



**Continuing
to Break the
Silence:
Living into
the Difficult
Legacy of
April 4th**

**Church of All Nations
Fourth Sunday after Easter, 2016
Ched Myers (www.ChedMyers.org)**

⁹ After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands...

13 One of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?"

14 I said to him, "Sir, you are the one that knows." Then he said to me, "These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

--Rev 7:9, 13f



Wade in the Water

Who are those children all dressed in **Red**?
God's gonna trouble the water.
Must be the ones that Moses led.
God's gonna trouble the water.



*Chorus. Wade in the Water, wade in the water children.
Wade in the Water. God's gonna trouble the water.*

Who are those children all dressed in **White**?
God's gonna trouble the water.
Must be the ones of the Israelites.
God's gonna trouble the water. *Chorus.*

Who are those children all dressed in **Blue**?
God's gonna trouble the water.
Must be the ones that made it through.
God's gonna trouble the water. *Chorus.*



*Thomas Moran, "Slave Hunt in the
Great Dismal Swamp," 1862.*



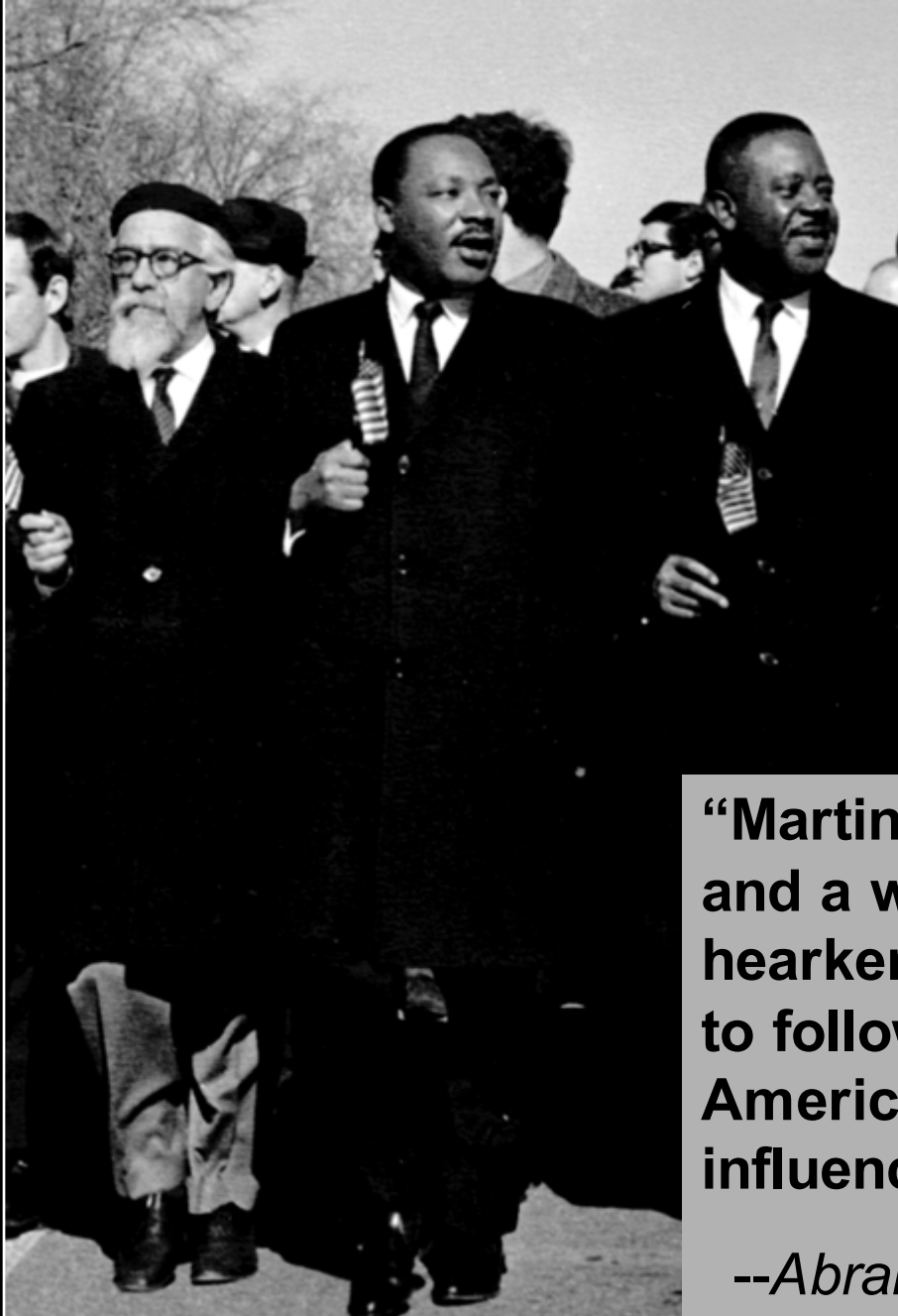
“...made white in
the blood of the
Lamb...”
(Rev 7:14)

April 9, 1968: M.L. King lying in
state. *Photo by Bill Preston.*



On April 4, 1968, Dr. King was assassinated in Memphis, TN.





“Martin Luther King is a voice, a vision and a way... I call upon every Jew to hearken to his voice, to share his vision, to follow in his way. The whole future of America will depend upon the impact and influence of Dr. King.”

--Abraham Joshua Heschel, March 25, 1968

Left: Rabbi Abraham Heschel with Martin Luther King in Selma, 1965.

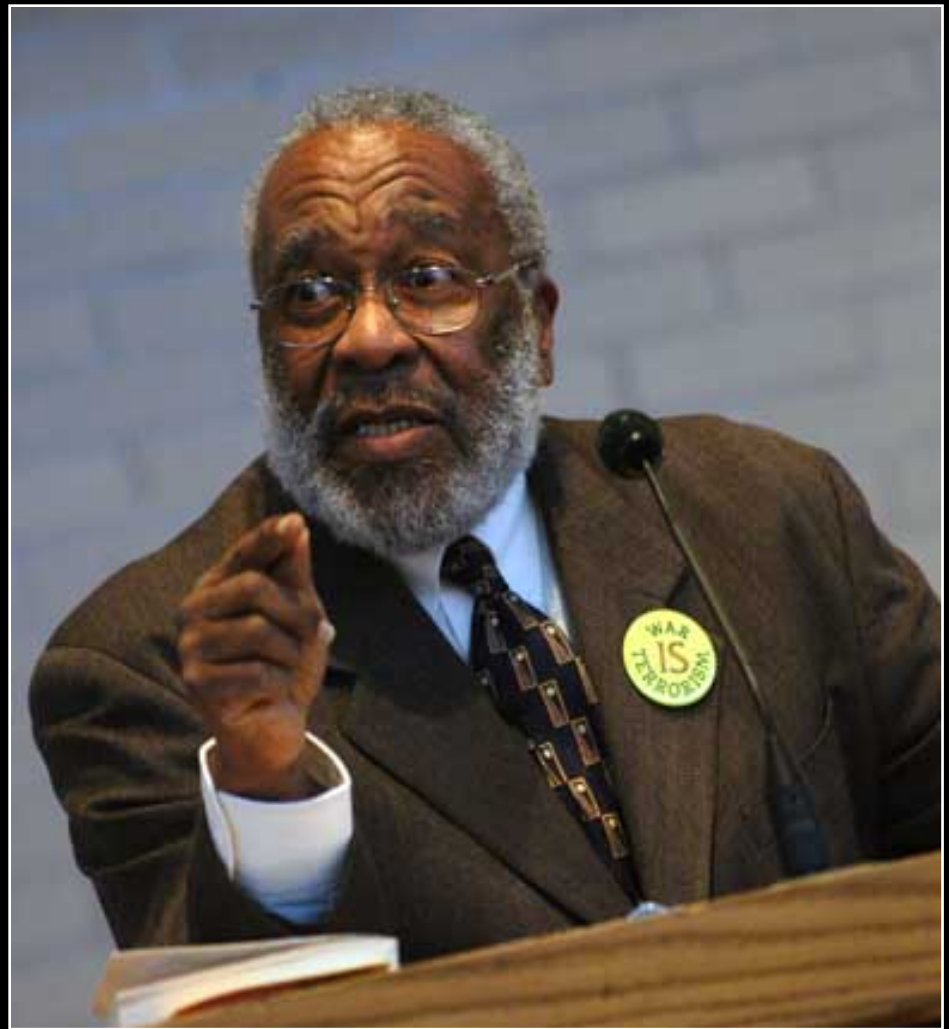
Right: March for Peace at the Arlington National Cemetery, 1968.

MARTIN LUTHER KING

The Inconvenient Hero



Vincent Harding



“The untranquil King and his peace-disturbing vision, words and deeds hold the key to the future of America... We owe ourselves, our children and our nation a far more serious exploration and comprehension of the man and the widespread movement with which he was identified.”

--Vincent Harding Jr.





**“Beyond
Vietnam:
A Time to Break
the Silence”**

Riverside Church,
New York
April 4, 1967



*Below: King leaves
J. Edgar Hoover's
office, 1965.*





Above: An exhausted King at the United Nations, 4/15/67. Photo Benedict Fernandez.

Left: Dr. Vincent Harding, drafter of the Riverside sermon.



King after delivering his “Beyond Vietnam” speech at Riverside Church. At his right are Rabbi Abraham Heschel and Riverside’s Rev. William Sloane Coffin.



MARTIN LUTHER KING

Some of us who have already begun to break the silence of the night have found that the calling to speak is often a vocation of agony, but we must speak. We must speak with all the humility that is appropriate to our limited vision, but we must speak.

I knew that America would never invest the necessary funds or energies in rehabilitation of its poor so long as adventures like Vietnam continued to draw [people] and skills and money like some demonic destructive suction tube. So I was increasingly compelled to see the war as an enemy of the poor and to attack it as such...





“We were taking black young men who had been crippled by our society and sending them eight thousand miles away to guarantee liberties in Southeast Asia which they had not found in southwest

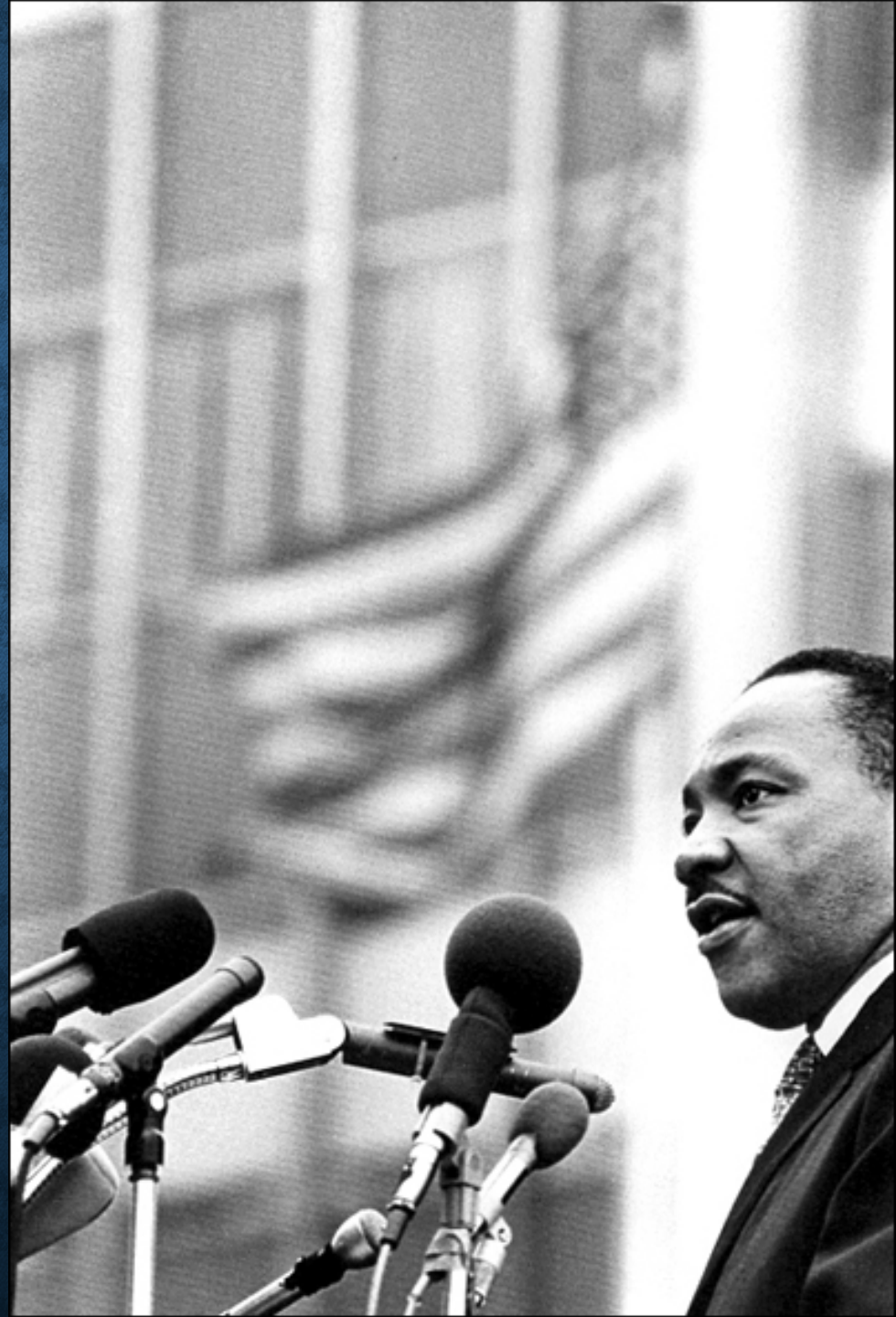
“As I have walked among the desperate, rejected and angry young men [involved in recent urban uprisings] I have told them that Molotov cocktails and rifles would not solve their problems. I have tried to offer them my deepest compassion while maintaining my conviction that social change comes most meaningfully through nonviolent action.

But they asked—and rightly so—what about Vietnam? They asked if our own nation wasn't using massive doses of violence to solve its problems, to bring about the changes it wanted...”



King in Los Angeles after Watts riots, August 18, 1965; at left is Bayard Rustin.

“Their questions hit home, and I knew that I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today—my own government...”



“In 1957 when a group of us formed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, we chose as our motto: ‘To save the soul of America...’ If America's soul becomes totally poisoned, part of the autopsy must read Vietnam. It can never be saved so long as it destroys the deepest hopes of [people] the world over. So it is that those of us who are yet determined that “America will be” [*Langston Hughes*] path of protest and dissent, working for the health of our land...”



King arrested, 1963.

“I wish to go on now to say something even more disturbing. The war in Vietnam is but a symptom of a far deeper malady within the American spirit, and if we ignore this sobering reality we will find ourselves organizing ...concerned committees for the next generation. They will be concerned about Guatemala and Peru.... about Thailand and Cambodia... about Mozambique and South Africa... We will be marching for these and a dozen other names and attending rallies without end unless there is a significant and profound change in American life and policy...”

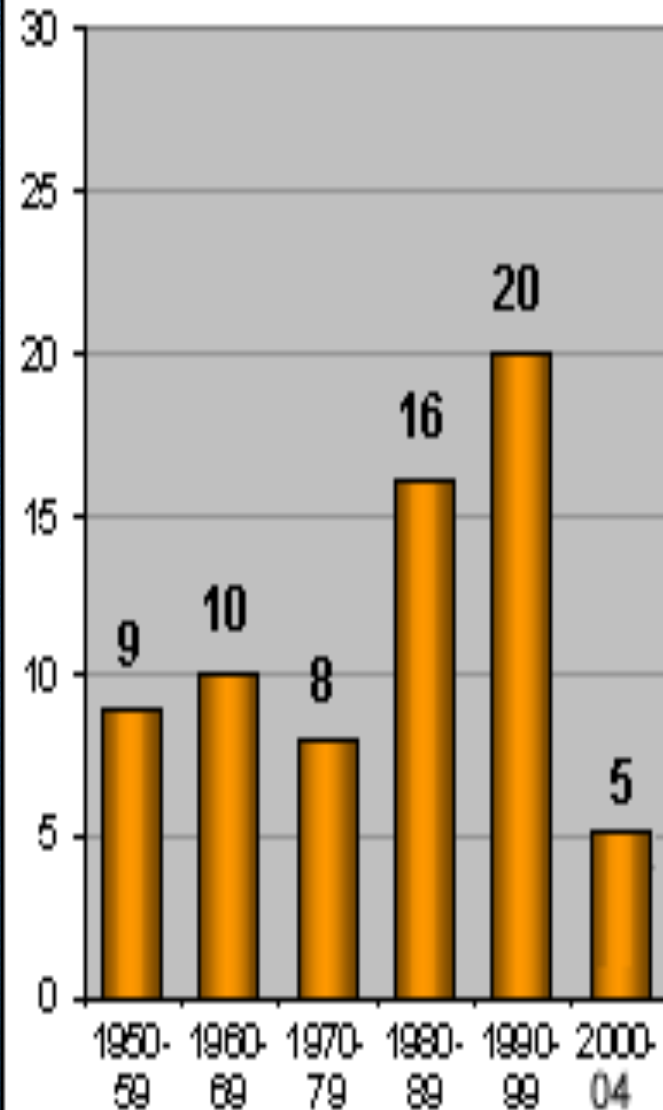


U.S. soldiers in occupation of Iraq, 2005.

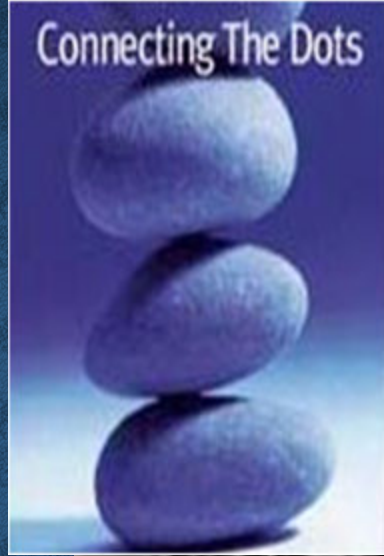
China 1945-46
Korea 1950-53
Guatemala 1954
Indonesia 1958
Cuba 1959-60
Congo 1964
Vietnam 1961-73
Laos 1964-73
Cambodia 1969-70
Grenada 1983
El Salvador 1980's
Nicaragua 1980's
Libya 1986
Panama 1989
Iraq 1991-??
Sudan 1998
Yugoslavia 1999
Afghanistan 2001-??

“Somehow
this
madness
must
cease...
The great
initiative in
this war is
ours. The
initiative to
stop it must
be ours...”

US military interventions
under way in each decade,
1950-2004



“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...”



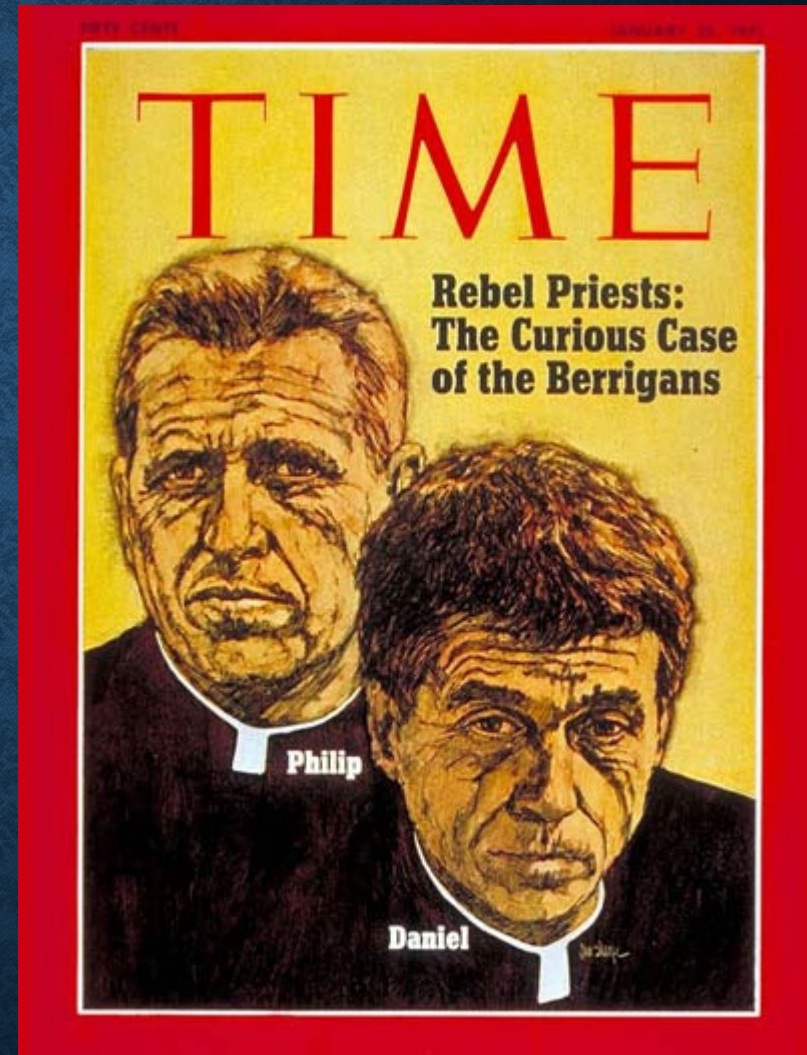
Below: An exhausted King on his last march, 3/28/68, in support of striking Memphis Sanitation Workers.



“...from those who possess
power without
compassion, might without
morality, and strength
without sight...”



“We must rejoice as well, for surely this is the first time in our nation's history that a significant number of its religious leaders have chosen to move beyond the prophesying of smooth patriotism to the high grounds of a firm dissent based upon the mandates of conscience and the reading of history... Perhaps a new spirit is rising among us. If it is, let us trace its movement well and pray that our own inner being may be sensitive to its guidance, for we are deeply in need of a new way beyond the darkness that seems so close around us...”



“Now let us begin. Now let us rededicate ourselves to the long and bitter -- but beautiful -- struggle for a new world. This is the calling of the [children] of God, and our [human family] waits eagerly for our response. Shall we say the odds are too great? Shall we tell them the struggle is too hard? Will our message be that the forces of American life militate against their arrival as full [people], and we send our deepest regrets? Or will there be another message, of longing, of hope, of solidarity with their yearnings, of commitment to their cause, whatever the cost?”



Exactly one year after the Riverside speech—almost to the hour—Dr. King was assassinated in Memphis.



Your silence will not protect you...

What are the words you do not yet have? What do you need to say? What are the tyrannies you swallow day by day and attempt to make your own, until you will sicken and die of them, still in silence?

...The transformation of silence into language and action is an act of self-revelation, and that always seems fraught with danger.



SILENCE=DEATH

That visibility which makes us most vulnerable is that which also is the source of our greatest strength. Because the machine will try to grind you into dust anyway, whether or not we speak. We can sit in our corners mute forever while our sisters and our selves are wasted, while our children are distorted and destroyed, while our earth is poisoned; we can sit in our safe corners mute as bottles, **and we will still be no less afraid...**



We can learn to work and speak when we are afraid in the same way we have learned to work and speak when we are tired...

**June 27, 2015,
activist Bree
Newsome
takes down
Confederate
flag at South
Carolina
Statehouse....**

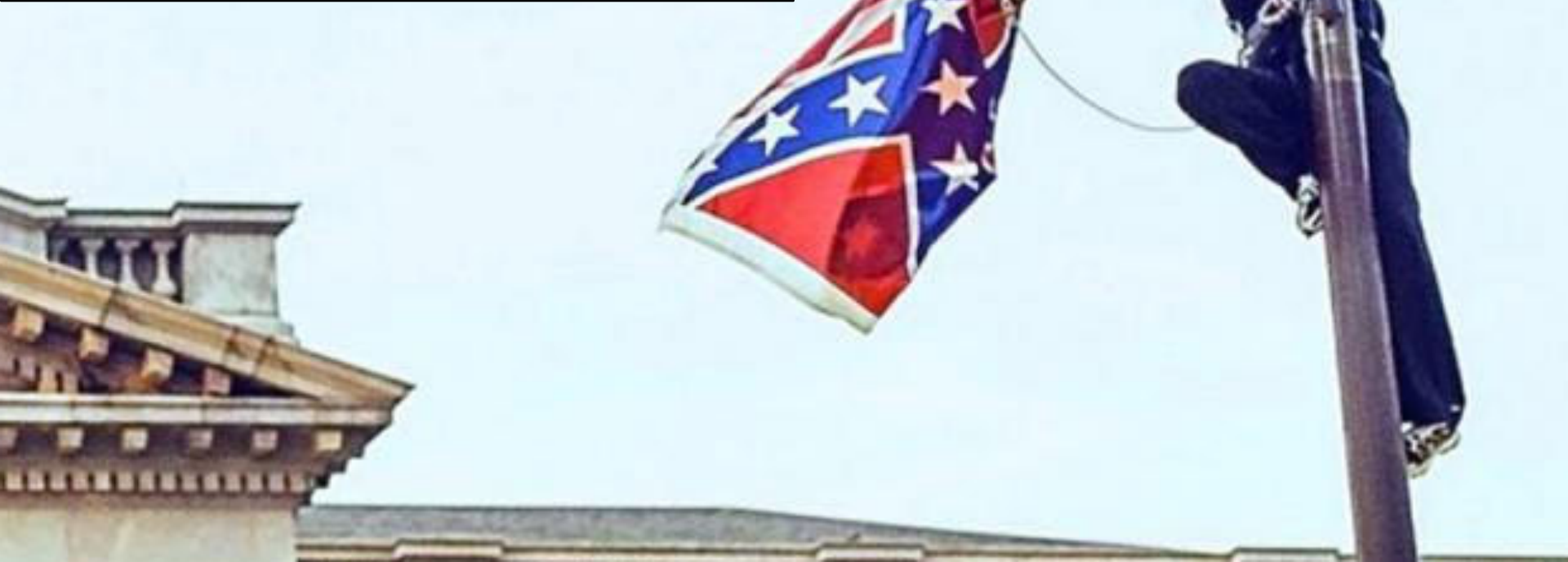


***"In the name of Jesus, this flag
has to come down"***





...and is arrested, reciting Psalm 23.

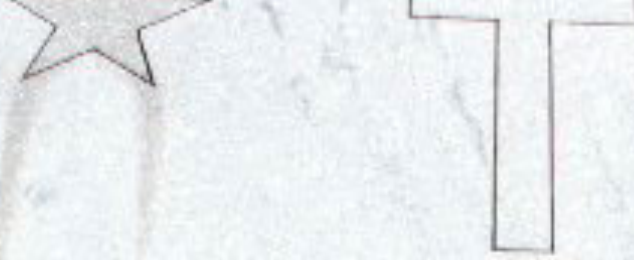


**"I removed the flag ... in defiance of the oppression that continues against black people globally in 2015 ... I did it for all the fierce black women on the front lines of the movement and for all the little black girls who are watching us. I did it because I am free."
— Bree Newsome**





REBECCA COHEN



MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
JAN. 15, 1929 — APR. 4, 1968

FOUNDING PRESIDENT

SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

THEY SAID ONE TO ANOTHER,
BEHOLD, HERE COMETH THE DREAMER...

LET US SLAY HIM...

AND WE SHALL SEE WHAT WILL BECOME OF HIS DREAMS

GENESIS 37: 19-20

“The choice is ours. And though we might prefer it otherwise, we must choose in this crucial moment of human history.”

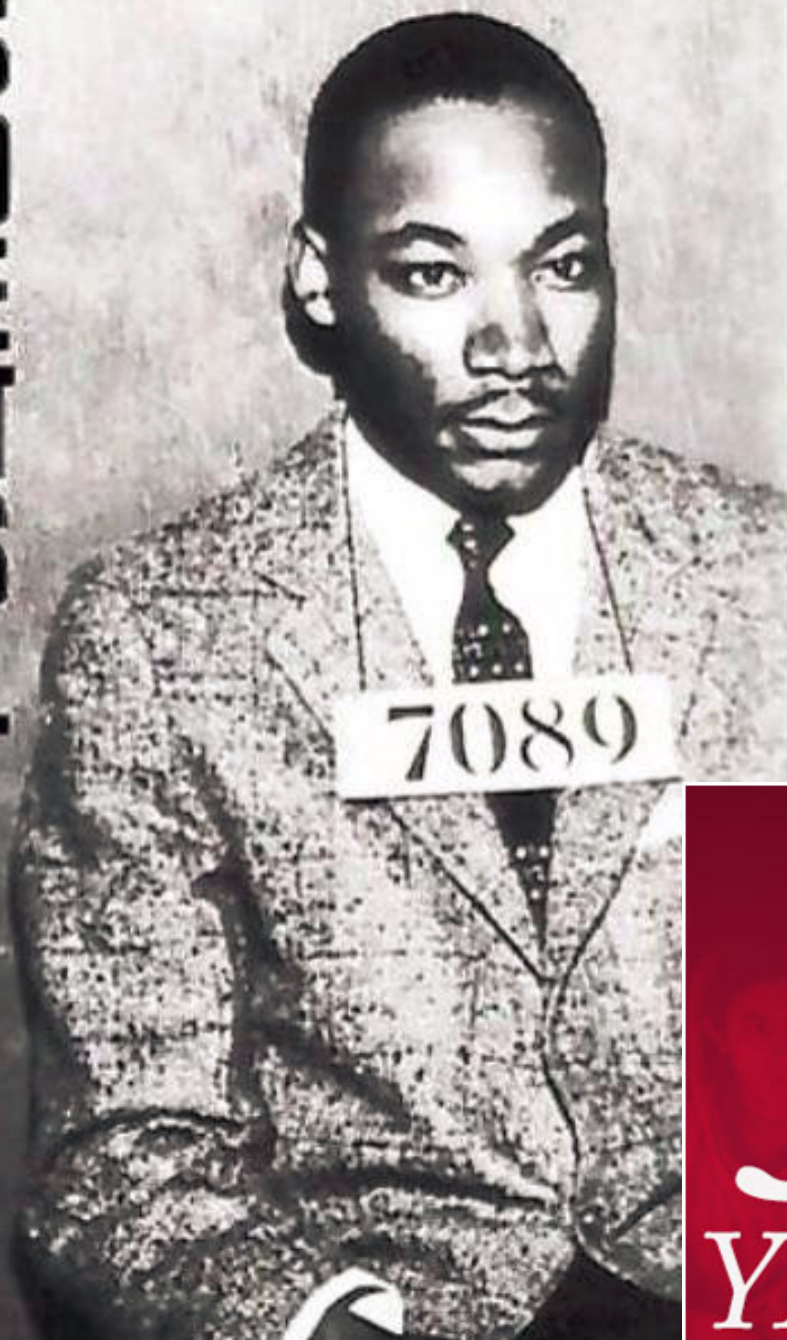


*Right: Rachel Harding,
Veterans of Hope Project.
Left: Rev. Amy Butler,
Riverside Church, NY.*



**OUR LIVES
BEGIN TO END
THE DAY WE
BECOME SILENT
ABOUT THINGS
THAT MATTER.**

Martin
Luther
King



COMMEMORATING

50
YEARS



Bartimaeus Cooperative Ministries

www.bcm-net.org