

Thu, Apr 4, 2024

# CALIFORNIA



*We hope to see you all online at 6:30pm this evening, when we'll collectively recite one of the most eloquent antiwar statements in modern history. In-person readings are also happening throughout the day; details below, along with a recap of the latest action in support of hotel workers, a report on the fight to protect HBCUs, Rev. Theoharis's Easter prayer for peace and more.*

## Announcements



### **Tonight! Online reading of “Beyond Vietnam”**

**6:30pm | [RSVP](#)**

Join us online this evening as we continue our tradition of reading Dr. Martin Luther King’s prophetic speech “Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence.” Members from across the state will take turns reciting his speech in its entirety so that we can experience the eloquence of his words and depth of his message.

Why this speech? Let’s review...

In the proposed federal budget for fiscal year 2025, which includes \$1.6 trillion in discretionary spending, \$69 out of every \$100 federal dollars would go toward militarization and its support systems, including \$850 billion for the Pentagon, \$34 billion for nuclear weapons and \$11.6 billion in international military aid—so far. This leaves just 31 percent of the discretionary budget for everything else, including housing programs, public education, public health and environmental protection.

Dr. King’s words could not be more relevant today. This speech reminds us that we must call for an end to all wars and occupations around the world—and demand the redirection of resources from the industries of violence to providing for the wellbeing of all people everywhere and the preservation of our environment.

**JOIN US**

In addition to the online gathering, you can join an in-person reading in the following cities:

#### **Oakland**

12pm

Oakland City Hall (Oscar Grant Plaza)

More info: Jackie Cabasso, [wslf@earthlink.net](mailto:wslf@earthlink.net)

Sponsored by Western States Legal Foundation

#### **Santa Cruz**

7pm

[612 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz](#)

More info: Peter Klotz-Chamberlin, [peter@rcnv.org](mailto:peter@rcnv.org)

Sponsored by Resource Center for Nonviolence

## Los Angeles

1pm

426 S.Alexandria Ave. Los Angeles 90020 (Alexandria House)

More info: Nancy Berlin, [nancyanneberlin@gmail.com](mailto:nancyanneberlin@gmail.com)

Sponsored by Alexandria House



### Hotel Workers rally with Sen. Sanders in DTLA

Friday April 5, 4pm (picket line) and 5pm (rally)

Hotel Figueroa (939 S. Figueroa Street, Los Angeles; Olympic and Figueroa)

U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders will join Unite Here Local 11 members at a powerful rally at the Hotel Figueroa! Come join us in standing with hotel workers and raising our voices to raise the wage. There are multiple paid parking lots nearby—or take Metro.

### Wood Street Encampment Demolition Anniversary

Wednesday April 10, 12pm

26th & Willow Streets, Oakland

Members of the Wood Street encampment invite the community to attend a press conference to mark one year since encampment residents were displaced from their homes. Once home to over 200 people, Wood Street was a self-sustaining community, offering mutual aid for residents in a way many had never experienced. Beginning in April 2023, about 70 remaining residents were forced to move. With little alternative, many of the residents ended up moving to the city-sanctioned community cabin site or an RV lot in East Oakland.

Costing 8.3 million dollars, the cabin site opened in March 2023, before construction was completed. The site lacked key amenities such as functional laundry machines, hot running water in the kitchen and properly working showers. Maintenance on the site has been inconsistent and basic needs have often gone unmet, with essentials like toilet paper and drinking water scarce or lacking entirely. Maintenance and custodial duties are often tended to by residents who were never paid or recognized for their efforts. Residents have recounted being retaliated against for complaining about problems at the site, and have called staff abusive and unhelpful.

At this press conference, members of the Wood Street community will reflect on their lives in the year since their community was displaced and announce upcoming actions.

## Meetings

### Los Angeles regional meeting

Sunday April 7, 3pm | [RSVP](#)

Angelenos: Help us plan to register, educate and mobilize low-income people to vote! We'll also have a debrief of our April 4 Beyond Vietnam reading and discuss how we can act to dismantle the war economy. All are welcome—please invite your family, friends and communities.

### Statewide organizing meetings

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

Our Wednesday meetings are a time to meet activists from around the state and take part in educating, registering and mobilizing our communities for the November election. It's a place to lend a hand and to learn from one another.

## Recap



### Station of the Worker's Cross

On Good Friday at the Figueroa Hotel in downtown L.A., clergy and laity gathered in fellowship with hotel workers from UNITE HERE Local 11 to walk their own Stations of the Cross—and to honor the workers who have struggled for their rights to just wages and fair working conditions. Barred from entering the hotel, they circled the premises to pause in prayer at each station.

The gathering sang "Were You There (When They Crucified My Lord)?" and hotel workers gave witness to the conditions that oppress them. At the final stop the group was able to enter the hotel, where they raised their voices to proclaim, "We will be back! ¡Sí se puede!"

We hope that the Figueroa Hotel managers heard and heeded their prayers!

—Recap by Lenore N. Dowling, Immaculate Heart Community (IHM)

## News



### **Bishop Barber decries Republican attacks on HBCUs**

On Monday, Bishop Barber joined Tennessee State University (TSU) student leaders and national faith and civil rights leaders at a press conference to sound the alarm about extremist Republican legislatures attacking and defunding historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). This comes after the Tennessee legislature pushed through a bill last week to vacate the TSU board of trustees following an audit.

Applauding the student leaders, Bishop Barber said, “All underfunded HBCUs are in the former confederate states, with almost \$13 billion underfunding. We’re here today to say that everybody that is concerned about this issue, especially students, need to be registered to vote and use those votes to determine who sits in these legislatures.”

In addition to recalling the history of land grant colleges and the fight for equal access to education, Bishop Barber outlined the basic rights the students deserve. “The students ought to have an automatic [board of trustees] seat that they pick, not that is picked for them. And there ought to be voting precincts on every campus. And lastly, we need to have Black College Day, when all colleges march on the legislature and demand funding.”

You can [watch the press conference](#) and check out [local news](#) coverage for background.

---

### **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**

---

## In the media

### **Rev. Theoharis shares Easter service, speaks up for Gaza and more**

Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis participated in the [Freedom Church of the Poor Easter Sunday Service for Gaza](#) this past weekend. Leading attendees in a grounding word, she said, “This is supposed to be a day of resurrection—yet it’s hard to feel that or believe that. With policy violence and police violence, and war and genocide cutting lives short in this death-dealing society, resurrection is distant. It’s hard to wish each other a Happy Easter.”

She continued, “Yet this resurrection day seems similar to the original one, where people were living under the Roman occupation of Palestine. Where war and violence were rampant, poverty claiming the lives of many. If anyone was fasting, it was because there wasn’t enough food to eat. Resurrection wasn’t preached from the perspective of those on top; it was demanded from those on the bottom.”

Then on Monday, Rev Theoharis joined other leaders of faith in New York during a 24hour [prayer vigil](#) to demand a just state budget that addresses poverty. “I am compelled to speak up and organize,” she said. “This is a time when many New Yorkers are turning to food pantries and working multiple jobs to make ends meet. This moment with this state budget offers an opportunity to make a transformative investment. Will we seize the moment?”

### **Bishop Barber calls out Trump’s attempts to “con poor voters”**

Referring to a Chris Matthews interview on [MSNBC’s Morning Joe](#), Bishop Barber wrote, “@HardballChris is right: Trump is trying to con poor voters. But they aren’t stupid. That’s why #PoorPeoplesCampaign launched a campaign March 2 to reach 15 million infrequent voters on issues that matter to them: living wages, healthcare & voting rights.”

---

*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).*