

# JUSTICE KNOX

# NEHEMIAH ACTION ASSEMBLY

## WHEN

**May 3, 2021**

**7pm – 8:30 pm**

**Seating/Zoom opens at 6:00 pm**

**(please be ready for pre-meeting instructions at 6:40)**

## WHERE

**Limited in person at World's Fair  
Park Amphitheater** (advance ticket needed)  
**Simultaneous Broadcast via Zoom**

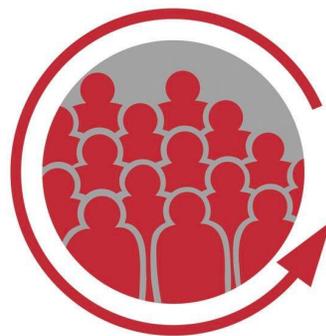
**Register here for zoom and in person event-** [https://](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUqd02qrz8vH9wp0Sc09LBX7qr-7qg4qgIM)

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**What does the Lord require of you? TO DO JUSTICE, TO LOVE  
KINDNESS, AND TO WALK HUMBLY WITH OUR GOD. Micah 6:8**

**web address: [www.justiceknox.org](http://www.justiceknox.org)**



## MISSION

**To use our  
congregations' people  
power to influence  
community leaders to  
confront our city's  
injustices**

## JOIN

**Join over 1,000  
Knoxville neighbors  
from 20+  
congregations to  
demand justice**

## ISSUES

**Affordable Housing,  
Education, Mental  
Health Care & Public  
Transportation. (See  
reverse side for info.)**

## PARKING

**[HTTPS://  
WWW.WORLDSFAIRPARK.  
ORG/WORLDS-FAIR-PARK/  
AMPHITHEATER](https://www.worldsfairpark.org/worlds-fair-park/amphitheater)**

## Affordable Housing:

- 1 in 3 Knoxville families can't afford housing; 21,000 low to moderate income families in Knoxville/Knox Cty pay more than 50% of income for housing
- Average Knox County renter earns \$13 per hour but for a decent 2 bedroom must earn \$16-17 per hour
- There are currently 10,400 families on the waitlist for KCDC subsidized housing.
- When people are securely housed, they can work, succeed in school and take care of other needs. More than 800 communities across the country are taking local responsibility for this huge problem and seeing a difference by building strong affordable housing trust funds that provide public dedicated long-term funding for needed affordable housing. With strong trust funds, developers work to meet the demand for affordable housing, able to effectively plan projects and leverage outside financing because local funding is stable and ongoing.

*In spring 2019, almost 1000 Justice Knox leaders attended our Nehemiah Action and secured commitments from then Candidate Kincannon as well as city council people to work with Justice Knox to develop an ordinance for creating a long-term affordable housing trust fund. Over the past year, Justice Knox leaders have worked with Mayor Kincannon's senior staff to develop the ordinance that will provide \$5 million annually for affordable housing over the next 10 years. We have invited Mayor Kincannon and city council people to the Action where we will create momentum to get the ordinance passed this spring!*

## Education:

2007: Knox County Schools (KCS) recognizes problem of too many suspensions for minor misbehaviors and that suspensions fall most harshly on poor minority and disabled students. KCS develops an action plan to remedy this.

2016: KCS recognizes that the same problem persists and develops action plan identifying restorative practices as a key strategy.

Spring, 2018: KCS releases data that shows that with renewed efforts, suspensions are down but disparities persist.

Winter 2018: RAND Corporation releases findings from first rigorous, large-scale evaluation of restorative practices in a large urban school district—

restorative practices improved school climate, reduced student suspensions and decreased disparities in Pittsburgh Public Schools.

Winter 2020: KCS releases data showing out of school suspension up to almost 2016 numbers & disparities persist.

- Suspensions have serious consequences for students, including increased risk of failure, drop-out, and time in jail and prison.
- Pittsburgh used the whole schools restorative practice model from the International Institute of Restorative Practices (IIRP)
- According to IIRP implementation without careful planning, including not just training, but coaching and support will fail.

*Because of pushing by Justice Knox and others in the community, we are seeing some small steps toward implementation of restorative practices. We have invited the school superintendent and school board members to our Nehemiah Action Assembly to ask them to take strategic next steps in implementation. We already have a commitment from one school board member to attend. The Superintendent and school board members need to see that there is strong political will behind our push.*

## Mental Health Care:

- On average, 30-35% of people in our local jail (i.e. 300-350 people) suffer from mental illness.
- Many cycle in and out of jail for minor offenses because they do not get the community treatment and support they need.
- It costs 2.5 times as much to house a person with mental illness in jail as it does a person without. Studies, including a study in Knox County, show that it is less expensive to provide appropriate treatment and support for people with mental illness than to respond repeatedly through the emergency, police and criminal justice systems.
- 8,500 people with the primary diagnosis of mental illness were treated in local ERs in 2015,
- Justice Knox gathered 45 stakeholders from mental health, hospital and criminal justice fields in Feb. 2020— all agreed that getting people with mental illness the treatment they need is something the community needs to do.
- When county leadership in San Antonio, TX stepped up to convene a data driven initiative to solve this problem they lowered their homeless population by 80%, their jail population by ⅓, and saved their county an estimated \$10 million dollars annually.

*In other cities that have solved this problem, a powerful political official has convened a group of leaders to make sure that they work together. We have invited Mayor Jacobs to our Nehemiah Action Assembly where we will ask him to provide leadership and commit 1.5 million to permanent supportive housing, so that people with mental illness get the help they need.*

## Public Transportation:

- 10,000 households in Knox County do not have a vehicle.
- 5,000 of those households are in low income neighborhoods.
- No bus service for people working nights: many good paying jobs outside of the fixed bus routes
- 86% of bus stops in Knoxville do not have a shelter.
- In 2018, 122 cyclists and pedestrians were hit by a car. 6 of them died.

*Justice Knox has invited KAT director Isaac Thorne to our Nehemiah Action to ask him to commit to a partnership with Via to create an on-demand ride share service. Here is a link to a video that explains how they work to provide affordable, reliable, fast, door to door service: [YouTube.com/watch?v=eBAKxQcpuMk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eBAKxQcpuMk) We are meeting with Mr. Thorne and Via representatives to explore this partnership together prior to the Nehemiah Action. We all need to show up at the Nehemiah Action so that we can get transportation equity in Knoxville.*