

Sharing & Caring

Serving The Midlands for 40 years

The Cooperative Ministry cuts the ribbon on clothing bank renovations and new store setting

As part of its 40th Anniversary, celebrated this year, The Cooperative Ministry has renovated its 3,150 square-foot clothing and furniture bank warehouse into a store setting, where clients can choose the free clothing they need and want for work and school.

On Tuesday, Sept. 13, Columbia Mayor Daniel Rickenmann joined with staff, board members, and church partners to cut the ribbon on the new store setting.

Beth H. Irick, The Cooperative Ministry's Chief Executive Officer, said the renovation helps clients have a more dignified experience, selecting their sizes and fashions just as any consumer would. The clothing bank is a 30-year core service of The Cooperative Ministry dating back to 1992, and in 2021 more than 15,000 articles of clothing were



given to clients. The Cooperative Ministry's clothing bank also provides free clothing to other social service organizations and Richland County public schools.

Mayor Rickenmann said, "This is a monumental anniversary year for The Cooperative Ministry. We think about how many lives you've served during that time."

"On behalf of a very grateful city, I applaud what you are doing here today and every day at The Cooperative Ministry - you are changing lives."

Pictured above, from left, Columbia Mayor Daniel Rickenmann; Beth Irick, CEO of The Cooperative Ministry; Dave Peoples, The Cooperative Ministry's clothing bank director; and staff member Diane Lawson, who assisted in the new store setting's organization.



Pictured, left, Rev. Wes Church, senior pastor of First Baptist Church Columbia, and a board member for The Cooperative Ministry, recognizes CEO Beth Irick before providing a closing prayer of blessing over the organization, its history, and ministry. At right, leaders from church partners visit in the clothing bank store, where clothes are organized by gender and size for clients to shop.

Partner Spotlight

By Rev. Alden Ellis
NewSpring Church
Columbia Campus Pastor

NewSpring Church desires that everyone everywhere be in a relationship with Jesus!

We believe in our community and in showing visible love to those around us. We also have a heart to see needs met for those in our community.

Because our heart is for kingdom mentality, we have the opportunity to work with and partner with others in Columbia who desire this, too.

I am thankful for ministries and organizations like The Cooperative Ministry. Since 1982, for 40 years, The Cooperative Ministry has served families well and, with available resourcing, set them up for the future.

We've seen people walk through our doors during the week weary because of their season in life. We can share with them the hope of Jesus. We can also connect them tangibly to The Cooperative Ministry, where they will receive immediate assistance and knowledge for long-term independence.

Together we can help those in our community thrive. I am expectant and hopeful for the people of Columbia because of partnerships like The Cooperative Ministry.



BUCHANAN IS 2022 BOARD CHAIR - The Cooperative Ministry is governed by a board of directors made up of 18 local men and women. Pictured, above, with Beth Irick, CEO of The Cooperative Ministry, are Robert Williams III, left, board chair 2020-2022, and Davis Buchanan, right, board chair for 2022-2024. Williams is restaurant operations manager for Lizard's Thicket, and Buchanan is president of Buchanan Construction Services.

BECOME A FRIEND

Become a Friend of The Cooperative Ministry with your monthly, recurring gift of any amount. Recurring donors can spread a gift over 12 months. A \$50 monthly gift will help as many as two families with basic needs and can prevent homelessness. As a Friend, you will ensure the continued support of our work in the Midlands.

Please snap a photo of the QR Code, right, to reach our Donor page or you can visit coopmin.org.



Need a speaker for your group meeting?

The Cooperative Ministry can provide a speaker for your next civic club, church group, or neighborhood meeting.

Programs can fit any available time allotment.

Please contact Scott Vaughan, Director, Community Awareness, at (803) 799-2428 or svaughan@coopmin.org.

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Clothing Bank change will benefit our clients

The Cooperative Ministry's Clothing and Furniture Bank provides free clothing to thousands of Midlands residents each year.

Yes, clothing is freely given because it is freely received from generous churches and individuals. There is always a need for good, quality clothing, and we pride ourselves on giving away clothing that we, as a staff, would wear ourselves.

This summer, as a project of our 40th Anniversary, staff and volunteers have renovated our 3,150 square foot clothing bank warehouse into a store setting.

Volunteers especially blessed us from BlueCross BlueShield of SC, Capgemini, TD Bank, the USC School of Law, and church partners First Baptist Church,



“Clothing is freely given because it is freely received from generous churches and individuals.”

~ Beth H. Irick
Chief Executive Officer

Forest Lake Presbyterian Church, Sandhills Community Church, and Trenholm Road United Methodist Church. Over the summer, these volunteers removed old shelving, sorted clothing by gender, size, and age (adult or children), and then placed clothing on appropriate racks.

In the past, clients came to us during our regular office hours, completed a request form, and then staff and volunteers pulled gender- and size-appropriate clothing for the client.

Our clients will now be able to choose their clothing. We believe this will help provide a dignified shopping experience. Who doesn't want to choose their colors and styles? Some clients, perhaps the elderly or those with limitations, may still need our assistance choosing clothes, and we will be more than happy to help them.

We will continue to pull and provide free clothing for non-profits like University of South Carolina Supportive Housing, Sober Living Transitional Housing, Lexington Richland Alcohol and Drug Abuse Center (LRADAC), Lexington and Columbia Mental Health, Restoring Promise, Transitions, and Richland One and Two school districts.

As always, thank you so much for believing in our mission.

Volunteers needed for tax assistance program

Volunteers are needed to assist clients in the 2023 Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program.



No prior tax preparation experience is necessary; The Cooperative Ministry provides complete IRS-approved training and assistance. Volunteers can serve from home or serve with friends at a location near home.

For more information, please contact Maggie Fant at mfant@coopmin.org.



In 2001, a **Congregational Advisory Committee** was formed, and the first meeting was at Eastminster Presbyterian Church. This special group meets to share opinions and perspectives, and for staff to share information within partnering churches.

The Cooperative Ministry has 53 partners from the Columbia area religious community.

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

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