



## Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Call to Day of Social Action and Service

15-16 January 2017

MCC's Interim Moderator, Rev. Rachelle Brown, and leadership teams would like to invite you, your church, emerging ministry, and/or Oasis group to join together to celebrate the world-changing ministry of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

On Monday, 16 January 2017, people from around the world will pause to remember Rev. King and his many accomplishments as a civil rights activist. He received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 for his work to protest racial inequality through nonviolent resistance.

MCC staff members collaborated to create a Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (MLK Day) Toolkit to provide you with resources to create your own local event. You can also download the resources at the links below:

- Communications Team Contact Information (page 1)
- MLK Day Local Church Suggestions (page 2)
- MLK Brief History: <http://mccchurch.org/mlk-resources-selma-to-montgomery/>
- MLK Day Litany: <http://tinyurl.com/2017-MLK-Litany>
- Media Release Template and Talking Points: <http://tinyurl.com/Press-Release-Talking-Points>
- MLK Banner: <http://mccchurch.org/mlk-resources/>
- Material for PowerPoint, Social Media, Bulletins, etc.: <http://tinyurl.com/MLK-Day-Quotes-and-Images>

### Communications Team Contact Information

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- Press, Website, Toolkit Questions, Conversation Partner

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- Social Media, Conversation Partner

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**Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**  
**2017 Project Toolkit**

## **MLK Day Local Church / Ministry / Group Suggestions**

The following is a list of ideas, but obviously, it is not inclusive of all possible ideas. Consider your community and your group / church/ ministry and decide how best to make MLK Day meaningful to all involved. We will start an idea-sharing post on MCC's Facebook page. You can also share your ideas on Interim Moderator Rev. Brown's Facebook page.

**Theme:** Many Rivers of Justice

**Scripture:** Isaiah 58:1-12 and / or Esther 4:1-17 (especially 12-14)

**Quote:** "Until justice rolls down like water and righteousness like a mighty stream" (Amos 4:24)

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King

**Song:** "Down by the Riverside"

**Topics:** The Many Rivers of Justice: Racial, Immigrant, Economic, LGBTQ, Women, Abilities

- Dedicate a worship service to MLK Day and incorporate any or all of MCC material
  - ✓ Scripture
  - ✓ Litany (see page 3)
  - ✓ Song - "Down by the Riverside"
  - ✓ Material for PowerPoint, Social Media, Bulletins, etc. (see link on page 7)
- Plan an MLK Day event featuring speakers at your meeting place or public location. Invite the community to attend and revise the Media Template to meet your needs (see page x).
- Create an opportunity for your church / group / ministry to support the local community in a way that honors Rev. King's memory. Use the Media Template (see page x) to alert the media to your contribution.
- Collaborate with local clergy and/or community leaders for an ecumenical service, or attend one as an MCC group that has already been planned. Let the local leader know your group will attend and offer to participate.

***Go to MCC's Facebook page 4-6 January to share your ideas about how you will participate on MLK Day. Remember, you can also post your ideas on Interim Moderator Rev. Rachelle Brown's Facebook page.***

## **MLK Day Brief History**

MCC's website provides an overview of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s work, including "Selma to Montgomery" and "1965 Selma to Montgomery March Fast Facts" at this link: <http://mccchurch.org/mlk-resources-selma-to-montgomery/>

## **MLK Day Litany**

by Rev. Lisa Heilig and Tammy Johnson

*The parts for one voice are direct quotations from Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

**One:** “Rarely do we find [people] who willingly engage in hard, solid thinking. There is an almost universal quest for easy answers...”

**Many:** When we are tempted to turn to the easy answers, let us look to the example of Martin Luther King digging deep from the well of Wisdom, the scriptures, stories, symbols that encourage, illustrate, and inspire.

**One:** “True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar. It comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring.”

**Many:** When we are tempted to settle for a compassion that requires little of us, let us be empowered to not only fling coins, fill out online petitions, or just feed people, but to truly tear down barriers and do the hard work to build bridges based on real justice.

**One:** “Oppressed people cannot remain oppressed forever. The yearning for freedom eventually manifests itself...”

**Many:** In the midst of ongoing, even escalating, oppression around us everywhere, let the Spirit awaken us to the expressions of those yearnings for freedom, and putting away old paradigms, open us to new understandings, insights, and ideas.

**One:** “The ultimate measure of a [person] is not where [they] stand in moments of comfort and convenience, but where [they] stand at times of challenge and controversy.”

**Many:** In the midst of these times of challenge and controversy and conflict, let us not move for our own comfort and convenience, but let us embody the courage that is standing, sitting, singing, marching, meeting, living, loving.

**One:** “I refuse to accept the view that [hu]mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and [fellowship] can never become a reality ... I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word.”

**Many:** With Martin Luther King, the prophets of old, and Jesus, we too proclaim our belief that the realm of God is near, and we can indeed fully become the Beloved Community. May how we behave ever reflect how we believe in truth and Love. Amen.



## **MEDIA RELEASE Template**

**DATE:** 10 January 2017

**Contact:** Name, Email, Mobile Phone

### **Metropolitan Community Church Speaks Out for Justice on MLK Day** **“On the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., we must stand for justice for everyone.”**

Leaders of Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC) are speaking out under the theme of “Many Rivers of Justice” as the rights of immigrants, women, the elderly, LGBTQ people, and so many others are at risk with the rising tide of hate crimes in the post election climate.

“On the birthday of Martin Luther King Jr., we must stand for justice for everyone. Our churches across the country, have been marked with hate graffiti, smeared with excrement, and targeted because we have always welcomed LGBTQ people and anyone who affirms the full dignity of all human beings. Our communion table is open to all. We only wish the world was open to all people,” said (pastor’s or church leader’s name).

“As part of our witness to the life and work of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., MCC leaders of (town or church name) will stand on the steps of (location) on January (date), 2017, to speak out for all human rights. In our state, our lawmakers is dealing with legislation that claims to support freedom of religion, but it actually supports freedom to discriminate. We have worked too hard and come too far to turn back on our commitment to human rights for all in this country,” said (church leader title/ name).

**Who:** NAMES OF SPEAKERS (EACH ONE 3 MINUTES LONG = 1 SINGLE SPACE PAGE)

**What:** WITNESS TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF ALL PEOPLE ON MLK DAY

**When:** January (date), 2017

**Where:** NAME AND ADDRESS OF COUNTY/CITY COURTHOUSE OR PLACE EVENT IS BEING HELD

**Why:** People of faith must speak out for the rights of all people.

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Founded in 1968, Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC) has been at the vanguard of civil and human rights movements by addressing issues of race, gender, sexual orientation, economics, climate change, aging, and global human rights. MCC was the first to perform same gender marriages and has been on the forefront of the struggle towards marriage equality in the USA and other countries worldwide. MCC recognizes a state of need around the world in the areas of human rights and justice. As people of faith, MCC endeavors to build bridges that liberate and unite voices of sacred defiance. MCC leads from the margins and transforms.

## MCC TALKING POINTS ON JUSTICE FOR MLK DAY OF SERVICE

### MLK Day of Service Points

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, “Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’” Against what seemed like impossible odds, Dr. King and scores of his fellow citizens of all races came together and helped bend the moral arc of the universe toward justice.

In recognition of Dr. King’s incredible legacy of service to all, Congress designated the Martin Luther King Jr. Federal Holiday as a national day of service in 1994.

The upcoming commemoration of the MLK Day of Service on Monday, January 16, 2017, reminds us that, almost 50 years later, we still have work to do to realize Dr. King’s dream.

Service is a powerful tool for strengthening our communities, but it is only a start. We must work together to create economic opportunities by improving education, strengthening health care services, and improving financial literacy. Our economy must work for every American.

### Religious Freedom Points

As a minister, Dr. King knew that free exercise of religion does not include discrimination. It is wrong to fire someone because they are LGBTQ. The idea that discrimination is acceptable if religiously motivated undermines both religion and human dignity.

Firing an employee simply for being LGBTQ is bad for business. Most big corporations ban discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Qualified employees are lost and lawsuits are expensive.

In more than half the country, it is legal to fire someone for being LGBTQ. [Pew Research](#) found that about 20% of LGBTQ adults reported unfair treatment from an employer. [The Williams Institute](#) found the rate of discrimination is similar among LGBTQ persons, women, and people of color.

### Immigration Points

Anti-immigrant rhetoric is tied to a 40% increase in hate crimes (from 2003 to 2007) and it is growing after the election of [Trump](#).

Contrary to popular belief, the vast majority of undocumented workers pay taxes and are less likely to be involved in crime.

Undocumented workers are subject to [abuse by employers](#). And because there is a large pool of workers that can be abused, wages for documented workers are hurt as well.

## **Justice for Muslims in the USA**

We must never abandon our civil liberties. We must reaffirm the freedom of all people to worship, to assemble, and to speak freely.

Refugees seeking to escape terrible violence should not be blamed for the actions of terrorists, and our Muslim American neighbors should not be subject to prejudice and vigilante violence.

We must speak out to stop the rising wave of anti-Muslim and anti-Syrian refugee sentiments in the United States and globally.

Refugees are not terrorists. Refugees from Syria, Yemen, and elsewhere in the Middle East have been attempting to escape extremist violence. They are not perpetrators; they are victims.

The Syrian civil war and ISIS barbarism have killed more Muslims than members of any other faith tradition.

Stay true to our core values: freedom, equality, and the right to pursue happiness.

## **MLK Day Banner**

The MLK banner that appears on the front of this booklet can be downloaded at this link:

<http://mccchurch.org/mlk-resources/>

## **Material for PowerPoint, Social Media, Bulletins, etc.**

A collection of quotes by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and public domain images\* are available at this link

<http://tinyurl.com/MLK-Day-Quotes-and-Images>. This is not a comprehensive list, but a helpful resource that could be used for a PowerPoint presentation, posts on social media leading up to an MLK Day event, or a church bulletin to advertise an MLK Day event.

\*The Pulse Club photo is by MCC clergy, Rev. Shirley Strader.