B.U.I.L.D.’s 2023 Nehemiah Action Assembly  
*Building a United Interfaith Lexington through Direct Action*

April 24, 2023– Central Bank Center  
Meeting Co-Chairs: Rev. Nathl Moore & Gail Swanson

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| 6:15 | Registration and Fellowship |  |
| 6:30 | Gospel Music: St. Peter Claver Choir |  |
| 7:00 | Spanish Interpretation Instructions | Fr. Miguel Alvizures  *Mary Queen of the Holy Rosary* |
| 7:03 | Preparing for Action | Rev. Rick Smith  *Historic Second Christian Church* |
| 7:13 | Welcome & Roll Call | Sherry Warsh  *Consolidated Baptist Church*  Bryna Reed  *Good Shepherd Episcopal* |
| 7:23 | Spanish Interpretation Instruction Reminder | Fr. Miguel Alvizures  *Mary Queen of the Holy Rosary* |
| 7:23 | Opening Song & Officials Enter |  |
| 7:26 | Call to Order   * Timekeeper: Yoshiya Togami, *Lexington Friends Meeting* | Rev. Nathl Moore  *First African Baptist Church* |
| 7:30 | Opening Prayer | Bishop Mark Van Koevering  *Episcopal Bishop of Lexington Diocese* |
| 7:32 | Opening Reflection | Rev. Brian Chenowith  *Unitarian Universalist Church of Lexington* |
| 7:42 | Violence   * Background on the Problem * Testimonies: Rochelle Carsby, *Shiloh Baptist Church* * Solution * Response from: Chief Lawrence Weathers | Belinda Snead  *Consolidated Baptist Church*  Cheryl Birch  *Greater Liberty Missionary Baptist Church* |
| 7:57 | Microtransit   * Background on the Problem * Testimony: Nikki Stanitis, *New Vista*   David Huckleberry, *Mary Queen*   * Solution * Response from: Jill Barnett, Lextran & Councilmember Chuck Ellenger | Rev. Adam Jones  *Open Door Church*  Kabby Akers  *Mary Queen of the Holy Rosary* |
| 8:12 | Affordable Housing   * Background on the Problem * Testimony: Christina Ellison, *New Beginnings* * Solution * Response from: LFUCG Council Members | Gail Swanson  *Faith Lutheran*  Rev. Nathl Moore  *First African Baptist* |
| 8:27 | Summary of Results and Next Steps | Rev. Nathl Moore  *First African Baptist Church* |
| 8:32 | Closing Prayer | Bishop John Stowe  *Catholic Bishop of Lexington Diocese* |
| 8:34 | Adjourn |  |

Share your pictures from tonight’s Nehemiah Action at [www.facebook.com/BUILDLex](http://www.facebook.com/BUILDLex)

To listen in Spanish, call (929) 205-6099 and enter 814 1016 7550 # # 1 # Para escuchar en español llama al (929) 205-6099 y pon 814 1016 7550 # # 1 #

**BUILD Issue Updates**

**The Violence Must Stop!**

The Problem:

* Homicides: 44 murders in 2022; 37 deaths in 2021; 34 deaths in 2020; 30 deaths in 2019; 23 deaths in 2018; 28 deaths in 2017; 26 deaths in 2016; 16 deaths in 2015 – most of these are from shootings
* According to the Gifford Law Center, the law enforcement and healthcare costs alone associated with a single gun-related homicide are $488,000, and more than $71,000 for each non-fatal shooting.
* As violent crime persists, the relationship between law enforcement and the victimized communities can become strained. The VERA institute found that traditional policing methods in high crime neighborhoods erode the trust between community and law enforcement, putting them at risk for situations like Ferguson.

The Solution:

* The National Network for Safe Communities helps cities implement the Group Violence Intervention (GVI) to reduce street group-involved homicides and gun violence.
* This focused deterrence strategy allows community leaders, law enforcement and social service providers to intervene in the lives of at-risk individuals *before* they escalate to shooting, and offers the support they need to change their lifestyle
* When New Haven, CT used this strategy they went from 34 homicides in 2011 to 7 in 2017; Oakland, CA went from 126 in 2012 to 74 in 2017. Miami saw a 67% reduction in group-involved violence. More than 80 cities are using the strategy including Cincinnati, OH; Detroit, MI; Pittsburg, PA; Chattanooga, TN; Chicago, IL; Boston, MA; New Orleans, LA; Wilmington, DE.

The Update: BUILD was successful in getting Mayor Gray and county council to bring NNSC staff to Lexington for a problem analysis in January 2019. Based on the detailed problem analysis, NNSC concluded that GVI would significantly reduce violent crime in Lexington. Thus far, the city has refused to take the recommendation of these national experts.

The Ask: Tonight we will ask Police Chief Lawrence Weathers the following:

* Will you, along with members of your staff, visit the police departments in New Haven, CT and Miami-Dade, FL to discuss how they are reducing violence through GVI?
* Will you meet with BUILD within 30 days of these visits to report back on these discussions?

**If the Police Chief does not show, we must bring the crisis to him**. We urge you to call 859-258-3621 which will go directly to the Police Chief’s secretary. A sample statement you can make: *“I was disappointed that the Police Chief did not come to the Nehemiah Action to address the 1,500 people gathered to call for action on violence. BUILD’s requests are completely reasonable. The Police Chief should visit the police departments in New Haven and Miami-Dade to hear how they are reducing violence in their cities and report back on those conversations to BUILD.”*

**Community Microtransit**

The Problem:

* Without reliable and accessible transportation, people with mental illness struggle to make it to appointments, the pharmacy, and other important community support. Without transportation to this support, people face isolation and cannot achieve and maintain stability.
* At any given time, half of all Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) team caseworkers are transporting clients to and from the grocery, appointments, and the pharmacy.
* According to New Vista, transportation is the number one barrier cited by clients to receiving both mental and general healthcare.

The Solution:

* Cities such as Birmingham, Chattanooga, Memphis, Milwaukee, Indianapolis, and many others are closing transportation gaps with a service called microtransit.
* Microtransit is a public transportation service that has the flexibility and ability to pick riders up on-demand and at their door, eliminating the challenges folks with mental illness face when trying to navigate WHEELS and the public bus. Microtransit works like a minibus that comes to the riders when they need it!

The Update:

* At our Nehemiah Action in 2022, New Vista committed to meet with microtransit provider, VIA to discuss transportation barriers their clients faced. In a recent meeting between New Vista and BUILD, they shared that microtransit would be TRANSFORMATIVE for people with mental illness in Lexington.

The Ask:

* Tonight we will ask the General Manager, Jill Barnett, of Lextran to begin a microtransit pilot program. We will also ask Ms. Barnett to meet with VIA for a free service design to better understand the specifics of this pilot.
* We will also ask Councilmember Chuck Ellinger to host a software demonstration and invite other stakeholders to hear more about how microtransit could be used in our community.

**Housing: Healthy at Home**

The Problem:

* One in four families in Lexington cannot afford their rent and face impossible choices between paying rent and buying food or medicine.
* According to the city’s [Consolidated Report](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mlWP_aQ5Vj4B01wZJ_nc6waQqk8jG7uI/view) in 2020, there are 14,000 families in Lexington paying more than half their income on rent.

The Solution:

* So far, over 3,080 families have been housed and over $352 million have been leveraged in our community because of the [Affordable Housing Fund](https://www.lexingtonky.gov/departments/office-affordable-housing) BUILD won in 2014. Our housing fund works, but it doesn’t go far enough.
* Cities across the country are making housing a priority by linking affordable housing to a [dedicated revenue source](https://housingtrustfundproject.org/htf-elements/revenue-sources/). This guarantees money for future years and attracts developers.

The Update: At our Nehemiah Action in 2022, we won a commitment from Councilmember James Brown to identify and fight for a dedicated revenue source for the affordable housing fund of at least $10 million each year. Councilmember Brown developed a two-part plan: first to link the affordable housing fund to 1% the city’s revenue from the previous year, and second to add a new funding source to bring the total to $10 million each year.

In March, we passed the 1% for affordable housing plan through the city’s budget committee!

The Ask:

We will ask all councilmembers present:

* Will you vote yes in support of the 1% for affordable housing ordinance when it comes before the full council on June 27th?

We will ask Councilmember James Brown:

* Will you work with BUILD and advise us in identifying a specific dedicated funding source and developing a clear plan forward by October 1st?
* Will you attend our Community Problems Assembly on November 13th as an ally in the fight to win dedicated funding?

**Ground Rules**

1. This is not an open forum.  There will be no questions from the floor.

2. We will be respectful of all officials in attendance tonight.

3. We will expect straightforward commitments from officials.

4. Officials will have 2 minutes for a statement only after they have responded with straightforward commitments and if there is time remaining.

What has BUILD accomplished?

Since 2003, BUILD has made a real difference on a number of community problems including:

***Affordable Housing:*** In 2014, BUILD gained a commitment from Mayor Gray to develop a plan for and champion the passage of an Affordable Housing Fund with $2 million/year from the city's general fund. This plan was approved by the city council and had created housing for over 1,200 families by 2020. In 2021, we pushed for and won over $10 million from ARPA for the Affordable Housing Fund. So far, over 3,080 families have been housed as a direct result of our work.

***Drugs:*** BUILD won an expansion of the local harm reduction syringe exchange program. When we first started, the needle exchange program was open for a couple of hours, one day a week, at one location. We pushed for and won an expansion to more hours, days, and locations so we can keep our neighbors alive. Hundreds of thousands of dirty needles have been taken off the streets. In March 2023 alone, 58,246 used needles were collected at the needle exchange. And to date, 515 people have been referred to treatment through the program.

***Healthcare for the Uninsured*** Due to the work of BUILD the Fayette County Health Department and other providers have supplied primary care to over 14,000 of Lexington’s over 40,000 uninsured adults. In 2011 alone, nearly $8 million of healthcare was provided to the uninsured in Lexington as a direct result of BUILD’s efforts.

***Code Enforcement*** Due to BUILD’s taking action in 2007, the Code Enforcement Division agreed to step up its inspections of trailer parks in Fayette county, some of which had rotting floors, leaking roofs, and open sewage.

***Drug Treatment***  BUILD discovered in 2006 that there was no drug treatment program for women in the Fayette County Jail, while the program for men was reducing the recidivism rate from 60% to 19%. BUILD got then-Mayor Teresa Isaac to put $175,000 in the budget each year for a women’s drug treatment program at the jail.

***Fayette County Public Schools*** BUILD won a pilot of whole-school restorative practices in five schools in Fayette County. BUILD pushed the school district to contract with the International Institute for Restorative Practices to train teachers and staff in their model to address high suspensions and racial disparities in discipline. To date, 17 schools in the district have been trained, and it is so successful that the district plans to implement restorative practices in every school over the next few years.

***Public Transportation*** BUILD got LexTran to start an “Employment Bus” which will take citizens to work during the hours the regular bus is not in service – this service began in August 2006.

***Ex-Offender Re-entry*** BUILD got the circuit court clerk and head of the detention center to develop a plan to ensure inmates have state issued photo ID’s upon their release.

**What congregations are part of BUILD?**

There are currently 26 member congregations of BUILD. The co-chairs are Rev. Nathl Moore (First African Baptist Church) and Gail Swanson (Faith Lutheran).

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| *Bethsaida Baptist Church* | *Greater Liberty Baptist Church* | *Shiloh Baptist Church* |
| *Cathedral of Christ the King* | *Historic 2nd Christian Church* | *St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church* |
| *Central Christian Church* | *Hunter Presbyterian Church* | *St. Paul Catholic Church* |
| *Christ Church Cathedral* | *Lexington Friends Meeting* | *St. Peter Catholic Church* |
| *Consolidated Baptist Church* | *Mary Queen of the Holy Rosary* | *St. Peter Claver Catholic Church* |
| *East Second Street Christian Church* | *Maxwell Presbyterian Church* | *St. Raphael Episcopal Church* |
| *Faith Lutheran Church* | *Newman Center/Holy Spirit Parish* | *Unitarian Universalist Church of Lexington* |
| *First African Baptist Church* | *Open Door Church* | *Wesley United Methodist Church* |
| *Good Shepherd Episcopal Church* | *Second Presbyterian Church* |  |

**Justice Ministry Network Members - See you at the Celebration!**

**Thursday, June 8th at 7pm (Food at 6:30pm)**

**Mary Queen of the Holy Rosary (605 Hill N Dale Road)**