Greater Detroit District
Michigan Conference
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

33rd Celebration Honoring Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
"Begin the Shift"

Sunday, January 10, 2027
In person *and* Livestreamed • Nardin Park United Methodist Church
29887 W. 11 Mile Rd, Farmington Hills, MI 48183 • 248-476-8860
Rev. Anthony Hood, Host Pastor

Dear Greater Detroit District Pastors, Lay Leaders, and Youth Leaders,

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "We must rapidly begin the shift from a "thing-oriented" society to a "person-oriented" society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered." Our country is in a very revolution, one where we must stay awake and revive the protection of our sacred humanity. The time to come together, to use our voices, and to honor justice is now. To pay tribute to Dr. King's urgent words and to continue to cultivate his dreams within our own lives, we invite you to gather at the 33rd Celebration honoring Dr. King.

Through a service of song, prayer, litany, and reflection, we will use our voices to reflect on the challenge of change. We will present awards and scholarships to individuals within our congregations who are pivotal examples of Dr. King's legacy and who use their lives as a platform to speak. We will also present deserving churches within our District with The Beloved Community Grant. This celebration is always a beautiful way to recenter our hearts and intentions. It is uplifting, poignant, and powerful. We sincerely hope to see you there, either in person or via the livestream! To participate:

- **Encourage your congregation to join us for this impacting service either in person or via livestream.**
- **Nominate a clergy or layperson who demonstrates Dr. King's values to be named a "Drum Major for Justice."**
  - Please submit a one-page nomination by October 16, 2026 to the MLK Committee by email: MLK@greaterdetroitumc.org
- **Reach out to high school seniors who are active members of your congregation and whose actions demonstrate a commitment to the values of Dr. King. Encourage them to apply electronically for a Scholarship for up to $1,000.**
  - Please copy and distribute the enclosed Instruction and Application forms and remind them of the **October 16, 2026** PDF email submission deadline (11:59 p.m. EST). Submissions must be sent to: MLK@greaterdetroitumc.org
- **Donate to the scholarship fund and/or The Beloved Community Grant by visiting this website or scanning this QR code:**
  - http://greaterdetroit.michiganumc.org/mlk

Faithfully, your 33rd Celebration Committee honoring Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,

- Stephanie Kenneh • Micki Phelps • Victor Raybaud • Tina Campbell • George Covintree
- Rev. Rachael Dunlap • Adrienne Trupiano • George Covintree • Rev. Anthony Hood, Host Pastor

SCHOLARSHIP INSTRUCTIONS

Michigan Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, Greater Detroit District
Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Committee

"We must rapidly begin the shift from a "thing-oriented" society to a "person-oriented" society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered." Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Purpose of the Scholarship Fund

The Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Scholarship Fund exists to honor Dr. King's ministry and perpetuate his Christian values, particularly for the benefit of students and communities within the Greater Detroit District of the United Methodist Church. Scholarship recipients may be awarded up to $1,000 at the discretion of the Celebration Committee.

Application Packet Requirements (4)

1. Submission of the Application Packet electronically (PDF) by current high school seniors within the Greater Detroit District.

2. Submission of two (2) letters of recommendation: a letter from your pastor **and** a letter from another adult such as a leader in your church, teacher, or counselor. These should attest to your membership and participation in the United Methodist Church as well as your adherence to Dr. King's values.

3. Submission of an essay (typed, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, 500 words) using the theme: **"Begin the Shift"** – Dr. King knew all too well that in order for justice to prevail and people to win that change must happen; but that change is not easy. No, in fact, societal change is guaranteed to be one of great challenge. If you could shift one aspect of our society today from "thing-orientated" to "people-orientated" that would improve our greater humanity, what would it be and why? What obstacles do you think you would come up against? Why do you feel called to embrace a shift from valuing things to people?

4. Submission of a head shot, clearly displaying the full face of the applicant. - Cannot be a regular selfie.

Evaluation Criteria

- Evidence that the applicant understands Dr. King's ministry and his Christian values.
- Examples of the applicant's activities that implement Dr. King's ministry, his dream, and/or stance on social justice.
- Writing that expresses how an applicant has been inspired by Dr. King and is likely to inspire others.

Submission & Deadline

Your electronic PDF Application, Letters of Recommendation, and Essay must be emailed on or before October 16, 2026 (11:59 pm EST) to MLK@greaterdetroitumc.org. Or, complete the online application form and upload Letters of Recommendation, and Essay, here: http://greaterdetroit.michiganumc.org/mlk

SCHOLARSHIP/GRANT APPLICATION FORM
Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Fund
Michigan Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, Greater Detroit District

Date:

Applicant's Name:

Mailing Address: **City/Zip:**

Email:

High School:

Local Church:

Pastor's Name: **Pastor's Contact:**

List 2 or 3 church activities in which you currently participate to help make Disciples of Jesus Christ.

List 2 or 3 honors you have received as a result of your engagement in the community.

What 2 or 3 accomplishments are you most proud of?

- **Include your Essay as an attachment.**
- **Include 2 letters of recommendation: One from your pastor and the second from another adult (such as a Lay Leader in your church, teacher, mentor, or counselor)**
- **Include your head shot as an attachment.**