18th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Community Celebration set for Jan. 21

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http://www.uwosh.edu/today/24150/18th-annual-martin-luther-king-jr-community-celebration-set-for-jan-21/

Members of the community, local businesses and other organizations are invited to RSVP for the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh's 18th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Community Celebration on Monday, January 21, 2013 in Reeve Memorial Union Ballroom 227, 748 Algoma Blvd.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day commemorates the birthday of King and has been designated as a federal legal holiday since 1994. Registration for the campus and community celebration, open to all community members, local businesses and other organizations, will begin at 4:30 p.m. The program and dinner follows at 5 p.m. The cost to attend is $20 per person or $200 per table.

Please RSVP by Monday, January 7, 2013 by calling (920) 424-2296, by emailing the UW Oshkosh Office of Equity and Affirmative Action: afaction@uwosh.edu or by submitting your information online at: http://www.uwosh.edu/home/martin-luther-king.

To reduce administrative costs related to the event, no credit cards will be accepted. Checks can be made payable to "UW Oshkosh" and addressed to:

Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration 2013
Office of Equity & Affirmative Action
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh
800 Algoma Boulevard
Oshkosh, WI 54901

A second community event follows the UW Oshkosh-hosted celebration at First Presbyterian Church, 110 Church Ave., from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Jan. 21.

Reverend Joe Ellwanger will speak at the event. Ellwanger, a Lutheran minister, became pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Birmingham, Ala. in 1958. While in Birmingham, Ellwanger led the interracial Birmingham Council on Human Relations and the Concerned White Citizens of Alabama. He was the pastor of Cross Lutheran Church for 34 years before his retirement in 2001. Currently, Ellwanger works for WISDOM, a faith-based affiliation of groups working for social causes in southeast Wisconsin.

Ellwanger was one of the few white Southern ministers involved in civil rights work. He worked with Martin Luther King, Jr. to plan the Birmingham demonstrations. On the Sunday when the 16th Street Church in Birmingham was bombed, Ellwanger was giving a service in his church a mile down the road. Denise McNair, one of the children who died in the bombing, was the daughter of one of his parishioners, and Ellwanger spoke at her funeral. He served as the president of The Birmingham Council on Human Relations, which provided behind-the-scenes support for civil rights work. On Saturday, March 6, 1965,

Ellwanger organized a march in Selma, Alabama to support voting rights. He and 72 white Alabamans marched to the courthouse steps in Selma, where they were confronted by hostile whites singing "Dixie." They came and left without any violence that day, and Ellwanger himself returned to march in Selma on "Turnaround Tuesday.

Learn more:

- UW Oshkosh Office of Equity and Affirmative Action