



Faith and Advocacy: Building Pathways to Economic Mobility

June 16, 2026

Who We Are



[JustUSCC.org](https://www.justuscc.org)

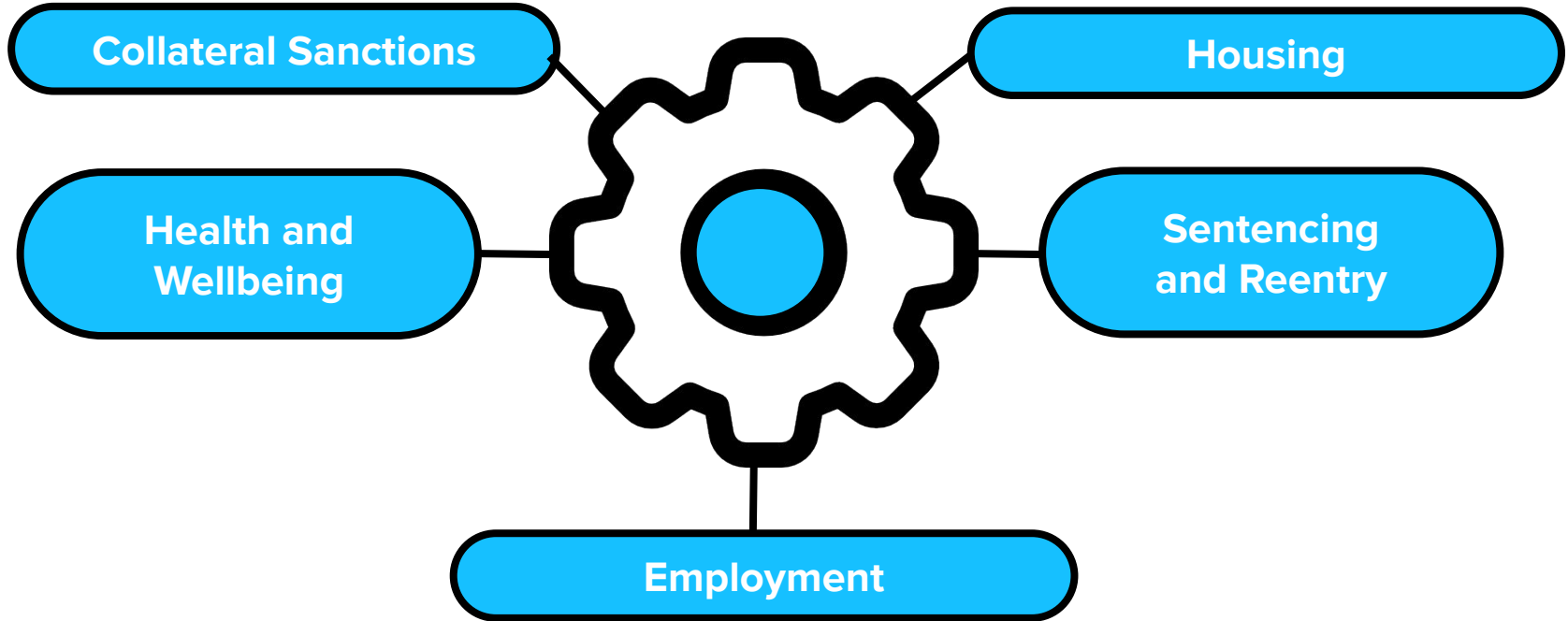
The JCC is a national federal policy table led by and created for individuals who are directly impacted. The JCC forms the connective tissue needed to catalyze full participation in policy practices and changes for formerly incarcerated people and directly impacted individuals and their communities.

Our Why



The voices of those most impacted by the criminal legal system have been missing and/or excluded from decision-making tables.

Priorities



Centered back to people






Center for **FAITH**

U.S. Department of Health
and Human Services

HHS Center for Faith Team



 **Monty Burks**, Director



Ben O'Dell, Senior Advisor



Katherine Pacheco, Special Assistant



John F. Tate, Senior Advisor



Clintandra Thompson, Communications Specialist

Collaborations between HHS and HBCUs



In December, HHS Secretary **Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.**, NIH Director **Jay Bhattacharya**, and HHS Faith Center Director **Monty Burks** hosted a roundtable with deans and leaders from HBCU medical schools where participants discussed opportunities to strengthen training, research, and workforce pathways.

Improving Outcomes For People And Communities



Faith. Health. Community. Resources.



SAMHSA's Faith
and Community
Engagement

Sign up for
our
newsletter



Supporting
the Journey:
Faith, Mental
Wellness, and
Community Care

All webinars can
be found on
YouTube



Contact Us

Stay in Touch with the HHS Center
for Faith



- **Website:** www.HHS.gov/Faith
- **Email:** Faith@HHS.gov
- **Phone:** (202) 260-6501
- **Follow:** @HHSFaithCenter on X.com, Facebook, and YouTube

The Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism

For more than six decades, the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (the RAC) has worked to educate, inspire, and mobilize the Reform Jewish Movement to advocate for social justice.



For thousands of years, the Jewish people have been guided by God's call to center the most vulnerable: the widow, the orphan, and the stranger (Exodus 23:12). God created this covenant so that the descendants of Sarah and Abraham would be a blessing (Genesis 12:2). For us, we realize this blessing through our work to heal what is broken in our world and shape a narrative of justice.

For 150 years, the Reform Jewish Movement has strived to amplify the voices of our prophets through our commitment to social justice.

For the last 60 years, the RAC – born out of the crucible of the Civil Rights Movement – has powered the Reform Jewish Movement's nonpartisan efforts to build our power to create a society of civil rights and freedom for all people.

צֶדֶק צֶדֶק תִּרְדּוּף

tzedek tzedek tirdof

Justice, justice shall you
pursue!

Deuteronomy 16:20



URJ/RAC Vision

- ▶ A world in which Judaism enables all people to experience **peace and wholeness** (shalom), **justice and equity** (Tzedek), and **belonging and joy** (*shayachut and simcha*)



RAC Theory of Change

We organize Reform Jewish congregations and communities on the local, state, and federal level as part of wider movements for social justice and across lines of difference, to bring about inclusive democracy in North America and Israel, made up of just communities of belonging and powered by leaders inspired by Jewish wisdom.



DC Advocacy: How the Reform Voice is Represented in Congress

- In partnership with faith and secular organizations, our legislative team engages in direct staff-level meetings on Capitol Hill to push for criminal justice reform, adequate funding for SNAP, gun violence prevention, and much more.
- Each spring, 2,000 Reform Jewish high schoolers come to our *L'Taken* social justice seminars, where they spend the weekend learning how to raise their voices for change. The seminar culminates in lobby visits with members of Congress or their staff.
- Every two years, we bring Reform Jewish leaders to our Consultation on Conscience, an opportunity for people to pray, learn, and act on Capitol Hill.



The Reform Movement's 2026 Every Voice, Every Vote Campaign: *We Decide Our Future*

Our Jewish tradition teaches: "A ruler is not to be appointed unless the community is first consulted." (Babylonian Talmud *Berachot* 55a) This means that voters should pick our leaders.

By working together to make sure every eligible voter has a say in the decisions that impact our lives, we can create a safer, better future for ourselves and for all people.

We are engaging in voter engagement work, supporting ballot initiatives for reproductive freedom and marriage equality, and protecting the right to vote.




Religious Action Center: States of Justice




RAC California
99 Reform
synagogues,
HUC-JIR Los
Angeles



RAC Illinois
35 Reform
synagogues




RAC Ohio
31 Reform
synagogues,
HUC-JIR
Cincinnati




RAC Texas
38 Reform
synagogues



RAC Pennsylvania
40 Reform
synagogues



RAC New Jersey
46 Reform
synagogues



RAC Florida
57 Reform
synagogues



RAC Massachusetts
39 Reform
synagogues



RAC New York
102 Reform
synagogues,
HUC-JIR New
York



Religious
Action
Center
of Reform Judaism



Religious
Action
Center
of Reform

Success: 2018 Florida Amendment 4

- Florida's constitution barred people convicted of felonies from voting even after completing parole and probation—with a disproportionate impact on African Americans.
- In 2018, Florida was one of only four states with permanent felony disenfranchisement, affecting 1.7 million former offenders, including 20% of the African American adult population.
- The RAC partnered with Second Chances Florida to pass a November 2018 ballot initiative restoring voter eligibility to 1.4 million formerly incarcerated Floridians. The initiative passed with 64% of the popular vote.



Success: Federal and State Legislation

- In 2018, the Reform Movement withheld support for the FIRST STEP Act until key improvements were won—and despite reservations over omitted sentencing reforms, pressed for it to be a genuine first step toward deeper change.
- In 2020-2021, RAC-IL mobilized 100+ lay leaders, 15+ congregations, and 20+ clergy to help pass the Pretrial Fairness Act—making Illinois the first state to completely abolish cash bail and a national model for pretrial reform.
- In 2020-2021, RAC-NY helped pass the Less Is More Act—landmark parole reform ending automatic incarceration for technical violations like missed curfews, transforming tens of thousands of lives.



Community: Central Synagogue Reentry Work

- Central Synagogue in New York City houses the Coming Home initiative, a 6-month program designed to welcome formerly incarcerated individuals into a supportive community.
- Coming Home seeks to accompany people on this journey as they set goals, heal past traumas, and become active citizens as we all grow together as individuals within our communities.
- Central also matches people coming home from jail or prison with internships in public health, public policy, media, and law—providing formerly incarcerated people with meaningful work as they reenter society.

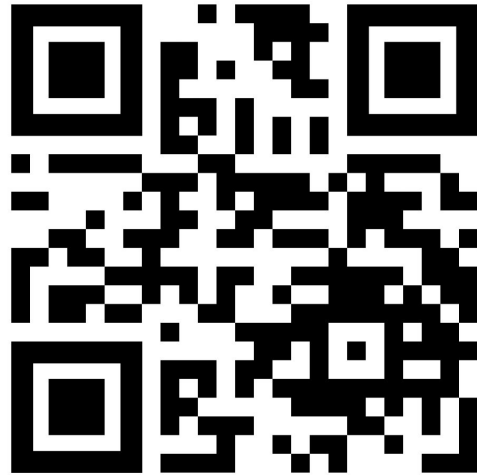


Reflection

“You shall commit no injustice in judgment; you shall not favor a poor person or defer to a great man; you shall judge your fellow with righteousness” (Leviticus 19:15)



**Take action with our
Every Voice, Every
Vote campaign!**





Prison Fellowship Ministry Overview

2026



MISSION

Our mission is to encounter Jesus with those impacted by incarceration.

VISION

We envision a revival of the Church inside and outside prison that brings justice, mercy, and hope to our culture.



A nationwide need

 In the U.S.,

1.9 people are incarcerated.
MILLION

1.5 children have an
incarcerated parent.
MILLION

2 OUT OF **3** people will be rearrested
within three years of release.





A biblical calling






“I was in prison, and you visited Me.”
—Matthew 25:37

We don't bring Jesus into prison. **He is already there**—and no life is beyond His reach.

Prison Fellowship equips Christians to come alongside men, women, and families impacted by incarceration. Partnering with individuals and churches nationwide, we **encounter Jesus together** and witness the transforming power of the Gospel, behind bars and beyond.



What we do

-  **Serve in prison.**
-  **Care for families.**
-  **Champion justice.**
-  **Support reentry.**
-  **Inspire generosity.**

Serve in prison

Jesus is **alive and at work** in prisons and jails across the country. When we draw near to our incarcerated brothers and sisters—the “**Church inside**”—we join Him in the amazing work He is already doing. Incarcerated people can be used by God in mighty ways, and doing time can be a life-changing journey.



Prison Fellowship
Academy



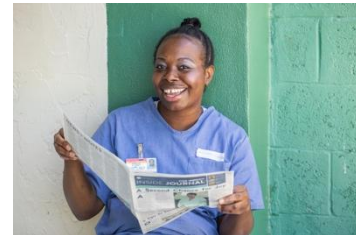
Prison Fellowship
Grow



Prison Fellowship
Lead



Hope Events



Inside Journal



Warden Exchange

Care for families

For kids with parents serving time, every day can feel like a life sentence. They often struggle with isolation and fear.

Through Prison Fellowship Angel Tree, we help families broken by incarceration **flourish**. Local churches and individuals become **the hands and feet of Jesus**, starting with gifts at Christmas and continuing with year-round support.

Angel Tree serves **the whole child**, for the whole year.



Angel Tree Christmas



Angel Tree camping



Angel Tree STEM camps



Angel Tree sports camps



Mentoring



Partner programming

Champion justice

Justice is important to God, so it's important to us.

Prison Fellowship works with nonprofits, Christian organizations, and politicians on both sides of the aisle to champion biblically informed justice that brings **healing and restoration**.

Because no person is beyond God's reach, we **advocate for legislative change** at the state and federal levels, equipping Christians to weigh in on policy reforms that **validate victims**, help transform those responsible for crime, and create **safer communities**.



Support reentry

We want every formerly incarcerated person to be accepted as a full member of their community and to enjoy a life of **flourishing**. To do this, we equip churches to become places of welcome, belonging, and ongoing support during the critical **early stages of reentry** and throughout the **long-term process of reintegration**.

Our goal is complete reintegration: freedom from stigma, relationships restored, and an identity rebuilt in Christ.



Advance justice that restores



LEARN MORE AT:

prisonfellowship.org/advocacy

Join the movement!



LEARN MORE AT:

prisonfellowship.org/justiceambassador



Prison Fellowship®

Seek justice. Love mercy. Restore hope.

prisonfellowship.org

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@justicereform



Prison Fellowship



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justuscc.org

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instagram.com/justuscouncil



TAKE OUR SURVEY!