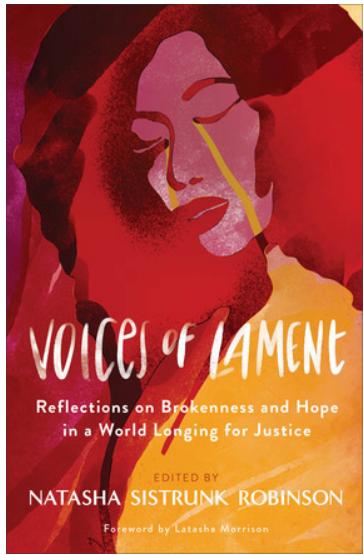




FAMILIES VALUED

A Program of the Center for Public Justice

In February, winter is not yet over but its end is in sight. There's still time to sit and listen before the next season's busyness arrives. *Voices of Lament*, a devotional edited by Natasha Sistrunk Robinson, is companion and aid to my listening this month. Robinson's contributors tell stories of hope and exile, uncover oppressions, summon anger, and name grief.



There is abundance in these stories, coexisting with deep suffering. Tarah-Lynn Saint-Elien writes about her mother, who, constrained by chronic illness, nevertheless insists on music and dance in the family home. "Even with pain in my mom's body, she dances," reflects Saint-Elien.

God calls us to remember through the practice of lament as modeled in the Psalms and the words of the prophets like Jeremiah. We must, in fact, learn to lament so that we can encounter reality more fully, trust God more completely, and partner with God in healing what is broken.

Through lament, we can as Saint-Elien writes, come to see that "blessings and brokenness can occupy the same space."

Peace and hope,

Rachel Anderson



Resident Fellow, Families Valued

RSVP: Community Call and Text Study with Families Valued



Estate of John August Swanson, <https://www.johnaugustswanson.com/>

This year's Families Valued theme is about envisioning a future where families can live abundantly. Psalm 23 paints a biblical image of abundance when scripture says "you set out a table before me...my cup overflows."

Over the course of the year we are inviting advocates to a conversation about the Psalmist's abundant vision, what it means for our own lives and for the work to build a common life in which all families have not only enough but more than enough. For 2023, we'll be hosting a quarterly text study series titled "**Setting the Table where Families Flourish**" that will include Biblical texts and practical ways to help advocates envision what a flourishing community looks like.

Join us on **Thursday, March 2 from 12-1pm ET** for the first of our quarterly Zoom community calls around the theme of abundance. Kendall Vanderslice will join us to discuss how we can set tables and build communities that pull together individuals and families from many

different walks of life to meet one another's needs. We will also hear about the implementation of the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) and PUMP Act. Sign up here to register for the call.

Register

Revisiting: Black Motherhood Matters



From October: Listen to Khadija Garrison Adams, Lauren Reliford, and Cessilye Smith and moderator Kathryn Freeman reflect on Black motherhood, including the systemic factors that lead to higher maternal mortality rates for black mothers and their children.

“The biggest factor we have to deal with [in black motherhood] is racial trauma.”
- Lauren Reliford

“See black women as image-bearers and not other-ed.”
- Cessilye Smith

“The health professionals we encounter are uninitiated in our experiences, bodies and our uniqueness.”
- Khadija Adams

For those who want to keep learning, panelists and participants shared several important resources:

- *Mother to Son: Letters to a Black Boy on Identity and Hope*,
Jasmine Holmes
 - *Abide Women's Health Services*
 - *The JJ Way*
 - *Birth Center Equity*
 - *Commonsense Childbirth School of Midwifery*
 - *Perinatal Taskforce*
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In the News: Make Birth Free

- Pro-life advocates introduce a proposal to Make Birth Free
 - Kelly Rosati, Rachel Anderson, and others respond in Christianity Today
 - Leah Libresco and Patrick Brown describe more ways to improve health coverage for women
 - Reporting from The New York Times illustrates the need for attention to racial justice in pro-child and family efforts
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From the Families Valued Advocacy Team: *Rachel Anderson (Resident Fellow) * Madi Allen (CPJ Advocacy Manager) * Kathryn Freeman (CPJ Consultant) * Michelle Kirtley (CPJ Fellow, Co-chair, Association for Public Justice) * Chandler Robinson (CPJ Advocacy Intern)*

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