

**FAITH IN  
ACTION**  
EAST BAY



ANNUAL REPORT 2023

[fiaeastbay.org](http://fiaeastbay.org)



# Our Mission

Our mission is to develop leaders who build power through their congregations and schools to drive systemic change, and improve the quality of life for their families.



# Our Credential

Founded in 1972 as Oakland Community Organizations, we have been a driving force for systemic change, racial justice, and economic equity in Oakland.

In 2020, we changed our name to reflect the move to expand and regionalize our work. Faith in Action East Bay is the same organization, but we are scaling up the level of our capacity to build power throughout the East Bay.

## **Our commitment to faith-based organizing and leadership development now encompasses all of Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.**

Faith in Action East Bay is a nonpartisan federation of 23 congregations, schools, and allied community organizations, representing over 25,000 families throughout the East Bay. FIAEB Leaders share common values from our diverse faith, racial, political, and social traditions. We bring these values into the public arena through research, action, and relationship-building.

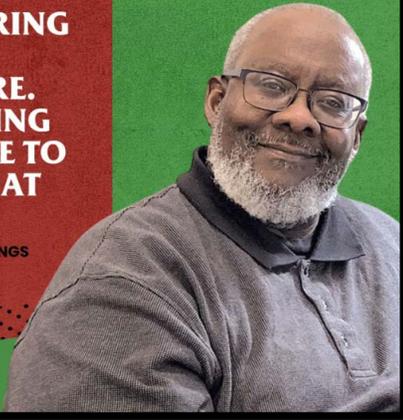
## **We envision a community where everyone has equal access to a first-rate education, affordable housing and home ownership, skills training and good employment opportunities, quality healthcare, and safe, clean streets in vibrant neighborhoods.**

Faith in Action East Bay is a proud member of the Faith in Action National Network, the nation's largest faith-based organizing network.



“  
HOPE IS HEARING  
THE MELODY  
OF THE FUTURE.  
FAITH IS HAVING  
THE COURAGE TO  
DANCE TO THAT  
MELODY.”

—REV. DR. GEORGE C.L. CUMMINGS



## From Our Regional Executive Director: Rev. Dr. George C.L. Cummings

Following the call to organize in order to work together to create a world that is different than the one we currently live in requires shining light into the dark places of our reality. As people of faith we stand in the world that is and strive to create a world that ought to be.

We bring from our many faith traditions a vision of a world in which our love and commitment for our neighbor challenges us to step out of our own experiences and seek to learn from the experiences of those who are different than we are. This requires us to listen and learn from others. It requires us to intentionally place ourselves in spaces and places that challenge how we see the world. It also requires us to engage those who are the least of these in creating a new future. 2023 was a year of listening to the cries of the people whom we love the most—hearing their desire for affordable housing, safe communities, and a moral economy in which there are opportunities for all to prosper.

Responding to these challenges meant a renewed dedication to building the power that will be necessary to affect change. We expanded our ability to build our power by developing organizing teams to move our agenda locally and across our state. We analyzed our organizing landscape; then we trained and equipped leaders and teams who organized for action. We punched holes of light in the darkness of the needs for more affordable housing by participating in a statewide collaborative effort to pass SB567 and SB4. We shone the light on the policies and people responsible for the way things are and took steps toward a new reality. We invite you to join us as we organize in 2024 to keep bringing our vision into reality.

May it be so!

Rev. Dr. George C.L. Cummings

**We build power.**

"I am excited that the work we do brings positive fruits so that the community is encouraged to raise their voices. When we do not see fruits we can get discouraged and think that we are wasting time. That is what excites me: The work that is carried out bears fruit."

~ Patricia Avila, Leader



"Without Faith in Action East Bay a lot of the things that I do would be nearly impossible. It's about working together, talking together, being one."

~ Pastor Bill Dixon,  
Board Co-Chair



"My Jewish faith calls me to pursue justice and work to repair our broken world. The rabbis teach: 'Do not turn away from the enormity of the world's suffering... You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to abandon it.' I feel this deeply."

~ Myrna Schwartz, Leader  
Interfaith Coalition for Justice  
in our Jails

# Theory of Change

## **What is our big goal for the year that moves our 5-year vision forward?**

Faith in Action East Bay's Big Goal for 2024 is to build our organizational power and base so that by December 2024 we will have 30 active organizing teams moving our organizational agenda. We aim to expand our leadership and institutional base that organizes in the East Bay around the priorities of the housing crisis, economic equity, public safety, and a robust voter engagement strategy. Building and strengthening our organizational power enables us to achieve our five-year goal of the East Bay in which all have access to adequate housing, economic opportunity, and safe communities.

## **Where does our power currently come from?**

- Power comes from 31 congregations, 2 counties, 4 cities, 45 trained leaders, 190 members, and 21,000 families.
- Strategic partnerships with multiple local nonprofits, and 3 progressive city council groups in Oakland, Richmond, and Antioch.
- A prophetic vision drawn from the values of our faith, such as a commitment to establishing a moral economy and racial and economic equity for all. Fundamental values of our faith include the ideals that all belong and that every human being deserves to have a home that provides safety and care.
- Partnership with 8 funding partnering organizations and 2 city governments.
- A track record of policy and budget victories in the city of Oakland and Richmond.
- Our faith partners bring the moral voice to the public square and to the creation of a narrative of abundance over scarcity.

## **Power Map/Power Analysis**

- In the East Bay there are powerful developers who impact the issue of housing.
- City government and county supervisors influence housing development and are the primary source of local resources.
- The tech industry and its need to house workers determine housing development.
- The current budget of the City of Oakland is a deficit budget of 60 million dollars.
- Budget deficits and decisions limit investments in social programs.
- The lack of affordable housing for lower-income families is reshaping the demographics of the East Bay.
- The lack of affordable housing for lower-income people, in addition to the fact that many families are having to extend over 60% of their available income to housing has led to the rise of homelessness.
- Evictions are on the rise in both Alameda and Contra Costa counties.
- Public safety is a major priority for residents in the East Bay.
- After 10 years of consistent growth the City of Oakland has shrunk by 1.3% in 2022. There needs to be further analysis of which populations are affected to ensure that the black and brown residents who built the East Bay have access and opportunity to live and thrive.

### **Our Path Forward/Core Campaign Pillars**

- Engaging local city council members and county supervisors in shifting resources towards addressing the housing crisis, homelessness, public safety, and social services.
- Holding cities and counties accountable for setting and meeting housing goals.
- Challenging city council and county supervisors to allocate resources that address the needs of the people.
- Ensuring the renewal of the Bond measure in the City of Oakland that funds public safety and violence reduction. The current bond measure sunsets in 2024.
- Encouraging the City of Oakland to expand and extend its current Guaranteed Basic Income pilot.
- Support local, county, and statewide legislation that provides for a guaranteed basic income.
- Support local city and statewide legislation that protects renters from unreasonable increases in their rent and illegal evictions.
- Actively engage in voter engagement to impact electoral politics at all levels
- Support the establishment of local rent caps and rent subsidies.
- Support the implementation of SB567.

### **Therefore, Our Strategy**

- To grow our base of Grassroot leaders and members engaged in public life.
- To provide transformational training opportunities for leadership development, power analysis, and strategic long-term organizing that will facilitate and incubate the internal revolution.
- Expand the number of our organizing teams and institutions from 18 to 30 in 2024.
- To encourage federation leaders to pursue further training by participating in PICO CA School of Faith and Power.
- Develop a year-round voter engagement strategy that will develop new relationships with voters in Alameda and Contra Costa counties.
- Participate in the PICO CA statewide network in organizing around issues that align with our federation priorities.
- Focus our organizing strategy on the following priorities: Affordable housing for lower-income families and homelessness, public safety (including crime and gun violence reduction, illegal dumping), economic inequity, and voter engagement.





"I give my full measure of duty, service, and commitment to the FIAEB Illegal Dumping Local Organizing Committee (LOC). I contribute to our shared passion for safe and clean streets. With committed service and full intention I take an active role in planning strategies, extending invites to friends and community members to attend the research meetings and actions, and doing as much as I can to help restore my hometown city to the aesthetic beauty and safe surroundings it once had."

~ Ernestine Wilson, Leader, Illegal Dumping LOC

"I have seen things happen, change, turn around for the better. I have a lot of faith. I have seen things get better and I have seen solutions work. There is possibility and we can affect change when we stay with process."

~ Leonor Godinez, Leader Public Safety Committee



FIAEB has given me a lot of experience I would not have had otherwise. I am more compassionate, more open to people's problems. It has strengthened me to be more outspoken to stand for others who have not yet found their voice."

~ Mary Schlarb, Leader Housing Committee



# In 2023, here's how we put our faith into action.

We celebrate all the ways our leaders, local organizing committees, and community members lifted their voices for justice in 2023.

## Ceasefire Night Walks

36



## Richmond Peace Walks

8

## Leadership Development Trainings

6



## Newly trained leaders

90



## Trainings on using Zoom

3

Enrichment events and classes

6



Illegal dumping research meetings and actions

10



Housing research meetings and actions

15



Leaders at statewide housing action in Sacramento



115



Legislative housing victories so far

3



Participants at Immigration Forum

**300+**



Public Safety Events

**10**



Participants at Town Hall with District Attorney

**490**



Active Local Organizing Committees

**19**

Allied congregations, schools, and community organizations



Local Organizing Committees in formation

**90**

**13**

We celebrate the work we've done together this year and look forward to continuing to lift up our voices for justice into the year ahead.

Watch a [video celebration](#) of our 2023 work.

Families represented

**25,000+**

To donate in support of our work  
and to learn more:

[fiaeastbay.org](http://fiaeastbay.org)

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