

# CALIFORNIA

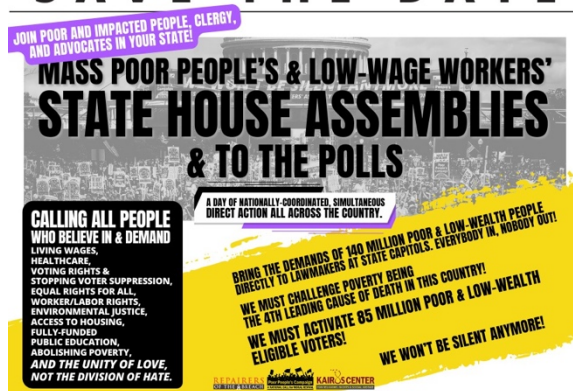


*We are thrilled to share the official flyer for the Mass Poor People's and Low-Wage Workers' Statehouse Assemblies. March might seem a long way off, but we have lots to do in order to make it a day our legislators can't ignore. Read on for more info, plus a recap of UNITE HERE's Las Posadas action (which ended with some good news), a pastor's reflections on Christian Zionism and more.*

## Announcement

**SATURDAY, MARCH 2, 2024 AT NOON**

**SAVE THE DATE**



**See you in Sacramento this coming March!**

**Mass Poor People's and Low-Wage Workers' Statehouse Assemblies and to the Polls**

**Saturday Mar. 2, 12pm PT**

**CA State Capitol, Sacramento**

California PPC kicked off the holiday season in a movement kind of way: by organizing for 2024! Organizers met simultaneously in-person in Los Angeles and Sacramento with others joining online from around the state. We were all connected via Zoom, with national PPC organizer Madison Ashley on the ground in Sacramento to lead our discussions.

It was exciting to be together for a productive day of reflection, fellowship and strategy as we made preparations for March 2, our nationally coordinated day of Mass Poor People's and Low-Wage Workers' Statehouse Assemblies and to the Polls—as well as other coordinated efforts that will come to pass in 2024.

Getting our CA PPC family ready for 2024 requires planning now to involve poor and impacted communities, faith leaders and advocates all across the state. We identified key locations and relationships to build and extend our power, starting in the Sacramento area, where the March 2 California action will take place. Our state capitols are not just symbolic; they are the policy hubs where people are deeply impacted by systemic poverty and the interlocking injustices every day.

We'll have more details on how you can be a part of our actions in the new year. For now, make sure to save the date: Saturday, March 2 at 12 pm PT in Sacramento.

We know close to 20 million fellow Californians live in poverty. Poverty kills. And it's going to take our creativity, clarity, voices and organized power to put an end to this injustice. We have declared we won't be silent any more! Join us as we build a movement to end poverty from the bottom up.

## Recaps



### **A powerful Las Posadas procession—and a win for workers**

Last Friday evening, LA PPC activists joined in solidarity with the courageous striking workers of [UNITE HERE Local 11](#) for a moving Las Posadas procession and ritual. Hotel workers from the nearby hotels were camped out on Century Boulevard near LAX to demonstrate their resolve to fight for better working conditions, wages and benefits.

Honoring the Christian traditions of Mary and Joseph’s search for shelter and hospitality as they prepared for the birth of the baby Jesus, the workers of the Sheraton Gateway and Four Points hotels marched from one hotel to the other. They sang, chanted and reenacted the story, as it resonated with their own cause of justice for migrants and a just contract.



Just as we prepared to end the evening with hot chocolate, cookies and conchas, we celebrated the news that the workers at the Beverly Hilton had won a tentative contract, covering more than 500 workers. So far, UNITE HERE has won tentative agreements with 10 hotels.

A special shoutout to our friends and allies from [Immaculate Heart Community](#) and [CLUE](#) for helping to organize this powerful action.

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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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### **SURJ and PPC national partners JVP host a Christian Zionism webinar**

*"In the Poor People's Campaign, we identify Christian nationalism as a key pillar of injustice in America that provides cover for a host of other ills, including systemic racism, poverty, climate change and militarism. To combat it, we believe it's necessary to build a multiracial moral movement that can speak directly to the needs and aspirations of poor and dispossessed Americans and fuse their many struggles into one." —Rev. Liz Theoharis*

*The recap of the SURJ/JVP [webinar](#) below was written by Rev. Joanna Lawrence Shenk, Associate Pastor at First Mennonite Church of San Francisco and CA PPC supporter.*

As a Christian clergy person, I was challenged and sobered by the recent webinar hosted by SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice) and JVP (Jewish Voice for Peace) addressing Christian Zionism. This is a theology undergirding U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East which is deeply antisemitic and Islamophobic. For people like me who grew up Evangelical Christian, this theology was reinforced implicitly and explicitly, through popular culture with the *Left Behind* book series and in Bible studies that implied the Second Coming of Jesus was dependent on a war in the Middle East between Muslims and Jews.

As we know from the interlocking injustices, white Christian nationalism blames poor people for being poor and claims there's not enough material resource for all poor people to have basic needs met. I see now how this theology of dominance in Christian nationalism functions to set vulnerable people against each other.

I encourage members of the Poor People's Campaign to [watch the webinar](#) with attention to the intersections between white Christian nationalism, militarism and Christian Zionism. To further understand the false narrative of Christian nationalism, read Rev. Theoharis's article "[How Do We Confront White Christian Nationalism?](#)"

I especially encourage people who are Christian, or who grew up within that tradition, to take seriously the call to recognize and dismantle Christian Zionist theologies.

## News

### **Hundreds of formerly homeless people evicted after L.A. nonprofit fails to pay rent on time**

After extensive research and interviews, CalMatters [reported](#) on the evictions of 306 formerly homeless people who were housed with the assistance of Homeless Outreach Program Integrated Care System (HOPICS), a nonprofit that received \$140 million in funding over the last three years but was months behind in paying rent on the apartments. Of the 306 people who were evicted, more than half have been re-housed, yet there remain 119 people whose housing was not yet confirmed. During a surge of pandemic funding, HOPICS relied on middlemen to re-house people, often temporarily; it has placed 3,100 people in permanent housing. Read more about the failures that led to the recent evictions in [CalMatters](#).

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.*

### **Watch: Advent of a Revolution / Winter Offensive They Cry Peace When There Is No Peace**

The Freedom Church of the Poor, together with partners from various fronts, are using the nine Sundays from Thanksgiving to MLK Day to hold a spiritual space of prayer, song, learning and community for our movement leaders. They are using this time to invite new leaders and organizations to share their insights and experiences, to get organized and to continue to unite the poor across lines of division. They are lifting up the true revolutionary power of the story told during this season: the birth of a poor brown-skinned Palestinian Jewish leader from the backwaters of Empire who helped bring “down the mighty from their thrones” and revealed a new way of peace—one rooted in truth, justice, and love.

Watch the recent [service](#) “They Cry Peace When There Is No Peace,” and [register](#) for this coming Sunday.

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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).*