

*Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.*

-- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



# Walking Among <sup>the</sup> Everyday People

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who are disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS, on how to eliminate its spread.

Ward emphasizes the need to empower the most vulnerable in our communities—seniors, immigrants, sexual minorities. “All for one and one for all,” said Ward. “God doesn’t discriminate.”

Recently, in observance of World AIDS Day, Ward along with other advocate groups, and Chrysalis Ministries hosted “I Speak Life,” a concert showcasing many visual and performing artists in a call to support those living with HIV or who have succumbed to the AIDS illness.

The event gave voice to the mantra “Planting a S.E.E.D.,” embracing the attributes of Service, Education, Empowerment and Dedication.

HIV/AIDS are not the only issues Ward has risen against. “I’m blessed to work within different movements, especially grassroots,” she said.

As a young woman in her 20s, Ward said she learned the “modus operandi” of grass roots organizing living in the San Francisco bay area where she had the fortune of knowing many inspiring civil rights leaders from the Black Panther Movement like Huey Newton and others activists like Al Sharpton and Dr. Cornell West.

In Portland, she has remained constant in giving voice to the disparities and socio-economic issues, and she has become a local and national motivational speaker and respondent.

From educating “everyday people” about predatory lend-

ing during the foreclosure crisis to helping register thousands of voters in the 2008 presidential election, to mobilizing citizens for police reform following the 2010 police shooting of unarmed Aaron Campbell, to advising the police bureau’s Northeast Crisis Response Team on domestic and gang violence, she is beckoned where injustice calls.

In her leisure time, Ward is a well-rounded artist; an actress, dancer, model, and author.

She is writing her first book, which she hopes to have completed in 2013. A project that has taken her close to 15 years, it will consist of interviews she’s done with women in and out of the church.

Ward is in the unique position to counsel women who walk through the door of the church, distressed by domestic violence, infidelity and other crises. Not free of her own oppressions, and as a female, African American woman in a still very misogynistic society, she offers a uniquely personal perspective on the issues people face.

“Yes, I’m ostracized,” she said, “The very thing I fight against, I experience.”

Ward starts each morning early and prepares herself for the unexpected challenges of the day. She reads scriptures, meditates to music, and sings her songs before setting out on her mission to be of help to somebody, whether it is paying a visit to a man ailed by stomach cancer or supporting survivors of the Clackamas mall shooting.

“I do believe everybody is a special assignment,” she said. “I cannot make any changes, but little ones.”

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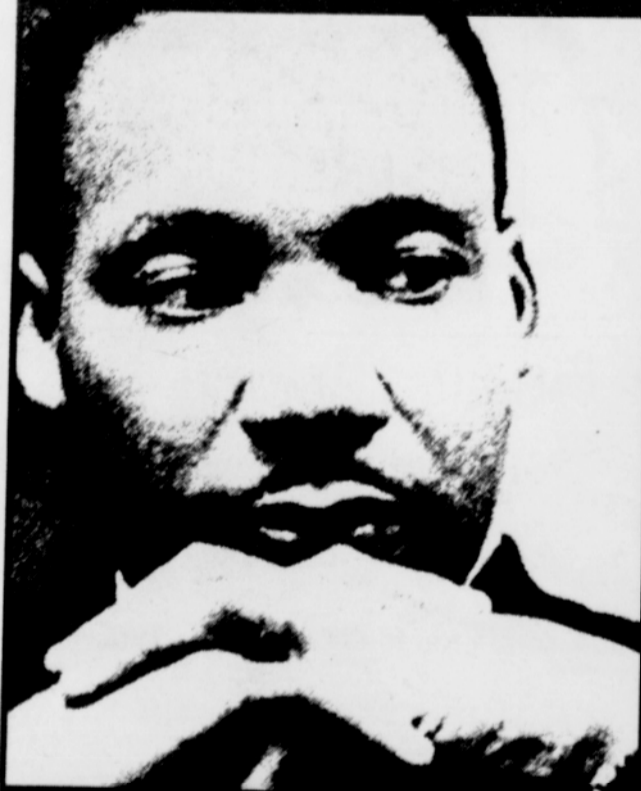
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