

Thu, Aug 17, 2023

CALIFORNIA



We left last week's Moral Poverty Action Congress report-back (recapped below) fired up and ready to get going on the work ahead. So what is the work ahead? Read on and get a glimpse. We've also got an inspiring reflection on the report-back and a look at some events around Black August.

Recap



Moral Poverty Action Congress CA delegates deliver a moving report-back

Last Sunday's Moral Poverty Action Congress report-back was a great success, with over 50 attendees from the top of the state to the bottom. Delegates Kenia Alcocer and Michelle Hayes guided us through the virtual meeting, which began with the soulful sounds of "Keep Your Eyes on the Prize" and a land acknowledgement.

Our delegates then shared their stories and reflections on the Congress—and while we were reminded of the sobering reality that Poverty = Death, we also heard about our own solutions included in the [3rd Reconstruction Resolution](#) and the tremendous power of movement-building.

This presentation reminded us yet again why we went to the nation's capital and what we are called to accomplish in the months and years ahead. Now we turn our attention to actions at state capitals next February, our new Moral Action Teams and more.

So what's next? Here are three things you can do right now:

- [Join a Moral Action Team](#) to meet and follow up with your member of Congress
- Spread the word and grow our base by posting about our efforts on social media, sharing this newsletter and inviting your family, friends, organizations and congregations to join in
- Find other ways to join our state's campaign to end poverty by [filling out this form](#)

Lots of exciting stuff on the horizon. Forward together!

A personal reflection on the report-back

I wasn't interested until I was. They started quoting statistics. For example, 540,000 U.S. homes do not have indoor plumbing. I thought, "That's not very many out of 340 million people." But I'm one of them. Later in the meeting, I learned that many more people have plumbing but no water. Their water has been shut off. That's not right. Water, clean water, is a human right. So is clean air and uncontaminated soil. How can we get these things we need?

We can do direct action together, informing others and ourselves along the way. For example, poverty is the fourth leading cause of death. Lack of healthcare, lack of healthful food, too much air pollution, chemical pollution and other factors cause poor people to die much sooner than those with adequate incomes.

Working with the Poor People's Campaign helps build power to change policy. This past June, in Washington, D.C., over 700 participants ran a blitz on Congress, emphasizing [House Resolution 532](#), introduced by Rep. Barbara Lee of California and Rep. Pramila Jayapal of Washington. H.Res.532 covers just about every aspect of poverty that PPC is concerned

about: raising the minimum wage, healthcare for all, debt relief, ending systemic racism, wages for care work and the right to clean water.

Now it is time for follow-up, contacting the Congressional people again to remind them of what's going on. After that, the CA PPC will start building an in-state assembly for February 2024. This rally will get the word out for another assembly in D.C. in June 2024. The theme for that gathering will be "To the Polls." California is very good at registering voters, but we are 35th in actual voter turnout. We poor people can make the difference in voting. As Rev. Barber has said many times: A small increase in our participation can turn the tide.

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

News



An L.A. Poet Laureate and others honor Black August

As part of the Freedom Church of the Poor's Black August series, poet [Luis J. Rodriguez](#), 2014 Poet Laureate of Los Angeles, read his poem "[Watts Bleeds](#)" at the Watts mural Unity Under the Sun. Black August is a tradition that began in California's prisons in the 1970s after the deaths of Jonathan and George Jackson and other incarcerated Black people who sought freedom. This year, events are being held to remember the Watts Uprising.

The [Freedom Church of the Poor](#) is a project of the Kairos Center, helping to identify and develop moral and spiritual leadership for the struggle to end poverty, systemic racism, ecological devastation, militarism and the false moral narrative of Christian nationalism. In addition to weekly online services that reach thousands of people, the Freedom Church holds regular Bible study and is developing ways to provide ongoing prayer and support to the church community. Recent recordings are available on the [Kairos Center YouTube channel](#).

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