



CHAPEL HILL Towntalk

JANUARY 2020
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Celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Message from Town Manager Maurice Jones

From an early age, children in schools systems all across America are taught about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., his heroic, sacrificial leadership and his long lasting legacy. Students learn about Dr. King's early years and his ascension to the leader of the civil rights movement. They are treated to black and white film footage of Dr. King's "I Have a Dream"

speech, one of the most consequential speeches in the history of our country.

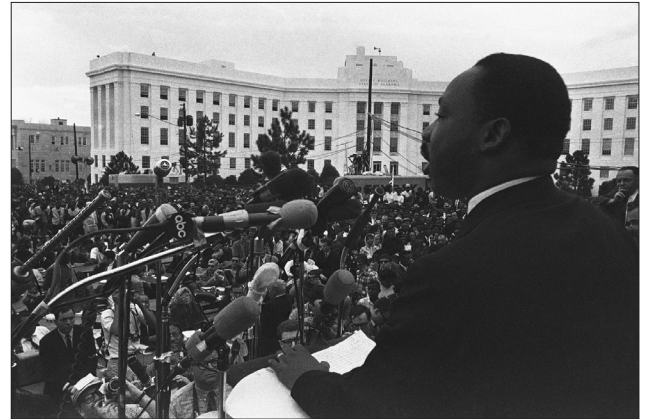
With his soaring rhetoric Dr. King told the story of a nation that was

"From every mountainside, let freedom ring."

failing to live up to its founding principles of freedom and equality, and was suffering in its soul. Dr. King concluded his speech with a mighty, aspirational

crescendo—a clarion call of action to free the oppressed and to bring people of all backgrounds together.

"Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring," said Dr. King. "And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when



we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"

As the crowd roared it was evident that our nation would never be the same. An important corner had been turned in the quest for justice. However it certainly was not the end of the battle for civil rights. Those who were determined to oppress and segregate their fellow Americans did not go quietly into the night. In fact as it became evident that the movement's non-violent and persistent protests were leading to transformation, the segregationists stepped up their efforts to intimidate those who championed change through violent and murderous acts:

- Less than a month after Dr.

King's I Have a Dream Speech, a

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23rd Annual Employee Celebration Program

The Women of the Movement

Hargraves Community Center,
216 N. Roberson St.

11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Friday, January 17

Welcome: Lance Norris, Director, Public Works Department, and MLK Employee Committee Member

Video: The History of the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday: Town of Chapel Hill Employees

Town of Chapel Hill Mass Choir: "Because of Who You Are"

The Rosa Parks Story: Chapel Hill Transit and Town of Chapel Hill Employees

Panel Discussion: The Women of the Movement

Remarks: Town Manager Maurice Jones
Poet Laureate C.J. Suitt

Northside Elementary School Choir: "Lift Every Voice and Sing"
Ms. Loftin-Bell's 1st graders, under the direction of Donald Parker

Town of Chapel Hill Mass Choir: "We Need Love"

Closing Remarks: Joe McMiller, Chapel Hill Transit

Lunch

Following the program, a light lunch will be served.

Honoring the Life and Legacy

Principles of Dr. King

Brotherhood

Dr. King preached and practiced a philosophy of racial integration and would not give ground when faced with the call for separatism. He said: "When I speak of integration, I don't mean a romantic mixing of colors, I mean a real sharing of power and responsibility."

Action

Between 1955 and 1968, Martin Luther King Jr. helped change America. He brought to the world's attention how unfairly blacks were treated. He had the help of millions of Americans, but his strong leadership and unprecedented power of speech gave people the faith and courage to keep working peacefully even when others did not.

Justice

Martin Luther King Jr. made it clear that we all share a human and moral responsibility to join hands as brothers and sisters in the quest for social justice. What turned out to be his final protest march was a gathering of striking garbage workers in Memphis, Tenn.

Non Violence

In 1964, Dr. King became the youngest person ever to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. (He was 35.) King promptly announced that he would turn over all of the money he received along with the award (\$54,123) to help advance the civil rights movement.

Morality

"The time is always right to do what is right."
— Martin Luther King Jr.

Documenting Local Stories

In the spring of 2016, the Orange County Training School/Lincoln Alumni Association began a partnership with Chapel Hill Public Library to collect, record, and document stories of the local Black community that had previously been untold.

The methodology is based upon the critical oral histories technique that was developed at the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University. The goal is to amplify history that is accessible, equitable, and relevant to today's world, that centers on the people who lived it.

To hear more from the amazing women of the civil rights movement and to learn about Chapel Hill history, listen to Re/Collecting Chapel Hill, a community history podcast by the Chapel Hill Public Library at ChapelHillHistory.org.



Town Manager's Message

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bomb exploded at the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, as church members prepared for services. The cowardly attack killed four young African-American girls.

- In June of 1964, three civil rights workers in Mississippi were murdered by members of the KKK with assistance from the Neshoba County Sheriff's Office.
- In March of 1965, several hundred civil rights marchers crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, were met by an angry mob of state and local lawmen who brutally beat the marchers in what became known as "Bloody Sunday."

Despite those attacks, the movement could not and would not be stopped. And Dr. King did not sway from his

commitment to non-violence and forgiveness.

"Forgiveness is not an occasional act. It is a permanent attitude," he said. Dr. King understood that meeting hatred with hatred would not bring about the change that our country so desperately needed. "I have decided to stick with love," he once exclaimed. "Hate is too great a burden to bear." This from a man whose family had been threatened on numerous occasions and who was ultimately slain by an assassin's bullet. His message of love and forgiveness, even for one's enemies, is a powerful one for all of us to remember especially as we enter into what promises to be another acrimonious election cycle.

And we should not forget that a number of the injustices that have plagued our country since our origins continue today in different, but harmful forms. Our Town



of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

"I Have a Dream" Video:

The Chapel Hill Public Library produced a video of Town employees reciting the words from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. The video is posted on the Town's YouTube and Facebook accounts.

Communications and Public Affairs has provided a documentary about the dedication celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in Chapel Hill on May 8, 2005. Available for online viewing at vimeo.com/chapelhillgov/mlkblvd. For more information, visit townofchapelhill.org/history.

Video from Martin Luther King Jr. Employee Celebrations is on our YouTube channel (youtube.com/TownofChapelHill).

Learn More

The Chapel Hill Public Library has a wide variety of publications about the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr.

Find out more about his life and the Civil Rights Movement through movies, books, eBooks, and audiobooks. You can check things out to take home or download them to your personal device. Visit the library's website at chapelhillpubliclibrary.org, or ask a librarian for a recommendation. The Library will be open from 1 to 5 p.m. on Jan. 21. And remember, all Town employees can get a free library card, no matter where they live.



Did You Know?

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday has been observed as a U.S. federal holiday since 1986. Chapel Hill has observed the day as a town holiday since 1984. Chapel Hill was one of the first communities in North Carolina to declare Martin Luther King Jr. Day a municipal holiday.



has recognized those injustices and is working to understand our institutional role in contributing to the problems of those who are struggling in our community. Whether it's the lack of affordable housing, or good job opportunities

"...we will pursue a more perfect organization and community through our diversity and inclusion efforts."

generations, faced oppression and discrimination.

During the course of this year we will pursue a more perfect organization and community through our diversity and inclusion efforts. We will be providing additional details

or workforce development, there are many issues that we need to continue to address, in order to help improve the lives of those who have, for

in the near future but generally speaking our goal is to make Chapel Hill a welcoming town and organization for all. A community that celebrates our differences and dedicates itself to taking on the challenges we face—head on.

All of us who work for the Town of Chapel Hill play a role in changing the circumstances and experiences of the people we serve every day. We owe it to them to treat them with fairness and respect, and to be equitable in all that we do. As Dr. King once said, "All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence."

Our goal is to lift up humanity in our little corner of the world. I am confident that all of us will rise up together to meet the challenge.

—Town Manager Maurice Jones

Community Honors Dr. King

The following are various community events to celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Access more information from the sponsoring organizations.

Orange County's Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. will be held from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Friday, Jan. 17, at the Passmore Center, 103 Meadowlands Drive, Hillsborough. The celebration features special guest speaker Danita Mason-Hogans, who is a native of Chapel Hill and comes from seven generations of "movement people." She has been an education activist for more than 30 years and is Program Manager for the Critical Oral Histories program at the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University.

More information:
<http://bit.ly/2Qiw4k3>

Carrboro's Youth-Led Special Event will be held from 1 to 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 18, at the Carrboro Century Center, 100 N. Greensboro St. This youth planned event strives to bring the community together to celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Come celebrate Carrboro's very own day of service with speakers, bands, and performers.

The 35th Annual University/Community MLK Memorial Banquet & Awards Ceremony will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 19, at the Friday Center, 100 Friday Drive, Chapel Hill.

More information and tickets:
<https://unc.live/2Qjkmfj>



Chapel Hill-Carrboro NAACP Events on Monday, Jan. 20, include:

Rally with speaker Tai Huynh, 9 a.m., Peace and Justice Plaza, 179 E. Franklin St., Chapel Hill

March to First Baptist Church-Chapel Hill at 10 a.m. followed by coffee and conversations and Community Interfaith Service with Keynote Speaker Gene Nichol at 11 a.m., First Baptist Church, 106 N. Roberson St., Chapel Hill

More information:
<http://bit.ly/2FvWlZw>

MLK Day of Service 2020 (North Carolina Central University Office of Community Engagement and Service

9 a.m.-12 p.m. Monday, Jan. 20, 1450 S Alston Avenue, Durham

More information:
<http://bit.ly/2Qjc5CO>

Dream Big 2020! (Book Harvest Book Drive)

1-4 p.m. Monday, Jan. 20, Rhythms Live Music Hall, 2020 Chapel Hill Road, Durham

More information:
<http://bit.ly/2STbsRj>

MLK Park Ribbon Cutting 3 p.m. Monday, Jan. 20, 1120 Hillsborough Road, Carrboro

More information:
<http://bit.ly/2ZL48bD>

The MLK Lecture and Awards Ceremony

7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 22, UNC Memorial Hall.

Dr. Michael Eric Dyson, author, radio host and Georgetown University sociology professor, will deliver the keynote. Tickets are free and will be available at the Carolina Performing Arts and Memorial Hall ticket office in early January.

More information:
diversity.unc.edu/programs/mlk

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