

Thu, Nov 30, 2023

# CALIFORNIA



*For many members of the PPC family, last week was no holiday. In D.C. and the Bay, we joined the call for a ceasefire; in L.A., we once again stood with striking hospitality workers. Read on for reports, plus a glimpse at an upcoming Kairos Center event and a farewell to a beloved faith leader.*

## Announcement



### **The Kairos Center's Advent of a Revolution returns**

The Freedom Church of the Poor, a project of the Kairos Center, is hosting an online series to mark the season of Advent, which is observed by mainline Christian churches. [The Advent of a Revolution](#) recognizes that social movements and revolutions are built in stages: "During this Advent of a Revolution, this season of preparation, we are challenged to ask the question, 'Are we ready for change to come?' Are we prepared to step out of our complacency with the way things are, and ready to respond fully to God's vision of justice in our world?"

Rev. Theoharis shared the series on social media, saying, "The Freedom Church of the Poor, together with partners from various fronts of struggles, will use the next nine Sundays (from Thanksgiving to MLK Day) to hold a spiritual space of prayer, song, learning, and community for our movement leaders. We will use this time to invite in new leaders and organizations to share their insights and experiences, to get organized, and to continue to unite the poor across lines of division."

To join, head to [this Kairos Center webpage](#) and scroll to the bottom, where you'll find a sign-up form.

## Recaps



### **Laney College PPC stands up for a ceasefire**

Last Sunday, over 1,500 people gathered at the Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California and online in support of a permanent ceasefire in Gaza; the Laney College PPC group was among them. The event was hosted in collaboration with Bay

Resistance, the Arab Resource and Organizing Center, Anti Police-Terror Project and the Center for Political Education.

The CA PPC set up a table to distribute the [California factsheet](#) (which provides important information on poverty in the state), encourage people to attend our March 2 rally at the State Capitol and sign people up for the PPC's Laney group.



Educational sessions throughout the day included presentations on the Palestinian struggle for liberation and how it relates to local actions and the strategies of other movements. Organizing sessions trained people on nonviolent direct action tactics and showed them how to mobilize from within existing groups to be in solidarity with the Palestinian struggle.

Our call for a Third Reconstruction—the need to completely reconstruct social, political and economic institutions and to continue to build from the bottom up for the future we all need—resonated with those in attendance.

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### **A pre-Thanksgiving rally for striking hotel workers**

The day before Thanksgiving, Los Angeles PPC activists joined UNITE HERE Local 11 at the Waldorf Astoria and Beverly Hilton for a rally and food distribution event with Beverly Hills hotel workers. As many families were getting ready for the holidays, preparing festive meals and giving thanks, striking hospitality workers have been struggling to pay the rent and feed their families.

CLUE leader Reverend Daniel Tamm of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles grounded the community in a prayer of encouragement. CA PPC tri-chair Nancy Berlin also took

the mic, emphasizing our solidarity with housekeepers, cooks, dishwashers, front desk agents and servers who have been fighting for a contract since July.



“Having been on picket lines with you reminds me of a Poor People’s Campaign song,” she said. “It goes like this: ‘Somebody’s hurting my people and it’s gone on far too long, and we won’t be silent anymore!’ So our promise to you today is this: the Poor People’s Campaign will stand here with you, making a lot of noise, until you win fair contracts everywhere.”

Workers at five hotels have reached tentative contract agreements with owners, raising wages, strengthening pensions, and increasing affordable healthcare—but more than 50 hotels remain without a contract. Stay tuned here and check the UNITE HERE [Facebook page](#) for more about solidarity actions that are being organized during the holidays.

## News

### Remembering Bishop Carlton Pearson

A faith leader whose message of unconditional love and acceptance made him an influential and controversial American figure, Bishop Carlton Pearson died on November 19 at the age of 70.

“Bishop Carlton Pearson lived a prophetic life of radically inclusive hospitality that gave new life, hope, and vision to those who long for a Church that is free and liberated from a belief in hell, bondage, and judgment so it might genuinely be the Good News of Jesus Christ,” said Rev. Dr. Monica Cross, a CA PPC faith leader. “He was a man with a courageous faith that used the grace that God gave him to push the boundaries so that all people would experience God’s unconditional love.”

Bishop Pearson felt the mandate to help enhance the possibilities of peace on the planet through his emphasis on a more inclusive approach to spirituality, encouraging interfaith dialogue and fellowship. He was invited to speak in Synagogues, Islamic groups and atheist and agnostic organizations along with a variety of other spiritual communities, as well as with governments and influential leaders from around the world.

“I consider myself a sacred activist,” Pearson once [said](#). “I’m inspired to get involved in peace and justice activism. I am becoming more outspoken, honoring the teaching and example of our beloved Dr. King. I have been active in Jewish and Muslim organizations. I’m part of Bishop William Barber’s new Poor People’s Campaign. I preach radical

inclusion—love, liberty and justice for all. I'm standing with all marginalized people, particularly the LGBTQ+ global community and the injustices they experience.”

NPR's Sarah McCammon shared a [conversation](#) of remembrance with Will Bogle, agent and friend of Bishop Pearson.

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## Support the California PPC!

*When over 140 million Americans are poor or living with low-wages, it's time for systemic change. We are building a movement led by poor and impacted folks, building across all lines of division, in order to topple the interlocking pillars of racism, poverty, militarism, environmental destruction and this country's distorted moral narrative. Please help us achieve this goal by clicking below and chipping in whatever you can.*

**DONATE**

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### **Faith leaders gather to call for peace in Gaza**

A moving [prayer vigil](#) was held last Monday in Lafayette Square, Washington, D.C., where leaders called for a ceasefire in Gaza and demanded immediate and adequate access to humanitarian aid and the release of hostages. Speakers included Bishop Barber, Rev. Mae Elise Cannon, Bishop Leila Ortiz, Bishop Mariann Budde, Joyce Ajlouny, Ekemini Uwan, Michelle Dunne, Nikki Toyama-Szeto, Sister Susan Nchubiri, Rev. Leslie Copeland Tune, Rev. Adam Taylor, Lisa Sharon Harper, Shane Claiborne and Rev. Tyrone Pitts, together with supporting musicians.

“Governments may have the right and duty to provide security, but God does not give the right to kill, kidnap and destroy innocent life in the name of security,” said Bishop Barber. “We must join forces together with Jews, Muslims and Christians around the world. We must stand together with love for Palestinians, love for Jews, love for all who face racism and classism. What the world really needs now is a coalition of love.”

Watch the [prayer vigil](#) and consider adding your name to the call for a ceasefire.

### **California's eviction cases are surpassing pre-pandemic levels**

This week's stark update from [CalMatters](#) notes that eviction levels are on the rise—and not just to pre-pandemic levels, but even higher in a dozen California counties after representatives failed to extend the state's moratorium. While the data reported was from court filings, evidence shows many others are “informally evicted” or move out due to the threat of a court case.

We know that poverty and homelessness is the fourth leading cause of premature death in the U.S. One of the core PPC demands, as written in [H.Res.532](#), speaks to this injustice:

*Whereas there are 8,000,000 to 11,000,000 people at risk of homelessness, and an estimated 34,000,000 people are facing food insecurity, including a disproportionate share of Black, Latino, American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander,*

*and multiracial households, yet protections against evictions and hunger are being rolled back...we demand that economic security should be guaranteed to all, and to that end, every individual is guaranteed access to fundamental economic rights, including the unqualified right to safe, well-maintained, and healthy housing for themselves and their families within affordable reach and without becoming cost-burdened.*

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*Thanks for reading. If you have any questions, you are welcome to reply to this newsletter or email [california@poorpeoplescampaign.org](mailto:california@poorpeoplescampaign.org).*