A group of Disciples are working together to provide liturgical resources for our congregations during the six Sundays during the 40-Days of action. Here are some materials for Week 4 (June 3-9) of the Poor People’s Campaign which will focus on The Right to Health and a Healthy Planet: Ecological Devastation and Health Care so please look for opportunities to address these themes in your worship on Sunday and public witness on Monday. With the prophetic leadership of Rev. Terri Hord Owens and Rev. Dr. William Barber II, God has raised up a holy remnant of Disciples of Christ who are willing to stand in the gap and be repairers of the breach, uniting people across the lines of deep difference to restore harmony to the community.

Year B, 1 Samuel 3:1-10, Deuteronomy 5:12-15, 2 Corinthians 4:5-12, Mark 2:23-3:6

Second Sunday after Pentecost Green

(For those using liturgical colors, we’re in green from now until Advent 1)

Call to Worship (Responsive)

One: We gather together this Holy Sabbath, eager to hear God’s call.

Many: We hear the stories of Samuel and the disciples of Jesus,

One: called by God into service.

Many: So today, we come ready to listen.

One: In our singing and praying, in our connection with scripture and our communion with one another,

Many: may we be tuned to hear God’s call to us.
Or: have the choir or a small group sing the chorus of *Here I Am, Lord* (Chalice #452)

**Opening Prayer:** God of mercy and love, as we settle into these moments of Sabbath rest, we yearn to find our place in your ongoing story of responsive people.

Like Samuel, we are still learning to hear your voice.

Like the disciples, we are still seeking to proclaim and embody the Gospel so it will be heard as Good News to the Poor.

Like our General Minister and President Rev. Terri Hord Owens, we are still seeking to discern how we can fully offer our gifts and graces to the Poor People's Campaign.

So come to us this morning in ways we can perceive.

Open our eyes, our ears and our hearts, that we, too, might be inspired to actions befitting followers of Jesus, the Christ. AMEN

**Call to Worship:** Consider using Psalm 139: 1-6, 13-18.

**1 Samuel 3:1-20**

In this call narrative in the Hebrew Bible, we see the young boy Samuel called by God three times. Not knowing how to discern the voice of the Lord, he relies on the wise guidance of his mentor Eli. Eli encourages Samuel to seek God and God gives him a prophecy. 1 Samuel 3:11 is a key verse where the Lord says to Samuel “See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle.” Ironically Samuel’s prophecy is a prophecy of judgement against Eli’s house,
but Eli accepts the prophecy because it comes from Samuel who he believes was anointed by the Spirit as a prophet of God. Because Samuel was responsive and obedient to the voice of God he grew in stature: “The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of Samuel’s words fall to the ground: (vs. 19). Like Samuel we need to be responsive to the voice of God.

Deuteronomy 5:12-15

“Remember the Sabbath and Keep it Holy” (Deut. 5:12). After working for six days of the week, God calls us to take a break and rest. Sabbath is a rest for both creatures and the whole community of creation.

When viewed through the lens of the Sabbath, Disciples Bible scholar Dr. Richard H. Lowery argues that the creation narratives of Scripture portray “a world fundamentally benevolent and able to produce enough to sustain prosperous human life. This theme of natural abundance is coupled, however, with a theme of self-restraint. By God’s own precedent, rest is woven into the fabric of the universe. Periodic self-limitation, deliberate relinquishment of power to work the world and control it, is by Sabbath example a cosmic principle.” (note: Richard H. Lowery, Sabbath and Jubilee (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000), 82)

Walter Brueggemann argues that Sabbath is resistance, offering an alternative way of living in our world of mass consumption. In contrast to Pharoah’s economy that never rests, the Sabbath economy takes time for both humans (made in God’s image) and the whole community of creation to rest and restore. As we see in the Year of Jubilee (Leviticus 25), the land is to lay fallow, debts are to be forgiven, and prisoners are to let out of prison. During the 7th and 50th years, the Sabbath principle takes on much broader proportions during the year of Jubilee. Since God created the world and it is good, the world is full of abundance. God’s economy says there is more than enough for all of your needs. You need to trust in God as we all do our part to be caretakers of our one planet that we all depend on.

Deut. 5:15 argues that we are to practice sabbath because God liberated the Jews from slavery in Egypt: “Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm.” The core narrative of the Hebrew Bible is that we were once slaves and we are supposed to remember that experience of what it is to be an oppressed people. The way that we relate to others and approach justice work entails keeping in our memory what it means
to be slaves in Egypt. From Rabbi Stephen Samuel Wise to Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, Judaism has a long history of faith-rooted justice work in America. Building on this prophetic tradition, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rev. William Barber II are calling us as Disciples to step up and step out and offering prophetic leadership to the Poor People’s Campaign at a time like this!

*We all have a decision to make: We will be agents of death and destruction or prophets of life and love?*

"I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live." (Deuteronomy 30:19)

**Psalm 139**

This Psalm affirms that God knit us “together in my mother’s womb” (139:13). God cares for each person in their particularity whether they have health care or not.

We're all “fearfully and wonderfully made” by our Creator (Psalm 139:14) With over 4,645 deaths of our sisters and brothers in Puerto Rico 🇵🇷 and over 1,500 immigrant children lost by Trump's administration, we have to fight fiercely for all God's children with large-hearted love.

We limit someone’s ability to thrive as a “fearfully and wonderfully made” creation (Psalm 139:14).

In contrast to comments about other humans by President Trump and Roseanne Barr, specialness, uniqueness and dignity in the human person.

Psalm 139: 18-19: We are in a journey toward the the mysterious and infinite depths of God

**Psalm 81**

****** DROP THE MIC: Psalm 81:8,9: “Here, O my people, while I admonish you; O Israel, if you would but listen to me!” There shall be no strange god among you; you shall not bow down to a foreign god.
Creation is God, but it is not God. Since God is our Creator, we are free to act in the world and for the world. Dr. Richard H. Lowery makes a distinction between “freedom from the world (as the home of enslaving idols) and freedom for the world (as God’s good creation).” (Richard H. Lowery, Sabbath and Jubilee (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000), 164). Psalm 81 challenges us not to bow down to foreign gods like the social sins we are confronting in the Poor People’s Campaign: Racism, Materialism, Militarism and Environmental devastation.

We treat mammon and certain elite white people like they are foreign gods. We are putting some things above God. In Minnesota, they are protesting another pipeline that is coming through. The Poor People’s Campaign is a big campaign with lofty goals. We can see God’s fruit in the context of the fruit of the whole. Rev. Barber’s Moral Mondays had been happening for years. We need to remember the history and broader social context as we all do our small part to advance this campaign. Dr. King died as an individual and he is coming back as a community.

2 Cor 4:11-12

Paul encourages the Corinthians to embody God’s love and life. While “death is at work” in the Apostle Paul and his ministers, it is all for the Corinthian Christians, “but life in you” (2 Cor 4:12). Like Melanie L Harris argues in her new book Eco-Womanism we need a practice of discipleship that seeks life and flourishing of all people, especially Black folks, in the context of the restoration of shalom in the community of creation. As we seek to live together in what Dr. King called a “World House,” let’s do our part to care for each other, in body and soul, and care for our planet, which in the words of Pope Francis is “Our Common Home.”

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Quotes:

“Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice. Justice at its best is love correcting everything that stands against love.”

“The hottest place in Hell is reserved for those who remain neutral in times of great moral conflict.”

“The moral arc of the universe bends at the elbow of justice.”
“The past is prophetic in that it asserts loudly that wars are poor chisels for carving out peaceful tomorrows.”

“The time has come for us to civilize ourselves by the total, direct and immediate abolition of poverty.”

“The time is always right to do what is right.”