



JUSTICE MINISTRY

ST. ANDREW'S
United Methodist Church

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St. Andrews' Justice Ministry team ensures justice, fairness, and dignity for everyone in our community. We are a Hillsborough Organization for Progress and Equality (HOPE) member, uniting 26 congregations throughout Hillsborough County.

Together, we seek personal stories from our community to understand their needs and determine common issues plaguing our brothers and sisters. We then engage and train Justice Ministry members to work together to achieve long-term solutions to the issues and annually unite over 2,000 citizens to hold community officials accountable for making positive changes for the future.

Right now, we are bringing members of our congregation together for small group conversations to deepen relationships, share how community problems affect us, and reflect on our scriptural call to do justice and how we can respond to that.

Nicah 6:8

DO
JUSTICE.
EMBRACE
LOVE.
WALK
HUMBLY.



WHAT BRINGS JUSTICE?



Nehemiah Action

**JUSTICE
MINISTRY**

Since 1988, the Hillsborough Organization for Progress and Equality has been a vehicle to unite diverse congregations to improve the quality of life in Hillsborough County by achieving greater justice and fairness through systemic change.

Fifty-two times a year, we gather for Sunday worship. Once a year, we gather for justice. At Nehemiah Action, we invite officials who can correct a systemic injustice in our society to face thousands of citizens from the HOPE congregation. Then, we ask the officials to take specific action to correct the injustice. The more people in attendance, the better our chances are of the officials agreeing to help make a meaningful change.

WHAT BRINGS JUSTICE?

NEW AFFORDABLE HOUSING

To date, \$46 million has been disbursed by the HOPE Affordable Housing Act to create 1,100 housing units.



HOPE Justice Ministry at groundbreaking for new affordable housing.



Blue Sky Communities & University Area CDC



Justice Ministry Timeline

2018

We got Hillsborough County to allot \$3 million to Aging Services Department to increase senior in-home services so seniors could live healthy lives at home in dignity.

2019

We got county commissioners to pass Hope Affordable Housing Act putting at least \$10 million a year in the budget to develop more affordable housing for those with low and very low incomes. To date, \$46 million has been dispersed from this fund to create 1,100 housing units.

2019


We got Tampa Police Chief Dugan to train all 1,000 police officers in Crisis Intervention Training so officers could recognize a mental health crisis and transport people for mental services rather than place them under arrest.

2021

We persuaded Criminal Justice Decision Makers to make Youth Civil Citations mandatory for 1st time misdemeanors, diverting 800 children a year from an arrest record for life. This program drastically reduced the recidivism rate, increased public safety and saved taxpayer's money.

2022

We convinced county commissioners to fund a Recovery- Through- Work- Clubhouse that will provide stability, job training, and employment for over 100 people with severe mental illness each year. The facility is accepting applications to open this year.



WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP OTHERS FIND JUSTICE?



LISTENING AND SHARING

Micah tells us God requires three (3) things: “To do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.” While we can always do better in walking humbly and showing mercy, “doing justice” is our biggest challenge. **Doing justice** starts right here - listening to each other’s concerns and struggles and joining with other people of faith across the county to address serious community problems. This is an opportunity to have a sacred conversation with each other and act on God’s call to do justice.

Sometimes we don’t connect our personal experiences to community problems. Other times, we blame ourselves or feel ashamed to share. Yet, in justice ministry we’ve learned when we share our stories, we discover other people have similar experiences. Sharing our stories unites us and then enables us to **win solutions** that improve the lives of thousands of families.

**WHAT CAN
YOU DO TO
HELP OTHERS
FIND JUSTICE?**



HOPE EVENTS

**JUSTICE
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Your presence and voice at Justice Ministry events leads to change for our community. Mark your calendar for these events taking place this year and in 2025.

- **Convention-October 28, 2024**
- **Rally-March 11, 2025**
- **Nehemiah Action-April 8, 2025**
- **Justice Ministry Celebration-June 3, 2025**

THE PARABLE



There was a great city with a large river running through it. One day, a member was walking beside the river and heard people in the river calling for help. She started dragging people to safety before collapsing exhaustively on the bank. As the member lay breathless upon the bank, many others got swept out to sea and drowned. Heartbroken, she took people she rescued to her congregation to receive care. The congregation then sent more members down to the river and found that people were falling in every day. So, many congregations joined together to help pull out of the river and care for those rescued. This took a lot of energy, and soon, all the rescuers and all their resources were exhausted. The congregations held a joint meeting to discuss the serious situation. One member said, "We have worked long and hard, rescuing many people from the river, and that is good. Yet it will continue to be an endless task until we go upstream and find out why people are falling in."

Come upstream with us to tackle the root of the problem...

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For more information and how to get involved,
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Visit our webpage:
www.saumc.net/justice-ministry



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