

Brookline Celebrates MLK DAY



3PM • JANUARY 20, 2020
Coolidge Corner Theatre

PROGRAM

Welcome	Bernard Greene
<i>Lift Every Voice and Sing</i>	Leontyne Price
<i>MLK</i> by U2	Testostatonnes
<i>Two Visions: Freedom or Repression</i>	Zvi A. Sesling
<i>Down to the River to Pray</i> (traditional) <i>Shed a Little Light</i> by James Taylor	Brookline High School Glee Club
<i>From an Old-Head to Young-Bloods: Advice for Black Men Coming of Age</i>	Regie Gibson
<i>Roxbury to Brookline: One Family's Experience</i>	Ruth Ellen Fitch
Discussion	Ruth Ellen Fitch Bernard Greene
Closing Remarks	Bernard Greene



Cover photo: *Martin Luther King, Jr.*, a 1982 bronze sculpture by Brookline artist John Wilson (1922-2015) in Town Hall, was a gift to the Town of Brookline made possible by contributions from Wilson's family, the Brookline community, and friends. It was dedicated with a festive celebration on January 27, 2019 and it serves as a reminder of Brookline's commitment to racial equity.

Lift Every Voice And Sing

*Lyrics by James Weldon Johnson
Music by John Rosamond Johnson*

Lift every voice and sing
Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise,
High as the list'ning skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,
Bitter the chast'ning rod,
Felt in the day that hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat,
Have not our weary feet,
Come to the place on which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past, till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our star is cast.

God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who has by Thy might,
Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee,
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand,
True to our God,
True to our native land.

PRESENTERS

Bernard Greene is chair of the MLK Celebration Committee and chair of the Brookline Select Board. Before retiring in 2018, he was general counsel to the Massachusetts Clean Water Trust, a state environmental finance agency in the Department of the State Treasurer. He has lived in Brookline since 2003 and is married to Dr. Ellen Pinderhughes, a psychology professor at Tufts University. They have two adult children. Bernard Greene graduated from Swarthmore College and Boston College Law School.

Zvi A. Sesling, the Poet Laureate of Brookline, is an award-winning poet whose poetry is in online and print journals in the U.S., India, Ireland, France, England, New Zealand, Australia, Ireland, Canada and Israel. He publishes Muddy River Books and edits *Muddy River Poetry Review*. Mr. Sesling is the author of three volumes of poetry, *The Lynching of Leo Frank*, *Fire Tongue* and *King of the Jungle*, as well as two chapbooks, *Across Stones of Bad Dreams* and *Love Poems From Hell*. He lives in Brookline with his wife Susan J. Dechter.

Regie Gibson is a literary performer who has lectured and performed widely in the U.S., Cuba and Europe. Regie has performed with and composed texts for the Boston City Singers, the Mystic Chorale and the Handel and Haydn Society. He's been published in *Poetry Magazine*, *Harvard Divinity Magazine* and *The Iowa Review*, among others. He is a recipient of the Massachusetts Cultural Council Award for Poetry, the Walker Scholarship for Poetry from the Provincetown Fine Arts Work Center, a YMCA Community Writer's Fellowship, the Lexington Foundation Education Grant, and the 2017 Brother Thomas Fellowship for Artistic Excellence from The Boston Foundation. When Mr. Gibson is not teaching, he is the lead singer for Atlas Soul, a world music, global funk ensemble and the artistic director of Shakespeare to Hip-hop's "Shakespeare Time-Traveling Speakeasy," a multimedia performance focusing on the works and influence of William Shakespeare.

PRESENTERS

Ruth Ellen Fitch served as President and Chief Executive Officer for nine years at The Dimock Center, retiring in June 2013. Prior to her position with Dimock, Ms. Fitch practiced law for over twenty years at Palmer & Dodge, LLP where she became the first Black woman partner at a large Boston law firm. Her practice was public law and financing transactions, serving as Bond Counsel to the City of Boston and many New England cities and towns and other public bodies. Before attending law school, Ms. Fitch was Director of the METCO program in the Brookline Public Schools and taught Black literature at the University of Massachusetts at Boston. She holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Economics from Barnard College, Columbia University and a Juris Doctor degree from Harvard Law School, where she served for three years on the Law School Administrative Board. She currently serves on the Boards of EdVestors, Inc. and Boston Medical Center and is a Trustee of the Ludcke Foundation. Ms. Fitch received an Honorary Doctor of Humanities degree from Curry College in 2011 and an Honorary Doctoral Degree from Simmons College in 2014. She received the Pinnacle Award for achievement in the legal profession from the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, the Women's Bar Association of Massachusetts Award, the Charles Hamilton Houston Public Service Award from the Harvard Black Law Students Association, and the Distinguished Alumna Award from Girls' Latin School/Boston Latin Academy, where she has been a commencement speaker.

The Testostatones of Brookline High School

Julius Arolovitch, Harrison Chang, Jack Flood, Jonah Fox, Oliver Fox, Chris Jennings, Ben Kiel, Omer Kitov, Kevin Liao, Miles Luther, Ethan Mamenta, Isaiah Wood, Daniel Zilberman

Brookline High School Glee Club

Meihui An, Julius Arolovitch, Jackson Daley, Ava French, Rossella Gargiulo, Livvy Hartshorn, Helen Ives, Cynthia Li, Alex Murray, Charlie Perdue, Katya Sacharow, Hannah Schlosberg, Daphna Steiner Tomer, Brad Wolf

REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968), a Baptist minister, was the face of the Civil Rights Movement during the 1950s and 1960s, working to end racial segregation and discrimination through civil disobedience and other nonviolent means.

In 1951, Martin Luther King, Jr. moved to Boston to study ethics and philosophy at Boston University. He became “Dr. King” by earning a Ph.D. in systematic theology from BU in 1955.

During these years, Howard Thurman was named dean of the University’s Marsh Chapel. King attended sermons there but also turned to Thurman as his mentor and spiritual advisor. Among the lessons that inspired him most were Thurman’s accounts of a visit to Mohandas Gandhi in India years earlier. It was Dean Thurman who educated King in the mahatma’s ideas of nonviolent protest that helped sow the seeds of change in the United States and beyond.

While in graduate school, King met Coretta Scott (1927-2006), a scholarship student at New England Conservatory. They were married on June 18, 1953, on the lawn of her parent’s home. They would have four children. After completing her degree in voice and piano at NEC, they moved Montgomery, Alabama when King was named pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church. She was a civil rights leader throughout her life.

King led the successful year-long 1955 Montgomery bus boycott, during which he was arrested and his home bombed. He helped found the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1957. From 1960-1962, he pushed for direct action in support of voting rights and in opposition to segregation of schools and public facilities.

He helped organize the 1963 nonviolent protests in Birmingham, Alabama, where demonstrators were met by police with attack dogs and clubs. He was arrested and placed in solitary confinement, from which he wrote “Letter from a Birmingham Jail.”

At the 1963 March on Washington, he delivered his famous “I Have a Dream” speech before 250,000 march participants. This speech established his reputation as one of the greatest orators in American history.

The combined efforts of civil rights groups resulted in the Voting Rights Act of 1965. King helped to organize the 1965 Selma to Montgomery marches, and the following year, he and SCLC took the movement north to Chicago to oppose segregated housing. In the final years of his life, King spoke out frequently against poverty and the Vietnam War, alienating some liberal allies with a 1967 speech titled “Beyond Vietnam.”

In 1968, King and SCLC embarked on the Poor People’s Campaign to increase economic rights for the poor. King was assassinated on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee, where he had come to speak in support of striking sanitation workers.

In 1964, King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for combating racial inequality through nonviolent resistance. He was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom (1977) and the Congressional Gold Medal (2004). The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., was dedicated in 2011.

– adapted from Wikipedia

History will have no record that the greatest tragedy of the period of social transition was not the strident clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people. – MLK, 1968

SPECIAL THANKS

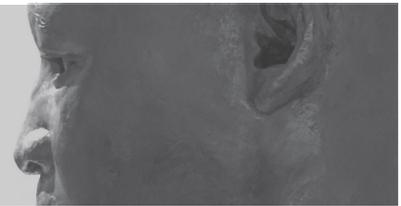
The Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Committee thanks the following businesses, organizations, and individuals for their commitment to making this event, as well as the book drive and the Welcome Blanket Knit-in, a success.

Mark Anastasio
Brookline Booksmith
Brookline Inspo/Expo
Brookline Interactive Group (BIG)
Brookline Office of Diversity,
Inclusion and Community Relations
Brookline Police Department
Brookline Public Library
Brookline Public Schools
Brookline Select Board
Brookline Senior Center

Chobee Hoy
Coolidge Corner Theatre
Gillian Jackson
Harvey Bravman
Kristin Leader Design
League of Women Voters of Brookline
Mel Kleckner
More Than Words
Paul Scarborough
Red Sun Press
Temple Kehillath Israel

Again we have deluded ourselves into believing the myth that Capitalism grew and prospered out of the Protestant ethic of hard work and sacrifice. The fact is that capitalism was built on the exploitation and suffering of black slaves and continues to thrive on the exploitation of the poor—both black and white, both here and abroad. — MLK, 1967

MLK COMMITTEE



Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Committee Mission Statement

Each year, MLK Day provides an opportunity for Brookline residents to remember a hero martyred in the effort to achieve equality in America. Despite his sacrifice and that of many others who participated in the Civil Rights Movement, and despite the progress made in the 50-plus years since his death, full equality has not been achieved. Brookline's MLK Day Celebration is an expression of the Town's commitment to racial equality. During the year, the Committee sponsors and plans events that bring us together to celebrate our diversity, to learn from one another, to better understand how racial inequality divides us, and, most importantly, how we may work together to achieve the goal of equality.

Members

Bernard Greene (chair), Jack Curtis, Rob Daves, Caitlin Starr (staff), Ann Kamensky, Bobbie Knable, Bill Mitchell

The MLK Committee has posted information on the MLK Committee webpage about the people and the organizations that participated in the Civil Rights Movement. Suggestions to include additional educational information are welcome. Our e-mail address is BrooklineMLKCommittee@gmail.com.

Brookline's Commitment to Workforce Inclusion and Diversity

In keeping with its commitment to increase diversity, the Town of Brookline has pledged to make available to the public its annual report on the racial and gender composition of its workforce. The latest *Annual Workforce, Inclusion and Diversity Report* can be found on the Human Resources Department webpage on the Town's website. The report for 2019 will be available this spring.



Inspo/Expo: Welcome Blanket Knit-In

For the past two years on MLK Day, Inspo:Expo, a social action fair organized by Brookline resident Hadassah Margolis, has brought together local organizations and other community members to share their projects and encourage service and activism. This year, as part of MLK Day, Inspo:Expo presented “The Welcome Blanket Knit-In” at Kehillath Israel. The goal of the Knit-In is to create blankets and notes of welcome to give to immigrants and refugees. Each blanket will be displayed in a pop-up exhibit on March 20-21 at KI, as part of Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society’s National Refugee Shabbat, and then sent to local resettlement agencies to be delivered to our newest neighbors.

Across the country, Welcome Blanket has inspired people to make 6,000 blankets, which were exhibited in three museum shows and then gifted to 30+ partnering resettlement agencies. In Brookline alone, local crafters have made over 80 blankets.

For more info, email Hadassah Margolis at: inspoexpo.brookline@gmail.com.

■ *Not only have we come a long, long way, but truth impels us to admit that we have a long, long way to go. – MLK, 1964*



Voter Registration - League of Women Voters of Brookline

The League of Women Voters, at local, state, and national levels, is dedicated to promoting an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive. Protecting the right of all citizens to vote, and encouraging them to vote, has been central to the League’s mission for 100 years.

The Brookline League’s table in the lobby today has non-partisan voting information and voter registration forms. Do you or someone you know need to register or update their information? February 12 is the deadline to participate in the Massachusetts presidential primary on March 3, 2020.

The LWVBrookline is a non-partisan, non-profit volunteer organization of women and men of all ages. We encourage informed, active civic participation through our *Voters Guide*, warrant and candidate forums, “Engaged Citizen Corner” in the *TAB*, voter registration tables, and other events. For more info, see www.lwvbrookline.org.

SUGGESTED READING FOR YOUNG ADULTS ON THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

About MLK

The Dream: Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Speech That Inspired a Nation

by Drew D. Hansen

Explores the fascinating, little-known history of King's legendary address.

Let the Trumpet Sound: A Life of Martin Luther King, Jr. by Stephen B. Oats

A definitive one-volume biography.

About the Civil Rights Movement

Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice by Phillip Hoose

Before Rosa Parks, there was Claudette Colvin, an impassioned teenager, who in March 1955, refused to give her seat to a white woman on a segregated bus in Montgomery, Alabama. A year later she was a key plaintiff in a landmark case that swept away the legal underpinnings of Jim Crow. The first in-depth account of an important yet largely unknown civil rights figure.

Free At Last: A History of the Civil Rights Movement and Those Who Died in the Struggle by Sara Bullard; introduction by Julian Bond

This history of the civil rights movement captures the turbulent years of struggle through stories and photos.

Freedom Walkers: The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott by Russell Freedman

Eyewitness reports, iconic photographs, and primary sources tell the stories of the heroes who stood up against segregation.

March by John Lewis and Andrew Aydin; illustrations by Nate Powell

Congressman John Lewis, a major civil rights leader, presents a vivid first-hand account of his lifelong struggle for civil and human rights. (a graphic novel trilogy)

- Book One: Spans his youth in rural Alabama, his life-changing meeting with MLK, and the Nashville Student Movement's fight to tear down segregation through nonviolent sit-ins.
- Book Two: From the Freedom Riders of 1961 to the bombing of the Birmingham church in 1963, a turning point that contributed to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Book Three: In 1963, when the Civil Rights Movement caught the country's full attention, an army of activists launched campaigns such as Freedom Vote and Mississippi Freedom Summer. The fight for voting rights came to a showdown with Bloody Sunday in Selma, Alabama.

Marching for Freedom: Walk Together Children and Don't You Grow Weary by Elizabeth Partridge (with photographs)

Focusing on the courageous children who faced terrifying violence when marching with MLK, this inspiring look at the fight for the vote recounts the chaotic, passionate, and deadly three months of protests that culminated in the landmark march from Selma to Montgomery in 1965.

Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom: My Story of the 1965 Selma Voting Rights

March by Lynda Backman Lowery; illustrations by P.J. Loughran. In her memoir, the youngest marcher in the 1965 voting rights march from Selma to Montgomery proved that young adults can be heroes. Jailed 11 times before her 15th birthday, Lowery fought alongside MLK for the rights of African Americans.



SUGGESTED READING FOR YOUNG ADULTS ON THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Fiction

Dear Martin by Nic Stone

Having left his rough neighborhood, Justyce McAllister, an honor student, is scorned by his former peers or ridiculed by his new classmates. He looks to the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. for answers and starts a journal to Dr. King. Then one day Justyce goes driving with his best friend—windows open, music blaring, sparking the fury of a white off-duty cop beside them. Words fly. Shots are fired. In the media fallout, it's Justyce who's under attack.

Lillian's Right to Vote by Jonah Winter; illustrated by Shane W. Evans

An elderly African American woman, on route to vote, recalls the excitement and challenges her ancestors faced on their long walks to the polls. Marking the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, this lyrical, poignant picture book portrays one woman's determination to make it up the hill and make her voice heard.

The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963 by Christopher Paul Curtis

A profound, often hilarious, story (a Newbery and Coretta Scott King Honoree) about a black family in Michigan that visits their Grandma in Birmingham, Alabama in 1963—just when Grandma's church is blown up. Their visit relates the terror of the bombing that killed four African-American girls and its impact on the Watson family.



As you leave this celebration... it is important that you keep these things in mind: the movement for equality for all Americans didn't begin with Dr. King, and it has not ended with him. Whenever you feel discouraged by how much remains to be done to fulfill the goal of equality, think of what has already been accomplished—and what it cost many individuals—working singly and together to bring us to this point. And whenever you feel your efforts don't count—that it doesn't matter whether you vote or read a newspaper, keep informed about the issues, take advantage of every educational opportunity or work to promote equal opportunity—you risk wasting the fruits of all of those sacrifices and those gains won at such high cost. If the lives taken are not to be lost in vain, you must add your efforts to those of Martin Luther King, Jr. to lead the people into the Promised Land.

When we honor the courageous leaders of the struggle for civil rights, let us also remember the people who joined the fight and strengthened the demands for equality. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Committee invites Brookline residents to share their experiences and memories of the Civil Rights movement. Please contact us with your stories and your suggestions for future events at BrooklineMLKCommittee@gmail.com.

—Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Committee

Many of the ugly pages of American history have been obscured and forgotten. A society is always eager to cover misdeeds with a cloak of forgetfulness, but no society can fully repress an ugly past when the ravages persist into the present. — MLK, 1967

