



SHALOM CIRCLES

Love Mercy Do Justice

Shalom is the Hebrew word that sums up the biblical understanding of “what life should be like.” It is often translated as “peace” in our English Bibles.

But the meaning of shalom is more than simply lack of conflict. The term comes from a root word meaning “to be complete” or “to be sound.” Shalom, then, is a peace that comes from everything being complete and whole.

The purpose of justice in Hebrew society was to restore and sustain shalom. The people with the least amount of power needed special protection. That’s why the Old Testament contains so many reminders to do justice to the poor, the widow, the immigrant, and the orphan. And doing justice meant not only avoiding doing wrong—it meant actively doing right and restoring what is broken.

As Christ followers, we are called to make God known; justice is both God’s brand and God’s signature. As the psalmist reminds us, “God is known by his acts of justice” (Psalm 9:16). One way we can make God known is to pursue communities of completeness, soundness, welfare, and peace—communities of shalom.

Love Mercy Do Justice introduces Shalom Circles: an initiative to develop communities, or “circles,” of advocates who are committed to advancing shalom through the pursuit of biblical justice. This effort is intended to serve rural, town and country, suburban, and urban contexts.

Within these contexts, Shalom Circles in each conference will engage to: Pray, Discover, Advocate, and Connect.





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pray

- Pray for discernment as we seek opportunities to join God in the work already happening in our community.
- Pray for partnerships to create a “fabric of faith” to hold and lift up the most vulnerable in our community.

discover

We seek a deeper understanding of our community in an effort to make a plan for wholeness.

ASSESSMENT

- Who lives here (including the ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, education, and age of residents)?
- Where is the greatest need? What systems are working for or against those who have the greatest need?

- What efforts are being done by local churches or organizations to support systems that are working and reform those that are not?

DEVELOPMENT

- Create a Shalom Circle plan that flows from prayerful discernment, discovery, and dialogue with key stakeholders in the community, including those who are most impacted.

advocate

- Establish and strengthen Shalom Circles within individual congregations.
- Partner with other local churches to raise awareness of community needs.
- Partner with organizations who align with our mission and are already working in the community.
- Promote efforts by raising awareness, continuing to learn, and loving in action.

connect

- Connect people in need with people or organizations who are positioned to help.
- Connect local churches and groups with curated resources from LMDJ or other sources aimed at raising awareness, educating, or promoting action toward more justice—more shalom.
- Connect the local conference and larger ECC family with stories of hope and transformation derived from acts of shalom.
- Connect LMDJ with local ministry leaders who are working to contribute to communities of shalom.

Shalom Circles is a tool for evangelism and discipleship across the U.S. and Canada. We are seeking input as well as recommendations of leaders to participate in the network.

For more information or to recommend a participant, contact ldmj@covchurch.org, or go to covchurch.org/justice.