



NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO 15 ~ May 2025

a committee of
Faith in Action East Bay
www.icjjalamedacounty.org

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Member Congregations

Congregation Netivot Shalom, Berkeley ~
First Church Berkeley, UCC ~
First Unitarian Church, Oakland ~ Interfaith
Council of Alameda County ~ Kehilla
Community Synagogue, Piedmont ~
Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church, Oakland
~ Lighthouse Mosque, Oakland ~ Montclair
Presbyterian Church, Oakland ~ Plymouth
United Church of Christ, Oakland ~
St. Columba Catholic Church, Oakland ~
Skyline Community Church, United Church
of Christ, Oakland ~ Starr King Unitarian
Universalist Church, Hayward

Who We Are: Mission Statement

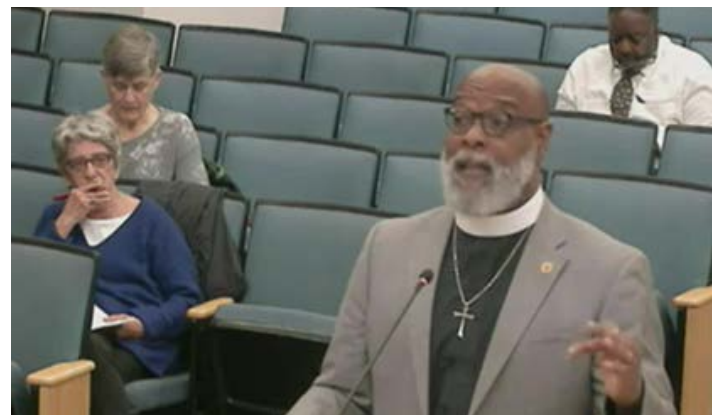
The ICJJ seeks to reduce incarceration as a response to social problems in Alameda County, California, and to decrease harmful conditions in the jail. We advocate to decrease the number of those imprisoned and close the revolving door to jail -- especially for those with mental health or housing needs. The jail must be safe, humane, and supportive of successful reentry into our communities.

Replace Wellpath at Santa Rita Jail!

A successful campaign to present urgent concerns about poor medical care in Alameda County Jail was led by The Stop Deaths and Harm group, an offshoot of the Interfaith Coalition for Justice in our Jails. Our concerns were voiced on March 27, 2025, at the Board of Supervisors' Public Protection Committee meeting chaired by Supervisor Marquez, with Supervisor Miley attending.

Wellpath has been the medical care provider in Santa Rita jail since 2016. The company is owned by a global investment firm and provides healthcare in 34 of California's 56 county jails, as well as other jails and prisons across the country. Over 1500 lawsuits have been filed nationwide against Wellpath, and the company's recent bankruptcy filing will prevent affected families from receiving justice.

Every report card on Wellpath's care at Santa Rita has come back with devastatingly low marks. Perhaps most egregious was the death of Maurice Monk, who in 2021 lay dying for three days in Santa Rita



Pastor Brian K. Woodson, Sr., addresses the Board.

Jail before a Wellpath nurse and Sheriff's deputies recognized his death. Three days of prescription medication and food had been thrown through the slot of his door and accumulated on the floor of Mr. Monk's cell. Alameda County was sued by the family, and the County settled the case for \$7 million. Wellpath has not settled.

Over the past several months, we have met with Supervisor Marquez's staff and secured the March 27th Public Protection committee meeting to

present our opposition to Wellpath. Both Supervisor Marquez, who has been supportive throughout this process, and Supervisor Miley stated that they will support the Board of Supervisors taking action to explore alternatives to Wellpath. Their contract is up in 2027, and it is important to start the lengthy process of exploring alternatives.

One alternative is to develop a robust Request for Proposals process to receive bids from multiple healthcare providers bidding on providing well-defined levels of care. Another alternative is for the county to provide the services directly. This is already being done successfully at local jails in San Francisco, Santa Clara, Marin, and Contra Costa Counties.

Supervisor Miley stated on the record that he supports ending the contract with Wellpath and finding an alternative.

Over 30 advocates and concerned residents spoke at the Public Protection meeting. None who spoke was more passionate than Elvira Monk, Maurice Monk's sister: "I feel Wellpath needs to leave," Monk said, choking back tears as she spoke. "I called up there multiple times trying to get his prescribed medication into his body. And they kept giving me a runaround."



The Stop Deaths and Harm Group includes representatives of the American Friends Service Committee, Families Advocating for the Seriously Mentally Ill (FASMI), the Interfaith Coalition for Justice in our Jails, and other individuals.

The next step will be a joint Public Health and Public Protection meeting currently set for 2 p.m. on May 16th, where the Stop Deaths and Harm Group will push for a resolution to explore alternatives to Wellpath to be presented to the entire Board of Supervisors.

If you are interested in providing public comments on May 16th, either in person or online, please let Micky Duxbury know: mickydux612@gmail.com. •

Faith Leaders Protest Reopening Federal Prison in Dublin as ICE Detention Center

Under the new federal administration, moves are being made to re-commission FCI (the Federal Correction Institution - Dublin) as an ICE detention center. This would support the federal government's deportation agenda, and a private company would be hired to run it. This alarming scenario led to a vigil being held on April 16th.

The vigil was organized by the Interfaith Movement 4 Human Integrity and co-sponsored by the California Coalition for Immigrant Justice. Our local protest was one of 20 vigils nationwide in a [Communities Not Cages](#) day of action organized by Detention Watch Network.

To learn more, see [this article](#) recently published in the Pleasanton Weekly.



*ICE Out of Dublin Campaign
(Pleasanton Weekly: Peg Hunter)*

FCI Dublin was closed in April of last year, following findings of poor physical conditions and a "rape club" culture among staff of the women's facility.

Although ICJJ's focus is primarily on the Alameda County jail and judicial system, ICJJ members have been following actions related to FCI Dublin. Last year, we joined a protest against both the horrible

conditions in that facility - including sexual abuse of the women in custody - and the government's sudden transfer of all the women out of that prison to avoid pending court oversight of the facility.

We were excited to learn that two class action lawsuits settled in December 2024 led to the largest award ever based on sexual abuse claims by incarcerated people. The suits also secured a promise of reforms in women's prisons across the country. The reforms are being overseen by Alameda County's retired Chief Probation Officer, Wendy Still.

This Spring, we attended the trial of the eighth and final FCI employee charged with perpetrating sex crimes on those in custody. The trial ended in a hung jury. Six other defendants had been convicted, and the 7th committed suicide before his trial. •

Care First Community Coalition (CFCC) Calls for Housing Options

In February 2025, the CFCC met with Michelle Starratt, the Alameda County director of housing; she provided insight into the current housing situation, the lack of it, the need for it, and the many people in the county who are experiencing homelessness.

The Care First Community Coalition is an alliance of social and racial justice-oriented community organizations, advocacy groups, and impacted community members, committed to reducing the number of people with behavioral health needs being incarcerated. CFCC considers housing as the priority issue for implementing the county's Care First, Jails Last (CFJL) resolution. (For more on CFJL, see the February 2025 issue of the ICJJ newsletter.)

CFJL seeks to prevent and reduce homelessness through programs like the Home Together Plan ("increase medical and mental health respite by 300 beds and include resources for rehousing. Stabilize and expand the board and care portfolio through new state funding and land trust.")

Housing is also important when it comes to diversion for people with mental health and substance use



MEETING INVITATIONS

We welcome your participation in our committees!

Alternatives to Incarceration work group meets the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 1 p.m.
Contact Donna: dmandel7@gmail.com or Jean Moses: Jean Moses jeanhmoses@gmail.com

Care First Community Coalition
Contact Willem: wvandekap2012@gmail.com

Stop Deaths and Harm work group meets via Zoom
Contact Micky: mickydux612@gmail.com

Health and Public Protection Committees
joint Board of Supervisors meetings currently set for May 16 and May 22.
Check BOS website:
<https://bos.acgov.org/committee-meetings>

Join ICJJ
Contact Richard: rspeiglman@sbcglobal.net

problems, and it is needed for the re-entry of people who have been involved with the justice system.

Our coalition will continue to speak up about the urgency of the need for housing, with special focus on the county's plan to start using the Measure W funds designated for this purpose. CFCC priorities include:

1. Prioritization of permanent, high-support housing for people with behavioral health needs and people who have contact with the judicial system.
2. Licensed housing, board and care homes with quality care.
3. Re-entry housing with case management.
4. Housing that helps to prevent legal system involvement.
5. Housing spaces for people in diversion and the collaborative courts.
6. Housing connected to discharge after First Episode Psychosis.

We look forward to the possibility of improving conditions as the County begins to make good use of the millions of dollars provided by Measure W. •