



BARRY GLASSMAN

HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 15, 2021

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Harford County to Present MLK Day Freedom Celebration Honoring Coretta Scott King

BEL AIR, Md., (Jan. 15, 2021) - Harford County Government is proud to announce the first annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Celebration presented by the Harford County Human Relations Commission in partnership with the Harford County Chapter of the NAACP.

At 6 p.m. on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Monday January 18, this virtual event will air on Harford Cable Network and the video will be posted on Harford County Government's website at <http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/3056/Freedom-Celebration>. The inspiring celebration which includes music, dance, and historical accounts, honors the life, legacy, and work of Coretta Scott King.

Coretta Scott King was born in 1927 in Marion, Alabama. In the early decades of her life, she was as well known for her singing and violin playing as her civil rights activism. She attended Lincoln High School and graduated as the school's valedictorian in 1945. She enrolled at Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, where she received her bachelor of arts in music and education. Coretta was awarded a fellowship to the New England Conservatory (NEC) of Music in Boston, Massachusetts, where she met Martin Luther King Jr., then a doctoral candidate at Boston University's School of Theology. They married on June 18, 1953. After earning her degree in voice and violin from NEC in 1954, Coretta moved with her husband to Montgomery, Alabama where he served as pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church. As a talented, concert-trained soprano, Ms. King held freedom concerts nationwide to raise money to support the cause of civil rights. Following her husband's assassination in 1968 she founded the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change and later successfully lobbied for his birthday to be recognized as a federal holiday. Coretta remained an activist throughout her life, serving as a syndicated columnist and contributor to CNN.

The hour-long celebration is hosted by Jim Thornton, executive member of the Harford County Chapter of the NAACP and a board member of the Historic Hosanna School in Darlington, Maryland, which is featured in the program. The Hosanna School is a fully restored schoolhouse built for African Americans in 1867 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The celebration also includes performances by Imyjah Taylor, Amber Kenni, and Angela Peaker as Coretta Scott King at different stages of her life; the Word of Faith Dancers; an interview with artist Martha Manco; a mime performance by Trey Malloy of Divine Worship Song; a presentation by Nathaniel Anderson for the Harford County Chapter of the NAACP; prose by Jess Webster; musical performances by Athaliah Sconion accompanied by William Howard on keyboard, and solo musical performances by William Howard, Melanie Bailiff, and Natasha Jackson.

“On MLK Day, people around the world pause to celebrate the life of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his legacy to the Civil Rights Movement,” County Executive Barry Glassman said. “We are proud to offer the inaugural Harford County Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Celebration and to honor the works and contributions of his wife and partner, Coretta Scott King, who was an extraordinary civil rights activist in her own right.”

The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Celebration will also air on Harford Cable Network on Wednesdays in February at 7 p.m. and be available on video on demand at <https://harfordcable.org>.

For more information about the Harford County Human Relations Commission and their initiatives including mediation, Choose Civility Harford County, volunteer opportunities, re-entry efforts, and conflict resolution training, please visit <https://www.harfordcountymd.gov/465/Human-Relations-Commission>.




Oil Painting by Martha Manco

First Annual
**MLK FREEDOM
CELEBRATION**
*A Tribute to
Coretta Scott King*
January 18 | 6:00-7:00 p.m.

This virtual celebration is presented by the Harford County Human Relations Commission in partnership with the Harford County Chapter of the NAACP.

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