

Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council

General Meeting, November 11, 2025

Present: 26 people in the room; 17 people online. List appears at the end of these minutes.

Welcome

Opening Moment of Silent Reflection

Acknowledgment of Indigenous Lands and Peoples

Self-Introductions:

Brief Reports:

- **Treasurer** (see www.eiscc.net for minutes and budget). In round numbers, assets are \$180,000, of which \$164,000 is restricted to the Congregations for Kids sub-agency.
- **Eastside Human Services Forum**. Linda Hillesheim shared that the merger with the Together Center and the Alliance of Eastside Associations is still in progress.
- **Faith Action Network**. Elizabeth Dickinson noted that the state is facing a very difficult time for human services and that FAN's efforts in the coming session would be concentrated on making sure that people are fed and housed. There will be a full FAN report next month.
- **Congregations for Kids**. Nancy Jacobs shared that the project's contacts in the Bellevue School District say they have never seen the magnitude of food insecurity and hunger among students that they are facing this year. The gift cards that the project provides for emergencies, used as a last resort, are even being used for pharmacy costs.
- **Severe Weather Shelter Project**. Susan Cozzens reported that based on the discussion at the last Eastside Interfaith Meeting, the Board had authorized a project to continue work on bringing together the resources of faith communities to expand the severe weather shelter capacity on the Eastside this winter. Linda Hillesheim stressed that not all the resources need to come from one faith community.
 - The efforts have already brought one congregation together with an organization that could arrange for professional services, and a proposal for funding is being prepared.
 - The project is looking for examples of the insurance challenges shelters and camps face, to share with the state Office of the Insurance Commissioner to look for ways to address them.

PROGRAM

SPOTLIGHT: Africans on the Eastside (What's App 425-233-4220). Founder and Executive Director Adam Dibba made the presentation. Her slides are available [here](#).

- Using a story of a real immigrant, she shared that refugees do not understand how hard it will be to start over here. Africans on the Eastside sends the message. "You don't have to do this alone. We are here." AOE help with adjusting to housing, schools, locating resources, etc. that build on the immigrant's strengths. In the end, the family in the story was not just surviving, but thriving. "No matter how far they have come," Adam said, "they can find peace, belonging, and a true place to find home."
- The grassroots immigrant support organizations do the work on the ground. They build bridges of trust, to connect systems to people who often fall into the cracks. The larger, less local organizations often get the donations, but "If we want equity, we must fund voices that are closest to the pain to find the solutions."

- Faith communities can help with gift cards, funds to help address rent struggles, and donations of culturally relevant food for people who are scared to leave the house and therefore can't work anymore. A later question asked where food that is culturally appropriate for Africans might be found. Adam recommended Ranier Avenue, around the 6000 block.
- AOE has hours of availability at Bellevue's Mini City Hall on Fridays from 12-4. But they are also often out and about, connecting immigrants to resources, so email or phone contact may be helpful.

MAIN PRESENTATION TOPIC: Responding to – and Disrupting – Racism in East King County.

Presentation from [Eastside for All](#) by Angleica Gonzalez Graham, Healing Justice Organizer, and Debbie Lacy, Founder & Executive Director.

Angelica presented data from the Hate and Bias Incident Report Survey, “a confidential and anonymous reporting tool that’s not affiliated with law enforcement.” (See the short video on [this page](#) for an introduction.) Community partners in the project are [CISC](#), [4Tomorrow](#), [Indian American Community Services](#), [Immigrant Women’s Community Center](#), [Muslim Community Network Association](#), and [Africans on the Eastside](#). When incidents are reported, the project provides emotional support and healing spaces, with advocacy if possible.

The project received 73 reports in the past year. Each report is only a small window into a larger reality that people of color are experiencing. Most people who experience hate or violence do not document it; they just move on. Half the perpetrators in the reports were property managers. School officials, including staff and teachers, were the next largest group. The categories of individuals, business employees, and law enforcement each were perpetrators in more than 10% of the reports. Victims found it hard to find justice from governmental organizations, which are often protected by powerful actors and lack accountability. The largest racial group represented among those who submitted reports was African Americans, who cannot hide. Institutional harm was involved in over half of the reports, that is, harm from systems or policies that perpetuate oppression, neglect, or discrimination. Refusal of service or unfair treatment was involved in nearly half.

The data illustrates that victims are not getting the support they need. They are going up against institutional harm, systems that keep the cycle of harm going. But Angelica stressed that if we truly care, we can step outside what we have been taught, learn about each other through experience and use our power to take action to help. In her role, she offers healing spaces for individuals, such as times to lament and grieve, non-violent communication training, and listening sessions. The community needs legal advocacy, community and mental health support, and advocacy to change policies. Eastside for All focuses its policy advocacy on the Eastside cities. Their [advocacy hub](#) lists opportunities.

In response to questions, Angelica affirmed that age discrimination is identified in the data. Email or phone is the best way to get in touch with her directly about the work. The reporting form for incidents is available on the Eastside for All website at [this link](#). The audience noted how alarming recent ICE detentions have been for the community. Eastside for All is part of the [Safe Haven network](#) of organizations that work at very local levels to support families and engage in joint advocacy, resource sharing, and collaboration.

The audience shared that some retired nurses are willing to help with in-home health issues. Another person noted that the King County Continuum of Care, a government advisory body, would be very interested in the Hate and Bias Incident Reporting results, particularly with regard to property managers.

Donations to the local community immigrant support organizations are particularly needed; they have earned trust in their communities.

Announcements

- **Issaquah-Sammamish Interfaith Coalition** produces a newsletter twice a month with opportunities in the region related to social justice. If you are interested in receiving it, contact Elizabeth Maupin (eli410maupin@gmail.com).
- **Faith Action Network** has its annual fundraising dinner on Sunday, November 16. Sign up at fanwa.org. FAN offers an opportunity to watch the festivities online.
- **Newport Presbyterian Safe Parking** is nearing its annual winter hiatus, closing on November 30 and re-opening on March 1. Please do not refer anyone there during that time. They are looking for another organization to partner with them to offer safe parking during that time period. Spread the word. Interested organizations can contact Lois Brandt (lois@loisbrandt.com)
- **The Sophia Way** is holding its annual fundraising event on Friday, November 14, 6:30 – 8:30 pm, in the Hilton Bellevue, 300 112th Ave SE, Bellevue. Buy tickets [here](#).
- Aldersgate United Methodist Church often provides food at the church when they are open and is interested in setting up a **24-hour pantry**. They were directed to Little Free Pantries, [The Little Free Pantries - Seattle](#) for a kit to build a free pantry and help installing it. Toiletry items can also be made available there.
- Nourishing Networks is maintaining a list on their website of [where food is available](#).
- **Hero House** is celebrating its 20-year anniversary with a [fundraiser on December 4](#) at Highland North. See information [here](#) from their EISCC presentation in February.
- **Essentials First** is overwhelmed with demand and looking for a bigger space for their operations. Contact admin@essentialsfirst.org if you have space to offer.
- Unity of Bellevue is having a Giving Tree and needs to know who could benefit from the gifts. Tammy Waddell from Nourishing Networks commits to being in contact with them on that.
- Susan Cozzens, Co-Secretary of Eastside Interfaith, noted two volunteer opportunities mentioned during the discussion today: **home delivery from food banks** to families in need and **nursing help**. EISCC will work with today's presenters to help match volunteers with these needs. Stay tuned for further information.

Closing Prayer from the Baha'i tradition

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Present at the meeting –

Last Name	First Name	Organization
Arndt	Sarah	North Urban Human Services Alliance
Backus	Shauna	Congregations for Kids
Baughman	Candice	One Parish One Prisoner
Brandt	Lois	Newport Presbyterian Safe Parking
Burnett	Gerald	Unity of Bellevue
Carter	Christopher	Camp United We Stand

Last Name	First Name	Organization
Clacy	Jill	Kindering
Cozzens	Susan	Eastside Friends Meeting & EISCC Board
Dibba	Adam	Africans on the Eastside
Dickinson	Elizabeth	Faith Action Network
Ennett	Maura	Unity of Bellevue
Folkman	Katie	LDS
Folkman	Kevin	LDS & EISCC Board
Godfrey	Dave	Eastside Friends Meeting
Graham	Angelica	Eastside for All
Harris	Jean	Aldersgate UMC
Haudenschild	Lynne	Unity of Bellevue
Hillesheim	Linda	Unity of Bellevue & EISCC Board
Jacobs	Nancy	Congregations for Kids
Jones	Carolee	St. Margaret's Thrift Shop
Kading	Ruth	Northshore United Church of Christ
Kalisa	Isabelle	Hero House
Kidd-Miller	Joyce	Baha'is of King County North & EISCC Board
Lacy	Debbie	Eastside for All
Lone	Dennis	Northshore UCC [?]
Mabbott	Art	All Saints Episcopal
Madden	Ciara	Plymouth Housing
Marquardson	Warren	LDS & EISCC
Maupin	Elizabeth	Issaquah Sammamish Interfaith Coalition
Mbaye	Amina	Essentials First
O'Hare	Pauline	First Congregational & EISCC Board
Pendgraf	Patti	The Salvation Army
Phelps	Ellen Weiss	Temple B'nai Torah & EISCC Board
Ranheim	Jayne	Newport Presbyterian
Rice	Andy	LDS
Richards	Diane	St. Margaret's
Saiffee	Ruqaiya	The Dawoodi Bohras
Spohn	Betty	Newport Presbyterian
Sterling	Susan	Unity of Bellevue
Szabo	Dick	St Andrew's Lutheran Church
Thomas	Ray	rayt2015@gmail.com
Waddell	Tammy	Nourishing Networks
Wallin	Scott	Nourishing Networks