

PROCLAMATION

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY JANUARY 19, 2026

WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., born January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia, was a transformative leader of the American Civil Rights Movement whose moral clarity, courage, and commitment to nonviolence reshaped the nation's conscience and advanced the cause of racial justice; and

WHEREAS, Dr. King's leadership was deeply informed by his faith, his family, and the influence of his father, the Reverend Martin Luther King, Sr., a respected pastor and civil rights advocate who instilled in his son the enduring principles of dignity, service, and social responsibility; and

WHEREAS, alongside Dr. King, Coretta Scott King emerged as a civil rights leader in her own right, sustaining and expanding the movement for justice and peace, preserving Dr. King's legacy, and reminding the nation that the work of equity requires persistence, courage, and collective action; and

WHEREAS, Dr. King taught that "everybody can be great, because everybody can serve," and called upon individuals and communities to measure their lives by their service to others, a call that continues to guide communities striving to build understanding, equity, and mutual respect; and

WHEREAS, the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on April 4, 1968, at the age of 39, was a profound loss to the nation and the world, underscoring both the costs of confronting injustice and the urgency of continuing the work to secure civil and human rights for all people; and

WHEREAS, the United States congress established Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day as a federal holiday to honor his life and legacy, and designated it as a National Day of Service, encouraging Americans to transform remembrance into action by strengthening their communities through service and civic engagement; and

WHEREAS, the Village of Oak Park strives to embody Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s vision of a beloved community as a group of people that could come together to

solve any social issue, division or struggle. One of the greatest strengths of Oak Park is the diversity of its people who come from many different walks of life. May we never lose sight of this as a unifier and never sow division; and

WHEREAS, the most poignant questions we here in the Village of Oak Park must ask ourselves: What will be the legacy of social and civil rights in Oak Park? What are we willing to sacrifice to continue to be a leader in social justice? What will the youth in Oak Park inherit and learn from our actions or lack thereof? As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. stated, "The ultimate measure of a man/person is not where he/they stand in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he/they stand at times of challenge and controversy." May we all commit to banishing our comfort zones in the pursuit of racial and social justice and carry the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther and Coretta Scott King along the way.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Vicki Scaman, President of the Village of Oak Park, and the Board of Trustees do hereby proclaim January 20, 2026, as **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day** in the Village of Oak Park, IL, and urge all community members to observe the anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birth as a time of reflection, learning, and service on racial and recommit themselves to advancing equity, justice, and opportunity for all. Although his legacy and the legacy of his wife Coretta Scott King are unparalleled, we all can and must commit to creating our own legacy of social justice here in Oak Park.

DATED this 20th day of January 2026.

Vicki Scaman
Village President

ATTEST

Christina M. Waters
Village Clerk