

Sharing & Caring

Serving The Midlands for 42 years

More than 13,000 served during Calendar Year 2023

Using eight unique services, The Cooperative Ministry staff and volunteers served 13,710 people during Calendar Year 2023.

Services include Financial Empowerment, which may include financial assistance with rent or utilities. Through this service, clients are partnered with a Financial Health Coach.

Through the clothing bank's store setting, 36,990 clothing items were distributed to those needing free clothing for work and school.

Volunteer tax preparers completed 7,792 free tax

returns for low- and moderate-income taxpayers, ensuring those taxpayers received the best possible refund available.

Since its inception, 220 individuals have benefited from a Career Improvement service aimed at helping individuals receive a GED, license, or certificate necessary for a better job. In 2023, this service helped 79 individuals.

There were 1,420 people who benefited from emergency food boxes and snack packs. Learn more about The Cooperative Ministry at www.coopmin.org.



LOOK FOR OUR NEW VAN - As you drive around Columbia, look for our new van, purchased in 2023, with the help of our board secretary, Alexa Godwin of Godwin Motors Inc. in Columbia. The decals were paid for through a Junior League of Columbia grant, which Mrs.

Godwin submitted on our behalf. Pictured from left are Dave Peoples, director of our clothing and furniture bank; Beth Irick, CEO of The Cooperative Ministry; Junior League of Columbia President Emily Bedenbaugh; and Mrs. Godwin.

Midlands Gives 2024

The Cooperative Ministry's goal is \$50,000 to help families

The Cooperative Ministry has a goal to raise \$50,000 through the 11th annual Midlands Gives campaign on Tuesday, May 7, 2024.

Midlands Gives is a one-day, online giving challenge to benefit non-profits in the Midlands. Giving opens at 6 a.m. and closes at 11:59 p.m.

To help this year's fund-raising effort, The Cooperative Ministry's board of directors has raised a \$25,000 match gift. Every gift up to \$25,000 will be matched dollar-for-dollar on the way to the \$50,000 goal.

This year's goal will impact as many as 65 individuals and their households through the eight unique services offered by The Cooperative Ministry. In Calendar Year 2023, The Cooperative Ministry served 13,710 individuals.

This year's Match Donors include Tucker Oil and The Corner Pantry; Buchanan Construction Services; IOA; Blackbridge Financial; Quality Plus Services; Palmetto State Glass; Godwin Motors; HUB



International; and Bauknight, Pietras, Stormer PA.

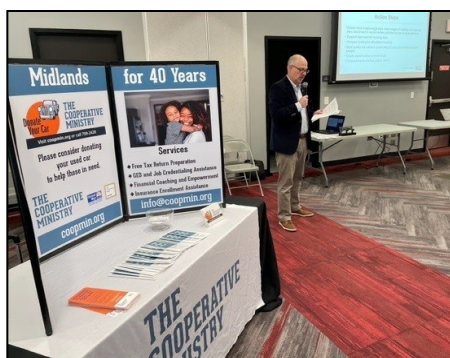
Donors can support The Cooperative Ministry at **[www.midlandsgives.org/The Cooperative Ministry](http://www.midlandsgives.org/TheCooperativeMinistry)**. You can also use the QR Code above to access The Cooperative Ministry's giving page.

Faith & Poverty Conference provides forum for information

The Cooperative Ministry hosted its 2023 Faith & Poverty Conference on Thursday, Oct. 26, 2023, for representatives from its church partners and the Midlands religious community.

The event aimed to help church leaders better understand and respond to poverty in our community. Speakers included Andy Pope, Senior Director, Data and Research, United Way of the Midlands; Felicia Kilgore, Director of Community Development, City of Columbia Government; Callison Richardson, Manager, Grants and Community Development, Richland County; and Wanda Pearson, The Cooperative Ministry's Chief Program Officer.

The City of Columbia provided its Busby Community Center as the venue, and First Baptist Church, Columbia, provided breakfast. Lunch was also served during table-talk conversations.



Above left, Andy Pope of United Way of the Midlands discusses poverty data within our community; right, the City of Columbia's Felicia Kilgore answers questions.

From Beth H. Irick, CEO

Thank you, volunteer groups

The Cooperative Ministry could not exist without the support of our volunteers, especially the groups that serve in our clothing bank.

Recent groups include those from Shandon Baptist Church, Eastminster Presbyterian Church, Gateway Baptist Church, Colonial Life, Trenholm Road United Methodist Church, First Citizens Bank, Elliott Davis, BlueCross BlueShield of SC, NewSpring Church, Trane Technologies, Sandhills Community Church, Fisher Phillips, and Spirax Sarco.

Sandhills Community Church sends a group to serve on the third Friday of every month, helping reset our “store setting” for clients needing free clothing for work and school. Our clothing is always distributed freely.

Church partners often incorporate volunteerism into special missions weeks aimed at community service. Corporate partners, too, will have dedicated service times during the year.

We are so thankful. Volunteerism makes up 34 percent of our annual workforce. During Calendar Year 2023, we had 383 volunteers serve 14,501 hours in various areas, including our clothing bank. That’s a lot of help, and we are thankful for it.

Come serve with us! When you are ready, please contact Scott Vaughan, our director of Community Awareness, at svaughan@coopmin.org. You can also visit our website at www.coopmin.org/volunteer.



VOLUNTEERISM - A recent volunteer group from Fisher Phillips in Columbia is representative of the many groups that serve in our clothing bank. This group served as part of the firm’s nationwide service month. The Cooperative Ministry offers volunteer opportunities for groups and individuals through our clothing bank, and individuals can also volunteer in front-end reception, periodic data entry, and as volunteer income tax preparers. For more, please visit our website at www.coopmin.org/volunteer.

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Sharing & Caring, Spring 2024

THE COOPERATIVE MINISTRY

3821 W. Beltline Blvd.
Columbia, SC 29204
(803) 799-3853
FAX: (803) 252-8621
Email: info@coopmin.org
Website: www.coopmin.org
Facebook:
[www.facebook.com/
thecooperativeministry](https://www.facebook.com/thecooperativeministry)

Beth H. Irick, Chief Executive Officer
Scott Vaughan, Director,
Community Awareness

Serving the Midlands for 42 Years

THE COOPERATIVE MINISTRY

is participating!

5.7.2024

MIDLANDS GIVES

Our 2024 Goal is \$50,000

Please give at midlandsgives.org/TheCooperativeMinistry



**MIDLANDS
GIVES**
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