

King's Lessons

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mother's house, they all had that velvet picture of Martin Luther King. He was like a king to us," she said. "So I looked at him, not like a god, but a god of the movement and the people and the one that was a voice on our behalf."

A couple of months ago, Palmer was in Washington, D.C. and was determined to see the Martin Luther King Memorial. She said being able to give tribute to the civil rights leader by placing t-shirts from the many nonprofits she works with at the base on his statue for a photo, making a connection to her own activism, was inspiring.

But King's dream of equality for all has yet to be fulfilled, she said.

"He said that he had a vision that one day we will all play together and be free, and we still ain't, and we're going into 2022," she said.

Through the difficulty of her own childhood, Palmer said she felt King's message, and she understands how some kids



Laurie Palmer is a community activist who addresses the root causes of gang violence.

can go astray.

"I grew up in an abusive home, got into drugs, and in 1991 went to prison," she said. "In 1992 I got saved and in 1993 I got out in October and had custody of my kids by the following January," she said. "Then I got a proposal from Keith Palmer. We got married and he helped me raise my kids."

Palmer is also involved in a campaign where signs that read Do Not Murder are placed at var-

ious deadly shooting locations around the city. She says more work is needed to address violence, and authorities should pay more attention and listen to those who have been impacted directly.

Her work in the community also involves working with many other nonprofits, including Love is Stronger and Black Men in Training, and she also seeks advice from Vincent Jones-Dixon, Gresham's first Black city councilman, who lost a brother to gun violence.

Saving children from gun violence is her main goal, Palmer said.

"I'm gonna fight for these kids, because if I can save one child – don't care what color he is – from killing somebody, then that's my mission," she said.

It hasn't been easy, she said, and she's received pushback for her activism, even from her own family.

"I have this saying that I'm going to be like Martin Luther King in my community. It only takes one, and when God told me he wanted me to start, I had to," she said.

Salem-Keizer NAACP MLK Day



Salem-Keizer NAACP president Dr. Reginald Richardson.

The Salem-Keizer Branch of the NAACP invites the community to join them in celebrating the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. national holiday on Monday, Jan. 17 with a special broadcast

cast is the *Urgency of Creating the Beloved Community*. MLK Jr. first introduced the concept during his 1957 Birth of a Nation speech. The beloved community is a community in which everyone is cared for absent of poverty, hunger, and hate.

The program will be introduced by Dr. Reginald Richardson, president of Salem-Keizer NAACP and feature Dr. Irvin Brown, Education Committee Chair for the local civil rights group, as keynote speaker.

The theme of this year's broad-

cast is the *Urgency of Creating the Beloved Community*. MLK Jr. first introduced the concept during his 1957 Birth of a Nation speech. The beloved community is a community in which everyone is cared for absent of poverty, hunger, and hate. The Salem-Keizer NAACP MLK broadcast airs on public access cable channels 22 and 23, beginning Monday, Jan. 17 at 7:30 a.m. and 8 a.m. respectfully, and repeats throughout the day on multiple days and times through Feb. 27 on both channels.

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