



## CONTACT

Mike Miller  
877-764-2426  
mikemiller@smchcn.net

August 10, 2013  
For immediate release

## **Samaritan membership surpasses 25,000 households**

Samaritan Ministries International's health care sharing ministry has surpassed 25,000 households.

Ministry leaders attribute the continued growth of this health care sharing ministry, founded in 1994, in part to the increasing desire among Christians for a stable and Biblical way to help one another with health care needs in the uncertain health care environment.

"The health insurance industry is constantly in flux due to the implementation of the Accountable Care Act, so by comparison our model is looking more and more stable to people," said James Lansberry, executive vice president of Samaritan. "I also think the growth has been related to health care costs continuing to go up."

He said Samaritan's affordability could be another factor in the growth.

Samaritan's recent growth is all the more remarkable when compared to its early history, when it took nearly three years to reach 1,000 households, founder and President Ted Pittenger said. Membership was just less than 11,000 families at the end of 2004, and growth remained modest through 2009, when it stood near 14,000. But the debate in Congress on the health care law in late 2009, triggered a growth spurt that is continuing. Since then, membership has grown by more than 3,000 households per year.

The 25,000 mark was passed during July 2013, with more than 82,000 individuals now taking part in Samaritan Ministries.

The rapid growth is a sign that "more and more people are considering us to be something that works," Lansberry said.

He cited numbers that show Samaritan members routinely share more than \$6 million in needs each month. More than 117,000 needs have been shared among members since SMI began sharing needs, operating in a renovated chicken coop on Pittenger's property.

Pittenger said that Samaritan is working hard to keep pace with the growth so member service doesn't suffer. The ministry has already had to move three times to increasingly larger facilities.

"We've been working to shore up our infrastructure, increase and reorganize our staff, and develop our information technology to support the kind of growth that we're seeing," Pittenger said. "We want to continue to offer quality service. We still have a commitment to personal service."

Asked how he would encourage more Christians to join, Lansberry urged them to consider the need to

“trust God, share in the burdens of His people, and be part of something that’s consistent with their religious views” when addressing their health care needs.

Not only does health care sharing enable Christians to live out the principles of their faith, but it is also “more affordable, more stable and allows believers to have that extra benefit of prayers and encouragement should they have a large medical need.”

###

*Samaritan Ministries International seeks to help members of the Body of Christ carry out His Great Commission through ministries that enable Christians to better obey Jesus’ commands. This is currently done through the Christian Health Care Newsletter health care sharing ministry and the Morning Center full-service maternity care ministry. For more information, contact James Lansberry, 877-764-2426, Ext. 186, [jlansberry@smchcn\(dot\)net](mailto:jlansberry@smchcn.net); or Mike Miller, 877-764-2426, Ext. 142, or 309-642-9529, [mikemiller\(at\)smchcn\(dot\)net](mailto:mikemiller@smchcn.net).*