THE DOORS OF THE INN
2018 ANNUAL REPORT

the Samaritan Center
During my career, I’ve helped many people navigate through a variety of doors. First, in healthcare for 22 years, and then, for the last 13 years, here at the Samaritan Center. In those 35 years, I’ve seen many bravely overcome obstacles to enter open doors. Sadly, others have faced doors slammed shut.

Jesus once told a parable of an innkeeper who opened his doors to a Samaritan and his wounded companion. For over 32 years, we at the Samaritan Center have been seeking to perpetuate that legacy. Over that time, God has opened many doors to give us the needed resources to minister to our community’s most vulnerable.

This legacy continued in 2018 as we shared Help for Today with thousands of weary travelers. And it was our distinct pleasure to point many of these travelers to the Hope for Tomorrow found only in the always open Door, Jesus Christ.

Thank you to each of our amazing team of staff, volunteers, and donors who supported this ministry of opened doors. Only Heaven will show the full impact of your kindness.

Tony Dahlburg
We dedicate this annual report to the memory of our long-time friend and colleague, Terry Haight. On Nov. 8, 2018, Terry passed away suddenly at the age of 75. His loss leaves a large hole in our Samaritan Center family.

Since 1989, he had coordinated disaster relief efforts in our region for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Up until a week before his death, Terry was on the frontlines of ministry, helping families in Georgia devastated by Hurricane Michael.

For many years, Terry served the Samaritan Center as our go-to expert for all things relating to disaster relief. His expertise in managing warehouses and distributing relief supplies to the public helped us ensure that the generous gifts of our community were shared with the people that needed them most.

We mourn, but not without hope. For we know Terry loved his Lord, and that soon, if faithful, we will meet him on the great Resurrection Morning. Sleep well, our good friend. Thank you for being a true Good Samaritan. May we carry forward your legacy of committed and tangible caring for generations to come.
Janice is in her fourth stint of duty at the Samaritan Center. Since she began in 2012, Janice has resigned her position at the Samaritan Center four times. Each time though, she has come back, because she sees working at the Samaritan Center as more than a just a way to pay the bills.

“I have taken positions at different places several times, but I keep coming back here because it’s a calling to me,” Janice says.

Janice’s workday begins during her 10-minute commute from her home in Ooltewah. Eyes-wide open, Janice prepares her heart spiritually for the day ahead.

“I thank God for the gift of my day and for being my Savior and Lord,” Janice says. “I then pray for kindness, love, and understanding, and that my words will be gentle.”

It’s not only through her words that Janice touches others. Arriving at work, Janice often greets her fellow co-workers with what her supervisor, Debbie Wright, describes as “a gentle hug.”
Those hugs often lead to meaningful conversations, where Janice is able to serve as a sounding board and encouragement to her co-workers.

Her ability to connect with others extends to the Center’s shoppers as well.

“As I’ve gotten to know the customers, I’ve gained friends,” says Janice. “Now I can hug them, and I’ve even been asked to say a prayer for them.”

Those invitations to prayer open up a door to one of the most sacred places in the Samaritan Center. As Christian writer Ellen White says, “Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend.”

Often those prayers take place in the Center’s Hulsey Chapel, an oasis of sorts, with low lights and a single wood pew. There, staff, volunteers, clients, and shoppers, have the opportunity to come near to the Lord in prayer and contemplation.

Janice is not the only person praying. According to Wright, not long ago, a customer was seen praying with another customer who we learned had cancer. Other staff and volunteers routinely pray with others in our chapel as well.

Because of the generosity of people like you, in 2018, doors to sacred places were swung open and wide to those in need of comfort, cheer, and hope. Thank you for giving this powerful gift.
“He’s not breathing!”

Among the festive onlookers at last December’s Spirit of Christmas parade in Collegedale, one family was not experiencing the holiday spirit.

Cradled in his mother’s arms, 20-day old, Spencer, lay motionless. Panic-struck, his parents, Allee and Warren, attempted to resuscitate him. While one attempt—ed resuscitation, the other called 9-1-1. With the assistance of paramedics, Spencer began breathing again. Soon, he was rushed by ambulance to Chattanooga’s Children’s Hospital at Erlanger. He, however, was by no means out of the water.

From birth, Spencer’s life had not been easy. As a newborn, he struggled to thrive and had to be held for observation. Soon after being allowed to go home, he came down with the Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV). RSV causes the small airways of the lungs to be inflamed and often produces pneumonia as well. RSV can be especially dangerous for infants, as their lungs are small and often still developing. This was the reality with Spencer and the reason for his emergency loss of breathing.

For three nights and four days, Spencer was under watchful observation at the hospital’s Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU). Slowly he rallied and the RSV cleared up: but at home, an emergency of another kind was brewing.

“She was so helpful and caring,” Alexandria says. “Meeting with her, we didn’t feel like failures.”

During Spencer’s hospitalization, Allee watched vigil at his bedside, leaving Warren to stay home with the couple’s three other children, ages 6, 2, and 1. To do this, Warren had called in sick from his job as a truck driver. Unfortunately, this didn’t go over very well with his employer.

“Warren, I’m letting you go,” his boss said, “I need to find someone that doesn’t have to be a babysitter.”

Careful savers, the family would have normally depended on reserves to carry them through during a time like this, but earlier that year all extra money had been exhausted when Warren had been hospitalized with a back injury.
After staying a week in the hospital (4 days in PICU and 3 in a step-down unit), Spencer was able to return home. With their baby on the mend, Warren and Allee’s mind turned to their finances. Their rent check was due in days. Where would they find the money?

It was then that Allee’s mind turned to the Samaritan Center, a place where, up until this point, she’d only donated and shopped.

“I’m normally the one helping, not the other way around,” Allee remarks. “It was difficult asking for help, but I had no other options.”

Almost as soon as they sat down with senior case manager Stephanie Pyke, they knew they wouldn’t be looked down upon.

“She was so helpful and caring,” Allee says. “Meeting with her, we didn’t feel like failures.”

After evaluating the couple’s financial situation, Stephanie approved them for a month of rent assistance, a shopping cart full of food, and a generous supply of diapers. She also signed them up for the Christmas Toyland. Without this program, their children would have had to go without Christmas.

As part of Christmas Toyland, their six-year-old daughter received her first bicycle and subsequently has learned to ride it.

“She won’t stop riding that bike,” Allee smiles. “She even rides it down our hallway.”

Allee and Warren represent hundreds of families that have entered through doors of relief, due to the support of Center supporters like you. Thank you for your generosity and kindness.

### Social Service Assistance

- **$558,224.14**
- **Case Manager Services** (39%)
- **Food Pantry** (19%)
- **Housing Assistance** (29%)
- **Health/Personal/Baby Care** (2%)
- **Programs** (17%)
- **Special Projects** (2%)
- **Community & Missions** (6%)
- **Food Pantry** (19%)
- **Case Manager Services** (39%)

### Volunteer Value Hours

- **$475,608.41**

### Total Assistance Provided

- **$1,962,768.25**
- **6 Baby Layettes**
- **106 Families Provided with Thanksgiving Food**
- **22,104 Gifts for Jesus**
- **12,040 Direct Client Visits**
- **$8,2091.57**
- **$846,844.13**
- **$558,224.14**
In Jesus’s parable, the compassionate Good Samaritan brought the beaten and broken traveler to an inn. There, the travel-worn twosome entered the inn through a door. Inside that door, they found respite, they found safety, and they found relief. We at the Samaritan Center seek to operate in the spirit of the inn, serving as place of solace for weary travelers along life’s pathway.

Since 1986, we’ve connected with our community through a variety doors and pathways.

Our primary door, helping our neighbors in financial distress, is, and will always be, our first mission, but the ministry of the Samaritan Center encompasses much more.

We seek to be a blessing to our shoppers, our volunteers, our partners, and our greater community as well. Whether we contact someone in our stores, in our volunteer room, at our donation center, or in our greater community, we seek to extend help and hope to all we contact.

This ministry is made possible only through God’s kindness and the generosity of our community. This generosity comes into our Center through a variety of doors and avenues as well. Through the devotion of time, resources, prayers, and acts of kindness, our Center is able to meet the necessities of today, while being ready for the demands of tomorrow. Thank you to all who’ve helped make this possible.
TSC Office

Through our office doors, we meet those in need by providing emergency food, clothing, financial assistance, and more.

TSC Stores

Through the doors or our store, our faithful customers support our ministry by purchasing gently used items.

TSC Staff Entrance

Through our staff entrance, daily our team of employees and volunteers give their energy to help those in need.

The Samaritan Center

Schools, businesses, churches, and groups open their doors by hosting drives for food, toys, and school supplies. They further open doors by volunteering at our Center.

TSC Donation Center

Our community’s donations at our Donation Center provide a way to make turn their items into resources to serve those in need.
From a young age, David’s* mother knew something was wrong. When they held him, David would often overextend and flex, almost as if he was pushing them away. And at other times his neck would fall backward when they picked him up from his crib.

* Not clients’ real names
Within a few months, the diagnosis was in—cerebral palsy. The news was devastating, but his mother was steadfast—she would seek to give him the best life possible.

To save money, David and his mother moved in with his grandmother. It was while living there, he began to attend school. Day by day, a school bus would stop by his grandmother’s home and pick him up. And every day the routine was the same. First, David’s mother would carry his wheelchair to the bus and then walk back and carry him down the stairs and place him in his chair.

The challenge was that David was growing bigger, while at the same time his mother’s degenerative disc in her back was getting worse and worse. It was clear that the family needed a ramp to get him to and from his bus, but constructing one was way outside the family’s limited income.

Facing a crisis, his grandmother, Cindy*, reached out to the Samaritan Center. That’s when our social services director, Sharon Smith-Hensley did what she does best: searching to find the necessary partners to piece together the puzzle to meet her clients’ needs.

“We can do our part, but often we’re not able to do everything,” Smith-Hensley says. “That’s where collaboration comes in.”

Soon, Smith-Hensley was on the phone with Helping Hands, a volunteer group of men from Collegedale Community Seventh-day Adventist Church. If Sharon could supply the materials and pay for the permits, the men pledged to build the ramp.

One of the men’s challenges was the length of the ramp. Regulations required that for one foot of ramp be constructed for every inch the door was above the ground. The door was 42 inches above the ground, meaning a 42 foot-long ramp would be needed.

Not to be deterred by a challenge, the men of Helping Hands worked steadily, and within a short time David was able to be wheeled freely to and from his bus.

Blessings like these are possible due to dozens of community partners that join the Samaritan Center each year. Whether it be a financial donation, a drive held in their business or school, or the energy of volunteer labor, each partnership is vital to our total success. For a list of Samaritan Center partners, please visit https://thesamaritancenter.net/give-back/partner.
For the children of some Samaritan Center clients, the idea of a week of summer camp is only a dream. This dream became reality in 2018 for 26 of these children, a record number in Center history. Each of these children received one week at Cohutta Springs Youth Camp in Crandall Georgia. The sponsorship is a partnership between the Center and the camp.

For many of our clients’ children, the week of camp, surrounded by nature and a positive atmosphere is in stark contrast to their normal day-to-day lives.

This was the case with Brandon, who a few years back, was gifted a sponsorship to Cohutta Springs. Up until that time, living in an urban setting, Brandon’s exposure to water activities had been limited. But his week at camp opened a door to a world and a passion Brandon had never experienced before. From the moment he set his oar in the water, Brandon fell in love with paddle sports.

Arriving home, he begged his mother to sign him up for rowing classes.
Soon, Brandon was out in the water every weekend possible and rapidly progressing as a competitive rower. It didn’t take long for college recruiters to notice. A door that had been cracked open with a sponsorship to camp now swung wide as universities sought to secure his letter of intent to join their collegiate rowing crews.

Brandon’s story is just one of many. Because of the generosity of people like you, nearly $14,000 was invested in summer camp support this year. Thank you to all who opened doors for children like Brandon, giving them the opportunity to enjoy fun, relaxing, and life-shaping experiences.

Funds Distributed to Families & Kids in Need

- Stock Their Lockers: $31,255.16
- Christmas Toyland: $32,364.50
- Summer Camp: $13,946
- F.R.E.E. (A refugee organization): $3,464.75
When retired nurse Linda Albertson moved to the Chattanooga area in 2005, it didn’t take her long to start searching for a way to give back. Service to others, whether in a medical setting, or alongside her pastor husband had been the heartbeat of Linda’s life for over 40 years.

When she saw an advertisement at church seeking volunteer nurses at the Samaritan Center, she recognized a way to couple her heart for nursing and ministry in one setting.

Soon Linda was stationed at her post of duty checking blood pressures in the lobby of the Samaritan Center, and week by week there she remained for over 13 years! Late last year, she announced that she would be retiring from volunteering due to an upcoming move and her husband’s declining health.

During her 13 years of volunteer service, Linda was able to not only help hundreds of people learn about the condition of their physical heart, she also had opportunity, on occasion, to open the door to their spiritual heart as well.

“It’s amazing what people will tell a total stranger,” Linda remarks. “Sometimes after learning about the struggles of someone, I would offer to have a word of prayer.”
Volunteering is good for her heart as well, Linda says. “They’ve found out that those who volunteer live healthier lives,” she says. “And when you help other people and learn of their troubles, your own troubles always seem to be smaller.”

Linda is just one of 317 volunteers who supported the Samaritan Center in 2018, with a cumulative total of 19,263 hours. Below you will learn more about how some have blessed the Samaritan Center with their hearts of service.

5,485 hours contributed by our puzzlers

21 plus years
Barbara Beckett has volunteered at the Samaritan Center

934 hours donated by Connie Hunt, working from her home & the sort room

1,060 hours served by our volunteer office assistants

7,800 hours of volunteer service donated by Joanna DeJong over the last nine years
### Office Team

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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Tony Dahlberg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant to the Executive Director</td>
<td>Erin Barthle</td>
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<td>Accountant</td>
<td>Sally Fisher</td>
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<td>Social Services Director</td>
<td>Sharon Smith-Hensley</td>
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<td>Receptionist</td>
<td>Dale Cady</td>
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<td>Senior Case Manager</td>
<td>Stephanie Pyke</td>
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<td>Case Manager</td>
<td>Erika Hughes</td>
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<td>Social Services Support</td>
<td>Sarah Young</td>
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<td>Communication Director</td>
<td>Eddie Schwisow</td>
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<td>Communication Specialist</td>
<td>Cynthia Salinas</td>
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<td>Director of Operations</td>
<td>Keith Heming</td>
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<td>Thrift Manager</td>
<td>Debbie Wright</td>
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<td>Volunteer Coordinator</td>
<td>Bethany Hills</td>
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<td>Volunteer/Operations Support</td>
<td>Heather Craig</td>
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<td>Network Administrator</td>
<td>Lyndon Blackman</td>
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### Board

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<td>Chair</td>
<td>Ben Wygal</td>
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<td>Franklin Farrow</td>
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<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Jon Wentworth</td>
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<td>Tony Dahlberg</td>
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<td>Kurt Allen</td>
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<td>Bert Coolidge (emeritus)</td>
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<td>Danny Garcia</td>
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<td>Samantha Walter</td>
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<td>Sonia Wrate</td>
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