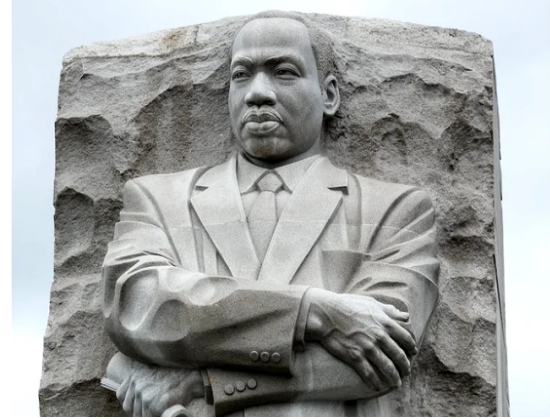




January 16, 2023

Martin Luther King Day is observed on the third Monday in January every year.



### Why Martin Luther King Is Such A Respectable Figure

Martin Luther King Jr. was born in 1929. He earned a doctorate in theology in 1955 and was also a Baptist minister and a prominent social activist in the American Civil Rights Movement.

Some of his notable and memorable acts also include heading the 381-day protest against segregation on public transportation, initiated by Rosa Parks on December 1, 1955. As a result of this protest, the Supreme Court declared such segregation as unconstitutional in November 1956.

He founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1957 and it fought to gain full rights for African Americans in the United States by protesting non-violently.

He organized the popular march on Washington for jobs and freedom to highlight the daily struggles of African Americans in 1963 with the support of various civil rights and religious groups.

Almost 25,000 people took part in this protest that ended at the Lincoln Memorial where the crowd gathered to listen to MLK's "I Have A Dream" speech that influences peace and equality. His speech contributed to the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, outlawing discrimination based on color, religion, sex, or national origin.

### The Significance and History Of Martin Luther King Day

Martin Luther King was assassinated on April 4, 1968 and 4 days after his assassination, a campaign was launched to declare his birthday, January 15 as a federal holiday.

### Did you Know...

Different states celebrate his significance differently? In Idaho, this day is known as Human Rights Day, in Wyoming it is known as Wyoming Equality Day.

He was the youngest person to receive the Noble Peace Prize in 1964.

The campaign for a federal holiday in King's honor began soon after his assassination in 1968, largely promoted by labor unions. In 1979, a bill to make King's birthday failed to receive the number of votes needed in the U.S. House of Representatives. Opponents argued that a paid holiday for federal employees would be too expensive, and that holiday's shouldn't honor private citizens.

Momentum for the holiday gained support from the corporate community and the general public—greatly strengthened by the release of Stevie Wonder's single "Happy Birthday" in 1980 and his hosting of the Rally for Peace Press Conference in 1981 culminating in a petition to pass the law that received 6 million signatures.

On the 20th anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington, more than 500,000 people gathered to hear speakers ask for the Senate and President Ronald Reagan to pass legislation for the holiday. Despite originally opposing it due to cost concerns, President Ronald Reagan signed a bill to establish the holiday in 1983. It eventually passed Congress, and the first observance occurred on January 20, 1986.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day is celebrated with equal importance in the Japanese city of Hiroshima, where a banquet is held at the mayor's office.

The Dr. Martin Luther King Tribute and Dinner has been held in Wassenaar, The Netherlands since 1986. The event traditionally concludes with crowds singing the Civil Rights Movement anthem "We Shall Overcome."

### EVENTS

#### MLK Community Celebration

##### Missouri History Museum

Saturday, January 14 | 10am–4pm

Sunday, January 15 | 2pm–5pm

Monday, January 16 | 10am–4pm

Click here to learn more:

<https://explorestlouis.com/event/mlk-community-celebration/2023-01-14/>

#### Ways to celebrate

Martin Luther King asked constantly "what are you doing for others?" and hence in honor of his greatness, people began observing this day as the day of giving back to their communities by volunteering in soup-kitchens, neighborhood clean-ups and visiting isolated people.

In the 1990s, the theme of the holiday became: "Remember! Celebrate! Act! A Day On, Not a Day Off."

#### MLK quotes:

"You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step."

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

"The time is always right to do what is right."

"We must learn to live together like brothers or we will perish together like fools."

#### Other notable observances in January

**Jan 7** Orthodox Christmas

**Jan 11** National Human Trafficking Awareness Day

**Jan 13** Koren American Day

**Jan 16** Civil Rights Day

**Jan 17** Prohibition Day

**Jan 21** World Religion Day

**Jan 24** International Day of Education