



DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.'S BIRTHDAY

(BELOVED COMMUNITY DAY)

WORSHIP & MUSIC RESOURCES

Sunday, January 18, 2009

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Worship Planning Notes

Do Something Different – Each year, churches celebrate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in some fashion. This year, do something different. Here are some suggestions for worship leaders, Arts ministries, drama ministries musicians, and ministers of music.

- A. Have a **Persons with Disabilities Lead In Celebrating Dr. King Service**. All churches greatly need to do more to involve persons with disabilities in worship. Most churches do not have a strong track record in this area. The Arts ministry will need time to prepare to work with persons of varying levels of skill across age groups. Regardless of their age, invite all persons with disabilities in your church to participate in some way in honoring Dr. King if they wish to do so. First, invite them. Do a special campaign and advertise for their participation, including personally asking persons to participate and asking them what they would like to do. If there are members in your church who are academically trained to work with persons with disabilities, they should be helpful in assisting in planning and or working with those who want to participate in the service.

Make accommodations, but do not expect less. For example:

- Make sure that wheelchairs can get to various areas of the sanctuary when necessary to allow those who use wheelchairs to participate.
- Prepare shorter speeches or poems for those with Down syndrome or who have autism and may have short attention spans.
- Persons who are blind may need assistance to and from areas of the church.

- Persons who are deaf and know sign language should be allowed to sign speeches; perhaps they can do so as another child or adult with a disability reads the same speech.
- Form a choir, praise group, or quartet of persons who are disabled but love to sing.
- Regardless of what you do for your service, remember, people with disabilities make valuable contributions to society each day, so there is no need to treat them as if they are unable to participate. If you expect them to achieve and encourage them, they will do well. What a wonderful way to honor Dr. King and glorify God—by presenting a worship service that is led by those whose gifts and contributions are often overlooked. This may well help mainstream persons with disabilities into all areas of your church.

B. Have an **Our Children Lead In Celebrating Dr. King Service**. For such a service, at least two weeks of planning is required. Children will need time to learn the material and songs. Be sure that the children and youth help plan the services. Involve children in every aspect of worship. Let them lead the Call to Worship, do the invocation, lead the morning litany, and do the altar call or morning prayer. All the songs should be children and youth songs—all of the music should be rendered by persons ages 3–17. While children and youth can be taught to sing everything from spirituals to the hymns of the church, teach them versions that are **only** for children and youth. Next, select excerpts of speeches by Dr. King and work long and hard with your children and youth so that they can recite this material without notes in front of the congregation. This will be invaluable public speaking experience. Importantly, allow children and youth the opportunity to do things such as perform a drama or a mime, participate as members of a hand-bell choir, do a liturgical dance, etc. Let them do what they do the way that they do it. Adults should be careful not to plan or direct the children out of the worship service. Finally, make sure that all areas that support the worship are also led by children and youth; they should be the ushers, the Junior Deacons/Deacons in training or elders in training, etc. On this day, if “Lift Every Voice and Sing” is to be sung, a child or youth must lead it. If announcements are to be read, a child or youth must read them. If a benediction is to be given, a child or youth is to give it. For the proclamation, if at all possible, find a youth minister under 25 or find ways to allow youth and children to proclaim the Word of God without having a preacher do a sermon at all. This would also be a great opportunity for children to write and present poems expressing things such as: how they believe President Barack Obama represents one example of fulfillment of Dr. King’s dream; how they believe that children and youth of today can help fulfill Dr. King’s dream; and how they believe that Christians can carry out Dr. King’s dream by helping the poor.

Either of these services would be great to record and use as eCommercials to send to sick-and shut-in members or to use as evangelism tools.

1. Call to Worship

Designed to be read by a child (age 7–10)

A Poem for Dr. Martin Luther King (From Children)

Let us dance, let us sing,
in thanks for Dr. Martin Luther King.

A man of peace who stood up tall.
He worked for fairness for one and all.

We must be kind to one another,
Because as he said, “we are all sisters and brothers.”

So let us make love the main thing,
for this was the way of Dr. Martin Luther King.

2. Hymns or Anthems

(a) Leaning on the Everlasting Arms. By Elisha A. Hoffman. Tune, Showalter

(b) Free at Last. By Lena Johnson McLin

(c) Lift Every Voice and Sing. By James Weldon Johnson. Tune, (Anthem) John R. Johnson

3. Spirituals or Traditional Songs

(a) Lord, I Don’t Feel No Ways Tired. Arr. by Phillip McIntyre

(b) Ninety-Nine and a Half Won’t Do. Spiritual. Adapt. by Carlton Reese

(c) If I Can Help Somebody. By A. Bazel Androzzo
YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0of7RbjoxTc>

(d) Keep Your Eye on the Prize, Hold On. Adapt. by Alice Wine

4. Gospel Songs

(a) Can’t Give Up Now. By Curtis Burrell

(b) In the Midst of It All. By Yolanda Adams

(c) Jesus Made a Way. By Walter Hawkins

5. Liturgical Dance Music

(a) Come Sunday. By Duke Ellington
YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bOpb7wZmEUk>

(b) Strange Fruit/Black Butterfly. By Lewis Alan, Maurice Pearl, and Dwayne P. Wiggins

(c) I Want Jesus to Walk with Me. Negro Spiritual

6. Modern Songs

(a) Faithful Is Our God. By Hezekiah Walker

(b) Victory. By Tye Tribbett

(c) O Give Thanks. By Hezekiah Walker

7. Children's Songs

(a) In His Dream. By Martin Luther King Day Group for Kids. Tune, He's Got the Whole World in His Hands

Dr. Martin Luther King had a dream (Sung three times)
He had the whole world in his dream.

He had me and you, in his dream
He had me and you, in his dream
He had me and you, in his dream
He had the whole world in his dream.

(b) Dr. King Had a Dream. By Martin Luther King Day Group for Kids. Tune, Bingo

There was a man who had a dream His name was Mar-tin Lu-ther King
Mar-tin Lu-ther King Mar-tin Lu-ther King Mar-tin Lu-ther King
His name was Mar-tin Lu-ther King

Doctor King, he had a dream He wanted peace for everyone
P-E-A-C-E P-E-A-C-E P-E-A-C-E
His name was Mar-tin Lu-ther King

(c) Freedom, Freedom, Let It Ring. By Jacqueline Woodson. Tune, Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

Freedom, freedom, let it ring.
Let it ring, said Dr. King.
Let it ring from North to South.
Let it ring from house to house.
Let it ring for everyone,
All across the whole nation.

Let it ring for black and white,
Let it ring both day and night.
Let it ring for young and old,
Forever may its song ring bold.
Freedom, freedom, let it ring.
Let it ring, said Dr. King.

(d) Happy Birthday, Dr. King. By Martin Luther King Day Group for Kids. Tune, Yankee Doodle

Dr. King was a man
Who had a special dream.
He dreamed of a world filled with love
And peace and harmony.

Happy Birthday, Dr. King,
Happy Birthday to you.
Happy Birthday, Dr. King.
We honor you today.

(e) We Are Much the Same. By Martin Luther King Day Group for Kids. Tune, Skip to My Lou

You may have light skin,
I may have dark;
You may have long hair,
I may have short;
You may have blue eyes,
I may have brown:
It really doesn't matter.

(Spoken) Why?

'Cause underneath our skin, we're much the same,
Underneath our skin, we're much the same.
Underneath our skin, we're much the same.
And that's what really matters.

When we're hungry, we both want to eat.
When we're thirsty, we both want a drink.
When we're tired, we both want a bed.
We are much the same.

When we're happy, we both smile.
When we're sad, we both cry.
When we're scared, we both want a friend.
We are much the same.

8. Offertory Song or Instrumental

(a) This Little Light of Mine. Negro Spiritual

(b) You Can't Beat God Giving. By Doris Akers

9. Song or Instrumental for the Period of Prayer

- (a) A Worshipper's Prayer. By Judith Christie McAllister. *Though this song is recorded as a vocal, it can be done nicely as an instrumental.*
- (b) Somebody Prayed for Me. By Dorothy Norwood and Alvin Darling
- (c) Father, I Stretch My Hands to Thee. By Charles Wesley
- (d) Come Here Jesus, If You Please. African American Traditional. Adapt. by Roland M. Carter

10. Sermonic Selection

- (a) My Help Cometh from the Lord. By Geraldine Woods. Text based on Psalm 121
YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d_ocn7IxDCU
- (b) Safety. By Lecresia Campbell
- (c) Hold On. Arr. by J. Jefferson Cleveland

11. Invitational Song or Instrumental

- (a) I Want Jesus to Walk with Me. Negro Spiritual
- (b) I Have Decided to Follow Jesus. Ascribed to an Indian prince

12. Benediction Song or Instrumental

- (a) God Be with You. By Thomas A. Dorsey
- (b) Amen. Negro Spiritual

13. Audio Visual Suggestions

Following are quotes by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. that can be placed on screens or in bulletins; discussed in Sunday school, Sabbath School, and Bible Study; and read aloud by adults or children during a worship service.

- Many of the ugly pages of American history have been obscured and forgotten....America owes a debt of justice which it has only begun to pay. If it loses the will to finish or slackens in its determination, history will recall its crimes and the country that would be great will lack the most indispensable element of greatness—justice.
Martin Luther King, Jr., *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?*, 1967
- The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. It must be the guide and the critic of the state, and never its tool. If the church does not recapture its prophetic zeal, it will become an irrelevant social club without moral or spiritual authority.
Martin Luther King, Jr., *Strength to Love*, 1963
- Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice. Justice at its best is love correcting everything that stands against love.

Martin Luther King, Jr., Where Do We Go from
Here: Chaos or Community?, 1967

- Nonviolence is the answer to the crucial political and moral questions of our time: the need for man to overcome oppression and violence without resorting to oppression and violence. Man must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression and retaliation. The foundation of such a method is love.

Martin Luther King, Jr., Nobel Prize acceptance
speech, Stockholm, Sweden, December 11, 1964

- The curse of poverty has no justification in our age. It is socially as cruel and blind as the practice of cannibalism at the dawn of civilization, when men ate each other because they had not yet learned to take food from the soil or to consume the abundant animal life around them. The time has come for us to civilize ourselves by the total, direct and immediate abolition of poverty.

Martin Luther King, Jr., Where Do We Go from
Here: Chaos or Community?, 1967

- When we ask Negroes to abide by the law, let us also declare that the white man does not abide by law in the ghettos. Day in and day out he violates welfare laws to deprive the poor of their meager allotments; he flagrantly violates building codes and regulations; his police make a mockery of law; he violates laws on equal employment and education and the provisions of civil services. The slums are the handiwork of a vicious system of the white society; Negroes live in them, but they do not make them, any more than a prisoner makes a prison.

Martin Luther King, Jr., The Trumpet of
Conscience, 1967

- It may be true that the law cannot make a man love me, but it can keep him from lynching me, and I think that's pretty important.

Martin Luther King, Jr., Wall Street Journal,
November 13, 1962

- Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that. Hate multiplies hate, violence multiplies violence, and toughness multiplies toughness in a descending spiral of destruction....The chain reaction of evil—hate begetting hate, wars producing more wars—must be broken, or we shall be plunged into the dark abyss of annihilation.

Martin Luther King, Jr., Strength To Love, 1963

- Like an unchecked cancer, hate corrodes the personality and eats away its vital unity. Hate destroys a man's sense of values and his objectivity. It causes him to describe the beautiful as ugly and the ugly as beautiful, and to confuse the true with the false and the false with the true.

Martin Luther King, Jr., Strength To Love, 1963

- I am aware that there are many who wince at a distinction between property and persons—who hold both sacrosanct. My views are not so rigid. A life is sacred. Property is intended to serve life, and no matter how much we surround it with rights and respect, it has no personal being. It is part of the earth man walks on; it is not man.

Martin Luther King, Jr., *The Trumpet of Conscience*, 1967

14. Other Recommendations

The MLK Award—Most churches have and/or need a Civic and Social Action Committee. As part of its regular activities, or as its first official act, this year the committee can give an award to the person or organization that it believes has best exemplified Dr. King in one of three areas: (1) as a Peacemaker; (2) as an Advocate for the Poor; or (3) as an Advocate for Justice Through the Legal System. Select one category or all three. The award recipient(s) can be a member(s) of your church or parish, but they need not be. Make sure that your qualifications for award recipients are clear and measurable. Be sure to have an award prepared for the recipient, other than a certificate. If necessary, seek nominations from within and without your church. It is best to give the award to persons whose efforts are unsung or perhaps little known, but significant. The church affiliation, denomination, or race of the recipient should not be factors. **Be sure to advertise the ceremony in which the award will be bestowed. Advertise in your local newspapers, radio stations, on your website, on blogs, and in E-Blasts.** Begin planning as soon as possible.

Cites and Additional Information for Music and Material Listed

1. Call to Worship

“A Poem for Dr. Martin Luther King (From Children).” Author Unknown. Adapt. by Bruce Henderson.

2. Hymns or Anthems

(a) Leaning on the Everlasting Arms. By Elisha A. Hoffman. Tune, Showalter
Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2001. #371

The New National Baptist Hymnal 21st Century Edition. Nashville, TN: Triad Publications, 2005. #211

Cleveland, J. Jefferson, and Verolga Nix. Songs of Zion. Supplemental worship resources, 12. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1981. #53

Church of God in Christ. Yes, Lord! Church of God in Christ Hymnal. Memphis, TN: Church of God in Christ Pub. Board in association with the Benson Co., 1982. #94

(b) Free at Last. By Lena Johnson McLin

Location:

Neil A. Kjos Music Company

4382 Jutland Dr.
San Diego, CA 92117
Phone: 858-270-9800

(c) Lift Every Voice and Sing. By James Weldon Johnson. Tune, (Anthem) by John R. Johnson
Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. #540

African Methodist Episcopal Hymnal, revised edition. Nashville, TN: African Methodist Episcopal Church, 2006. #571

Lead Me, Guide Me: The African American Catholic Hymnal. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 1987. #291

The Presbyterian Hymnal Hymns, Psalms, and Spiritual Songs. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990. #563

3. Spirituals or Traditional Songs

(a) Lord, I Don't Feel No Ways Tired. Arr. by Phillip McIntyre

Location:

Fostco Music Press
1107 17th Avenue South
Nashville, TN 37212
Phone: 615-320-5300

(b) Ninety-Nine and a Half Won't Do. Adapt. by Carlton Reese

Location:

Reese, Carlton. Sing for Freedom: The Story of the Civil Rights Movement Through Its Songs. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, 1989, 1990.

(c) If I Can Help Somebody. By A. Bazel Androzzo

Location:

Jackson, Mahalia. Mahalia Jackson: Gospels, Spirituals, and Hymns. New York, NY: Columbia/Legacy Recordings, 1998.

Online location: www.legacyrecordings.com/Mahalia-Jackson/Gospels-Spirituals-and-Hymns.aspx

Choral Arrangement: Music n More by RnR

Online location: www.musicnmorebyrn.com/Choral.htm

(d) Keep Your Eye on the Prize, Hold On. Adapt. by Alice Wine

Location:

Moses, Robert Parris. Sing For Freedom: The Story of the Civil Rights Movement Through Its Songs. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, 1989, 1990.

4. Gospel Songs

(a) Can't Give Up Now. By Curtis Burrell

Location:

Mary, Mary. Thankful. New York, NY: Columbia Records, 2000.

(b) In the Midst of It All. By Yolanda Adams

Location:

Mountain High, Valley Low. New York, NY: Elektra, 1999.

(c) Jesus Made a Way. By Walter Hawkins

Location:

The Williams Brothers. The Concert. McComb, MS: Malaco Music Group, 2000.

5. Liturgical Dance Music

(a) Come Sunday. By Duke Ellington

Location:

Duke Ellington: A Concert of Sacred Music from Grace Cathedral. Middlesex, England: Status Records, 1966, 1997.

(b) Strange Fruit/Black Butterfly. By Lewis Alan, Maurice Pearl, and Dwayne P. Wiggins

Location:

Sounds of Blackness. Africa to America; The Journey of the Drum. Hollywood, CA: Prospective Records, 1994.

(c) I Want Jesus to Walk with Me. Negro Spiritual

Location:

The Baltimore City College Choirs. Vision for the Millennium. Springfield, VA: Sonority Records, 1999.

African American Heritage Hymnal. #563

6. Modern Songs

(a) Faithful Is Our God. By Hezekiah Walker

Location:

Walker, Hezekiah Walker. 20/85 – The Experience. New York, NY: Verity, 2005.

(b) Victory. By Tye Tribbett

Location:

Tye Tribbett and GA. Victory Live. New York, NY: Sony Urban Music/Columbia, 2006.

(c) O Give Thanks. By Hezekiah Walker

Location:

Souled Out. New York, NY: Verity, 2008.

7. Children's Songs

(a) In His Dream. By Martin Luther King Day Group for Kids. Tune, He's Got The Whole World In His Hands

- (b) Dr. King Had a Dream. By Martin Luther King Day Group for Kids. Tune, Bingo
- (c) Freedom, Freedom, Let It Ring. By Jacqueline Woodson. Tune, Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star
- (d) Happy Birthday, Dr. King. By Martin Luther King Day Group for Kids. Tune, Yankee Doodle
- (e) We Are Much the Same. By Martin Luther King Day Group for Kids. Tune, Skip to My Lou
Location:
Online location: http://martin-luther-king-day.123holiday.net/king_songs.html

8. Offertory Song or Instrumental

- (a) This Little Light of Mine. Negro Spiritual

Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. #549

Lead Me, Guide Me: The African American Catholic Hymnal. #190

The New National Baptist Hymnal 21st Century Edition. #401

Songs of Zion. #132

- (b) You Can't Beat God Giving. By Doris Akers

Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. #671

The New National Baptist Hymnal 21st Century Edition. #383

9. Song or Instrumental for the Period of Prayer

- (a) A Worshipper's Prayer. By Judith Christie McAllister. *Though this song is a recorded as a vocal, it can be done nicely as an instrumental.*

Location:

Send Judah First. Los Angeles, CA: Judah Music, 2000.

The songbook is available from Norwood Publishing

4913 Albemarle Road

Charlotte, NC 28205

Phone: 704-531-8961

- (b) Somebody Prayed for Me. By Dorothy Norwood and Alvin Darling

Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. #505

(c) Father, I Stretch My Hands to Thee. By Charles Wesley

Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. #127

Lead Me, Guide Me: The African American Catholic Hymnal. #223

Yes, Lord! Church of God in Christ Hymnal. #289

(d) Come Here Jesus, If You Please. African American Traditional. Adapt. by Roland M. Carter

Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. #439

10. Sermonic Selection

(a) My Help Cometh from the Lord. By Geraldine Woods. Text based on Psalm 121

Location:

The Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir. Hallelujah: The Very Best of the Brooklyn Tabernacle. Nashville, TN. Word Entertainment, 2000.

African American Heritage Hymnal. #615

(b) Safety. By Lecresia Campbell

Location:

Available in the songbook *My Praise Is My Weapon*
Norwood Publishing
Phone: 704-531-8961

(c) Hold On. Arr. by J. Jefferson Cleveland

Location:

Songs of Zion. #86

11. Invitational Song or Instrumental

(a) I Want Jesus to Walk with Me. Negro Spiritual

Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. #563

The New National Baptist Hymnal 21st Century Edition. #503

Songs of Zion. #95

(b) I Have Decided to Follow Jesus. Ascribed to an Indian prince

Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. #400

The New National Baptist Hymnal 21st Century Edition. #164

Yes, Lord! Church of God in Christ Hymnal. #484

12. Benediction Song or Instrumental

(a) God Be with You. By Thomas A. Dorsey

Location:

African American Heritage Hymnal. #639

Lead Me, Guide Me: The African American Catholic Hymnal. #308

(b) Amen. Negro Spiritual

Location:

Online location: <http://www.negrospirituall.com/news-song/index.htm>