

Reading recommendations

For mature thinkers :

The Source of Self-Regard by Toni Morrison

Women, Race & Class by Angela Y. Davis

Where Do We Go From Here: Community or Chaos?

By Dr. Martin Luther King Jr

For up-and-coming thinkers :

Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi

Black Enough: Stories of Being Young & Black in America by Ibi Zoboi, et al.

For junior thinkers :

Counting on Community by Innosanto Nagara

Something Happened in Our Town: A Child's Story about Racial Injustice by Marianne Celano, et al.



UNIVERSITY OF
**NORTHERN
COLORADO**

MARCUS GARVEY CULTURAL CENTER

MLK

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

DAY

PATHWAY

of

PRAXIS:

a guide for reflecting, serving, and learning

WELCOME

About the event

After a long-standing tradition of marches being used to celebrate and commemorate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the City of Greeley, the University of Northern Colorado, and the Marcus Garvey Cultural Center wished to start a new tradition here in Greeley of celebrating Dr. King's birthday by carrying on his legacy of serving those in his community. Today is a day of joining together in solidarity rather than charity, learning about Dr. King's service, and organizing through praxis to continue the fight for equality.

What is PRAXIS?

Praxis has been defined as "action oriented towards changing society," "the free, conscious productive activity of human beings," "changing circumstances," and so on. In essence, it is **action to create change through community service** rather than talking about creating change. It answers Dr. King's question: "**What are you doing for others?**"

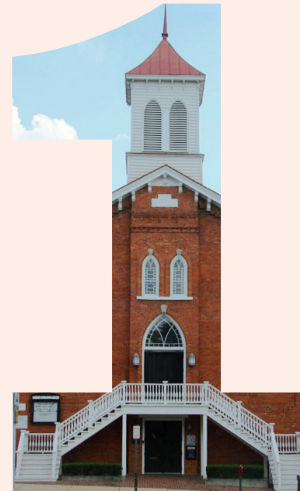
Service options

- Cooking food and taking meals out for curbside pickup with **The Weld County Food Bank**
- Building care packages for survivors of sex-trafficking with **The Avery Center** (please be mindful that this activity can be potentially triggering for some.)
- Making literacy, hygiene, and comfort kits with **United Way**

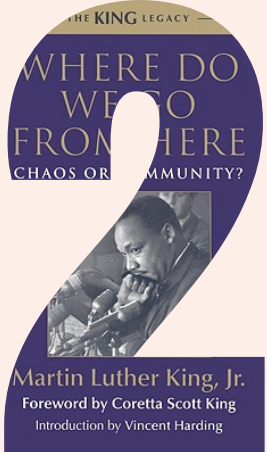
Whether this is your very first step participating in grassroots community service, or if service has been a cornerstone in your life, you are standing in the footsteps of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

While King grew up watching his father organize against racial segregation, he had his own choice to make regarding service. At the age of 25, he became the pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery (pictured below). His first step was like yours today—he provided resources. He opened the church basement to organizers of the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

The foundation of our service options today rests on the same principle of providing resources. As you serve today, continue reading and reflecting on your Pathway of Praxis and learning how your steps align with Dr. King.



**PATHWAY OF
PRAXIS:
first steps**



PATHWAY OF PRAXIS: getting started

After you've chosen your activity, meditate on how the different populations served today can be interconnected. Dr. King urged people to see the struggles of all people as inter-related. In his Letter from Birmingham Jail in August 1963, he states:

"All [people] are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly...Anyone who lives inside the United States can never be considered an outsider."

Dr. King perfectly illustrates why we are on this Pathway of Praxis -- we are all connected in our community, and when people in need are able to thrive, we all benefit from it.

The more housing resources we provide, the safer our community becomes. The more accessible education is, the more mechanics, doctors, plumbers, scholars, cooks, and so on, we have in our community. What other singular benefits extend to the whole community? Where do you fit in our network of mutuality? How do you add to it?

As you spend your last third of your time today serving, consider how the law has punished citizens for helping others. While many cite Dr. King's peaceful protest as an alternative to other forms of protest deemed illegal, King's peaceful protests got him arrested twenty-nine times in a 9-year period from 1956 to 1965 (The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute).

While we like to believe that American society has moved on from such unjust and unfair arrests, even today, your work helping others could get you arrested in certain places. Norma Thornton was arrested in March 2022 for feeding homeless people in Arizona (Brooks 2022). Scott Warren was charged with a felony for providing water to migrants (Warren 2019). American police targeted and arrested medics providing aid to injured protestors in 2020 (Pedneault 2020).

Today, you provided resources to tangibly aid your community. Others who have done the same, including Dr. King, have been arrested for it. Why is that? What do you make of the ongoing disagreement between morality and the law?



PATHWAY OF PRAXIS: in the thick of it

Left: February 1st, 1960, Greensboro NC. David Richmond, Franklin McCain, Ezell Blair, & Joseph McNeil

Citations

We invite you to continue your journey of serving others. Here are some opportunities and resources to continue on:

- City of Greeley

<https://greeleygov.com/activities/volunteer>

- Weld County Mutual Aid
- Northern Colorado Community Mutual Aid
- United Way of Weld County
- The Avery Project
- Weld County Food Bank

Brooks, K. J. (2022, October 28). Arizona woman Sues City after arrest for feeding homeless: "criminalized kindness". CBS News.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute. "Martin Luther King Jr. - Arrests. Stanford University.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute. "Chapter 1: The Early Years." Stanford University.

King Jr., M. L. (1963, August). "Letter from Birmingham Jail." *The Atlantic Monthly: The Negro Is Your Brother; Vol. 212, no. 2; pages 78-88.*

Pedneault, J. (2020, October 28). "Police targeting 'street medics' at US protests." Human Rights Watch.

Warren, S. (2019, May 28). Perspective | I gave water to migrants crossing the Arizona Desert. they charged me with a felony. The Washington Post.



PATHWAY OF PRAXIS:
next steps