

Time-Tested Distinctives For Transformative



Are you overwhelmed by growing injustice? Deep down do you long for God's justice? Do you want to see the resources God has given you used for life-changing impact?

We understand. For more than 20 years, Administer Justice has expanded access to justice and Jesus for neighbors in need. God has worked through our experience to develop a distinctive Gospel Justice Center service model. Local volunteer teams gather one Saturday morning a month to bring the help of a lawyer and the hope of God's love through the home of the church to members of their community.

What Makes A Gospel Justice Center Unique?



A
Affirming
Dignity & Sustainability



B
Biblical
& Holistic



C
Church Led
Team Supported &
Neighborhood Based

Our Approach

Affirming

Dignity & Sustainability

The materially poor are not problems to be solved, they are people to be loved.

We fail to demonstrate love when we rob people of dignity by denying them the opportunity to participate in their own progress toward freedom. Our motto is: Seek Justice. Find Freedom. This happens when we do justice **with** neighbors and not **for** neighbors.

Dr. Ruby Payne has conducted significant social science research affirming a non-paternalistic approach to helping others. Her research strongly supports active listening, relationship building, and coaching individuals as a framework for dignity (*A Framework for Understanding Poverty*, 2005).

In the field of legal services, Dr. Donna Beegle pioneered training through her poverty immersion institute to **fight poverty, not the people who live in it** (Beegle Poverty Immersion Institute, 2020). She emphasizes careful listening, non-judgment, checking implicit biases, and empowering those in need to be part of the solution.

In the Christian realm, Dr. John Perkins pioneered effective compassion and justice ministry. In his book, *With Justice For All* (1982) he refers to the principles as relocation, reconciliation, and redistribution. Relocation is getting proximate

so relationships can be forged. Reconciliation is a recognition that the gospel changes everything. And redistribution means that we address individual and structural barriers to work and economic conditions.

Robert Lupton expanded on Dr. Perkins' work in *Toxic Charity: How Churches and Charities Hurt Those They Help and How to Reverse It* (2012). More recently, the Chalmers Institute has significantly expanded this field through *When Helping Hurts* (2009) and *Becoming Whole* (2019).

In the legal ministry realm, Moody recognized Administer Justice's model as reflective of these best practices in promoting our Founder's book, *Gospel Justice* (2013). For over 20 years, Administer Justice has explored and refined effective empowerment ministry.





Client Copay

While the average attorney fee exceeds \$300/hr. all we charge is a one-time copay of \$30. The copay provides dignity. The copay invites a client to participate in seeking justice. **Gospel Justice Centers are not transactional, they are transformational.** But transformation will not take place without some skin in the game. Getting something for nothing is not dignity affirming. This copay is all someone will pay for the problem they are facing. A specific Next Steps Plan and follow up will be established to walk alongside the client. We invite them to take part in this process by paying a copay.



Client Plan

Lawyers in the transactional world take a large fee and then do everything for a client. The number one complaint made by clients is a lack of communication. They feel shut out of the process and disempowered. This typically fuels anxiety and worsens outcomes. We empower vulnerable neighbors by developing a Next Steps Plan together, so **we do justice with them instead of for them.** Clients are coached and a member of the team checks in with them at regular intervals to encourage and ensure progress. Legal aid is not complex litigation. Legal aid involves critical daily life issues from safety, stability, housing, family, basic contracts, and financial issues.



Three major reports reveal low-income clients do better when coached than when receiving full representation (Yale Law Journal: *Celebrating the “Null” finding: Evidence-based strategies for improving access to legal services*, 2013; Self-Help Center Census: *A National Survey by the ABA*, 2014; and *Legal Help Evaluation Report by Michigan*, 2015). The top two reasons given in these reports were empowerment and the shortened length of time: lawyers routinely seek continuances that drag cases out and cause collateral harm to clients. Clients felt better informed and guided through the process as they participated in the resolution.

Administer Justice provided excellent self-help coaching and resources for years

without follow up. In association with Willow Creek Church, a comprehensive study was undertaken on outcomes. What percentage of clients were able to successfully complete their custom plan? We discovered only 20%! We should have realized the importance of follow up. We all need encouragement and accountability. Too many things happened in clients' lives to prevent them from moving forward without encouragement. Once we added a team member to follow up at regular intervals the stats flipped. 80% of clients successfully completed their plan, significantly improving sustainable outcomes.

When Administer Justice expanded nationally, our board chairman, John Robb, insisted we eliminate the cost factor from the host church. John was instrumental in the 1960's in beginning Legal Aid in the United States through the Office of Economic Opportunity. This would later become the Legal Services Corporation. But funding was always a challenge. More importantly, John believed the government provided good but incomplete service because it failed to understand justice from God's perspective. John began Christian Legal Aid on a national level. However, over four decades he saw more Christian Legal Aids fail than start. John realized this was because of his emphasis on lawyers and the funding required to run a not for profit.

Running a not for profit is much harder than running a profit business or a church. The tax return is complex, accounting is unique, registrations are significant, and fundraising is hard. Administer Justice removes those barriers.

Each Gospel Justice Center has a one-time start-up cost of \$5,000. A generous donor donates these funds. Sometimes the local church provides this support. Once opened, client copays go to the National Support Center to sustain operations. **A one-time gift has a lifetime impact!**

The benefits of a partnership with Administer Justice are significant. Malpractice, premises, volunteer, and officer liability insurance are covered. Technology is provided for scheduling, client database, volunteer coordination, and financial visibility. A website, banner, and initial supplies are covered. Ongoing supplies are minimal and can be conveniently obtained through our web store. All accounting, administration, receipting, reporting, training, and support is handled through our National Support Center team at no additional cost. That is our commitment to sustainability.



Biblical & Holistic Approach

Did you know, that justice for the poor is the second most prominent theme in the Bible? Justice is Biblical, not political.

The American Bible Society's Poverty and Justice Bible highlights over 2,000 verses on justice. *God's Justice Bible* (Zondervan) includes authors from around the world highlighting how the theme of justice runs through all 66 books from Genesis to Revelation. Justice is part of God's character and it forms the foundation of His throne (Psalm 89:14).

Themes in Scripture:



Gospel Justice Centers are named to reflect the critical importance of the gospel and justice. **Justice does not distract from the gospel. Justice reflects the gospel.**

Administer Justice is Biblical because too many people understand justice either in terms of retribution or redistribution. *God's primary view of justice is restoration.*

Justice in the Old Testament

The Old Testament Hebrew uses two primary words translated as justice:

מִשְׁפָּט (Mishpat)

Mishpat is a legal term. A Jewish lawyer is a *mishpatan*. The Old Testament uses the word in legal context but as a means of balancing scales on behalf of the widow, the fatherless, the foreigner and the poor (Zechariah 7:9-10).

צְדָקָה (Tzedek)

Tzedek means to restore what is broken and right what is wrong. The root word is the same as the word translated for righteousness. **Justice means being restored in covenant with God and neighbor.** Therefore, Jesus summarized the law as love God (righteousness) and love neighbor (justice).



Justice in the New Testament

The New Testament is written in Greek and there is one word for justice:

δικαιοσύνη (Diakosuni)

Diakosuni is also equally translated as righteousness or justice.

In English we think of righteousness as relating to personal holiness, but in Hebrew and Greek they are intertwined with loving God and neighbor. Both the gospel and justice seek to restore neighbors to God and one another. Jesus best acknowledged this when He read Isaiah 61 and proclaimed this was why He came.

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” Luke 4:18-19

Being Biblical means being holistic.

We are whole beings with mind, affections and will. Every Gospel Justice Center addresses legal, social, and spiritual needs.

The key to understanding human flourishing is recognizing the dignity of all humanity created

in the image of God. Sin created injustice, not God. God allows sin but His redemptive plan is for human flourishing. That cannot happen apart from Him. We guide people toward freedom from injustice by recognizing the heart of justice is the cross of Jesus Christ. Literally. In English the center of the word justice could be viewed as a cross. We keep the cross in view every time we come alongside a neighbor and guide them in the plan God has for their life.

justice

From the moment someone walks into a Gospel Justice Center they are welcomed warmly. Hospitality is offered reflecting a core Biblical concept. We welcome the stranger. Every person demonstrates compassion to put their neighbor at ease. Lawyers demonstrate the gospel in action.



Restoring Hope

Most people cannot access attorneys. 1 in 3 Americans simply cannot afford an attorney.



In 2020 the United States ranked 110 out of 128 nations for providing affordable access to justice (*2020 World Justice Project Rule of Law Index*). Lawyers are viewed as only accessible to the rich. When a lawyer enters someone's neighborhood and sits beside them, prays for them, and demonstrates compassion the impact is profound.

Lawyers are modern day Samaritans from the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). They are the least likely person expected to stop and show compassion toward a vulnerable

neighbor. When they do, they reflect the Great Samaritan.

Most people think lawyers live in ivory towers with great privilege and power. Since lawyers only make up 0.4% of the population and hold a monopoly on justice, this is not ill founded. Lawyers are a privileged few. But when a lawyer sets aside that privilege and uses power to guide a neighbor, they reflect Jesus. Jesus left the corner office of Heaven and set aside all His privileges to enter our neighborhood. He used His power to lovingly restore neighbors. He willingly sacrificed his life for us. Lawyers are only sacrificing a little time, but the sacrifice is significant and reflects the gospel.

This Biblical, holistic model restores hope. Every year we see clients come to faith in Christ and have their faith restored, advancing our vision of 1,000 Gospel Justice Centers transforming lives in the name of Christ.



Church Led

Team Supported & Neighborhood Based

No one does justice alone.

Administer Justice believes the church is the bride of Christ and His bride should reflect His priorities. God loves justice. His Kingdom is defined by justice. The problem is that justice in America cannot be separated from law and lawyers. Without a specialist organization to come alongside the church to help them do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God into their neighborhood, it will not happen. Administer Justice is that specialist organization. We make it easy for your church to lead in equipping your people for works of justice in your community. People want practical expressions of justice. Lead them in living out

One pastor recently said,

“Now that we know how great the need is and how easy Administer Justice makes it, we would be negligent not to start a Gospel Justice Center.”



the gospel. This is why Gospel Justice Centers are rooted in and lead back to the local church.

Team Supported

The National Support Center has designed the team that makes high-impact legal ministry possible. Over the years we learned that lawyer-only models lacked sustainable, transformative impact. As a result, our team approach, consisting of a five- to nine-person team serving distinct roles, is a key reason high-impact and long-term legal ministry is possible. The body of Christ is best demonstrated through many different people using their gifts together to serve others. Each role has an important part to play in the whole. Do not leave this to lawyers alone.

Gospel Justice Center Team



Justice Champion



Attorney



Prayer Champion



Community Advocate



Hospitality Specialist



Client Advocate



Interpreter



Client Intake Specialist



Follow-Up Advocate

Each Gospel Justice Center team is led by a **Justice Champion** who coordinates roles and communicates impact. A **Prayer Champion** supports clients and volunteers in prayer. They coordinate the creation of personal prayer cards. The team begins each session with prayer for the day and praises from the prior month.

Community Advocates enter the community to let them know help is available. They also collect information about other services that are available so clients can be referred to them as needed. **Hospitality Specialists** can put single parents at ease and watch children while the parent is with a lawyer. This role allows people who love to bake to be part of doing justice. **Client Intake Specialists** use their gifts of administration to keep track of all information in a secure cloud-based system, so no documents are stored on site or confidentiality concerns raised. They manage the scheduling system, process copay payment, and help team members. **Interpreters** provide language assistance. **Client Advocates** address social and spiritual needs through resource coaching and conversations expressing the hope of God's love. **Follow-Up Advocates** continue to walk alongside clients to help ensure they overcome any barriers to plan completion.

The team forms strong bonds of friendship as they look forward to serving together once a month for 4-5 hours. As our torch logo demonstrates, it takes many diverse hands to bring the light of God's justice into the confusing darkness and fear of injustice.





Neighborhood Based

Traditional legal aid runs law offices that require clients to travel great distances to see them. Sometimes these locations are in secured buildings that frighten people. Lawyers also tend to concentrate in certain areas leaving vast areas as lawyer deserts.

The American Bar Association released a 2020 Profile of the Legal Profession Report demonstrating 40% of America's 3,141 counties are legal deserts with less than 1 lawyer per 1,000 residents. We can change that by opening neighborhood Gospel Justice Centers.

Every neighborhood has legal needs. Every neighborhood has a church. Let us bridge the gap. Every day people pass by your church. Many would not dream of entering the church on Sunday to see a pastor, but they will enter

on Saturday to see a lawyer and return on Sunday because of the demonstration of love and compassion they received at the church. By connecting with your community through justice, you attract those who love Jesus but not the church. Many 18- to 35-year-olds are leaving the church because they do not think the church cares about justice for the poor (Barna's The Connected Generation and Faith for Exiles 2019 reports). Show them and your neighbors how much you care.

The impact you have extends far beyond volunteers and clients to include friends, relatives, neighbors, children, and grandchildren. You represent God's Kingdom as you invite individuals into an expression of human flourishing. A beloved community is formed as we do justice for the glory of God.

Explore Gospel Justice today!

Register for a virtual, interactive tour of our mission here: <https://bit.ly/ExploreJustice>



www.administerjustice.org