Journey of a King: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Ball State University Libraries' GIS Research and Map Collection, from the book M.L.K.: Journey of a King by Tonya Bolden

- January 15, 1929: Born Michael King in Atlanta, Georgia. (His father changed both of their names to “Martin Luther” in 1934 following a trip to Germany.)
- 1944: King won a high school speech competition in Dublin, Georgia, with “The Negro and the Constitution.”
- September 1944: Begins Morehouse College in Atlanta, majoring in sociology, at the age of 15.
- 1952: King attends Boston University and meets Coretta Scott. They marry on June 18, 1953.
- September 1, 1954: King becomes pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama.
- December 1955: King leads the Montgomery Bus Boycott to end segregation following the arrest of Rosa Parks.
- February 1956: Dr. King was giving a speech in Nashville, Tennessee, when he was indicted for anti-boycott laws in Alabama.
- January 10, 1957: Helped found the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), a church-based civil rights organization, in Atlanta.
- May 1957: At the "Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom" in Washington, D.C., King gives his first national address.
- Summer 1958: King attends more "Crusade for Citizenship" drives in Oakland, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Pasadena.
- September 20, 1958: On a tour for his first book, Strive Toward Freedom, Dr. King is stabbed by a woman in a department store in Harlem, New York.
- November 1959: Dr. King leaves Montgomery to become the co-pastor at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta.
- April 1960: A bomb threat delays King's speech at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee.
- April 15, 1960: King delivers the keynote speech in Raleigh at the founding of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which organized sit-ins and freedom rides.
- October 25, 1960: King was sent to Reidsville Prison in Georgia for a parole violation stemming from a traffic arrest. Then Senator John Kennedy and his brother, Robert, worked for his release in three days.
- November 1961: King begins civil rights marches for the desegregation of Albany, Georgia, and is arrested.
- Spring 1963: King organizes nonviolent protests in Birmingham, Alabama, which gains national television exposure.
- April 16, 1963: Following another arrest, Dr. King writes the "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" in response to criticism from other clergy.
- June 23, 1963: Dr. King spoke in front of 25,000 people at City Hall in Detroit, Michigan, at the great March on Detroit expounding upon making "the American Dream a reality." King repeated the words, "I have a dream."
- August 28, 1963: Dr. King delivers his "I Have a Dream" speech to more than 250,000 at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom at the Lincoln Memorial.
- September 18, 1963: King delivers the eulogy for three of the four girls killed at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church bombing in Birmingham.
- January 3, 1964: Dr. King is named "Man of the Year" by Time Magazine.
- June 11, 1964: King is arrested at a restaurant sit-in in St. Augustine, Florida.
- July 2, 1964: Dr. King is in attendance at the White House when President Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which combated discrimination in housing and employment.
- December 1964: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway. King also traveled to Africa, India, and the Holy Land during his lifetime.
- March 7, 1965: This date is declared "Bloody Sunday" in Selma, Alabama, during a march for voter registration. King first leads a march on March 9 and completes the trek to Montgomery on March 28 and delivers a speech.
- August 1965: Dr. King travels to Watts in Los Angeles for a march during a racial disturbance that leaves 35 dead.
- June 1966: Dr. King joins James Meredith's march for voter registration from Memphis to Jackson, Mississippi.
- July-August 1966: King leads the "Chicago Freedom Movement," protesting housing for the poor. Dr. King is injured at a march.
- April 4, 1967: Dr. King delivers his "Beyond Vietnam" speech at Riverside Church in New York, New York.
- Spring 1967: Dr. King attends speaking engagements in San Francisco; Denver, Colorado; Cleveland, Ohio; and Louisville, Kentucky.
- March 18, 1968: King delivers a speech to 15,000 in the Church of God in Christ's Mason Temple in Memphis, Tennessee.
- March 28, 1968: The "Poor People's Campaign March" in Memphis ends in violence.
- April 3, 1968: Dr. King returns to Memphis and delivers his "I've Been to the Mountaintop/Promised Land" speech at the Mason Temple.
- April 4, 1968: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated by James Earl Ray on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee. Over 50,000 people surrounded the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta for his funeral on April 9.