

About Faith in New York

Founded in 2013, Faith in New York (FINY) is a multifaith grassroots citywide network of congregations and people of faith committed to the work of justice, community transformation and liberation through faith-based community organizing, policy change, and movement building in New York City. Faith in New York is the New York City affiliate of the Faith in Action, the largest faith-based community organizing network in the country.

Our Vision: To build the Beloved City in New York City by bringing together a multi-faith, multi-issue base of community members who learn together, analyze power, re-envision, and co-create a city that is a sanctuary for all, regardless of faith, race, class, age, gender, economic status, and other identities.

Our Theory of Change: We believe that when people of faith come together in teams in our houses of worship and communities to dream, discern, learn, and act together, transformative change happens. We believe that powerful relationships - with clergy,



congregants, and community members and groups - drive our work, and that is through those relationships that we change policy, build power, listen deeply to each other, and bring forth the divine.

Our Organizational Pillars: Leadership Development and Training, Community Education, Community-led Research, Public Action

Areas of Work

Civic Engagement/Voting Reform: Expanding Democracy through advocating for policies that allow all New Yorkers to more easily participate in local, state and federal elections, with specific focus on expanding access to the ballot box for people of color, persons who live in poverty and persons with disabilities. Our Get Out The Vote (GOTV) work includes voter registration, community education, Souls to the Polls voter mobilization, and engaging candidates on the issues that impact our communities.

Immigrant Justice (Faith for Liberation): Pursuing pro-immigrant legislation through local and national efforts by holding officials accountable to an agenda of keeping families together. We seek to combat the othering and criminalization with one that affirms all immigrants are deserving of protection from unjust laws. This includes protection and security of immigrant communities through deportation defense, sanctuary advocacy, preserving asylum protections for those fleeing murderous regimes and domestic violence, and fighting for the rights of all immigrants including undocumented workers and families, Dreamers, and those with Temporary Protected Status.

Restorative Justice (Live Free): Building power and agency in communities by reimagining public safety and increasing civic engagement. In addition, we seek to eradicate gun violence, mass incarceration, and mass criminalization: institutions and policies that contribute to the dehumanization of Black and Brown Americans.

Youth Organizing: Empowering youth to make systemic change in their communities by providing opportunities and training to build leadership skills, identity issues, policies, and elections in order to organize and advocate for meaningful social change.

Communal Care: Engaging spiritual and emotional health interfaith practices to care for the mental health well-being of our communities. We seek to foster a sense of solidarity and shared responsibility for the overall welfare of the community, promoting a collaborative and supportive environment.

Member Leadership at Faith in New York

FINY Board of Directors

<u>The Board of Directors</u> is a body composed of representatives from member congregations who are legally and financially responsible for the organization. They cast a long term vision for the organization and evaluate, hire and fire the Executive Director. There is geographical representation and religious diversity on this body. The board is over 85% people of color.



Clergy Caucus consists of regular meetings that happen at both the borough and city wide level. Their purpose is to build relationships between faith leaders; to create opportunities for new clergy to learn about our work and to get involved. For clergy to provide leadership on campaigns decisions and strategies, and for clergy to receive additional training and support in their work.

Transformational Leadership School Borough based leadership development

Congregation Based Social Justice Teams The Transformational Leadership School (TLS) is a formal and hands on training for faith leaders to learn about building social justice ministries. The TLS is presented by facilitators, and guest experts. It is a 12 session in person and web based leadership develop program that emphasizes building transformational leaders for creating faith-rooted social justice movements. developing specific skills for

powerful faith based organizing.

Congregational Based Social Justice Teams, are at the heart of the work that FINY supports. Our goal is to coach each congregation (clergy and often lay leaders), to develop and lead social justice work within their congregation(s). This team building system, helps to grow the justice work of the congregation through monthly meetings, ideally helping to weave social justice work into the fabric of daily congregational life.

Strategy Teams Campaign Based relationship building and strategic planning

Borough Based Strategy Teams Localized relationship building and strategic planning

City Wide Leadership Assembly Bi-yearly decision making by member congregations

Action Planning Committees Temporary and usually citywide, as needed, 25+ cong.

Coalition Work Strategy Teams are for core campaign issues and are comprised of members of congregations that are engaged around our specific social justice campaigns. These bodies have representation from a minimum of 10 congregations and do the research, outreach and strategic decisions to build powerful campaigns. The meeting locations rotate between boroughs and use phone calls when possible to minimize the travel burden for participants.

Borough Based Strategy Teams allow for lay leaders and clergy to build relationships locally and work on supporting campaign work across issues. There are also opportunities to develop a deeper political analysis, and training around the issues they have identified in their community.

These meetings are proposed as bi-monthly.

Leadership Assemblies meet two to three times a year. It's a gathering where Faith in New York member congregations are invited to participate; especially those involved in their social justice teams. These assemblies are the largest decision making meetings for the organization – long term priorities and goals. Organizational structures and priorities are discussed

Action Planning Committees are temporary committees, and meetings that are developed in response to a need; to collectively plan a particular event. These planning committees tend to be city wide and are temporary in nature. In FINY's history, there committees have helped to plan actions, like our 2014 Sandy Recovery action at Allen AME Cathedral and our 2015 Build it Right Action in East New York.

Faith in New York is an active participant in city and statewide coalitions. We recognize that in the largest city in the country, and in one of the most politically dynamic and complicated places in the world, it is necessary for us to work with trusted allies: community based organization(s), labor unions and other interest groups that share our goals in Building the Beloved City. We strongly believe this allows for our congregations to be more effective and powerful.

Faith in New York is a Congregational and Individual membership-based organization with modest membership dues.

Visit http://faithinnewyork.org/membership to learn more!

Stay in Touch!

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