

## Local celebrations, events will mark Martin Luther King Jr. Day

West Virginians are invited Monday to celebrate the life of Martin Luther King, Jr., a leader of the country's civil rights movement who used non-violent protests to bring about change and draw attention to racism.

The theme for West Virginia's MLK Day celebration is, "I Believe That Unarmed Truth and Unconditional Love Will Have The Final Word In Reality," according to Carolyn Stuart, chairwoman of the Martin Luther King, Jr. State Holiday Commission.

"We invite you to join us as we celebrate the life of Dr. King and the significant contributions that West Virginians have made and are still making for us to continue to enjoy the freedoms that we have," Stuart said in a news release. The largest celebration will take place in Charleston. There, David Fryson, West Virginia University's vice president of its Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, will speak at Asbury United Methodist Church on Elizabeth Street at 9:30 a.m. to kick off the day's events.

After his speech, people in attendance will make a symbolic march from the church to the state Capitol at noon. This symbolizes the historic 1963 March on Washington which King helped organize. Civil rights leaders and activists march at the country's capital, where King delivered his now-famous "I Have a Dream" speech.

Because Governor-elect Jim Justice's inauguration is the same day, there will not be a bell-ringing ceremony.

The Kanawha County Public Library is also hosting an event Monday to commemorate the day. Elementary-aged children are invited to come to the library on Capitol Street between 1-4 p.m. to make crafts, participate in activities and listen to stories that celebrate King's life.

The historic Lewis Theatre in Lewisburg will host a special screening of the movie "Loving" Monday night. The movie tells the story of the interracial couple whose illegal marriage challenged the laws at the time and ultimately led to a Supreme Court decision that affirmed the rights of interracial couples to marry.

The theatre will host the screening at 7 p.m. Monday.

Marshall University will honor the civil rights leader at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday with a candlelight vigil on campus by the John Marshall Statue. The service is open to all students, faculty and members of the community - See more at: <http://www.wvgazettemail.com/news-community/20170114/local-celebrations-events-will-mark-martin-luther-king-jr-day-#sthash.SkjGjzTu.dpuf>