

**City of East Lansing, Michigan**

**RESOLUTION TO PAY TRIBUTE TO DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING,  
JR.'S LEGACY OF NONVIOLENT SOCIAL CHANGE, PRINCIPLED  
LEADERSHIP AND PUBLIC SERVICE**

**January 12, 2021**

WHEREAS, Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Jr. dedicated his life to ensuring the nation's fundamental principles of liberty and justice for all citizens; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led this nation in a nonviolent civil rights movement during the 1950s and 1960s beginning with the Montgomery Bus Boycott to obtain social, political and economic equality for Black-Americans and all oppressed peoples; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. King had a dream that “one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed...” which is that “we hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal;” and,

WHEREAS, Dr. King earned worldwide recognition as an eloquent and articulate spokesperson for equality, being the voice of a movement that spanned the two decades and sparked nonviolent freedom protests around the world; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. King preached a doctrine of nonviolence to combat racism, segregation, discrimination, militarization and economic injustice and believed that each person has the moral capacity to serve and care for our fellow mankind; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. King awakened the conscience and consciousness of the nation and used his message of hope to bring people together to build the Beloved Community, a community of justice at peace with itself; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. King was born on January 15, 1929, and attended segregated public schools in Georgia; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. King began attending Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia at the age of 15 and received a B.A. degree in 1948 from Morehouse College, following in the footsteps of both his father and grandfather; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. King received his B.D. in 1951 from Crozer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania and his Ph.D. in theology in 1955 from Boston University; and,

WHEREAS, while studying in Boston, Dr. King met Coretta Scott, a civil rights activist, and the couple married on June 18, 1953 and had 2 sons and 2 daughters; and,

WHEREAS, in 1954, Dr. King accepted the call of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama, and was pastor there until November 1959 when he resigned to move back to Atlanta to lead the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; and,

WHEREAS, from 1960 until his death in 1968, Dr. King pastored the Ebenezer Baptist Church along with his father; and,

WHEREAS, between 1957 and 1968, Dr. King traveled over 6 million miles, made over 2,500 speeches and sermons, was arrested over 40 times, and wrote 5 books and numerous articles supporting efforts around the nation to end injustice and bring about social change and desegregation; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. King led the Montgomery bus boycott for 381 days to protest the arrest of Mrs. Rosa Parks and the segregation of the bus system of Montgomery, Alabama, in the first great nonviolent civil rights demonstration of contemporary times in the United States; and,

WHEREAS, during the Montgomery bus boycott, Dr. King was arrested, and his home was bombed, and from here composed his famous letter from a Montgomery jail that stirred the conscience of America and brought national recognition to the cause of social justice; and,

WHEREAS, on November 13, 1956, the Supreme Court of the United States declared the laws requiring segregation in Montgomery's bus system to be unconstitutional, leading to the end of the bus boycott on December 21, 1956; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. King led the March on Washington, D.C. on August 28, 1963, the largest nonviolent protest of the civil rights movement; and,

WHEREAS, during that march, Dr. King delivered his famous I Have A Dream speech from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial and before a crowd of over 200,000 people; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. King's I Have A Dream speech is one of the iconic and memorable orations in United States history; and,

WHEREAS, as Dr. King led the Black community and the nation through mourning when members of the Ku Klux Klan bombed the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama that killed four little girls preparing for Sunday worship service; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. King was a champion of nonviolence, fervently advocating nonviolent resistance as the strategy to end segregation and racial discrimination in the United States; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. King was awarded the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize in recognition for his efforts, and, at the age of 35, was the youngest man to receive the Nobel Peace Prize; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. King as the principle leader, spokesman and strategist for the civil rights movement was instrumental in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and,

WHEREAS, on the evening of April 4, 1968, Dr. King was assassinated while standing on the balcony of his motel room in Memphis, Tennessee where he was to lead sanitation workers in protest against low wages and intolerable working conditions; and,

WHEREAS, in 1968, Representative John Conyers of Michigan first introduced legislation to establish a national holiday honoring Dr. King, and he would champion this effort for over a decade; and,

WHEREAS, Coretta Scott King led a massive campaign to establish Dr. King’s birthday as a national holiday, and in 1983, Congress passed H.R. 3706 with a veto proof majority in both houses, and President Ronald Reagan signed legislation establishing Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; and,

WHEREAS, Dr. Bernice King, the daughter of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King, named Coretta Scott King “the Architect of the King legacy;” and,

WHEREAS, the City of East Lansing has celebrated the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday since 1982, one year in advance of federal legislation; and,

WHEREAS, in 2021, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day will be celebrated in all 50 states and in more than 100 countries throughout the world; and,

WHEREAS, in 2021, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission of Mid- Michigan has adopted the theme of “Out of a Mountain of Despair a Stone of Hope;” and,

WHEREAS, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission of Mid-Michigan will welcome Dr. Bernice King, daughter of civil rights activist Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King and CEO of the King Center as the featured speaker for the 2021 televised King Day of Celebration.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of East Lansing encourages citizens to participate in the Commemoration being held on Monday, January 18, 2021, and broadcasted on WILX.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of East Lansing is committed to the ideals of building the beloved community and will conduct policy in accordance with these values.

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Aaron Stephens, Mayor

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_, 2021

Moved by Council member: \_\_\_\_\_

Supported by Council member: \_\_\_\_\_

ADOPTED: Yeas: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nays: \_\_\_\_\_

CLERKS CERTIFICATION: I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a Resolution adopted by the East Lansing City Council at its regular meeting held on January 12, 2021, the original of which is part of the Council's minutes.

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Jennifer Shuster, City Clerk