

November 27, 2018

Dear Friend and Social Justice Advocate,

This year's 16th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Rally & March comes at a time of rising hatred, bigotry and military conflict both inside the United States and around the world. The Detroit MLK Day Committee is once again requesting your financial support to continue this tradition which mobilizes the largest social justice gathering in the whole of southeastern Michigan.

On Monday, January 21, 2019, the Detroit MLK Day Program/Rally and March will commemorate the 90th birthday of Dr. King. This year's program will feature keynote speaker Ms. Gail Walker, the Executive Director of the Inter-religious Foundation for Community Organization (IFCO) based in New York City.

IFCO has been in the leadership of various community and international campaigns since its founding in 1967. In late April 1969, IFCO sponsored the National Black Economic Development Conference (NBEDC) at Wayne State University (WSU) which put forward the first modern-day call for reparations to be paid to African Americans for the stolen labor during slavery and the national oppression in which they have lived under since the conclusion of the Civil War (1861-1865).

In addition, 2019 represents the 50th anniversary of the further emergence of Black workers in the leadership of the Civil Rights and other emancipatory struggles. 1969 witnessed the formation of the League of Revolutionary Black Workers (LRBW) in Detroit and the Charleston, South Carolina hospital employees strike which was led by African American women with the intervention of Mrs. Coretta Scott King, the heir to the legacy of Dr. King after his assassination on April 4, 1968.

These events prefigured the ongoing struggle on behalf of low-wage workers and the imperatives of eliminating poverty in this country. The recent efforts by D15, Unite Here and other labor organizations demanding justice for marginalized workers is a major advancement in the movement for full equality and self-determination.

In addition to its work on domestic issues, IFCO has coordinated the education of over 150 students who studied medicine for free at the Latin American School of Medicine (ELAM) in the Republic of Cuba. Numerous youth from Detroit along with other cities have taken advantage of this program. The recruitment of these young people was initiated by Rev. Dr. Lucius Walker, the founder of IFCO, as well as former City Council member Rev. Dr. JoAnn Watson.

You are cordially invited to attend this 16th Annual Detroit MLK Day event at our new location of the St. Matthew's-St. Joseph's Episcopal Church located at 8850 Woodward Avenue between King and Holbrook in the city's North End neighborhood. This venue which is a historic institution in Detroit having played an integral part in the 19th century Underground Railroad and the Northern High School Student Strike of April 1966, among other important events, will place us in the heart of the city in a community where gentrification, water shutoffs and tax foreclosures continue to take a serious toll.

The program begins at 12 noon in the sanctuary and will include music and brief messages from cultural workers and activists from throughout the region.

At about 1:30 p.m., the Detroit MLK Day March for Jobs, Peace and Justice will begin. At 3:00 p.m., a special cultural program of poetry and music will take place at the church. A healthy community meal will be served.

The Detroit MLK Day Committee is comprised of a small, dedicated group of volunteers. Due to the significance of the January 21, 2019, Detroit MLK Day Program & March, we are seeking contributions now to assure a successful event.

Please send your contribution and enclosed donor response form to: Detroit MLK Day Committee, 5920 Second Ave., Detroit, MI 48202. Please make checks payable to: "Detroit MLK Day". You may donate online <https://mlkdetroit.org/donate/>.

Thank you for your kind support! (You may download event leaflets at www.mlkdetroit.org.)

Sincerely in Peace and Solidarity,
The Detroit MLK Day Committee