

Samaritan Ministry

Psalm 124. "If the Lord had not been on our side...."



Summer Cookout Fun

Another great weather-day greeted everyone for our 13th Summer Cookout.

With more than 30 volunteers and 80+ in attendance, this day was one to celebrate life and friendship, and God's Community coming

together to serve His people. We are always amazed at the diversity and especially the number of children that attend and enjoy those hotdogs!

Helping



Volunteers helping with home clean-up.

Sharing



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SEPT 7-10, 2017 | MARRIOTT MARQUIS WDC

United States Conference on AIDS

Samaritan Ministry Engages with USCA for the 13th Year.

Once again our experience at USCA was memorable. Our 3-day booth run was fast and furious, and our materials were a hit, giving away almost all items by the middle of the second day. We have even had requests for materials (for HIV+ Irma victims in Florida) since we returned to Knoxville. All in all we distributed 400 bags, 100 Bibles, and a variety of printed items (all available free on our website - www.samaritancentral.org)

We had a great team... my wife Laura, Mike Young from King's Cross Church in Tullahoma, TN, and Terry Baker, one of the staff ministers from Central Bearden.

This year we heard from many people who have used our ideas and materials at their church, most notably the Hope Bucket Project.

And, of course we met a lot of great people, and we talked about God's love, and rejection at the hands of Christians. Our message to everyone at the conference is a powerful one... God loves you. It resonates with

everyone and makes our time at this conference one of the best things we do all year.

“I’ve had the opportunity to see Jesus in the faces and stories of people I would have never meet in a church.” - Mike Young



FAITH COALITION TRAINING

This August, FAITH Coalition held a training for leaders (pastors and lay members) of local African American Congregations. There are many health disparities that affect minority communities and HIV is certainly one of those. FAITH Coalition has prepared 3 “Trunks” that can travel to local congregations to offer education for teens and/or adults. Our training, on Saturday, Aug. 19, provided comprehensive HIV/AIDS Education, as well as a direct approach to reducing stigma. We were thrilled to have more than 25 local faith leaders in attendance.



FaithWalk and Al Ichiki 5K

**Knoxville Steps
Up for HIV!**

Our 6th annual Faithwalk and Al Ichiki 5k will take place 12-2-17. We hope to see you there as we commemorate World AIDS Day, raise awareness of HIV/AIDS in our community, fight stigma, and spread love.

Registration is open now!

Our event is a 5k run or 2 mile walk through Knoxville's beautiful historic 4th and Gill neighborhood. Race begins and ends at the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church. Here is a link to our [race route](#). All preregistered race participants will receive a long-sleeved T-shirt and other goodies.

Our event is named after the late Dr. Al Ichiki, a renowned researcher at UT Medical Center



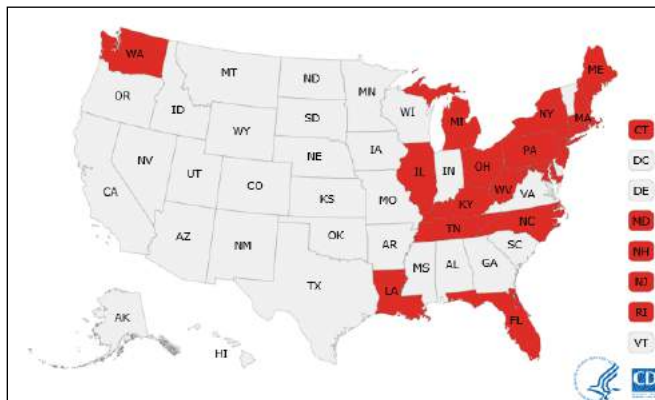
who pioneered HIV testing in our community and played a significant role in the early growth of Samaritan Ministry. We are honored that Dr. Al's family has allowed us to memorialize our friend and mentor in this way.

Race proceeds will support Samaritan Ministry and help those living with HIV/AIDS, Smoky Mountain Lions Club, and the National Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS. For more details and to register visit <http://www.samaritancentral.org/faithwalk-2/>



Samaritan Ministry and the Opioid Crisis

Our commitment to engagement in this emerging crisis continues with this update.



Training - Samaritan Ministry is committed to covering basic opioid abuse and Hepatitis C (HCV) education with EVERY HIV presentation. Wayne is one of the official Tennessee Department of Health HCV trainers.

Testing - During 2016, we conducted over 500 HCV tests, working in cooperation with our testing partner Helen Ross McNabb Center. We are on track to exceed that number in 2017. Our overall positivity rate is 37%.

Syringe Services - Samaritan Ministry is part of a local Harm Reduction Coalition, looking at ways to effectively introduce syringe exchange to the Knoxville Community.

Hepatitis C and HIV - We recognize that there are 42 counties, most of which are in East Tennessee, that have been identified as “vulnerable” to an HIV outbreak. This connection between IV drug use and HIV infection is getting the attention of many in the public health field and is why we are paying attention.

Chart above, from the CDC, illustrates the states with the greatest increases in Hepatitis C virus infection related to drug use among persons aged <30 years 2006-2012.

Tennessee continues to show up on a variety of measures as one of the states with the greatest impact.

From the Director

Thoughts and Questions about our Transgender Neighbors



It's not that I understand. I can't imagine what goes on inside someone who recognizes that inner dissonance that leads to a more outward expression of gender expression. But if I have learned anything about the Gospel in my 67 years, I see a Christ who loves his people, and expects us to do the same. In Galatians 3:28, Paul puts it precisely.

There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

What I read, as exemplified by the magazine cover pictured, is that our Transgender neighbors need attention from the medical community so that they can benefit from all of the services offered in prevention and treatment. HIV rates are among the highest for transgender woman (someone expressing their identity as female although born male). Bringing these people into the mainstream of medical care is crucial to reducing those rates.



“Transgender individuals, especially transwomen of color, encounter extremely high rates of stigma and discrimination, including social rejection, verbal, physical and sexual assault, exclusion from employment opportunities and housing, and yes, even access to public restrooms. It is no surprise that transgender persons experience higher rates of psychological distress, including anxiety, depression and suicide.” (AAHIVM).

Let's Get PrEP!

Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)



PrEP, introduced in 2012, is an HIV prevention strategy that WORKS. Taking this pill (Truvada is the only approved PrEP medication at this time.) once a day will prevent transmission of HIV from between 96 and 99%. This is an amazing new HIV prevention strategy.

PrEP is a strategy that might be used by those individuals who think they are at risk of getting HIV. These would include people with an HIV+ partner or spouse, people with multiple sex partners, and sex workers.

In the U.S., uptake of this strategy has been slow due to a lack of knowledge and limited access to PrEP providers, especially in places like East Tennessee.

The Tennessee Department of Health has just launched a new PrEP website, www.getpreptn.com which offers assistance for those seeking this prevention strategy.

PrEP is highly effective for preventing HIV if used as prescribed, but it is much less effective when not taken consistently. Daily PrEP reduces the risk of getting HIV from sex by more than 90%. (CDC)

Let's Get Tested!

HIV and Hepatitis C Testing is a part of our DNA.

Testing for HIV - Samaritan Ministry conducts HIV testing in partnership with Helen Ross McNabb Center. We regularly test at homeless shelters, halfway houses, substance abuse facilities, migrant farm communities, and colleges and universities. Our staff and volunteers are available to reach out whenever we receive an invitation.

During 2016, we conducted over 300 tests.

Testing for Hepatitis C (HCV) - During 2016, we conducted over 500 HCV tests, working in cooperation with our testing partner Helen Ross McNabb Center. We are on track to exceed that number in 2017. Our overall positivity rate is 37%.

Our testing, especially with Hepatitis C, has been an important factor in improvements in testing, treatment, and government involvement in this on-going epidemic.

The only way to know for sure whether you have HIV is to get tested. CDC recommends that everyone between the ages of 13 and 64 get tested for HIV at least once as part of routine health care. (CDC)



Samaritan Ministry

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“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 this disease.”

Give to Samaritan Ministry!

We need your gifts to sustain our work through the last quarter of 2017.

Moving into our busy season we need your help as we plan several events to serve our HIV Community. These include our Thanksgiving Banquet, the Christmas Food Box Delivery, and the Holiday Hope Bucket Project. Will you help?

You can mail a check (made out to Central Baptist Bearden) or you can make an on-line gift at <https://my.simplegive.com/g3/h/>. Choose “Quick Give” and “Samaritan”.

Please visit us @ www.samaritancentral.org.

Loss and Hope

Once again, we have lost another neighbor who was living with HIV. David is a reminder that this disease is STILL a killer. Silence kills, isolation kills and stigma kills. Won't you join us in praying for love, friendship and community, for these bring life!

We have also been on a journey with James as he has waited and waited for a new kidney. Well... I am delighted to tell you that Vanderbilt Hospital called and James has received a new kidney. We are so grateful, for what this means to James, but also for a family that said “yes” to organ donation.

James is being ferried back and forth from Knoxville to Nashville as his new organ get acclimated to its new home. AND... apparently, the new kidney and James are getting along quite well!

Thanks be to God!