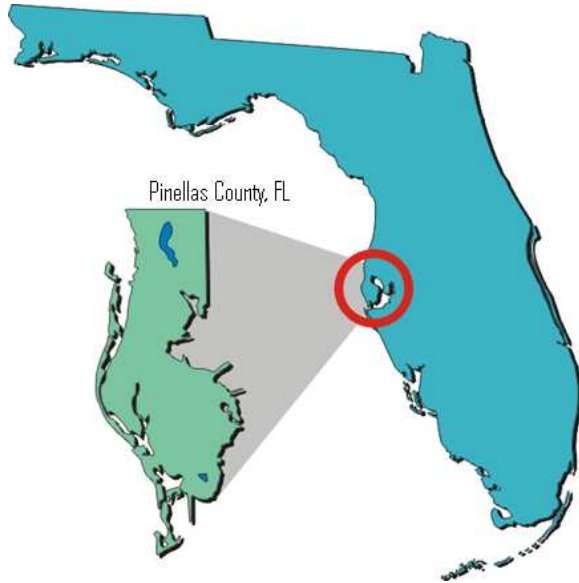


Faith and Action for Strength Together



F.A.S.T.

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Lead Organizer:

Haley Grossman
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Senior Associate Organizer:

Leah Woodward
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Associate Organizer:

Percy Peralta
Phone: 727-524-3301

Participating Congregations

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Rev. Walter Campbell | Bayview Baptist Church |
| Rev. Manuel Sykes | Bethel Community Baptist Church |
| Rev. James E. Byrd | Christ Church of Universal Love |
| Rev. John Hiers | Episcopal Church of the Ascension |
| Rev. Bob Schneider | Espiritu Santo Catholic Church |
| Rev. Bragg Turner | Faith Memorial Missionary Baptist Church |
| Rev. Anton DeWet | Faith United Church of Christ |
| Rev. Leo Crawford | Good Samaritan Episcopal Church |
| Fr. Bob Williams | Good Shepherd Episcopal Church |
| Rev. Paul Kochu | Holy Cross Catholic Church |
| Rev. John Tapp | Holy Family Catholic Church, Co-Chair |
| Rev. Joe Diaz | Holy Trinity Episcopal Church |
| Rev. James McWhinnie | Pasadena Community UMC |
| Rev. Todd Sutton | Lakeview Presbyterian Church |
| Rev. Jim Merkle | Most Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church |
| Rev. Robert Ward | Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church, Co-Chair |
| Rev. William Sherman | Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, Vice Chair |
| Rev. Ron Williams | Mt. Olive A.M.E. Church |
| Rev. Clarence Williams | Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church |
| Rev. LeRoy Howard | New Zion Missionary Baptist Church |
| Rev. Mason Dorsey | Riviera United Methodist Church |
| Rev. Willie McClendon Jr. | Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church |
| Rev. Richard Doscher | St. Alfred's Episcopal Church |
| Msgr. Michael Devine | St. Brendan Catholic Church |
| Rev. Pat Irwin | St. Cecelia Catholic Church |
| Rev. Glad McCurtain | St. John's Episcopal Church |
| Rev. Fleming Tarver | St. John's Missionary Baptist Church |
| Rev. Benny Dyer | St. Mary Missionary Baptist Church |
| Rev. Pat Rebel | St. Matthew Catholic Church |
| Rev. Carolyn Biggs | St. Matthew's Episcopal Church |
| Rev. Culp | St. Paul's Lutheran Church |
| Rabbi Arthur Baseman | Temple B'nai Israel |

Faith and Action for Strength Together



Isaiah 58:6

*This, rather, is the fasting that I wish:
releasing those bound unjustly, untying the
thongs of the yoke; Setting free the
oppressed, breaking every yoke;*

Faith and Action for Strength Together (F.A.S.T.)

A congregation-based community organization bringing together congregations to powerfully address injustice & poverty in Pinellas County.

Faith and Action for Strength Together

General Goals

To serve as agents of change, calling for a “renewed” community by holding public systems accountable to improve the quality of life for all in Pinellas County. To foster and promote community wide interest and concern for the problems of individuals and families, particularly low- to moderate-income, so that such issues as poverty, crime, sickness, housing, education, and environmental degradation may be lessened, and education and economic opportunities may be expanded.

What Is the Mission?

As led by the Creator of all things, the mission of F.A.S.T. is to engage people of diverse faiths in a process of listening, education, action, and reflection in order to powerfully address community issues in *Pinellas County*.

How Does a Congregation Participate?

Clergy begin building relationships with clergy from other congregations through Clergy Caucus meetings. The congregation signs the covenant agreement committing to support the mission of F.A.S.T. The congregation supports the organization financially. Dues are based on an equitable formula. The congregations develop leadership teams within the congregation to listen for local concerns and, using tested criteria, select issues and develop action strategies that will positively affect the quality of life in Pinellas County.

How Does F.A.S.T. Work?

F.A.S.T., as part of the DART Network, will involve congregations in a process of listening for unifying community concerns, focusing on the ones we feel we can do something about. Members of each congregation will research these issues, develop strategies to address them, and be part of large public actions to see that these strategies are implemented by decision makers.

What Is the DART Network?

Dart is a network of congregation-based community organizations throughout the country. Being part of the DART network (Direct Action and Research Training Center) gives us the ability to send leaders to national trainings and bring national experts to consult with us here in Pinellas. It also provides us with the opportunity to work with the nine other organizations in Florida.

How Is F.A.S.T. Funded?

Initial and ongoing funds will come from the dues of member congregations, foundations, individual contributions, the business community, and grants from religious institutions.

Accomplishments

We have come together in three large public actions to press public officials to implement solutions to community problems. In 2005 we gathered over 1200 people; over 1700 in 2006; and a ground-breaking 2000 people this year. The issues we've won are:

Education

- The director of the Pinellas Early Learning Coalition provided funds so all low-income children in Pinellas can attend a full-day pre-k program.
- In 2006, the superintendent of Pinellas County Schools implemented a school-wide disciplinary program in 24 of our schools to reduce suspensions and increase learning. This year, members of the school board committed to expand the program to additional schools.

Transportation

- The director of the Metropolitan Planning Organization of Pinellas County created a “one-stop” hotline to help seniors get their transportation needs met.

Affordable Housing

- In 2006, our county commissioners committed to create long-term affordable housing for low- to moderate-income families across the county by implementing several effective housing initiatives over the next year. So far, they have put \$10 million in place for affordable housing.
- This year, our cities, county, and housing authorities are united to, together, create a net increase of over 3,000 units of lower-income housing over the next three years, and to come up with plans to do 1-1 replacement of any public housing units that get lost in the next 3 years.