevention, Truvada and Descovy. Descovy has not yet been approved for women.

There is a monthly injectable medication that is currently under review for approval. This medication, cabotegravir, has been shown to be highly effective in the prevention of HIV.

A Dapivirine Vaginal Ring may also be available soon. Studies show that the ring, inserted monthly, reduces risk of HIV acquisition through a slow release of an anti-HIV medication called dapivirine, with no safety concerns.

There is a good bit of great information about PrEP on-line, including the following resources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/basics/prep.html>

<https://www.prepwatch.org>

<https://getpreptn.com>

Injectable Treatment Approved

We reported on-line that a new injectable two-drug combo has been approved for HIV treatment. This is the first long-acting injection as an alternative to daily oral medications. The new medication is being marketed as Cabenuva, and is made by ViV Healthcare. [Learn more.](#)

The Death Rate is Down!

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported deaths related to HIV in the United States fell significantly from 2010 through 2018, regardless of sex, age, race or region.

Experts said the death rate declined overall by about half, a welcome sign in the fight against the virus. The data also highlighted some troubling trends with smaller improvements in death rates among women, Black people and those of multiple races. Additionally, the rate of death was about twice as high in Southern states as in the Northeast.

It is possible the pandemic has dampened these improvements. The CDC did not offer numbers on testing for HIV or access to preventative pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) therapy over the past few months, but many facilities have shuttered their HIV clinics or reported decreases in the number of people using their services, the researchers said.

Still, experts said the news was a testament to the enormous strides made in efforts to end the HIV epidemic. [Read the full article.](#)

New HIV Meds for Children in Resource Poor Countries

Two pharmaceutical companies are making a generic, strawberry flavored liquid for treatment of HIV in pediatric patients. This formulation will be inexpensive and will help make HIV treatment more accessible in resource poor countries. Often the development of meds for kids lags behind those available for adults, as we have seen with COVID-19 vaccinations.



12 Things to Know about HIV Treatment

1. When should HIV treatment start?
Everyone with HIV should start treatment as soon as possible after diagnosis.
2. What does HIV treatment do?
The goal of treatment is to suppress the virus.
3. Which tests are needed before taking HIV therapy?
Usually STIs and hepatitis B and C.
4. Is HIV Treatment a cure?
No, but it maintains health and prevents transmission.
5. What does HIV treatment consist of?
Medications from different “classes”, often one pill, once per day.
6. How should HIV treatment be taken?
As prescribed by your doctor - not missing doses.
7. What is drug resistance?
The virus can mutate and make your meds less effective when medication is not taken properly.
8. Which drugs should I use?
There are many great drugs available. Your doctor will use DHHS guidelines
9. How can I address my concerns?
Talk to your doctor or health care provider.
10. What is AWP?
Average wholesale price. You are not going to pay this.
11. What are PEP and PrEP.
PEP and PrEP are not HIV treatment, but are used to prevent HIV transmission.
12. More information online:
HIVinfo.nih.gov
aidsmap.com
<https://www.positivelyaware.com>

The End HIV Plan

The CDC has released a new plan to End HIV by 2030. It is Possible.

Under the theme “Getting Ahead of HIV”, the CDC has launched a comprehensive plan to end HIV. This plan comes with a new online dashboard, and targets 57 jurisdictions (some states, some cities, counties and territories) where more than 50% of new HIV diagnoses occur. The new dashboard can be accessed easily on-line at <https://ahead.hiv.gov>.

This bold plan contains 4 important areas of emphasis.

Diagnose - Great strides have been made in HIV prevention, but about 1 in 7 (14%) of the estimated more than 1 million people with HIV in America still don’t know they have HIV! Community based HIV testing is critical.

Treat - Current HIV treatment guidelines recommend all people with HIV begin treatment as soon as possible after receiving a diagnosis. People who have HIV and who take medication daily as prescribed and maintain an undetectable viral load can live long, healthy lives and have effectively no risk of sexually transmitting the virus to an HIV-negative partner.

Prevent - New HIV transmissions can be prevented by using proven interventions, including pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and syringe services programs (SSPs). **PrEP** is a pill that reduces the risk of getting HIV when taken as prescribed. Fewer than 25% of the estimated more than 1 million Americans who could benefit from PrEP are using this prevention medication.

Respond- Our communities must respond so that those in need can get the care they need - testing, linkage-to-care, and prevention. It takes a village.

Happenings

Samaritan and Central Bearden Promote COVID Vaccination Efforts



Partnering with Knox County Health Department to serve the General Population

Central Baptist Bearden has partnered with the Knox County Health Department to help

distribute COVID-19 vaccines. On two dates in March we provided space, food, and about 30 volunteers to help over 800 people get vaccinated. We will follow-up with two dates in April for second doses with the same people.

Serving our community is a priority for our church and we wanted to help and support our local health department staff.

The surprise was that the HD staff needed love and support. They needed encouragement in the face of a pandemic that is stretching them and their service to our community. Heroes.

Samaritan Ministry Partners with Cherokee Health Systems to Vaccinate those living with HIV.

In March, the State of Tennessee opened up vaccination class 1c. This included all people over the age of 16 who also have chronic health conditions. Bam. All of our HIV clients are now eligible for vaccines.

We responded to this by making calls (everywhere!) and found a willing partner to accelerate vaccines for our client group. Cherokee Health Systems offered us a block of 20 spots at a local clinic, so we have been busy taking care of our friends.

Fortunately, vaccine availability has really opened up, so many of our friends with HIV have other options. We appreciate Cherokee for stepping up.

Thanks so much for your enthusiastic support for getting people vaccinated with COVID vaccine. It's partnerships like yours that makes our job so much easier!

-KCHD Official

2021 Calendar of Events

Please mark these opportunities and events for 2021!

Support Group - Our **First Tuesday Support Group** will start meeting in May. Need info about our group? Contact us. info@samaritancentral.org

In-Person Testing begins at Central Bearden in April. Info available on Page 4 of this Newsletter or at samaritancentral.org/testing.

The Big Summer Cookout is coming back on June 1st at 6:00 p.m.

Samaritan Ministry Thanksgiving Banquet - November 18 at 6:30 p.m.

US Conference on HIV/AIDS (USCHA) - October 28 - 31 in Washington DC - plans uncertain at this point.

On The Move Together for Hope May 15 through August 15, 2021 - Walk, run, ride or swim (or paddle, row, hike, trail run, or other!) to help alleviate poverty.

From the Editor

Take a look at the "T"



I remember this edition of *HIV Specialist* from July, 2016 and the excellent coverage of this topic. *HIV Specialist* is the journal of the American Academy of HIV Medicine (aahivm.org). *Specialist* is written for docs, and I am not one, but they do an outstanding job of putting together something that is readable and meaningful, even for someone like me. I'm sure other readers were enlightened and challenged by this thoughtful and sensitive edition.

With some items in the news today, making transgender medical care illegal in some places, I feel obliged to speak up.

How much more harm can be done to our friends and neighbors in the LGBTQ community by zealots, no matter their stripe? When, oh, when, will we be able to see our common human family as all created by God, especially as we see the uncommon variety of His creation.

Until you have lived with gender uncertainty, fought the internal demons of knowing ones-self, you cannot be the decider.

The articles in *Specialist* I reference above may have been ahead of their time, but we are now nearly 5 years later and moving backward.

Let's let medical decisions be between families and their healthcare providers. Let's look to science and research.

Are you soon going to tell me where I can go to the bathroom?

Wayne

FREE HIV Self Tests

You can take it at home,
or wherever is convenient.

Stay Connected. Stay Healthy.

HIV and HEPATITIS C TESTING

is now available on-site, in-person at
Samaritan Ministry

2nd and 4th Tuesdays
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY
free - confidential - accurate



6300 Deane Hill Dr. - Knoxville - 37919
www.samaritancentral.org/testing
865-450-1000 ext. 827

Our Testing Programs Ramp Up for 2021

Point-of-Care Testing has long been a staple for Samaritan Ministry and it remains an important part of national plans to bring HIV to an end.

At-Home HIV Testing

Since March of 2020, we have been promoting the OraSure Technologies Rapid At-Home Test Kit as a way of making HIV testing available, even as the pandemic limited the availability of community based testing. At-Home kits are still available from Samaritan Ministry by applying at our website.

Free. Reliable. Confidential.

www.samaritancentral.org/testing

Need a Test?

Get one at
Samaritan
Ministry

www.samaritancentral.org/testing

Regular HIV and Hepatitis C In-Person Testing Re-Start

Beginning April 13 (10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.) Samaritan Ministry will offer in-person testing (safe and socially distant) at Central Baptist Church of Bearden.

We will offer rapid testing (results in 20 minutes) for both HIV and Hepatitis C (HCV). Our testing table will be under the covered walkway on the west side of the church by the CORE building.

No appointment is necessary.

Testing Dates:

April 13 and 27

May 11 and 25

Presenting at the RX Summit

Presenting Centered Set Thinking to Change the Way we Work Together

We are in a crisis involving overdose deaths, viral hepatitis, and the threat of HIV outbreak. This “syndemic” or intersection of co-occurring epidemics, extends across the country and certainly has a home in the state of Tennessee. This national crisis is taking lives and fueling increases in new hepatitis C and HIV cases. In 2020, 81,000 lives were lost in the U.S. due to overdose, the highest number ever recorded. While HIV disease is becoming a chronic, manageable outcome for most people, new infections still continue at about 35,000 per year. Hepatitis C is the most common bloodborne pathogen in the U.S., with new cases skyrocketing, and access to curative treatment not nearly addressing the scope of this epidemic.

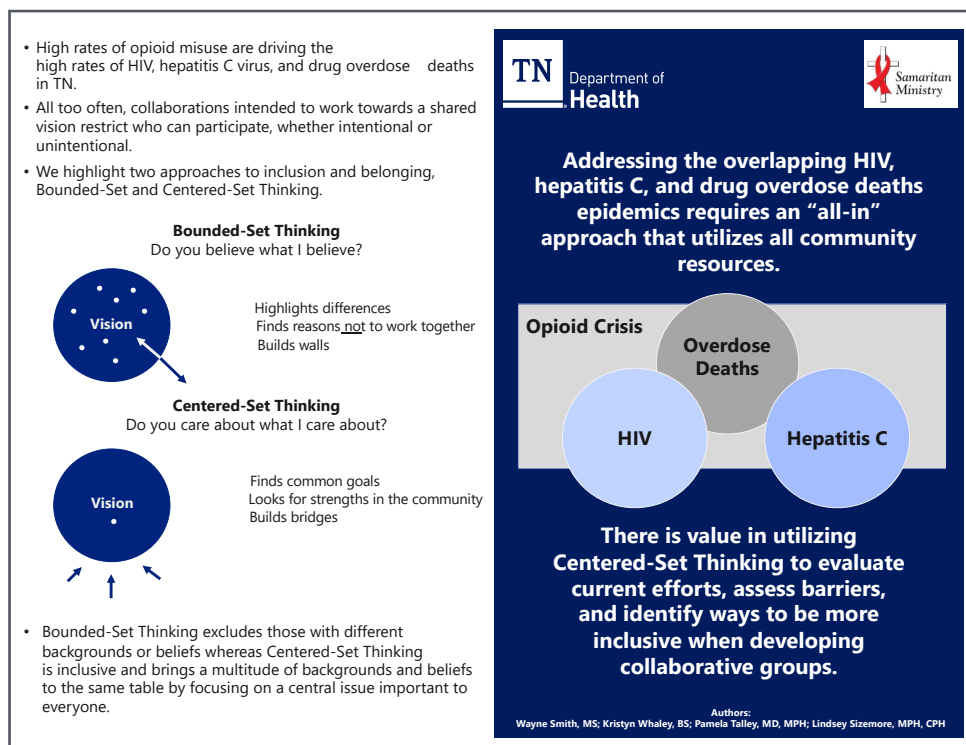
We recognize that it will take an “all in” approach, with partners across the spectrum - from government, the not-for-profit world, business, and faith groups - to address these tangled and related threats. All too often, however, organizations look inward for help and resources, often relating only to those individuals and groups that are founded on similar principles, with similar beliefs. The typical model is shown here as Bounded-Set theory. Bounded-Set theory asks the question, “Do you believe what I believe?”, and is a way of limiting and constricting the boundaries within which we can operate.

We will be offering a different way of looking at collaboration and partnerships. This Centered-Set approach ask a very different question. Instead of asking, “Do you believe what I believe”, Center Set theory asks, “Do you care about what I care about?”

You can imagine that two very different groups might gather together to address this global crisis if they can both say that they care about the loss of life due to opioids. Putting differences aside, we put our heads and resources together to fight this common enemy.

This different focus on what we together care about allows a common vision to drive our collaborations and partnerships. If our vision is to bring an end to this syndemic, or at least address it in some sustained way, then we must be creative in our partnerships and collaborations including those with expertise outside of our own sphere of influence.

Asking this different question can open doors to many interesting and fulfilling collaborations and partnerships. As a church organization, Samaritan Ministry, the group I work with in Knoxville, TN, has found that partnerships with other not-for profits and governmental organizations (particularly the Tennessee Department of Health, and our local health department) has allowed us to not only increase our sphere of influence but to draw upon a great wealth of knowledge.



Remove the Risk

Remove
the
RISK

Dispose of unused opioids.



Building Partnerships to attack Opioids

SafeProject is a non-profit with a mission to contribute in a tangible way to overcoming the addiction epidemic in the United States. It was founded in November 2017 by Admiral James and Mary Winnefeld, following the loss of their 19-year old son Jonathan to an accidental opioid overdose.

Safe Project is providing Detertra Drug Disposal Pouches for our church family during this campaign.

SafeProject's core beliefs begin with this simple but powerful statement:

Addiction is a disease,
not a moral failing.

Read more about [SafeProject](#).

Metro Drug Coalition (MDC) is a nonprofit organization striving to create a healthy and safe community, free of substance misuse. MDC has served the Knoxville community for over 34 years with the goal to increase access to evidence-based prevention education, harm reduction programs and recovery support services for anyone desiring to maintain or seek a life free from substance misuse. [Learn more.](#)

MDC is providing speakers for several of our Sunday and Wednesday programs.



Central Bearden takes on the Opioid Crisis

Over 81,000 drug overdose deaths occurred in the United States in the 12 months ending in May 2020, the highest number of overdose deaths ever recorded in a 12-month period, according to recent provisional data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

This issue has become a public health crisis with devastating consequences including increases in opioid misuse and related overdoses, as well as the rising incidence of neonatal abstinence syndrome due to opioid use and misuse during pregnancy. The increase in injection drug use has also contributed to the spread of diseases including HIV and hepatitis C. As seen throughout the history of medicine, science can be an important part of the solution in resolving such a public health crisis.

Beginning with Sunday morning, April 18th, Central Bearden will be hosting a variety of special guests to inform and to speak to solutions for this important national emergency. Please join us for these in-person events (safely presented with social distancing and masks) or live streaming at [centralbearden.org](#).

Please join us Sundays (10:30 a.m.) as part of our regular worship and Wednesdays (6:00 p.m.) for special programming.

Sun. 4/18 - Morning interview with Karen Pershing, Executive Director, Metro Drug Coalition

Sun. 4/25 - Special Guest Dr. Stephen Lloyd, former Medical Director and Assistant Commissioner for Substance Abuse Services for the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. For the last eight years he has focused on addiction medicine with an interest in the opioid dependent pregnant patient. He has been in recovery from addiction to opioids and benzodiazepines since July 8, 2004.

Wed. 4/28 - Finding Help in Recovery - Jason Goodman- Director of Recovery and Support Services, Metro Drug Coalition

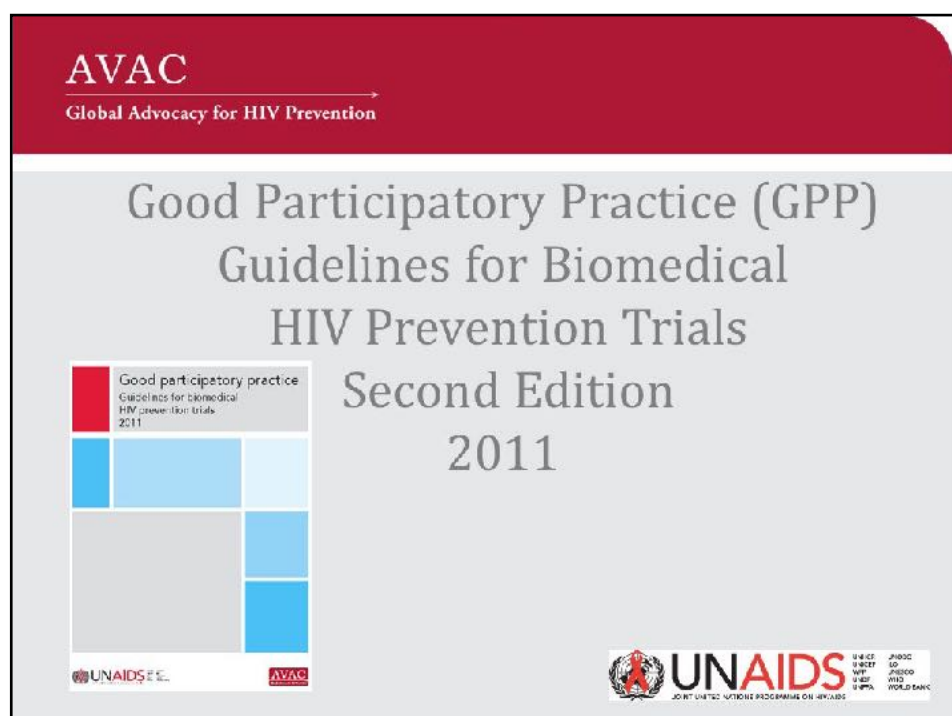
Wed. 5/5 - In-Person NARCAN Training with Jessica Stanley, Regional Overdose Prevention Specialist -Metro Drug Coalition

Tennessee Releases New County-Level Vulnerability Tool to Track HIV and Hepatitis C Outbreaks Due to Injection Drug Use

The confluence of three important epidemics (No, I am not talking about COVID.) has caused many states, including Tennessee, to look at a concept called vulnerability. The question is... where is the greatest likelihood of spikes in hepatitis C and/or HIV because of injection drug use? These related epidemics, often called a “syndemic” have been overlooked because of COVID, and, there is evidence that there is increased vulnerability BECAUSE of COVID.

In response to this, the Tennessee department of Health has released a new online tool. Take a look.

<https://www.tn.gov/health/health-program-areas/std/std/vulnerability-assessment.html>



Samaritan Ministry Advocates for Community Involvement in Research and in Program Development

In 2011 AVAC published Good Participatory Practice (GPP), a set of guidelines meant to protect stakeholders in research and development. Still, in 2021, we find it important to remind those in power and those with a hand in life saving research, to remember past abuses, and to follow GPP.

In 1995, nine HIV treatment activists founded the AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition, now AVAC, to speed the development of preventive HIV vaccines. Within a year, this small group published the first annual Industry Investment in HIV Vaccine Research report and incorporated as a non-profit organization.

A decade ago, UNAIDS and AVAC published the Good Participatory Practice Guidelines for Biomedical HIV Prevention Trials (GPP). Created to provide a consistent global standard for stakeholder engagement across the research life-cycle, GPP has emerged as a point of reference for how to engage stakeholders. It has also given rise to a robust community of practice.

AVAC's current strategic policy priorities include the following (among a long list of other priorities):

- Identifying and advocating for actionable, people-centered strategies to increase the uptake and continuation of HIV prevention.
- Supporting implementation research to close the gaps in treatment and prevention.

As programs are developed to help close gaps in treatment and care for those members of our community who are living with HIV, we urge community groups, non-governmental groups, and governmental agencies to follow GPP and to engage a full range of stakeholders in research, and also in program development. [Learn more about GPP.](#)

2021 Conference Update



In 2021, we are still looking at a lot of uncertainty regarding some of the national and regional conferences in which we usually participate. Conference organizers are looking to make sure that gatherings are safe and that they do not contribute to the spread of COVID-19.

RX Drug Abuse and Heroin Summit - April 5-8, 2021 - Virtual

This large gathering, often called the "RX Summit" is one of the premier conferences directed at the opioid crisis. Wayne Smith (Samaritan Ministry) and Lindsey Sizemore (Tennessee Department of Health) have been selected to present a poster entitled, "*Bounded Set vs. Centered Set Thinking - Challenging the HIV, Viral Hepatitis, and Substance Use Disorder Syndemic With A Unique Partnership Approach*".

Tennessee Cooperative Baptist Fellowship General Assembly April 16, 17, 2021 - Virtual

The Tennessee Cooperative Baptist Fellowship will hold its annual meeting this month. Join with Tennessee Baptists [here](#).

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship General Assembly June 25-26, 2021 - Virtual

We will join Cooperative Baptists from across the country and around the world for an engaging two-day interactive learning experience with the CBF Family. This year's General Assembly is all about Forming Bold Faith. Samaritan Ministry has been a ministry partner with CBF since 2004. The conference is free. cbf.net

United States Conference on HIV/AIDS - USCHA Washington DC - October 28-31

Samaritan Ministry has been a part of this conference as a presenter and exhibitor since 2004. The organizers of USCHA are still making decisions about the conference and whether it can be in-person or virtual. Stay tuned. <https://uscha.life>

Budget News

Samaritan Ministry Keeps Broad Foundation in Giving

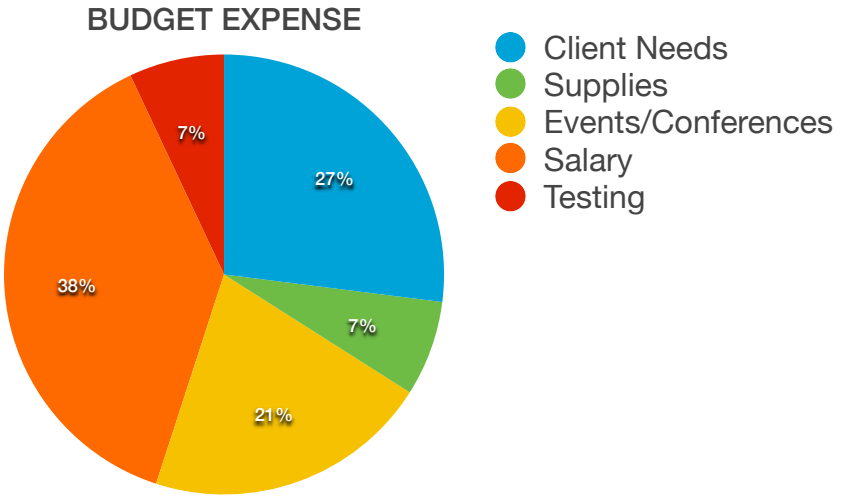
Since our inception in 1996, we have always tried to make sure that our financial security was based on a diverse portfolio. We never want to be in the position where losing one donor would have devastating effects on our operation.

We have been very fortunate. Many of our partners have been with us for years and years and that continued stability is encouraging. We also have a number of individual donors who have been consistent monthly or yearly donors. As you can see (income - designated giving) a

SAMARITAN MINISTRY PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 21/22			
EXPENSES	Direct Client Needs	food, utilities, transportation, drugs, etc.	\$19,200
	Supplies	General Supplies, office materials	\$1,000
	Client Events	Thanksgiving, Cookout, Christmas Food	\$4,000
	Conventions/booth rental, travel	USCA, CBF, TCBF, Educational	\$12,000
	Testing Supplies	HIV/HCV test kits	\$5,000
	Salary Support for Director	includes case management	\$25,200
	Salary Support for Assistant	part time hourly	\$3,000
	Postage/Cell Phone		\$4,000
	TOTAL		\$73,400
INCOME	Central Baptist Church of Bearden	salary support	\$9,500
	Tennessee CBF	general operational	\$7,500
	MAC AIDS Fund	Covid-19	\$5,000
	BC/EFA (Private Foundation)	client support (emergencies)	\$4,000
	Designated Giving (estimate)	general operational	\$25,400
	FISH of Knox County	client support	\$3,000
	East Tennessee AIDS Fund	case management, client support	\$7,000
	City of Knoxville	food, testing programs	\$2,000
	Cedar Springs Presbyterian	general support, case management	\$10,000
	TOTAL		\$73,400

large percentage of our income comes from these individuals.

We encourage you to use the link below and GIVE NOW, to support the work of Samaritan Ministry.



Thank You Partners!

We cannot begin to thank our financial partners enough for the continued support, especially during this pandemic.



- MAC AIDS FUND
- EAST TENNESSEE AIDS FUND
- BROADWAY CARES / EQUITY FIGHTS AIDS
- WEST KNOX COOPERATIVE FOOD PANTRY
- THE CITY OF KNOXVILLE
- And many wonderful individual donors LIKE YOU!

[GIVE NOW!](#)
Choose “Samaritan”