

# SAMARITAN MINISTRY



## From Your Editor

In this Winter Newsletter we are going to explore some of the treatments and HIV prevention tools that were new in 2021 along with some other science news. (page 3)

While we have reported transgender news before, we are looking at this issue with a local, and personal eye. In an effort to live out the message of Christ, to love all of our neighbors (yep, even the transgender ones), we have embarked on a journey of discovery and support with parents of transgender children.

We are also going look at some data (page 4) coming from AIDSvu. This unique and valuable resource has just updated its national data for HIV and AIDS. It is worth a look.

And, we are also struck by the intersection of poverty and those we serve, so we want you to take a look at our 2021 At-A-Glance report, on page 5, to get a feel for what 2021 has looked like for us.

Don't forget to check out our financial report and budget information on page 6. With generous help from donors, we are looking to be able to do great things in 2022!

Wayne

### COVID Issues Continue to Impact our Ministry Work

**C** OVID 19 has had an impact on Samaritan Ministry, but not all of that has been negative. Let's take a look.

#### Cessation of Group Activities

During COVID we have to modify or cancel many of our group activities. This included our Summer Cookout, Thanksgiving Banquet, and several of our monthly Support Group meetings.

#### Interruption of testing services

Our HIV and Hepatitis C testing program has also been impacted. Some venues ceased letting outside volunteers come in to their facilities, and in some cases we made that call when we felt that proper COVID protocol was not in place.

There are concerns that 2020 and 2021 HIV data will reflect a drop in testing around the country, possibly leading to an overall increase in new HIV diagnoses.

#### COVID Vaccination Success

We have been very excited that the HIV community with which we are associated has taken vaccination seriously, and the vast majority of

our clients are fully vaccinated (and getting boosters!). The science seems to be pretty clear. Those living with HIV WILL benefit from COVID vaccinations and will, in most cases, be able to mount an appropriate antibody response. This is really good news.

We are also unaware of any serious COVID cases within our group, and of those few, there have been recoveries.

#### Giving to Samaritan Ministry

We have been somewhat surprised, and very grateful, that giving to Samaritan, both individually and corporately, has been VERY generous in the last 18 months or so. This has allowed us to continue to serve, but also to actually expand into some interesting areas. For example, we have been able to step forward to help people living with HIV in western Kentucky. (See page 2.)

#### Engaging in partnerships

COVID has given us new opportunities for partnerships (or it has "pushed us"). This is another one of the good things. We have a new partnership with LivWell in Paducah, KY. We have been distributing at-home HIV tests in partnership with Walgreens and Greater than AIDS. We are working with Raising a Voice, a new organization helping women who are being trafficked, and we have strengthened our relationships with

the Tennessee Department of Health and the Knox County Health Department.

#### Home Test Kit Distribution

As mentioned earlier, we have been a state-wide distributor of the OraSure rapid HIV at-home test kit. In 2021, we distributed 66 of these kits, drawing some positive feedback.

**"The service you offer is honestly amazing. You all deserve Nobel Peace Prizes for your [at-home test kit] service."**

**Order an At-Home HIV Test**

[www.samaritancentral.org/testing](http://www.samaritancentral.org/testing)

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# Filling In the Gaps

## Christmas Relief - Winter 2021/22

### Samaritan Ministry Uses Resources to Benefit Those We Serve

It is a good problem to have... money in the bank that has been given to serve others, and it makes sense to use it for that purpose. As 2021 has drawn to a close, there are both on-going and emergent needs that should be addressed. We have used our resources to address these multiple needs in a variety of ways.



### Food Insecurity

Food insecurity remains a challenge for many of those we serve. Fixed income, fluctuating food stamp resources, employment issues, etc., all contribute. During this winter season, starting with Thanksgiving, we have leveraged our partnerships (see page 5) to meet these needs.

We have distributed Thanksgiving and Christmas Food boxes, along with hundreds of dollars in grocery store gift cards. And, we continue our monthly grocery deliveries to about 30 locations in and around Knoxville.

### Housing

Safe and affordable housing seems to be a problem in every community, and ours is not an exception. We use the resources of our financial partners, and individual donors, to shore up monthly issues with rent and utility bills. Our flexibility, and the speed with which we can take care of emerging issues, makes us the go-to agency for these kinds of needs.

Samaritan Ministry has also been able to assist with unexpected needs involving electrical work, HVAC repairs, and appliance repair and replacement.

### Medication

Securing prescription medications still is a challenge for many. Even the smallest copay of \$1.50 or \$4.00 can often be the difference between taking medications and not

being able to do so. Oddly, expensive HIV medications are not the issue, as they are always covered by insurance and the Ryan White Care Act takes care of HIV medications for the uninsured. It is often the inexpensive generics that are the hardest to pay for. Utilizing our network of partnerships (Belew Drugs in Knoxville and NPS Pharmacy in Nashville) we are able to help secure monthly prescriptions for several of our clients.

### Tornado Relief

We became concerned about the victims of the Western Kentucky tornados this winter, and the plight of those affected, especially those who are living with HIV. After contacting Livwell Community Health Services, in Paducah, we were able to provide support to about 25 families served by this HIV agency.

Livwell is part of a network of agencies that provide HIV/AIDS support as part of the federal Ryan White Program.



Cedar Springs Presbyterian Thanksgiving Box

### Support

Providing support for the HIV community is always a priority. This takes many forms, from our HIV Support Group, which meets monthly, to on-going support of individuals and families.

You probably didn't know that we have friends that we support in areas outside the Knoxville area, including the whole state of Tennessee, Washington D.C., Kentucky, and Indiana.

## News Items

### Local Cluster of New HIV Cases in Knox County

The Knox County Health Department is working to address a cluster of new infections tied to injection drug misuse. We are pleased to be a part of discussions with the Tennessee Department of Health and KCHD to explore ways to mitigate this increase, test and identify those who may have contracted HIV, and work to make sure they are all linked to HIV care and treatment.

### Central Bearden Hosts Group for Parents of Transgender Children

In an effort to reach out and support families, Central Bearden has started a support group for parents who are on a journey of transition with one of their children.

Please contact Wayne at Samaritan Ministry if you are interested in finding out more.

[samaritancentral@gmail.com](mailto:samaritancentral@gmail.com)

### HIV 40TH ANNIVERSARY

This June 5th, the world marked 40 years since the first five cases of what later became known as AIDS were officially reported. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (MMWR) described the five cases. [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/june\\_5.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/june_5.htm)

### We Have the Tools

It is important to remember that today, 2022, we already have the tools to end HIV. With what we know about prevention tools (PrEP) and treatment for HIV making transmission impossible, we can bring this epidemic to its knees.



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# Science News

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## At Samaritan Ministry, We Follow the Science

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### IMMUNITY AND COVID VACCINE RESPONSE IN PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV

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COVID vaccines are recommended for those with HIV and indications are that vaccines are effective. People living with HIV who have healthy immune systems are able to mount an effective immune response against COVID-19.

The CDC advises that people who are immunocompromised, including people with HIV, be eligible to receive the vaccine because of their potential increased risk for serious illness due to COVID-19.

The CDC and HIVMA are recommending a 3rd dose of vaccine to better protect people who may not make as strong an immune response. [[HIV Medicine Association -COVID-19 Vaccines and People with HIV Frequently Asked Questions 12/15/21](#)]

### HIV TESTING DROPS DURING PANDEMIC

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HIV testing centers across the United States showed reductions in testing of nearly 50% during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, raising concerns of a subsequent increase in transmission by people unaware of their HIV-positive status. According to data from the National HIV Prevention Program Monitoring and Evaluation system, the number of CDC-funded HIV tests declined by more than 1 million in 2020 amid the COVID-19 restrictions, with 1,228,142 tests reported that year, compared with 2,301,669 tests in 2019, a reduction of 46.6%. The first step toward ending the HIV epidemic is to diagnose all people with HIV as early as possible, and to accomplish that, there needs to be sufficient HIV testing. When fewer HIV tests are being conducted, there are missed opportunities to identify persons with newly diagnosed HIV, which affects the entire continuum of care, including linkage to medical care, receiving antiretroviral treatment, getting and keeping viral suppression, and reducing transmission. [[Family Practice News December 15, 2021](#)]

### VACCINE TRIALS

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After promising results in earlier rounds of testing, Johnson & Johnson's experimental HIV vaccine failed in Phase 2 trials in women in Africa. The failure is

the latest in the so-far fruitless effort to create a vaccine to prevent HIV infection, the leading cause of infectious death in the world.

The International AIDS Vaccine Initiative and Moderna have launched a Phase I study of a pair of HIV vaccines that use the same messenger RNA (mRNA) technology as the highly effective Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccines. [AND...the first doses have been administered to clinical trial participants, according to an announcement from Moderna.](#)

Researchers have spent more than three decades and billions of dollars studying vaccines to prevent HIV, with little success. The virus mutates rapidly and there are many strains around the world, making it difficult to develop broadly effective vaccines. [[POZ.com](#)]

To date, only one vaccine regimen used in the RV144 trial in Thailand—has demonstrated partial protection in a human study, but it was not effective in the another trial. Two other large trials, Mosaico and Imbokodo, are currently testing an approach that uses an adenovirus primer (similar to the one used for the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine) followed by a booster that contains a mosaic of proteins from multiple HIV strains.

### LONG-ACTING TREATMENTS AND PREVENTION

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On December 20, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved Apretude, an extended-release formulation of cabotegravir, as the first long-acting injectable option for HIV prevention (pre-exposure prophylaxis or PrEP. In two large studies, cabotegravir injections every other month reduced the risk of HIV acquisition more than daily PrEP pills.

On January 21, 2021, the FDA approved Cabenuva, the first injectable regimen for HIV-infected adults (HIV treatment) to be administered once monthly.

[On February 1, the Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\) approved an every-other-month dosing schedule for Cabenuva.](#)

We have several local friends, living with HIV, who are using this new treatment strategy.

### REPORTS OF HIV CURES

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Timothy Ray Brown and Adam Castillejo are the only verified cures in the 40-year history of HIV/AIDS. Both men received stem cell transplants and chemo therapy as a part of cancer treatment utilizing HIV resistant stem cells. Both were considered cured after showing no signs of HIV in the years following their procedure.

A Brazilian man, who last summer had no evidence of remaining HIV after more than 15 months off antiretroviral therapy, once again has detectable viral load a few months later, according to a report at the virtual [Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections \(CROI\)](#). Work is underway to determine whether he experienced viral rebound or reinfection.

Two individuals have apparently cleared the virus without any antiretroviral therapy. These cases, one in Argentina, and one in California, are being investigated as possible "[elite controller](#)" cases.

Patients who seem to have been cured, or are in long-term remission, can provide windows into finding that elusive HIV cure.

### PREP IS FREE

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A life-changing drug that can reduce the risk of getting HIV by as much as 99% is now completely free for insured Americans.

While PrEP has been free for several months, people were still being charged out-of-pocket fees for bloodwork and other costs.

So, in July, the federal government told health insurers they had just weeks to cancel cost sharing of any kind.

In a move that is expected to prove transformative to the national HIV-prevention effort, the federal government has announced that almost all health insurers must cover the HIV prevention pill, known as PrEP, or pre-exposure prophylaxis, with no cost sharing — including for the drug itself and, crucially, for clinic visits and lab tests.

A great way to find out the latest on HIV prevention is to take a look at [PrEPwatch](#).

Click [here](#) to find out where PrEP is available in Tennessee.

ATLANTA

December 15, 2021

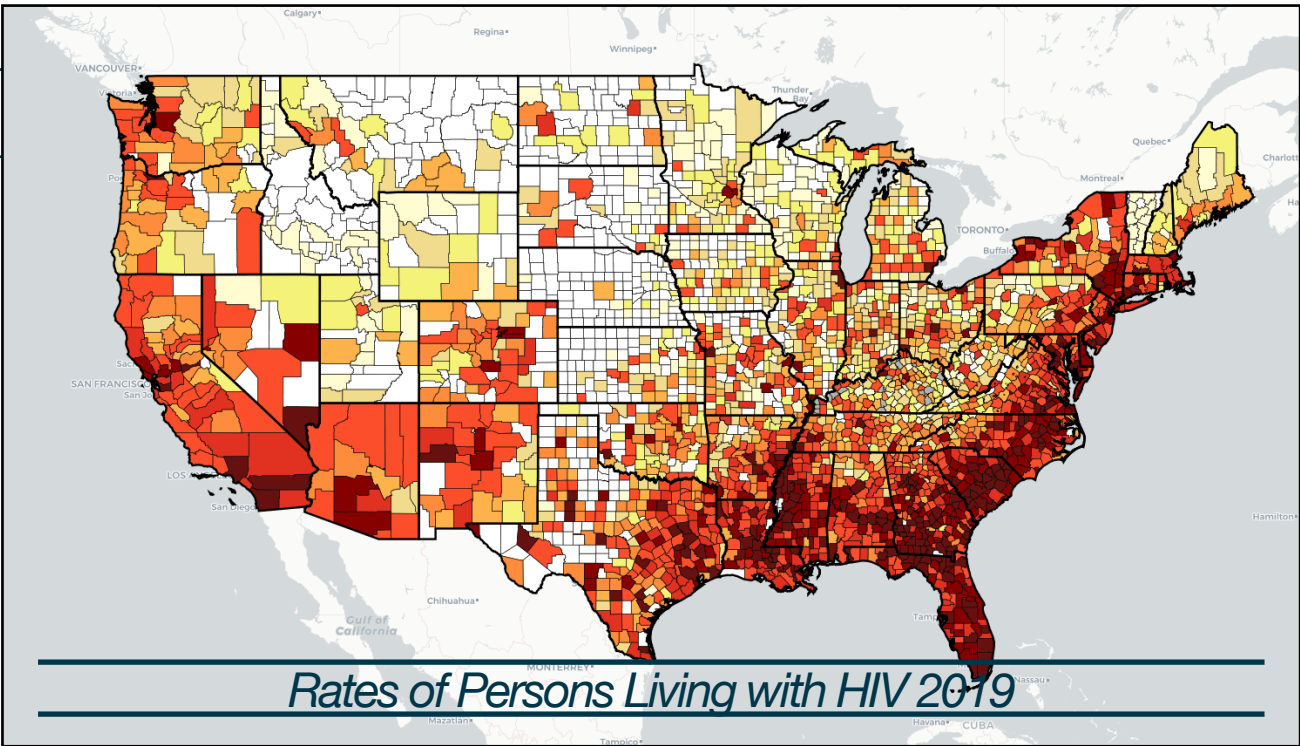
AIDS*Vu* today released **interactive maps** and **data** visualizing the HIV epidemic at the state and county level for 2019, and for 15 additional cities across the United States, further illustrating how the HIV epidemic impacts cities and neighborhoods at a fine geographic level to enable targeted and effective policy and programmatic interventions.

A highlight of the AIDS*Vu* website is the interactive nature of the maps, covering a variety of topics. It is easy to look at national, state, and local county data.

Find your state [HERE](#) and view data that matters to you.

Dig deeper into the data with the following topics:

- Health Disparities
- Viral Suppression
- PrEP
- HIV Testing
- Ending the HIV Epidemic



## A Deeper Look - AIDS*Vu* Feature

[Deeper Look: HIV Criminalization](#)

In the U.S., there are 32 states with specific laws or enhanced sentencing used to prosecute and punish people living with HIV (PLWH).

## Syndemic Update

Samaritan Ministry has worked hard to highlight the three epidemics making up the Syndemic of HIV, hepatitis C, and the opioid crisis. These three legs of the Syndemic each hold up the stool which represents a public health threat as these elements interact to create a storm in America.



HIV continues to be the centerpiece of our ministry and the focus of our work.

New cases HIV continue at a rate of about 38,000 per year in the U.S., and while this number is dropping, it is not dropping quickly enough to meet national goals to end the HIV epidemic.

AND, there are concerns that this number will actually climb, when 2020 and 2021 data are collected. Nobody knows for sure just how COVID will impact the spread of HIV, with isolation and curtailing of HIV testing both potential contributors to HIV spread.

Hepatitis C (HCV) is increasing in the U.S. at alarming rates with no end in site. New HCV (acute HCV) case are estimated to top 56,000 in 2019. Males in their 30s are most affected, with Native Americans among the most affected as a racial category.

Sixty-seven percent of those reporting indicate a history of injection drug use, a dramatic pattern. Take a look at the [CDC Hepatitis C data](#) to learn more.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported a [29% increase in drug overdose](#)

[deaths from 2019 to 2020](#). This preliminary data from CDC shows an estimated 93,331 deaths, including a reported 68,821 opioid-related deaths.

These increases are disheartening, and point to the need to redouble our efforts to talk about addiction in the context of treatable illness, and not moral failure. We need to redouble our efforts to make sure that NARCAN is available in our communities and we need to educate about the need to remove unused opioids from our homes.



# 2021 At-A-Glance

## Serving Our Community

55% Male  
Female  
White  
Black  
Asian  
Hispanic

**\$1078**

Co-Pays for Prescription and Non-Prescription Medications

**250**

Monthly Grocery Deliveries to Those We Serve

**40**

Thanksgiving Baskets Delivered

**1088 Learners**

Educational Programs Delivered

**\$9575**

Utility Bill Rescues

**\$3000**

Food Gift Cards Distributed

**135 Bags**

Our Church Family Filled Holiday Hope Bags for Choice Health Network

**\$6000**

Funds sent to LivWell to Support Tornado Victims in Western Kentucky

**50**

Christmas Boxes Filled to Provide Christmas Meals for Those We Serve

**1637**

Calls, Mail, Texts and Email Communications

**66**

OraQuick Home HIV Kits Shipped Through our Website

**194**

HIV Rapid Tests Conducted

**140**

Rapid Hepatitis C Tests Performed



# Community Partnerships

Samaritan Ministry is blessed to operate in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration with some awesome community partners.

- Central Baptist Church of Fountain City
- Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church
- Knox Co. Health Dept.
- TN Dept. Health
- N.E. TN Regional Community Planning Group
- AIDS Housing Authority
- The McNabb Center
- Choice Health Network
- TN Dept. of Corrections
- Knox County Sheriff’s Department
- FOCUS Prison Ministries
- TN Cooperative Baptist Fellowship
- Knox Area Rescue Ministries (KARM) and Serenity Shelter
- West Knox Cooperative (FISH) Food Pantry
- National Minority of AIDS Council
- Nat’l Assoc. of State and Territorial AIDS Directors
- University of Tennessee College of Nursing
- Pellissippi State Community College

# 2022 Budget

Our 2022 budget is \$80,000. This contains our income and probable expenses for the year.

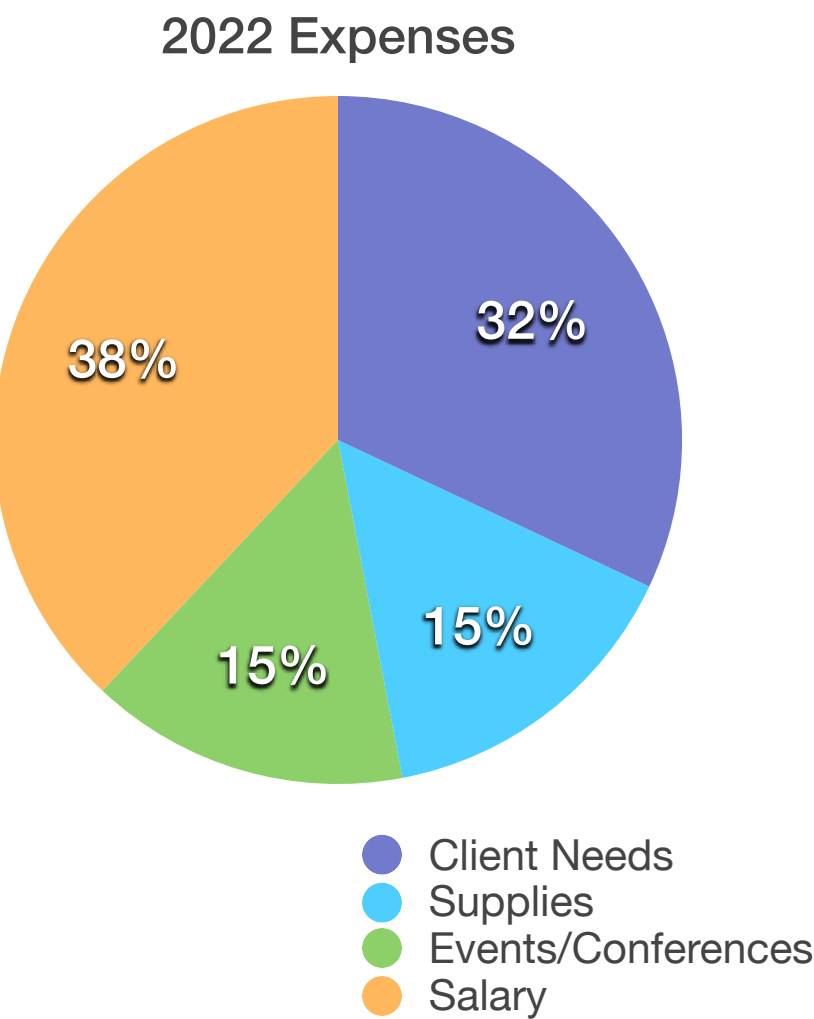
All of our funds are held by Central Baptist Church of Bearden with funds distributed via a check-request format. Checks are signed by two church staff members. Wayne Smith, Director of Samaritan Ministry, does not write or sign checks. An annual audit of all funds is conducted by Central Bearden as a part of its on-going fiscal accountability.

# Financial Partnerships

The financial well being of our ministry is dependent on a very diverse group of funding partners.

- Central Baptist Church of Bearden (Our Home Church)
- Central Baptist Church of Fountain City
- Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church
- The City of Knoxville
- Estée Lauder Charities
- Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS
- The East Tennessee AIDS Fund
- The West Knox Cooperative Food Pantry (FISH)
- The Tennessee Cooperative Baptist Fellowship
- And we receive very generous support from a HOST of individual donors from all across the country.

Thank You!



SAMARITAN MINISTRY PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2022			
EXPENSES	Direct Client Needs	Food, rent, utilities, transportation, drugs, etc.	\$20,400
	Supplies	General supplies, office materials	\$2,000
	Client Events	Thanksgiving, Cookout, Christmas food, Support Group	\$5,000
	Conventions/booth rental, travel	USCHA, CBF, TCBF, educational	\$12,000
	Testing Supplies	HIV/HCV test kits	\$5,000
	Salary Support for Director	Includes case management	\$27,600
	Salary Support for Assistant	Part time hourly	\$3,000
	Admin.	Postage/Cell Phone/Storage	\$5,000
	TOTAL		\$80,000
INCOME	Central Baptist Church of Bearden	salary support	\$10,700
	Tennessee CBF	general operational	\$7,500
	MAC AIDS Fund	Covid-19 Response	\$5,000
	BC/EFA (Private Foundation)	client support (emergencies)	\$7,500
	Designated Giving (estimate)	general operational	\$25,300
	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
	Central Baptist Fountain City	general operational	\$2,000
	TOTAL		\$80,000





“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/AIDS.”

## Giving to Samaritan Ministry

There are several ways to give to Samaritan Ministry. Remember, your support is critical to our work!

Nearly 1/3 of our \$80,000 budget comes from individual gifts from people like you!



### 1. Send a check

Checks should be made out to Central Bearden with Samaritan Ministry in the memo line. Mail checks to Central Bearden at the address below.

### 2. Place a gift in the offering plate

If you are attending in-person worship at Central, you can drop a check or cash in the offering plate. Checks should be made out to Central Bearden with Samaritan Ministry in the memo line. Cash should be placed in an offering envelope and marked for Samaritan Ministry.

### 3. Make a gift on-line

Central Bearden has a great giving portal that you can easily use. Just click the link at the left, choose “Give Now” and select Samaritan Ministry.

**GIVE  
ONLINE  
NOW**

[https://  
centralbearden.o  
rg/give/](https://centralbearden.org/give/)

## Samaritan Ministry

-a ministry of Central Baptist Church of Bearden-

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