

Thu, Jan 4, 2024

CALIFORNIA



We hope you're feeling refreshed and ready for a jam-packed year. The State House Assemblies are less than three months away, and we need your help organizing and rallying your community. Details on that action and a lot more below; if you haven't heard about Bishop Barber's recent experience at an AMC movie theater, you'll definitely want to keep reading.

Announcement



Get ready to go to Sacramento!

Mass Poor People's and Low-Wage Workers' State House Assemblies and to the Polls

Saturday Mar. 2, 12pm

CA State Capitol, Sacramento

It's 2024 and time to get organized for a busy year, starting with our State House Assembly in Sacramento on March 2. We'll be joining other states for a national day of action to address the needs and concerns of the nation's low-income people—including 18 million in California.

Here's what you can do right now to get involved:

- Let us know you're coming ([sign up here](#))
- Help us organize! Join us Wednesdays, starting next week, at 6:30pm on Zoom ([RSVP here](#))

Our state capitals are not just symbolic; they are the policy hubs whose decisions directly impact people facing systemic poverty and the interlocking injustices. Join us in building an action that will send a message to the legislators responsible for the unrelenting policy violence that we won't be silent anymore.

Upcoming meetings

Los Angeles regional meeting Sunday Jan. 7, 3pm | [RSVP](#)

Calling all Angelenos for our first regional meeting of 2024! We'll be making plans to celebrate Dr. King's birthday and legacy on January 15 and mobilizing for our March 2 Assembly in Sacramento. Even if you can't go to the Assembly, there will be lots of other ways to help: phone banking, media and social media work, signs, banners and more. Join us to learn more and add in your ideas. Invite your neighbors, families and friends—all are welcome. Let us know you're coming: [RSVP here](#).

Statewide organizing meetings Wednesdays, 6:30pm | [RSVP](#)

Help us organize for March 2 and beyond. You'll meet other activists from around the state and take part in mobilizing our communities for these historic actions. It's a place to lend a hand and to learn from one another. Drop in any Wednesday.

Recap



An Interfaith Watch Night Service of Lament, Hope and Call to Action

Watch the re-broadcast of the moving New Year's Eve service hosted by Bishop Barber and [Repairers of the Breach](#). He warmed up the congregation with a rousing opening of 10 reasons to thank God, repeating variations of "He woke me up this morning and started me on my way!" The service is a celebration and a coming together, standing in solidarity in prayer and song, with leaders from multiple faith backgrounds. We hope you enjoy it.

News

AMC's ADA debacle: Bishop Barber responds and meets with the CEO

Bishop Barber was escorted out of a screening of *The Color Purple* on Dec. 26, after insisting on using a chair he needs because of a severe and disabling bone disease. (He has been allowed to use the chair everywhere from Broadway to the White House—and even in jail after being arrested for nonviolent civil disobedience.) He said the situation with theater staff should never have escalated and that it was a violation of the 14th Amendment, which protects Americans' civil rights. He quickly held a [press conference](#) with community supporters to address the incident.

On Tuesday, a few days after AMC issued a public apology, Bishop Barber met with its CEO. In a statement following the meeting, he said, "This isn't about William Barber or one night in December. It's about the law. It's about treating every man, woman and child who has disabilities with compassion and dignity."

Background: In 1990, after the tireless work of disability activists, President George H.W. Bush signed the bipartisan Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which prohibits discrimination against those with disabilities in employment, transportation, public accommodations, communications and access to government services.

Read Bishop Barber's [opinion piece](#) "Why I couldn't watch *The Color Purple* with my mother" on CNN.

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.

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PPC in the media

"Delaying the menthol ban is another blow to racial health equity"

After the Biden administration stepped in to delay a ban on sales of menthol cigarettes, Bishop Barber spoke up on [The Hill](#), sharing his concerns for Black lives—especially Black children—who will be adversely affected by the delay. The FDA is ready to ban menthol in cigarettes, but the White House will take more time to review the plan, targeting March for implementation. It is estimated that the plan could prevent 300,000 to 650,000 smoking deaths, the majority of whom are poor Black Americans who smoke menthol cigarettes in much higher numbers and are targeted by tobacco marketing campaigns.

"Tobacco use is the number one cause of preventable death among Black Americans, claiming 45,000 Black lives every year," Bishop Barber writes. He goes on to call the tobacco industry's bluff: "Some have alleged that a menthol ban targets the 'choice' of Black Americans who smoke and could lead to increased police interaction, even though those policies regulate retailers and others in the industry. The tobacco industry's misinformation supports this claim. This is a tactic that cynically exploits the very real and traumatic issues of police brutality and mass incarceration endured by the Black community. Pass voting rights so we can elect politicians who will pass police reform. If you don't want people doing side hustles for money, then pass living wages. But don't tell Black people or poor people you have to accept death and being poisoned to prevent death and brutality at the hands of police."

"Activists who engage with voters of color are looking for messages that will resonate in 2024"

Democratic strategists and activists are working on boosting turnout of voters of color in the U.S., given recent polls and disappointing turnout in state elections in some parts of the country, according to recent reporting in the [Hartford Courant](#). The Reverend Frederick Haynes, president of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, a Chicago-based civil rights group founded by Rev. Jesse Jackson, said, "the Democratic party needs to tell voters what it has accomplished and what it plans to do beyond the election." He added that

they'd be challenging the administration: "What are you doing to get the message through the appropriate mediums to the communities that you say you're serving?"

Bishop Barber also appears in the article. "There's two kinds of tired," he says. "There's a tired when I'm going to quit, and there's a sick-and-tired but I'm not going to quit because I know I have the power to change this."

Thanks for reading. If you have any questions, you are welcome to reply to this newsletter or email california@poorpeoplescampaign.org.