



# Freedom's Feast **MLK DAY**

On-line resources to get the most out of your AMERICAN holiday celebrations.

## EVERYBODY CAN BE GREAT, BECAUSE EVERYBODY CAN SERVE! \*

Real service addresses real needs. Step up. Speak out. Give back.

Martin Luther King Day is a great day to start or recommit to service. Service begins at home, such as the opportunity to help with household tasks. Identify a need. Ask for help; thank everyone involved when they provide assistance. Consider family members with unmet needs and how your help can make a difference. Next, discover needs in other places. Children can help celebrate Dr. King's legacy by turning community concerns into community action. Start with your own neighborhood. Be curious. Be compassionate. Pay attention.

Here's how you can help make a difference through service:

### 1. Identify the Need(s)

What works well in your neighborhood? How could your neighborhood be improved? What might make it a better place for all? Consider the environment or populations in need (don't forget animals), where your help can matter.

### 2. Do Research. Talk to Others. Gather and Check information.

Find the oldest neighbor and interview him or her. How long has she lived there? How was the neighborhood different when she first moved in? What can they tell you about the first neighborhood they remember? Talk with other neighbors. What do they see needs fixing? What stories can they share about neighborhoods they have lived in?

### 3. Decide What You Want To Do.

Does someone in your family have a special hobby, talent, or passion? How could they share it with others? Think about your school and church or congregation if you belong to one - do they have service projects that interest you? Has anyone in your family had an experience that changed or affected their life in an important way? Did it alert you to a need in the world that you did not know about before?

Is anyone studying a problem or issue that they want to learn more about or become involved in? Has anyone traveled in the US or elsewhere and seen a need they would like to further explore? Talk with others about your favorite and least favorite service experiences. What did you learn? How can those lessons help you as you choose a service program or create your own?

### 4. Make a Plan. Commit to It. Follow Through.

Are you keeping your commitments? Has the project gone as expected? Are you learning new things or using your skills? Are you meeting your goals? What impact has your project had and how do you know? Dr. King had a dream for this country. What is your dream today? Can your service project contribute to that dream?

**service:** noun \ 'sər-vəs \

a: contribution to the welfare of others

b: the action of assisting someone

c: HELP, USE, BENEFIT

### What type of service can we do with our kids?

Volunteering with your kids, grandkids, and children within the community is one of the best ways to show them what you care about and why. Here are some great resources to help you match your passions with your family's location and capabilities. Visit [Explore More](#) for additional suggestions.

[www.mlkday.gov](http://www.mlkday.gov)

[www.serve.gov](http://www.serve.gov)



[www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org)

[www.911dayofservice.org](http://www.911dayofservice.org)

[www.dosomething.org](http://www.dosomething.org)

### MLK DAY AS A NATIONAL SERVICE DAY

Dr. Martin Luther King is widely regarded as one of the most influential nonviolent leaders of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He also served as a pivotal figure in the country's Civil Rights Movement. Dr. King strongly believed service was our greatest legacy encouraging all citizens to live up to the purpose and potential of America.

Service often begins with a need. When Dr. King first embarked on his own service journey, his family, neighbors, and many people of color were suffering due to unjust laws and the prejudice that permitted them. Through his work, King demonstrated that together we can change the world through service, an integral and highly powerful American value.

In 1983, President Ronald Reagan signed the bill first recognizing Martin Luther King Day as a national holiday. In 1994, Congress passed the King Holiday and Service Act, designating the holiday as a national day of volunteer service.

Please visit us again for Presidents' Day at [www.freedomfeast.us/presidents-day](http://www.freedomfeast.us/presidents-day) and visit us on [Facebook](#) to share your experiences.

\*Martin Luther King, Jr., "The Drum Major Instinct." Service definition referenced from Merriam-Webster Dictionary.

\*MLK Image Reference: Trikosko, Marion S. "Martin Luther King Press Conference." March 1964. US News & World Report Magazine Collection. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, DC, 20540.