

From the Desk of
Rev. Tyler C. Millner, Sr.

December 12, 2021

Re: King Holiday Celebration 2022

To: Virginia's Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Commission

In the continued interest of honoring the "memory and Legacy of Dr. King" in the Commonwealth of Virginia, I offer the following suggestions:

- **Issue** a statement ahead of the King Holiday urging communities and organizations in Virginia to commemorate the holiday.
- **Appeal** to the Executive Branch to issue a proclamation and ahead of the holiday--re-enforcing the Commission's appeal.
- **Model** in the Richmond-Petersburg communities an initiative inviting the citizens to enroll and commit to action to finish the unfinished work of making the Dream a true reality.
- **Provide** a resource-web based and hard copy--"Defining and Outlining Marks of the "Beloved Community."
- **Promote**-- with statewide communication--spotlighting the Emancipation Monument.

I have attached two documents of my crafting that may be helpful.

Blessings,

Rev.

Attachments: 2021 Letter to Governor & Commission Chairlady
Community Memo - Checklist for Celebrating the King Holiday



National King Holiday Drum Major Project

[Revised/Updated EDITION 2022]

Community Memo ...

1

Checklist for Celebrating the King Holiday

National King Holiday History Notes

- Monday, January 21, 2008 [Jan. 17- 2022]
 - Celebrating the life and works of Dr. Martin L. King Jr.
 - Communities across the nation will in some fashion pay homage to this great American and world Humanitarian.

Holiday History

- The Act of Congress designated the third Monday in January as a national holiday
- The law states as quoted
 -such holiday should serve as a time for Americans to reflect on the principles of racial equality and nonviolent social change espoused by Martin Luther King Jr.

The Challenge

- As we honor Martin
 - We are challenged to seize the moment to make the national holiday activities contribute to strategic action breathing new vitality and energy into the work for empowerment and community building. The questions which set the stages are several.

The Opportunity

- Words of Rev. Millner
 - As I reflect on the legacy of Martin which I find invigorating and personally challenging, I see a number of essential conditions necessary to be met in order to make the Dream a Living Memorial.

Checklist for Celebrating the Holiday

2

Activity #1

More Than Reciting “The Dream”

- It is important to see Dr. King as a towering symbol of complex action, hopes and dreams.
- He was truly multi-dimensional in both character and work.

Activity #2

Don’t Pasteurize the Image

- Resist the temptation to reduce Dr. King to acceptable non-critical thoughts which makes no real demand of us.
- We are benefactors of the legacy of Dr. King—black and white.

Activity #3

The Dream

- Dr. King was more than a dreamer.
- He was a doer...risk taker, daring to follow the moral constraints of his convictions.

Activity #4

Appreciate the “Rightness of Fighting for Justice

The father of the modern civil rights movement in the United States, **Martin Luther King** was born 15 January 1929 and died on 4 April 1968. Awarded the **Nobel Peace Prize** in 1964, he died when he was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee. There are some of Dr Martin Luther King's famous speeches which immortalized the civil rights movement of the 1960s and still give inspiration today.

- In order for a community to seize the moment to honor Dr. King in a manner that will transform
 - Appreciation and homage must be paid to the “rightness” of the struggle and fight for justice.

Activity #5

Recognizing the Collective Symbolism of Dr. King

- If our celebrating is to have a transforming quality
 - There must be a wholesome and authentic expression of appreciation of the vast contributions of citizens of African descent to making America what it is.

Activity # 6

Black Church as a Vehicle of Social Change

- The black church is unique in its power as a vehicle of social change and liberation.

We must take the church to the marketplace and call the nation to faithfulness to her creed.

Activity #7

Interracial & Interfaith

In a sense all life is interrelated

Let's heed the words of Dr. King

- "The agony of the poor impoverishes the rich; the betterment of the poor enriches the rich."

Activity #8

National Holiday Observance for All

It is important that the holiday honoring Dr. King be taken up with a passion...however, it should not be thought of as a black holiday.

Activity #9

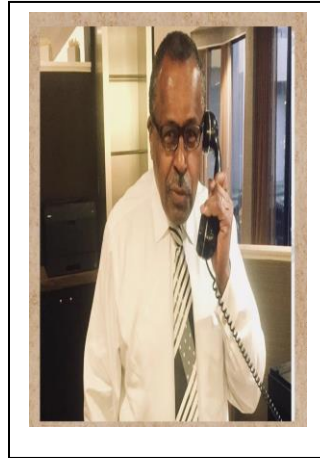
Corporate Score Card

- The King holiday is an appropriate time for corporate America to account for its stewardship when it comes to the fight for racial and social justice.... as well as economic empowerment for the many.

Activity # 10

Faith and Africa

- Celebrating the King Holiday should include a fresh reminder of our heritage "less in our hearts drunk with the wine of the world we forget Thee..." Yes: Commit to be "true to our God....true to our Native Land."



Tyler C. Millner, Sr. Profile

- Co-founder of Community Learning Week
and served as director for 20 years.
- Former executive vice president of Virginia Union University
- Business and education consultant
- Pastor of Morning Star Holy Church, Martinsville, VA.

Tyler C. Millner, Sr
Axton, Virginia 24054

December 31, 2020

The Honorable Ralph Northam
Office of the Governor - Virginia
P. O. Box 1475
Richmond, Virginia 232218

RE: MLK Holiday Celebration - 2021

Dear Honorable Governor:

The celebration of Dr. King's birthday on January 18, 2021 will provide Virginia an opportunity to publicly to express its deep commitment to the "Ideas and principles" that exemplify the beliefs of this great civil rights leader.

Virginia has a unique and defining history when it comes to the celebration of the holiday. It was in January 1978 that Community Learning Week launched the celebrating the life and works of Dr. King six years prior to the official holiday date which started in Jan. 1986. The MLK VA Commission and the Governor's Office can provide the motivation and stimulation for celebrating the holiday 2021.

As one of the guardians and keepers of the CLW papers documenting this history as well as being a major promoter of the King Holiday celebration and an activist-- in Central Virginia, and Piedmont, offer the following suggestions:

1. There be an issuance of a **joint statement** by MLK Commission and the Office of the Governor,
2. Also, there is an issuance of a **Governor's Proclamation** that will advocate for full state participation in the holiday activities, including some historical nuggets, while saluting the leadership of Governor Wilder in regards to the King holiday in Virginia, Community Learning Week, now Living the Dream and Virginia Union University.
3. That the governor makes "**appropriate remarks**" saluting both the works and significance of Dr. King's influence and why the King holiday is both special and a great opportunity for America,
4. There will be **public expressions** from administration, boards and agencies of the Commonwealth will both advocate for and take a leadership role in the 2021 celebration.

5. That the governor **assigns the A/A Commission** to review the suggestions and recommendations compiled from the "**Where Do We Go from Here**" Community Conversations held in the eleven cities and towns visited by Dr. King. And prepare a **guide-directory** on "how best to follow-up and follow-thru on an **ACTION PLAN WITH OBJECTIVES AND BENCHMARKS**."

6. There be a **press release** addressing the topic of race and the governor's initiatives where race and social justice is concern. And include a highlight on the interrelatedness of King Holiday, Black History and Black Lives Matter.

All things celebrating the King Holiday 2021 in Commonwealth shall also be done in salute and honor of the Honorable John Lewis.

Thank you, Mr. Governor, for your consideration of these suggestions.

In the Interest of the Beloved Community,

Rev. Tyler C. Millner

cc: The Honorable L. Douglas Wilder
Dr. Janice Underwood
The Honorable Levey M. Stoney, Mayor, City of Richmond
Senator Jenifer McClellan, Chairlady, MLK VA Commission
Delegate Bagby, Chairman, Virginia Legislative Black Caucus
Dr. Hakim J. Lucas, President Virginia Union University
Dr. Ricardo Brown, Executive the Director, Living the Dream
Mr. Da'Quan Marcell Love, Executive Director, VA State NAACP

bc: Ms. Lily Jones, MLK VA Commission—Legislative Services