The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) is a Quaker organization that promotes lasting peace and justice as a practical expression of faith in action. Toward that lasting peace, we stand fast to the belief that that of God may be seen in every person and that speaking truth to power may guide our way forward—a way forward that seeks restoration and wholeness for all those harmed by incarceration and the transformation of inherently unjust systems of torture and mass imprisonment. These beliefs lead us to work to improve conditions of confinement and, ultimately, end mass incarceration.

Support the work of those striving for healing and transformation. Donations of time and other resources are welcome and will advance this important cause. Find out more at afsc.org/hjpw.

“We when I left prison, AFSC gave me a place to land. They opened their doors and hearts in ways I could not expect and confirmed for me that I am more than my worst mistakes. Their kindness made it possible for me to reenter society with a sense of worth and purpose. I will be forever grateful to AFSC and others who see us all through the lenses of love, forgiveness, and understanding.”

—Russell Tucker, a returning community member

To get involved, contact us at:

Bonnie Kerness
AFSC Prison Watch
89 Market Street, 6th floor
Newark, NJ 07102
973-643-3192
bkerness@afsc.org

Lewis Webb, Jr.
AFSC NY Healing Justice Program
15 Rutherford Place
New York, NY 10003
212-598-0967
lwebb@afsc.org
Empowering communities
In communities devastated by mass incarceration, abusive systems of imprisonment, and the collateral consequences of arrest and conviction, AFSC’s New York and New Jersey Healing Justice and Prison Watch programs support people to heal and take leadership roles in confronting injustice. We join these communities in challenging the realities and political and economic root causes of these injustices, including the racism embedded in our criminal legal and related systems. We do so as part of the Campaign to End the New Jim Crow, as well as by responding to the thousands of letters received by Prison Watch and distributing materials such as our Survivor’s Manual.

Providing safe spaces
AFSC staff, interns, and volunteers work with and support people in prison with efforts to end unjust conditions of confinement and our Hope Lives for Lifers Project. We also work with those returning from prison, and the larger community. We welcome and provide safe spaces for those most impacted by the system. We learn from them and engage them in our work so they can lead efforts for change.

Our community includes young people, people seeking parole release, those returning home, and those who will likely spend the rest of their lives in prison. AFSC is committed to changing the narrative so that a more just system can be realized, while advancing efforts to abolish prisons.

Shifting paradigms
Our efforts are informed by prisoners and their families, as we work with policymakers, coalitions, other advocates, and the legal community to change the paradigms of punishment to ones of healing and transformation. We advocate for alternatives to incarceration, better mechanisms for reintegration after prison, and more humane conditions of confinement.

We offer educational opportunities for young people, including academic internships and advocacy training.

We reach thousands of individuals each year through presentations to faith communities, universities, and others. We also provide informational resources on topics such as surviving solitary confinement, sentence planning, and parole readiness to those incarcerated, their families, and other advocates.