

JUSTICE TOGETHER

FAITH IN ACTION

"What does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." - Micah 6:8



"Power at its best
is love implementing
the demands of justice,
and justice at its best
is power correcting
everything that stands
against love."

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

What We're Building Toward: 2026-2027

We've set a goal of 130 listening sessions, an increase from 96. This would put us on target to reach over a thousand NEW people and increase our Nehemiah Action number to 2,000.

Our network today doesn't reflect the full diversity of Sedgwick County. With that in mind, we're committed to closing that gap in Justice Together. Specific recruitment goals include two new Catholic parishes, one Evangelical/Non-Denominational, two from historically Black churches, and one non-Christian tradition.

The executive committee believes this next cycle is about building on real momentum. Increasing our individual investment goal from \$100,000 to \$130,000, and our congregational dues goal from \$100,000 to \$110,000, reflects congregations' committing more fully to ownership of this ministry.

Our corporate investment goal remains \$50,000, built on the strength of new relationships including a commitment from Jill Docking of \$5,000 a year for the next five years.

Leaning Into Three Strategies

As we start the third year of Justice Together we have set the bar high. Rather than simply asking people to do more, we recommend three specific practices that are proven to give strong results.

1. Real one-on-one relationships

We've seen the example set by Carol Furrow, a team lead at Calvary United Methodist, who went to our Justice Ministry conference last year and came home committed to doing a one-on-one with every one of her twelve team members. ***As a result, her team grew from around 12 people at last year's Nehemiah Action to 37 this year — nearly a third of her whole congregation.*** We're asking every team lead to try the same this cycle. The training being provided gives team leaders the tools they need.

2. Stronger, well-supported leaders

We're recommitting to the tracking forms every network member fills out during the listening process. In addition, sharpening our team assemblies around practical skills, and sending more team leaders to regional trainings to learn from experienced organizers from other cities. Also, team leads and clergy are being urged to participate in investment-drive training.

3. Sharing our victory stories

We're building a victory story into every listening session script, lifting up an accomplishment at every team and network meeting. Telling our story is what makes people want to be part of it.

Save the Date

11/9 Community Problems Assembly

First UMC, 330 N Broadway, 6pm-8pm

11/18- 11/19 Power Building & Negotiation Training (DART)

First UMC, 330 N Broadway, Wichita, 8:30am-5pm

Regional training for team leads on engaging networks, and preparing leaders with strategies for critical interactions.

12/10 Research Kickoffs

Grace Presbyterian Church, 5002 E Douglas, 6pm-8pm

Research committees form and meet every 3-4 weeks through the spring.

2/2-2/4 Clergy Conference

Orlando, Florida

Clergy convene in Florida for the DART justice ministry training and scripture study. This conference provides energy and theological grounding for the critical spring mobilization phase.



Golden Rule Award

Justice Together receives the Golden Rule Award from HumanKind Ministries



Pictured here: Rev. Dr. Karen Robu, Darwin Eads, Rev. Dr. Mitch Reece, Rev. Ashley Prescott Barlow Thompson, Rev. Lance Carithers, Rev. Dr. Pamela M. Hughes, Cindy Marion, & Louis Goseland

The Golden Rule Award honors an organization that embodies the spirit of treating others with dignity and compassion. Through leadership, generosity, and service, they strengthen our community and create opportunities for hope, connection, and lasting impact. Justice Together was presented the 2026 award at the 76th Annual Humanitarian Awards Benefit. Thank you to Cargill for sponsoring this award.

Progress on Housing

Second Light Still Lacks Ongoing Funding

Second Light has not secured sustained funding to cover its ongoing operating budget. The City of Wichita has put forward millions of additional one time dollars. However, Sedgwick County has not — its contribution has been in-kind services through COMCARE, not dollars. As the funding crunch continues, the housing-first solution that we rallied around has come into question.

The City Council approved \$5 million in one-time funding for Second Light from the City's Stabilization Reserve for the FY 2027 budget. Of that, \$1 million is available for immediate release, while the remaining \$4 million is contingent on a performance model — an increase in its shelter bed capacity — which has not yet been drawn up. Currently, Second Light has 30 low barrier beds and 100 program beds.

This comes as city-funded, permanent, affordable housing — 50 affordable housing units and 25 non-congregate shelter beds — are under construction at Second Light.

Some on the council are asking Second Light to provide more shelter beds, while others are calling for accelerated encampment removals. In the winter of 2024, Justice Together successfully called on the council to preserve the requirement that a shelter bed be available before someone in an encampment can be displaced, cited, or jailed, while others on the council pushed to remove that requirement. At a July 28 workshop meeting, Mayor Wu again proposed removing that requirement. No change has been adopted, and we're continuing to watch it closely.

Vote on the Public Housing Authority Plan

The Public Housing Authority (PHA) Plan is up for the second of two required votes to secure the \$10 million in annual braided funding for affordable housing that Council members committed to at our Nehemiah Assembly, and that Director Sally Stang described in detail at our Solutions Rally.

The first vote passed unanimously on May 5th as the Annual Action Plan. The Council votes on the PHA plan on October 6, and public comment is open now.

Sales Tax: Framing Moves Forward

Our listening process that is underway, includes a question on community support for a standalone sales tax referendum for a historic investment in affordable housing and homelessness relief. This input will inform our campaign, as we move towards a public launch at our November 9 Community Problems Assembly.

Our Power Is Showing Up



We recently met with City Manager Marstall and Wichita Police Chief Sullivan about gun violence prevention, and they share our concerns. We're making progress towards

evidence-based violence reduction in Wichita. Everyone agreed that Wichita needs to contract with a group that has a proven record for a Gun Violence Reduction Strategy. We have another meeting in September to build alignment with the Wichita Police Department (WPD).

Additionally, at the end of August, the City Council allocated \$200k specifically to be used towards a gun violence reduction strategy. Our research committee has been meeting with Council Members one at a time building majority council support for evidence-based violence prevention. This cooperative work is yielding results.

Invest in Justice

Support this important mission. 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



dojusticetogether.org/invest

Why We Care

"Why We Care" is a series introducing local Justice Together members

Meet Justice Together members Trudy MacDonald, a member of Riverside Christian Church, and Debbie Harr a member of East Heights UMC. These women attended the regional Direct Action & Research Training (DART) conference in Nebraska last fall, and in July the National Justice Ministry Conference in Florida.

Trudy and Debbie are serving as team leaders and share a desire to be more effective. Both ladies also participate in research committees and encourage everyone to be involved in this vital part of the ministry. Trudy is on the research committee on affordable housing and homelessness, and Debbie is on the research committee on gun violence.

At the National Conference, Debbie and Trudy worked alongside people from many other justice ministry organizations. Both ladies were impressed with the training sessions and the people just like them, with a heart for doing justice who came from all over the country to participate. Debbie pointed out that the DART model takes inspiration from the non-violent organizing that Martin Luther King Jr. and other Civil Rights leaders used in their struggles for equality and justice.

Debbie and Trudy learned strategies for leading change in their congregations and building a culture of doing justice including:

- Creating and empowering a guiding coalition of leaders to engage each congregation.
- Practicing ongoing shepherding of Network Members
- Continually communicating the process and mission of Justice Together with the congregation.
- Helping the congregation to understand God's requirements not only to be faithful and to love mercy, but to do justice.



Tiger Han, Debbie Harr and Trudy MacDonald on their way to the national conference.

Each lady had her own personal reason for being involved in justice work. Trudy told us, "I have had many blessings in my life, but have also experienced unfairness and injustice as well. I was very ill from the end of 2022-mid 2025. My renewed health afforded me the opportunity to pay my blessings forward for the less fortunate and the vulnerable, specifically in the area of affordable housing and the many issues the homeless face on a daily basis."

Debbie remembers the fight for racial integration and civil rights. "I came to realize the vast disparity between black Americans and whites, and wondered why such inequality existed. I took notice of Martin Luther King Jr. and the struggles for justice."

His assassination and also that of Robert Kennedy amplified the tensions within society. She saw the unrest across the country caused by the Vietnam War. "I listened to the protest music of the time and noticed everyday people taking up the fight against injustice, speaking out against systems and policies that oppress and marginalize people, protesting endless deadly wars, and demanding change for good." She saw the power of organized people working together for justice and getting into 'good trouble' as congressman John Lewis said. "(People) can effect change, and I want to participate in that work."