



San Francisco Interfaith Council

*Celebrating our diverse faiths & spiritual traditions
Bringing people together to build understanding
Serving our community*

Interfaith Prayer Service

Remembering Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on the 50th Anniversary of his Assassination

“The Urgency of Now”

“We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there "is" such a thing as being too late.

This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is a time for vigorous and positive action.”

— Martin Luther King Jr.

Yerba Buena Gardens Esplanade Monday, January 15, 2018

Sponsored by the San Francisco Interfaith Council

With the Support of:

*MJM Management Group/Yerba Buena Gardens Festival
The Tabernacle Community Development Corporation*

Welcome

*Michael G. Pappas, Executive Director
San Francisco Interfaith Council*

Invocation

*Rev. Staci Current, District Superintendent for Bay District
California-Nevada Annual Conference, United Methodist Church*

Excerpt from Senator Robert F. Kennedy's Remarks After Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Assassination – April 4, 1968

*Read by Abby Porth, Executive Director
Jewish Community Relations Council*

“What we need in the United States is not division; what we need in the United States is not hatred; what we need in the United States is not violence or lawlessness, but love and wisdom and compassion toward one another, and a feeling of injustice towards those who still suffer within our country, whether they be white or they be black ... We've had difficult times in the past. We will have difficult times in the future. It is not the end of violence; it is not the end of lawlessness; it is not the end of disorder. But the vast majority of white people and the vast majority of black people in this country want to live together, want to improve the quality of our life, and want justice for all human beings who abide in our land. Let us dedicate ourselves to what the Greeks wrote so many years ago: to tame the savageness of man and to make gentle the life of this world. Let us dedicate ourselves to that, and say a prayer for our country and for our people.”

Excerpt from L. Harold DeWolf's Funeral Tribute to Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at Ebenezer Baptist Church – April 9, 1968

*Read by Imam Abu Qadir Al-Amin, Resident Imam
San Francisco Muslim Community Center*

“On that rock of faith God raised in him a lighthouse of hope. No white backlash nor black backlash nor massive indifference could cause him to despair. He dreamed a dream of world brotherhood, and unlike most of us, he gave himself absolutely to work for the fulfillment of this inspired hope. In that lighthouse of hope, God lighted in Martin a torch of love. He loved all men. Even the hate-filled foe of all he represented he tried sympathetically to understand... It is now for us, all millions of the living who care, to take up his torch of love. It is for us to finish his work, to end the awful destruction in Vietnam, to root out every trace of race prejudice from our lives, to bring the massive powers of this nation to aid the oppressed and to heal the hate-scarred world. God rest your soul, dear Martin. You have fought the good fight. You have finished the course. You have kept the faith. Yours is now the triumphant crown of righteousness. Your dream is now ours. May God make us worthy and able to carry your torch of love and march on to brotherhood. Amen.”

Musical Selection: “Take My Hand Precious Lord” by Thomas A. Dorsey

Sung by Helen LaMar

*Precious Lord, take my hand
Lead me on, let me stand
I'm tired, I'm weak, I'm lone
Through the storm, through the night
Lead me on to the light
Take my hand precious Lord, lead me home*

*When my way grows drear, precious Lord linger near
When my light is almost gone
Hear my cry, hear my call
Hold my hand lest I fall
Take my hand precious Lord, lead me home*

*When the darkness appears and the night draws near
And the day is past and gone
At the river I stand
Guide my feet, hold my hand
Take my hand precious Lord, lead me home*

*Precious Lord, take my hand
Lead me on, let me stand
I'm tired, I'm weak, I'm lone
Through the storm, through the night
Lead me on to the light
Take my hand precious Lord, lead me home (lead me home)*

Introduction of Public Officials

*Kaushik Roy, Chair
San Francisco Interfaith Council*

Welcome on Behalf of the City

*The Honorable London Breed
Acting Mayor, City and County of San Francisco*

Excerpt from L. Harold DeWolf's Funeral Tribute to Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at Ebenezer Baptist Church – April 9, 1968

*Read by Sensei Elaine Donlin
Buddhist Church of San Francisco*

“Martin Luther King spoke with the tongues of men and of angels. Now those eloquent lips are stilled. His knowledge ranged widely and his prophetic wisdom penetrated deeply into human affairs. Now that knowledge and that wisdom have been transcended as he shares in the divine wisdom of eternity. The apostle Paul has told us that when all other experiences and virtues of humanity have been left behind, faith, hope, and love remain. But the greatest of these is love. Martin exemplified all three in the rarest intensity. Amid the tempestuous seas and treacherous storms of injustice, hate, and violence which threatened the very life of mankind, his faith was a solid, immovable rock. He received hundreds of threats upon his life, yet for 13 years he walked among them unafraid. His single commitment was to do God’s will for him; his trust was in God alone.”

Excerpt from Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s “The Drum Major Instinct Sermon” Audio Played at Private Funeral at Ebenezer Baptist Church – April 9, 1968

*Read by Rev. Jay Williams, Ph.D., Lead Pastor
Glide Memorial United Methodist Church*

“If any of you are around when I have to meet my day, I don’t want a long funeral. And if you get somebody to deliver the eulogy, tell them not to talk too long. (Yes) And every now and then I wonder what I want them to say. Tell them not to mention that I have a Nobel Peace Prize – that isn’t important. Tell them not to mention that I have three or four hundred other awards – that’s not important. Tell them not to mention where I went to school. I’d like somebody to mention that day that Martin Luther King, Jr. tried to give his life serving others. I’d like for somebody to say that day that Martin Luther King, Jr. tried to love somebody. I want you to say that day that I tried to be right on the war question. I want you to be able to say that day that I did try to feed the hungry. And I want you to be able to say that day that I did try in my life to clothe those who were naked. I want you to

say on that day that I did try in my life to visit those who were in prison. I want you to say that I tried to love and serve humanity. Yes, if you want to say that I was a drum major, say that I was a drum major for justice. Say that I was a drum major for peace. I was a drum major for righteousness. And all of the other shallow things will not matter. I won't have any money to leave behind. I won't have the fine and luxurious things of life to leave behind. But I just want to leave a committed life behind. And that's all I want to say."

Musical Selection: "If I Can Help Somebody" by Alma Androzzo

Sung by Henrietta Davis

*If I can help somebody, as I pass along
If I can cheer somebody, with a word or song
If I can show somebody, that he's travelling wrong
Then my living shall not be in vain*

Chorus:

*My living shall not be in vain
Then my living shall not be in vain
If I can help somebody, as I pass along
Then my living shall not be in vain*

*If I can do my duty, as a good man ought
If I can bring back beauty, to a world up wrought
If I can spread love's message, as the Master taught
Then my living shall not be in vain*

Repeat Chorus

**Introduction of Democratic Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Nancy Pelosi**

Excerpt from President Barack Obama's Remarks at the Dedication of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial in Washington, DC – October 16, 2011

*Read by Supervisor Malia Cohen
San Francisco Board of Supervisors*

"If he were alive today, I believe he would remind us that the unemployed worker can rightly challenge the excesses of Wall Street without demonizing all who work there; that the businessman can enter tough negotiations with his company's union without vilifying the right to collectively bargain. He would want us to know we can argue fiercely about the proper size and role of government without questioning each other's love for this country with the knowledge that in this democracy, government is no distant object but is rather an expression of our common commitments to one another. He would call on us to assume the best in each other rather than the worse, and challenge one another in ways that ultimately heal rather than wound... It is precisely because Dr. King was a man of flesh and blood and not a figure of stone that he inspires us so. His life, his story, tells us that change can come if you don't give up. He would not give up, no matter how long it took, because in the smallest hamlets and the darkest slums, he had witnessed the highest reaches of the human spirit; because in those moments when the struggle seemed most hopeless, he had seen men and women and children conquer their fear; because he had seen hills and mountains made low and rough places made plain, and the crooked places made straight and God make a way out of no way. And that is why we honor this man – because he had faith in us. And that is why he belongs on this Mall – because he saw what we might become. That is why Dr. King was so quintessentially American – because for all the hardships we've endured, for all our sometimes tragic history, ours is a story of optimism and achievement and constant striving that is unique upon this Earth. And that is why the rest of the world still looks to us to lead. This is a country where ordinary people find in their hearts the courage to do extraordinary things; the courage to stand

up in the face of the fiercest resistance and despair and say this is wrong, and this is right; we will not settle for what the cynics tell us we have to accept and we will reach again and again, no matter the odds, for what we know is possible.”

Excerpt from Rev. Benjamin Mays’ Eulogy at Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Public Funeral at Morehouse College – April 9, 1968

*Read by Dr. Mary Wardell-Ghirarduzzi, Vice Provost for Diversity & Community Engagement
University of San Francisco*

“Here was a man who believed with all of his might that the pursuit of violence at any time is ethically and morally wrong; that God and the moral weight of the universe are against it; that violence is self-defeating; and that only love and forgiveness can break the vicious circle of revenge. He believed that non-violence would prove effective in the abolition of injustice in politics, in economics, in education and in race relations. He was convinced, also, that people could not be moved to abolish voluntarily the inhumanity of man to man by mere persuasion and pleading, but that they could be moved to do so by dramatizing the evil through massive non-violent resistance. He believed that non-violent direct action was necessary to supplement the non-violent victories won in federal courts, He believed that the non-violent approach to solving social problems would ultimately prove to be redemptive. Out of this conviction, history records the marches in Montgomery, Birmingham, Selma, Chicago and other cities. He gave people an ethical and moral way to engage in activities designed to perfect social change without bloodshed and violence; and when violence did erupt it was that which is potential in any protest which aims to uproot deeply entrenched wrongs.”

*Read by Rev. Floyd Trammell, Senior Pastor
First Friendship Institutional Baptist Church and
Graduate of Morehouse College*

“No reasonable person would deny that the activities and the personality of Martin Luther King, Jr. contributed largely to the success of the student sit-in movements in abolishing segregation in downtown establishments; and that his activities contributed mightily to the passage of the Civil Rights legislation of 1964 and 1965. Martin Luther King, Jr. believed in a united America. He believed that the walls of separation brought on by legal and de facto segregation, and discrimination based on race and color, could be eradicated. As he said in his Washington Monument address: “I have a dream.” He had faith in his country. He died striving to desegregate and integrate America to the end that this great nation of ours, born in revolution and blood, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created free and equal, will truly become the lighthouse of freedom where none will be denied because his skin is black and none favored because his eyes are blue; where our nation will be militarily strong but perpetually at peace; economically secure but just; learned but wise; where the poorest – the garbage collectors – will have bread enough and to spare; where no one will be poorly housed; each educated up to his capacity; and where the richest will understand the meaning of empathy. This was his dream, and the end toward which he strove. As he and his followers so often sang: “We shall overcome someday; black and white together.”

Special Recognition of Deacon G.L. Hodge, Past Chair, San Francisco Interfaith Council

Benediction

*Rev. Dr. Amos C. Brown, Pastor, Third Baptist Church
President, San Francisco NAACP*

Musical Selection: "We Shall Overcome"

Led by Henrietta Davis and Helen LaMar

*We shall overcome,
We shall overcome,
We shall overcome, some day.*

*Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
We shall overcome, some day.*

*We'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand, some day.*

*Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
We shall overcome, some day.*

*We shall live in peace,
We shall live in peace,
We shall live in peace, some day.*

*Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
We shall overcome, some day.*

*We are not afraid,
We are not afraid,
We are not afraid, TODAY*

*Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
We shall overcome, some day.*

*The whole wide world around
The whole wide world around
The whole wide world around some day*

*Oh, deep in my heart,
I do believe
We shall overcome, some day.*

Invitation to MLK Program

Aaron Grizzell, Executive Director

Northern California Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Foundation

San Francisco Interfaith Council

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