

JUSTICE TOGETHER

FAITH IN ACTION

"What does the Lord require of you, O Mortal? But to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God." - Micah 6:8



The Heart of It

"Doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God isn't a call to perfection, but a call to direction. We're not the heroes of this story — we're partners in something larger than any one of us. That's true whether we're celebrating a Nehemiah Action of nearly 1,400 people or being honest that we still have work to do reaching further into our own congregations. "

- Rabbi Andrew Pepperstone

Celebrating our Progress

On June 18, more than 175 of us packed into Calvary United Methodist Church for a night that was part celebration of the real wins for our community, and a kickoff for the investment drive that will carry our work into 2027 and beyond.

Champions for Housing and Health

City Council Members Michael Hoheisel and Joseph Shepard joined us at the celebration. They reaffirmed their partnership to support Justice Together's current proposals.

We were also honored to welcome Michele Calvert, the new Executive Director of COMCARE, for her first-ever public appearance since taking the position. She shared the success of the mobile mental crisis units we fought for—units that have stabilized 1,400 crisis calls at home, rather than in a jail cell or an emergency room. *(cont. pg 2)*

Celebration (cont.)

Our Largest Nehemiah Assembly Yet

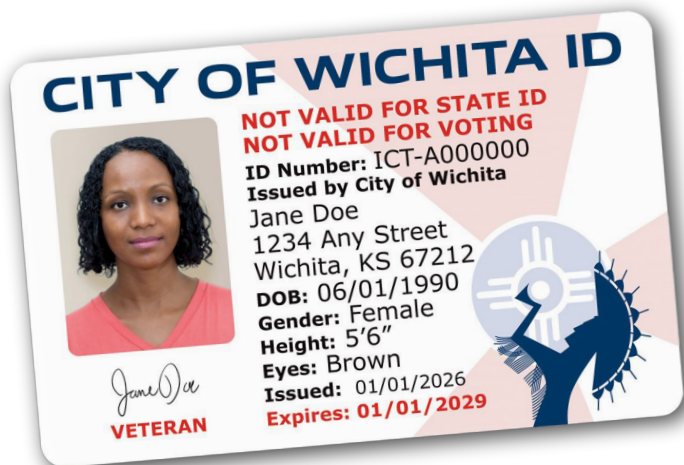
The night's biggest moment was the announcement of our largest Nehemiah Assembly ever with over 1,400 people. Standing before that crowd, Council Members Hoheisel, Shepard, and Johnston made a public commitment:

\$10 million for each of the next three years through braided local and federal dollars toward affordable housing, and support for putting housing and homelessness on the ballot as a stand-alone sales tax referendum in 2027.

Justice Together members witnessed the Council Members' commitment and will hold them accountable. The affordable housing investment proposal represents our community's largest-ever investment in housing and homelessness services.

Progress We Can See

We celebrated the municipal IDs we called for back in 2024. Since 2025, more than 2,200 of our neighbors in need have received an ID card free of charge. This card represents a practical solution to the identification barrier that restricts access to necessary resources provided by the city and state.



2025-2026 Cycle Award Recognition



Rookie of the Year Award

Congregation building its first network

Holy Savior Catholic Church



52:1 Award

More than 100% of congregation's average worship attendance were at the Nehemiah Assembly

Mennonite Church of the Servant
130%



Doing Justice Award

Congregations brought two thirds or more their worship attendance

Calvary UMC
Grace Presbyterian
Church of the Savior
Hope Mennonite Church
First Unitarian Universalist Church of Wichita



Rolling Waters Award

Congregation with the largest turnout at the Nehemiah Assembly

Aldersgate UMC
more than 112 people



2026 Nehemiah Award

Top Individual Organizers for bringing the most people to the Nehemiah Assembly

1st place: Darwin Eads
Grace Presbyterian Church - 49 people
2nd place: Theresa Canidy
St. Paul AME Church - 23 people
3rd place: Liz Carson
Chapel Hill UMC - 15 people

Annual Assessment Recap

Board members, clergy, and team leaders met on July 9 to assess how far we've come this past year, and plan for 2027. Led by John Aeschbury, Executive Director of the DART, alongside our own organizers Louis Goseland, Tiger Han, and Ethan Henry we discussed the organizations strengths and weaknesses and set goals for the future.

Looking Back: A Year of Growing Power

This past cycle asked much of us, and in many ways we rose to meet the challenge. We held 96 house meetings (just shy of our goal of 100) and averaged 8.33 people per session, approximately 800 neighbors gathered to be heard. Our research committees met 19 times, well past our goal of 15, and that work translated into real wins: a housing referendum moving forward, a \$10 million per year funding commitment, and a new monthly oversight structure to hold decision-makers accountable. Our work was covered by five media outlets, surpassing our goal of three.

Our Nehemiah Action was the largest in our history. Over three years, Justice Together has formed a coalition from different faith traditions who chose, to listen, act, and hold city and county officials accountable.

We also examined not only the year's successes but our shortcomings as well. For instance, only 1 in 7 of our Justice Ministry Network (JMN) members brought three or more guests to the Nehemiah Action. This indicates that we need to invite more people within our congregations and beyond.

The Community Problems Assembly attendance was only 59% of network members, short of our 75% goal. And while our investment drive is growing— \$98,021 pledged with \$57,673 already in hand of this year's \$100,000 goal—fewer than *(cont. pg 4)*

Celebration (cont.)



Justice Seeker Award

Congregations brought half their worship attendance or more

Mt. Vernon UMC

St. Paul AME Church

St. Paul UMC

First Church of the Brethren

Hillside Christian Church

Reformation Lutheran Church



GNATs Award

Greatest Network Members of All Time

75 people from 30 congregations attended all four major assemblies, brought at least three neighbors to the Nehemiah Assembly, showed up to the Celebration, and made an investment in this work. Small, persistent, and impossible to ignore. GNATs are the backbone of this ministry.

Standing Together at City Hall

As part of our celebration we lifted up our Day of Action (5/27/26) at City Hall. Members of our Gun Violence Steering Committee, with more than 130 people supporting them, went face to face with City Manager Marstall and called on him to meet with us to discuss implementation of a community violence problems analysis—the first step aimed at evidence-based solutions proven to bring down gun violence in other communities.



Our city manager has agreed to meet in August. A gun-violence accountability meeting was scheduled the day after our assessment.

Assessment Recap (cont.)

a quarter of network members reached the \$200 pledge level we hoped for. Our corporate outreach reached 15 of the 44 appointments we set out to schedule.

Financially, we are stable but not yet fully secure: we're sitting on 7 to 10 months of committed and on-hand funds rather than the full year we're working toward, and two-thirds of our budget is currently raised locally rather than the 100% that would make us fully self-sustaining.

Our leadership training numbers also lagged behind our goals this year, a reminder that growth in turnout has to be matched by growth in trained, confident leaders.

John Aeschbury ended his remarks on a positive note stating,
"We are best in the world at engaging our fellow worshipers in this work — and our locally raised dollars are what drive it. What makes all of it possible is our Network members and team leaders."

Invest in Justice

Your investment in Justice Together answers the scriptural call to "do justice" on long term, systemic initiatives that directly benefit the people and places we call home. You can become a stakeholder and make a lasting change.

Scan the QR Code to make a donation via the Give Lively portal. Or write a check and mail to:

Justice Together
1200 S. Broadway,
Wichita, KS 67211

Thank you for your support and commitment to serving our community.



dojusticetogether.org/invest

My Brother's Keeper

Jim Woody

The late British Prime Minister William E. Gladstone is credited with being the originator of the phrase, "justice delayed is justice denied."

Others, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., have paraphrased Gladstone as well. In his 1963 *Letter From Birmingham Jail*, King expresses his frustration at being labeled an extremist because of his passion to enact justice as quickly as possible. After considering the label of "extremist" for a short while, Dr. King decided that label was not something to be ashamed of, but rather a term he should embrace. He noted that history, especially the history of faith, is peopled with many extremists—the Old Testament's Amos, "Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever flowing stream"; Martin Luther, "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise, so help me God"; Thomas Jefferson, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal"; and Christ himself who said, "Love your enemies."

King points out that by 1963, African-Americans (and other minorities and the poor could surely be added to this group) had already waited 340 years for the justice they deserved, and 63 years later they are still waiting. The need for justice is urgent. Those of us who seek justice for all Americans should not allow our passion to be blunted by being called "extremists," we should, as Dr. King did, embrace that label and continue working towards the day that seeking and expecting all people to be treated justly will no longer be seen as an extreme position.

