



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 this disease.”

*Love
Compassion
Awareness
Witness*



A Christian Response

- Challenging the negative and judgmental attitudes that still exist toward people with HIV/AIDS.
- Decreasing fear and misconceptions about HIV and AIDS by providing accurate information.
- Providing practical and pastoral support for people living with AIDS and their families.
- Engaging in prayerful dialogue with other churches, faith communities and secular organizations*

**From Donald Messer in Breaking the Conspiracy of Silence (2004)*



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Reaching out to the HIV/AIDS Community – one person at a time



*Use the Samaritan Model
to develop an HIV/AIDS
ministry at your church*



*A Ministry of
Central Baptist Church of Bearden
Knoxville, Tennessee*

The Samaritan Model for church-based HIV/AIDS ministry

Patience.... This has become the guiding word for Samaritan Ministry. Eight years passed before the time was right to begin a World AIDS Day Worship; almost 10 years before our Bible study began. Our time-tested plan for developing a ministry that changes hearts and lives **can** be duplicated in your church, your community. **It will** take commitment and a willingness to take on a servant role within the community. You will need to work with others who are different than you; people who share different ideas and faiths. **It is possible.**



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Within the Church

The first step in changing the relationship between the HIV/AIDS community and the church is to provide opportunities for church members to learn about HIV and AIDS. This can be done through educational programs that should include the following:



1. A message of compassion from the pulpit
2. HIV lessons directed at every age level- (first grade through senior adult)
3. Special programs to inform youth
4. Development of a church policy or statement concerning HIV/AIDS
5. Use the words...we need to talk about sex if we are going to talk about HIV.

It is vital that the position of the church be one that provides a non-judgmental and compassionate approach to serving the needs of those suffering with HIV/AIDS – without questioning the guilt or innocence of the victim. We don't need to know "how they got it."

Judgmental attitudes need to be changed. Statements that judge people based on HIV status are both ignorant and unproductive.

In the Community

Impact outside the church and within the community is the goal of an HIV/AIDS ministry, but this goal cannot be accomplished without great patience. There is great mistrust in the HIV community concerning the church, and much of this mistrust is warranted. Messages of hate and condemnation from Christian people have caused many people to view the church as the enemy. It takes **time** to change these perceptions. Here are our rules for working with the community:



1. Go slowly. Trust building is essential.
2. Show up. Be a part of community gatherings where HIV prevention and care are on the agenda. Your presence will be noticed and appreciated.
3. Help existing programs before trying to start your own. Watch and listen.
4. Be willing to partner with secular groups, acting as volunteers. Set evangelistic goals aside and demonstrate faith by example. Be a servant.
5. Minister first to physical need.
6. Don't preach.
7. Don't judge.
8. TOUCH!!! (It's magic!)