

## Reimagining King’s Vision – The Fierce Urgency of Now

From Ukraine to Uvalde, the crises of militarism, materialism and racism today—Join our Webinar on Sunday, January 15<sup>th</sup>.

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Exactly one year before he was murdered, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. gave an historic sermon at New York’s Riverside Church on the profound connection between US militarism abroad with violence, racial repression, and widespread deprivation on the home front.



Over 50 years later, **from Ukraine to Uvalde** the crises of militarism, materialism, racism and the prospect of spiritual death that Dr. King warned us about are still very much with us. Not only does this militarism abroad continue to seed violence and poverty at home, it now aggravates the climate crisis and consumes vital resources that could alleviate climate-related suffering.

On what would be his 93rd birthday— **Sunday, January 15 from 4-5:30 pm EST**— we are hosting a webinar, “[Reimagining King’s Vision – The Fierce Urgency of Now](#)” with an esteemed panel of presenters who will discuss how King’s radical wisdom applies to our current moment.

Our presenters include **Medea Benjamin** (CODEPINK), **Ash-Lee Henderson** (Highlander Center), **Tiffany Loftin** (NAACP Youth), **Rev. Liz Theoharis** (Poor People’s Campaign), and **Luis Rodriguez** (Tia Chucha’s Centro Cultural and Bookstore). (See biographies below.)

“[Reimagining King’s Vision – The Fierce Urgency of Now](#)” is sponsored by CODEPINK, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Highlander Center, The National Council of Elders and the King and Breaking Silence Coalition, in cooperation with other partner organizations.

[Register here!](#)

### Biographic information on panelists:

**Medea Benjamin** (CODEPINK) is the co-founder of the women-led peace group CODEPINK. She is also co-founder of the human rights group Global Exchange, the Peace in Ukraine Coalition, ACERE: The Alliance for Cuba Engagement and Respect, and the Nobel Peace Prize for Cuban Doctors Campaign. Medea has been an advocate for social justice for 50 years. Described as “one of America’s most committed — and most effective — fighters for human rights” by New York Newsday, and “one of the high-profile leaders of the peace movement” by the Los Angeles Times.

**Luis J. Rodriguez** (Tia Chucha's Centro Cultural & Bookstore) is a leading Chicano writer with 16 multi-genre books including a bestselling memoir, "Always Running, La Vida Loca, Gang Days in L.A." and its sequel "It Calls You Back: An Odyssey Through Love, Addiction, Revolutions & Healing." For 50 years he's been active in urban peace, ending mass incarceration, and social justice struggles, including some 40 years of doing poetry readings, talks, healing circles, and creative writing workshops in prisons, jails, and juvenile lockups throughout the United States, Mexico, Central America, South America, and Europe. He's founding editor of Tia Chucha Press, renowned for emerging voices in poetry, and cofounder with his wife Trini of Tia Chucha's Centro Cultural & Bookstore in Los Angeles' San Fernando Valley. He's also active in Indigenous issues and Native spiritual practices, his teachers being from the Mexica (US and Mexico), Dine (Navajo), Lakota, Akimel O'odham, Pibil (El Salvador), Maya (Mexico and Guatemala), and Quechua (Peru). From 2014-2016, he served as Los Angeles Poet Laureate.

**Tiffany D. Loftin** (NAACP Youth) is a national labor, civil, and youth organizer. From managing national civic engagement campaigns, to stopping state violence, and organizing for education and labor, she is a student of the movement. She was appointed by President Barack Obama to serve on the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African Americans in Higher Education. She is based in her hometown of Los Angeles, CA.

**Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis** is founding director of the [Kairos Center for Religions, Rights, and Social Justice](#), at Union Theological Seminary. Ordained to ministry in the Presbyterian Church USA, Dr. Theoharis is highly respected scholar, author, and social critic who serves as Co-Chair of the [Poor People's Campaign](#).

In 2021 she was awarded the 30th Annual [Freedom Award](#) by the National Civil Rights Museum, the [Hunger Leadership Award](#) from the Congressional Hunger Center, and the Adela Dwyer-St. Thomas of [Villanova Peace Award](#), each along with the Rev. Dr. William Barber II for their work with the Poor People's Campaign. In 2020 she was named one of 15 [Faith Leaders to Watch](#) by the Center for American Progress. In 2019, she was a [Selma "Bridge" Award](#) recipient and named one of [11 Women Shaping the Church](#) by *Sojourners*. In 2018, she gave the "Building a Moral Movement" [TEDtalk](#) at TEDWomen, was named one of the *Politico 50* "thinkers, doers and visionaries whose ideas are driving politics", and was also named a [Women of Faith Award](#) recipient by the Presbyterian Church (USA).

**Ash-Lee Woodard Henderson** is an Affrilachian (Black Appalachian) woman from the working class. Born and raised in Southeast Tennessee, she is the first Black woman to serve as Co-Executive Director of the Highlander Research & Education Center in New Market, TN. As a member of multiple leadership teams in the Movement for Black Lives (M4BL), Ash-Lee has thrown down on the Vision for Black Lives and the BREATHE Act. Ash-Lee has served on the governance council of the Southern Movement Assembly, the advisory committee of the National Bailout Collective, and is an active leader of The Frontline. She is a long-time activist who has done work in movements fighting for workers, for reproductive justice, for LGBTQUIA+ folks, for environmental justice, and more.

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