

“After Selma and the Voting Rights Bill, we moved into a new era, which must be an era of revolution...In short, we have moved into an era where we are called upon to raise certain basic questions about the whole society.”

--Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



## **COMMUNITY HEARING ON POVERTY: A RENEWAL OF DR. KING'S POOR PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN**

Friday, March 6, 2015  
11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Brown Chapel A.M.E. Church  
410 Martin Luther King Street  
Selma, AL

**#SelmalsNow**

Convened by leaders from Union Theological Seminary, Howard University Divinity School, United Workers of Baltimore City, Save OurSelves Coalition, Alabama Multicultural Fisheries & Seafood Workers Cooperative, Iraq Veterans Against the War, Skylight Pictures, Kairos Center for Religion, Rights, and Social Justice, the Environmental and Climate Justice Program of the NAACP, Selma Auto Workers United, Federation of Southern Cooperatives and Legal Services Alabama.

## Plight, Fight, and Insight: Engaging Local Struggles and Calling for a Poor People's Campaign for Today

This year's march marks fifty years since the Selma voting rights campaign, the march to Montgomery, and the violence of "Bloody Sunday." Fifty years later, community leaders in Selma are calling for a continuation of the fight for civil and fundamental human rights, not just a commemoration of those events. In Selma and throughout the South, communities are still struggling against injustice, oppression, and exploitation. Everyday people are fighting back against an unfair police and prison system, cuts to public education, the denial of Medicaid expansion, unsafe working conditions and unfair wages, ecological devastation and the dangerous pollution of their communities, and renewed attacks on voting rights.

Led by a delegation of leaders representing the effort to re-ignite Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s call for a Poor People's Campaign in 1968, we come together today to hold up the plight of the poor today, the fight being made by those directly affected to secure their basic civil and human rights, and the insight of those communities into solutions to the crises we are all facing.

We come together today with the following goals:

To highlight and document the failure of the U.S. to eliminate poverty, in its many manifestations, in Selma and across the U.S.

To organize and educate ourselves and the community about the human rights violations that currently exist in Alabama and across the South, revealing how issues of housing, healthcare, and incarceration connect to issues of education, low wage work, militarism, and environmental degradation.

To provide a platform for poor and dispossessed people to tell their stories of the economic human rights violations they are experiencing in their lives.

To convene local and national leaders to develop the shared analysis and responsibility needed to work together to end economic human rights violations by finishing the unfinished business of Rev. Dr. King, igniting a new Poor People's Campaign to abolish poverty.

Opening Music Dr. Viola Bradford

Welcome to Brown Memorial Chapel and Prayer The Rev. Leodis Strong

Welcome to the Community Hearing Erica Williams  
Howard Divinity School

Bridge Testimony - Selma Then and Now Annie Pearl Avery  
Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee

Music Yara Allen  
North Carolina NAACP

"There Comes a Time When Silence is Betrayal; the Truth Must Be Told"  
(This response will be repeated by the audience at the end of each testimony.)

### Voices on the Ground: Part 1

Understanding the Current Conditions Jacqueline Patterson  
NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Program

Safe Harbor Video  
Alabama Multi-Cultural Fisher & Seafood Worker-Owned Cooperative

Siriporn Hall  
Alabama Multi-Cultural Fisher & Seafood Worker-Owned Cooperative

Catherine Coleman Flowers  
Equal Justice Initiative and Alabama Center for Rural Enterprise

Paul Nelson  
Alabama Multi-Cultural Fisher & Seafood Worker-Owned Cooperative

Johminia Rudolph  
Legal Services Alabama

Cultural Performance

## Voices on the Ground: Part 2

### Understanding the Current Conditions

Jose Vasquez  
Iraq Veterans Against the War

Sherry Mitchell and Selma Public Housing Residents

James Washington

National Association of Black Veterans, Alabama Chapter

Equal Justice Initiative

Lakeisha Griffin-McCovery

Federation of Child Care Centers of Alabama (FOCAL)

### Cultural Performance

## Voices on the Ground: Part 3

### Understanding the Current Conditions

Jaffe Pickett  
Legal Services Alabama

Mr. Otis Hill

Legal Services Alabama

Adriane McIver

Fight for Medicaid Expansion Alabama

Rev. Samuel Fairley

Southeastern Goat Cooperative (SoGoCo)

Callie Greer

Fight for Medicaid Expansion Alabama

Letasha Irby

Selma Auto Workers United

### Music

Charon Hribar and John Wessel-McCoy  
Poor People's Campaign Program,  
Kairos Center for Religions, Rights, and Social Justice

## Evoking the Call for a Poor People's Campaign

"We as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. We must rapidly begin the shift from a "thing-oriented" society to a "person-oriented" society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered... True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it is not haphazard and superficial. It comes to see that an edifice, which produces beggars needs restructuring. A true revolution of values will soon look uneasily on the glaring contrast of poverty and wealth... A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death."

--Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "Beyond Vietnam" (April 1967)

## Responding to What We've Heard

Bernard Simelton

President, Alabama NAACP

Serene Jones

President, Union Theological Seminary

Luis Larin

Organizer, United Workers of Baltimore City

Ejim Dike

Executive Director, U.S. Human Rights Network

Open Response

## Call for a Poor People's Campaign Today

### Call to Action

Rev. Dr. William Barber II  
North Carolina NAACP

### Closing Music

Dr. Viola Bradford  
With Yara Allen, Charon Hribar and John Wessel-McCoy

Today's gathering was planned by a tremendous and growing network of leaders committed to fighting for our lives, rights and deepest values. We are grateful for the leadership and partnership of Faya Rose Touré and Sen. Hank Sanders, the Jubilee Bridge Crossing Planning Committee and all the foot soldiers in Selma who helped organize this community hearing. We give thanks to Pastor Leodis Strong and the Brown Chapel AME Church for opening their doors to us. We are grateful for the contributions of Alabama Center for Rural Enterprise, Alabama Multi-Cultural Fisher & Seafood Worker-Owned Cooperative, Alabama NAACP, the Clayton family, Climate Reality Project, Ellwood Community Church, Equal Justice Initiative, Faith Matters Network, Federation of Southern Cooperatives, Fight for Fifteen, Fight for Medicaid Alabama, Federation of Child Care Centers of Alabama (FOCAL), Howard Divinity School, Iraq Veterans Against the War, Legal Services Alabama, NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Program, North Carolina NAACP, Save OurSelves Coalition of Alabama, Selma Auto Workers United, Skylight Pictures, Union Theological Seminary, U.S. Human Rights Network, United Workers of Baltimore City and 21st Century Youth.



Historic Thousands on Jones Street 2014, Raleigh, North Carolina

Join the Reigniting of Rev. Dr. King's Poor People's Campaign for Today

On December 4, 1967, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. announced plans for a Poor People's Campaign and called for the nation to take dramatic steps to end poverty. In the wake of his assassination the campaign went forward but fell short of his vision. Today, nearly fifty years later, we are experiencing unprecedented poverty in the midst of plenty and unnecessary abandonment in spite of unheard abundance. Throughout the world there are growing struggles pushed forward by people who are organizing and fighting for our lives, rights and deepest values. Those in the forefront of these struggles see the need to connect battles which are too often separated and begin creating the broad and deep social movement needed to transform the national and global structures that produce the rotten fruits of poverty, inequality and oppression. This is the vision of the Poor People's Campaign, then and now.

Endorse the call for a Poor People's Campaign for Today (as an individual or organization) at [www.PoorPeoplesCampaign.org](http://www.PoorPeoplesCampaign.org).

Promote and discuss the call for a new Poor People's Campaign with others in your congregation, organization and community.

Email us at [newpoorpeoplescampaign@gmail.com](mailto:newpoorpeoplescampaign@gmail.com) and tell us about the work your group or organization is doing.

Join monthly Poor People's Campaign for Today conference calls (8pm EST on Wed. March 18). Email us for more details.

Host a delegation from the Poor People's Campaign National Organizing Tour.



The Poor People's Campaign's Resurrection City, June 1968, Washington, D.C.,