# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message from DR. Alex Gee</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact Dashboard</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nehemiah At a Glance</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision &amp; Mission</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justified Anger Initiative</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court Observers</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Education &amp; Leadership</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Leadership &amp; Capacity Building</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hierarchy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board of Directors</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nehemiah Staff</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Report Breakdown</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At the end of 2020, I held some optimism about the possibilities of what 2021 could bring - after all, vaccines for COVID-19 would soon be available; we would go through our country’s most valued civic tradition of the transfer of power to another President; seemingly more Americans were exposed to and were discussing the systemic drivers behind the deaths of George Floyd, Briana Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery; and hope, optimism and resilience are in our DNA.

As it turned out, 2021 was another profoundly difficult year. And despite the exhaustion so many of us felt facing each new day - we kept showing up. In the face of what often can seem to be too much - the most important thing we can do is show up.

I am so proud of what our Nehemiah staff were able to accomplish with our partners - by showing up over and over again in 2021:

Nehemiah provided over 27,000 pounds of food to families at the height of the COVID-19 surge, in partnership with Second Harvest and Fountain of Life Church.

Our educational staff served as critical liaisons between schools and families during the pandemic - providing up-to-date information at a scary and confusing time. They also provided pod-based and remote supplementary education to keep students on track with learning.

Despite uncertainty about moving our Black History for a New Day courses online (would Zoom-wary instructors and learners still sign up?) attendance increased by more than 200% in 2021.

We responded to school districts, for-profit companies, faith-based organizations and local governmental entities that wanted to take steps beyond the history class and learn how to most effectively and authentically facilitate and embrace a more diverse workforce.

The following pages will share more of these stories of perseverance that give me hope, even when it is hard to see that light at the end of the tunnel.

I hope you will gain a sense of possibility when you read this report - and most importantly - I hope you keep showing up for Nehemiah so that we can continue to be here for those who depend on us.

Together Building,
Reverend Dr. Alex Gee
NEHEMIAH AT A GLANCE

Highlights from 2021

FOOD

27,000 pounds

DISTRIBUTED

BLACK HISTORY FOR A NEW DAY

2000+

VOLUNTEER HOURS

2386

PARTICIPANTS

100 FAMILIES

Almost 100 families attended a Zoom holiday event and received holiday gift baskets of essential goods

1300 MASKS DISTRIBUTED

Masks and hand sanitizer distributed
MISSION STATEMENT

Nehemiah cultivates leaders through culturally grounded programs, ally development pathways, and transformational educational experiences.

VISION

Nehemiah will transform the face of leadership.

CORE VALUES

- Culturally relevant services and service providers are essential for sustainable change
- People in need have the potential to be their own solution
- Everyone has a role in playing in eradicating racial disparities
- History and education are foundations for transformational change
- The African American lens of our work creates a framework that can be used to create solutions in any oppressed/oppressor context.

WE ARE AN ORGANIZATION:

- That recognizes the inherent value, dignity, and talent in each person
- That sees and shapes the potential in those not often seen as leaders
- That depends on the expertise of culturally competent staff who have walked in the shoes of those we serve
- That serves all people but focuses on strengthening the Black community - empowering individuals from youth through adulthood to become leaders who contribute to the health and betterment of our community
- That listens to and learns from the community - who has invited our presence and programs
Mobilizing Madison

JUSTIFIED ANGER INITIATIVE

“...Nehemiah is helping people wake up and then stand up, mobilizing people to recognize that they have both power and place in racial justice work. This is what sets the Justified Anger initiative apart from what I have experienced in the past. It is not simply a matter of digesting facts and then going home; it is a call to action. After hearing stories about the personal and transformational impact of Nehemiah’s training, I wanted in and I have not been disappointed!”

Our country seems to become more and more divided each day. Unless we can bridge the gaps that keep us from understanding one another, it will be hard for us to work together to build a better Madison, a better country, and a better world.

One starting point for that work is for non-black people of courage and conviction to come together to learn about and discuss the history that has shaped our world and worldviews. Over nine Monday evenings, Nehemiah's Justified Anger Initiative brings history professors from UW-Madison to revisit our American past to help us understand how the African-American experience has shaped the world we all live in, and how allies can find roles supporting racial justice today. This process is led without guilt, finger-pointing, or propaganda, and starts from a place of compassion, community, and understanding. Rooting ourselves in our history, and understanding how we got here, will help us move forward together to make a better world and a stronger local community.

HIGHLIGHTED STORY

Madison Teachers Inc. (MTI) reached out to Nehemiah in 2021 to register 300 Madison Metropolitan School District teachers and staff to take the class and reimburse them for the time they were investing over their normal contracted time. When asked about the impetus for this unique arrangement - MTI shared their understanding that “systems change is a long-term commitment and requires all hands on deck. This is something that our teachers are asking for. We hear after each session the impact this course has had on their perspectives and how they approach teaching.”

DATA FROM 2021

• More than 2,000 people took the Black History for a New Day course in 2021
• 42 companies, schools, and other groups sent their staff to experience this course together as a step towards organizational culture change
• More than 100 volunteered to help with the course as facilitators or others
"One of the (many) things I think is truly fantastic about Nehemiah is the way you give space for and honor people's strengths and abilities. If you've got the heart for this work, Nehemiah will give you a place to show up and it will help your heart grow."

- Sandi Reinardy, Court Observer Coordinator and Trainer

**COURT OBSERVERS PROGRAM**

Growing out of action inspired by the Black History for a New Day course, The Justified Anger Court Observers program offers an opportunity to learn more about our local criminal courts through a combination of education and court observation. Trained Court Observers attend hearings and complete observation forms that help:

- Identify irregularities or challenges to equity that exist in court processes
- Expose the public to details of the court process
- Formulate advocacy actions
- Support criminal justice research efforts

In the winter of 2021, the Court Observer launched an advocacy effort to have the Dane County Sheriff's department end the dehumanizing practice of having defendants appear in court over Zoom through food slots in their cell doors. They responded to their efforts and stopped using the practice for most defendants. They are still occasionally using it for people that were said to have "behavioral issues." The Court Observers ongoing concern about this practice prompted them to launch a focused observation effort to learn how often this is happening so that they can determine if additional advocacy efforts are needed. This work continues into 2022.
When the schools closed because of COVID, families and caregivers struggled to figure out how to juggle working and making sure our kids didn’t lose critical learning momentum. Our Youth Development and Education staff opened a unique and safe learning pod for families - where siblings came together to create a multi-age community classroom.

The Nehemiah COVID Learning Pod for students in K-12 focused on basic reading and math via daily skill strengthening activity clinics to ensure that no one lost ground during the highly disruptive and unusual year. Critical community connections, such as with the Chavez School library, allowed students and coaches to focus on reading levels and advancing students in their education.

While academics are key - learning doesn’t happen in a vacuum. Children need to be in a place of calm and strength to excel at learning. Therefore, students and coaches also discussed how the pandemic was a globally shared experience; and were intentional about addressing the social-emotional well-being of students dealing with this crisis. Nehemiah staff reached out to community mental health specialists to provide wellness check-ins while still respecting and following CDC guidelines. Blended classrooms learned about self-advocacy, communication, identifying and cultivating strengths, and service. To ensure physical strength as well as mental and academic strength, students were provided a whole, balanced breakfast, lunch and two snacks free of charge. They also received special instructions in dance, fitness and mindfulness.

A key component of Nehemiah’s approach to youth education and leadership has always been based on the love that Nehemiah staff and coaches have for their students - children of their own communities. To quote a teacher’s altered version of 1 Corinthians: Chapter 13:

If I could explain everything perfectly to my students, but did not love each one of them, I might as well be talking to an empty room. If I could find all the answers to educational problems and did not love, my efforts would be futile. If I could buy every kind of educational aid and sacrificed to do so, but did not have love for my students, it would be a waste.

– Fr. Ron Nuzzi

This is the essence of the Nehemiah approach to working with youth.

For more information
Community Transformation Podcast - A conversation with Ms. Ozanne Anderson and Ms. Lindsey Johnson: https://nehemiahpod.podbean.com

"Teaching children is not about crayons, coloring books, field trips or even providing discipline. It is about loving them and seeing them for who they are and what they bring to the table. It is about seeing the potential leader in each child. We are building leaders from the very beginning."
COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP & CAPACITY BUILDING

Rise of the Community

“If you have people in need of food – you find a way to get it to them. When you come from where I come from this is not an option – it is a mandate.”

– Jackie Hunt, Nehemiah Family & Community Specialist

The challenge for any nonprofit born from a call to serve those in need is maintaining a balance between addressing immediate and critical needs while building sustainable systems that seek to eradicate the need for emergency services.

In 2020 and 2021, Nehemiah’s focus was on addressing immediate and critical needs due to the ongoing COVID crisis. In order to continue to provide a safety net for our neighbors during the pandemic - the goal of 2021 efforts required designing and implementing new models of crisis care. With the help and collaboration of our partner organizations - F.O.S.T.E.R, Fountain of Life, Second Harvest, Allied Wellness Center, Dane County Boys and Girls Club, One City Schools, the Foundation for Black Women’s Wellness, and the ARC Community Services - Nehemiah was able to provide critical resources and services to thousands of individuals and hundreds of families.

HIGHLIGHTED STORY

The Back 2 Skool Bash is an annual event that distributes gift cards to parents to stores like Target, Walmart, Burlington, Kohl’s, etc. for those last-minute things that every child needs when they start a new school year. The goal is to promote dignity, happiness, and pride for parents in being able to go to the store with their kids for things like socks, hair bows, or even the belt they need for their jeans.

2021’s event was perhaps even more critical than years past as COVID had exerted such a harsh impact on so many families, now dealing with increased stress, depression and anxiety.

As the founder of the event, Ms. Jackie remembered when she was a single mom with five kids in school at one time - wanting that first day of school to be special and to make sure her kids had new outfits, shoes, and fresh haircuts so no one could tell that she didn’t have a lot of money. This is why the Back 2 Skool Bash is so critically important; because she recalls hiding the stress and strain of trying to make ends meet so it wouldn’t dampen the excitement in her babies.

The Back 2 Skool Bash is not a handout. It’s a therapeutic event providing emotional support, resources, food, and a host of amazing activities, games, and more to show the community that they are loved and valued.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Jacquelyn Hunt’s Work in the Community During COVID-19 Crisis

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND REENTRY

Return to the Community

“When you leave people in a state of brokenness, they stay broken. Jail doesn’t heal people.”

– Aaron Hicks, Nehemiah Reentry Coordinator

Each year 500-700 people leave prison and return to Dane County. Hundreds more complete their jail sentences and return to our community. The vast majority of these people are men and of those, a large percentage are African American. Involvement in the criminal justice system remains heavily stigmatized and often results in insurmountable barriers for returning citizens to obtaining gainful employment and stable housing, which often leads to recidivism and re-incarceration. Research shows that the key to reducing recidivism and re-incarceration is in providing wrap-around services that address basic needs such as housing and employment as well as providing mentoring and peer support to navigate challenges that may arise on a personal, legal, and family level.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT - MANUP

Most discussions regarding support for individuals returning from jail or prison focus, appropriately, on cornerstones of reentry services – housing, employment, education, and treatment. But one of the most significant barriers to reentry and recovery is not a tangible resource. Nehemiah’s Man UP group offers current and recently incarcerated men hope, healing, and growth. Started as a support group of formerly incarcerated men, Man UP provides a space where men can talk freely and safely about their experiences with others “who’ve been there.” Man UP helps formerly incarcerated men heal and grow through sharing their own stories.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT - HOUSING WITH DIGNITY

Nehemiah’s Housing Program approach begins with a consuming focus on human dignity and is best understood by the difference between the word housing versus the word home. Staff work tirelessly to ensure that when the men open the doors to these apartments, they feel like they are home. The apartments (and their grounds) are clean, have soothing wall colors, and furniture that is not a hodgepodge of random donations. There is art on the walls and because staff connect with the men daily, they know when an outlet cover needs replacing or an appliance needs to be fixed. This is not only a signal to the men that they are important and cared about and for, it is also a sign to the surrounding neighborhood that these residences can enhance a community.

DIRECTOR’S REPORT DATA FROM 2021

• 103 men provided housing
• 125 meetings/advocacy in courts, jails, the Department of Corrections or Madison Police Dept.
• 200 Community Contacts
• 11 New Employer connections
• 78 Man Up attendees (29% new)
• Over 200 volunteer hours
• 1793 Court Cases observed

FOR MORE INFORMATION

COVID Corrections Crisis podcast
Reaching the Full Impact of the Nehemiah Housing Reentry Program
**HIERARCHY**

**The Team**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**REV. DR. ALEXANDER GEE, JR.**
(President) President/Founder, Nehemiah - Pastor, Fountain of Life Covenant Church

The visionary of Nehemiah. He is a loving husband and father and also a pastor, writer, community activist, life coach, international lecturer, relief worker, and social entrepreneur. His interests include: understanding the impact of fatherlessness on the African American community, cross-cultural leadership empowerment, spiritual life coaching, motivational speaking, mentoring, and transformational leadership development. You can find more of his own personal thoughts and insights at his personal website: alexGee.com.

Dr. Gee studied at the University of Wisconsin-Madison; Fuller Seminary’s Distance Learning Program and Bakke Graduate University, where he earned his doctorate. The author of two books and a local radio host, his relief work and motivational lectures have lately taken him to Cambodia, Korea, and South Africa.

**NEHEMIAH STAFF**

**Rev. Dr. Alexander Gee, Jr.**  -  President/Founder, Nehemiah
**Harry H. Havekins**  -  Executive Vice President
**Anthony Cooper, Sr.**  -  Vice President of Strategic Partnerships and Reentry Services
**Dr. Karen Reece**  -  Vice President of Research & Education
**Shameka Harper**  -  Director of Administration
**Jacquelyn Hunt**  -  Community Support Specialist
**Gloria Manadier-Farr**  -  Director of Community Chaplaincy & Allied Empowerment Services
**Ozanne Anderson**  -  Director of Youth Development and Education
**Lindsey Johnson**  -  Director of Youth, Family, and Community Wellness
**Denise Thornton Mjelde**  -  Director of Economic Innovation and Sustainability
**Eli Steenlage**  -  Director of Communications
**Aaron Hicks**  -  Reentry Coordinator
**Anna Mason**  -  Assistant to VP of Research & Education
**Ali Gee-Lewis**  -  Executive Assistant and Creative Solutionist
**Rebecca Compton-Allen**  -  Director of Mobilization
**Tyler Nylen**  -  Faith Community Relationship Manager
**Sharla Miller**  -  Admin Asst for Anthony Cooper
**Don Thornton**  -  Executive Assistant to Dr. Alex Gee

**KIRBIE MACK**
Vice President, Board
Retired City and State Official and Community Activist

**ERIC A. FARNSWORTH**
Attorney, DeWitt Ross & Stevens, S.C.

**JEREMY MORTON**
Senior Economist, Laurits R. Christensen Associates, Inc
**FINANCIAL REPORT BREAKDOWN**

**FINANCIALS - FROM AUDIT**

Why do we share our investment in personnel and benefits?

Vu Le, a well-known analyst of nonprofit organizations and culture shares, “society has the wacky and damaging notion that nonprofit staff should martyr ourselves. It’s perfectly OK for celebrities, athletes, and CEOs of companies producing soft drinks or gory video games or yoga pants to be paid millions, but God forbid anyone pay a nonprofit professional 100K to help end homelessness or cancer.”

Nehemiah is sharing the breakdown of how much we invest in staff salaries and benefits because that is what they are: an investment. The staff who work here do so due to their unshakeable commitment to our community and belief in the value and impact of the work. They bring unmatched life experiences and talent and we do not want to lose them because they cannot support their families on nonprofit salaries. This is a long-term effort that will involve identifying donors who share our commitment to both our work and the people who make this work possible.

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### Annual Accounts

#### Revenue

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<td>Donations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>$1,168,511</td>
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<td>Program &amp; Service Revenue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rental income</td>
<td>$167,997</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program and consulting fees</td>
<td>$707,049</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$7,486</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total revenues without donor restrictions</td>
<td>$3,097,960</td>
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#### Expenses

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<td>Program services</td>
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<td>Criminal Justice &amp; Security</td>
<td>$476,301</td>
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<td>Justified Anger Initiative</td>
<td>$411,218</td>
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<td>Youth &amp; Community Leadership</td>
<td>$158,710</td>
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<td>Community Relationships &amp; Outreach</td>
<td>$220,380</td>
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<td>Fiscal sponsorship of local nonprofit organizations</td>
<td>$44,450</td>
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<td>Supporting activities</td>
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<td>Management &amp; Administration</td>
<td>$236,310</td>
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#### Changes in Net Assets with Donor Restrictions

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<td>Net assets released from restrictions</td>
<td>$1,184,428</td>
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<td>Change in net assets with donor restrictions</td>
<td>$236,305</td>
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<td>Change in net assets</td>
<td>$1,512,237</td>
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**Consolidated Financial Statements 2021**

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<thead>
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<td>Net Assets at the beginning of year</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net Assets at end of year</td>
<td>$3,162,237</td>
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**Financial Chart**

- Direct expenses (rent, office, etc.): 25%
- Staff salaries and benefits: 75%