

THE DRUM MAJOR PROJECT

Commemorative Unity Wreaths



Wreath workshop design by Zipporah Camille Thompson

Concept by and created in collaboration with Rachel Parish



Commemorative Unity Wreath Making Workshop

PROJECT OVERVIEW: LESSONS FROM THE PAST

Between the days of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination on April 4 and his funeral on April 9, 1968, the nation experienced the greatest social upheaval since the Civil War. Fury filled riots broke out in over 100 cities, dozens of people were killed, thousands injured and millions of dollars of damage occurred. The city of Atlanta stood in sharp contrast. As thousands of mourners poured into the city, the city stood steady. In the midst of incalculable loss, family members, city leaders, community leaders, students and volunteers joined together to literally live out Dr. King's legacy of courageous nonviolence. This time was marked by countless expressions of unity and grace from all sectors of the city.

On the day of his funeral, throughout the course of the three and a half mile procession from Ebenezer Baptist Church to Morehouse College, over a thousand civilians volunteered to protect the 100,000 mourners who came to memorialize him. From children to freedom fighters, individuals from across Atlanta and further afield acted to use their skills to maintain peace at that tumultuous time. Just as City Hall and churches positioned beautiful wreaths throughout the city, many other everyday people made their own commemorative wreaths, holding them up as a sign of love and unity as the funeral procession wended its way throughout the streets.

As we approach the 50th anniversary of this moment, our society is facing tremendous political discord, racial and gender discrimination and economic and environmental injustice. There are profound lessons to learn by looking back at how the everyday people of the civil rights era were able to channel their grief into creating positive actions to hold their city together.

Participation in the the Drum Major Project invites Atlantans to simultaneously engage with our inspiring civil rights legacy and the violent costs of political action. We firmly believe the social and political context of our country at this moment requires a reflection of how legacies of civil rights struggles and racial violence inform who we are today. Through participation in the Drum Major Project, we seek to bring people together to reflect, grieve, and celebrate our past and present, in the hopes of nurturing, in some small way, a Beloved Community of the future.

ACTIVITY:

During this activity, we will create commemorative wreaths which serve as symbols of remembrance and markers for strength, perseverance, and unity. Through making these wreaths, we will hold ourselves accountable for showing up to improve our own communities. You are invited to display these wreaths along the funeral processional route on April 9th 2018, on the 50th anniversary of Dr. King's funeral, and to join us as we retrace the funeral procession path from Ebenezer Baptist Church to Morehouse College. Beginning at 11:30 am, this March for Humanity is a call for us to walk in solidarity toward a just future, in witness to the past.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

On February 4th, 1968, from the pulpit of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Dr. Martin Luther King preached his Drum Major Instinct sermon. This was his last major sermon; he was assassinated only two months later. His wife Coretta Scott King requested that this sermon be played at his funeral service. In a foreshadowing of his own death, Dr. King reflected on what he wanted to be said about him after he died – he spoke his legacy as he would wish to be remembered, and in so doing, defined with eloquent simplicity, a personal and communal moral vision for the entire world.

As you follow the steps of the wreath making activity, use these materials for your reflection and discussion.

- 1) Listen to or read the Drum Major Instinct sermon

Text:

[http://kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/documententry/doc the drum major instinct/](http://kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/documententry/doc%20the%20drum%20major%20instinct/)

Recorded sound: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BcuifZJdyaY>

Excerpt included at the end of this document.

- 2) When you listen to Dr. King's sermon, the message of the following quote emerges as an undergirding legacy and challenge to us:

"I want you to say that I tried to love and serve humanity."

As you work together to create a Commemorative Unity Wreath, discuss: How does this particular statement speak to you, individually and collectively, 50 years on?

3) Dr. King's legacy includes a personal invitation to each of us to be the change we want to see in the world. We can make this change through simple acts of kindness as well as dedicated efforts to bring about lasting social change. Either way, it always begins with individuals and communities. Continue making your wreaths and develop your discussion to include these questions:

What is one change you would like to see in your community?

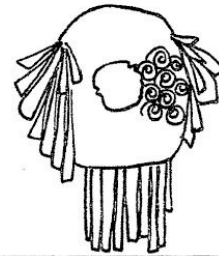
What ideas can you think of to help facilitate this change?

Who is someone you can think of that has helped to create change and has helped to make a difference in your community?

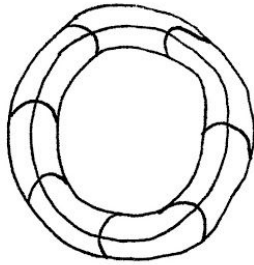
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Wreath Design

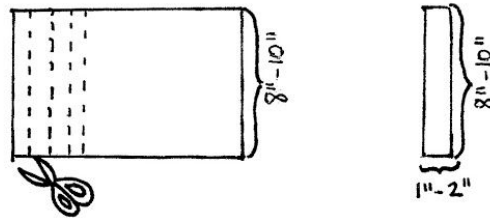


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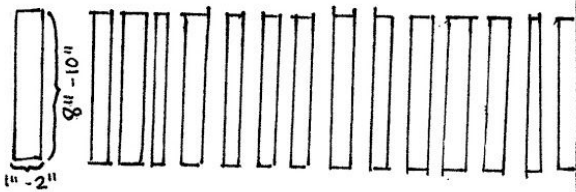
PURCHASE A 12"-16" WIRE WREATH FRAME FROM amazon.com, (SEE INCLUDED MATERIALS LIST), OR CREATE YOUR OWN USING METAL WIRE IF YOU WISH.

2



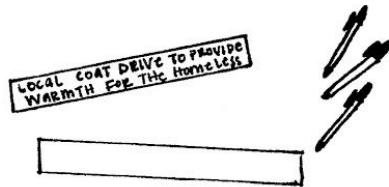
USING GRAY-TONED, NON-STRETCH MIXED DENIM, OTHER COTTON FABRICS, MUSLIN, OR OLD CLOTHING, CREATE A RECTANGULAR FABRIC 10" IN HEIGHT X PREEXISTING WIDTH. MEASURE OUT AND MARK THE WIDTH OF FABRIC AT 1"-2" WIDE INTERVALS, THEN CUT ALONG EACH LINE.

3



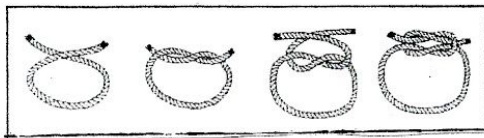
CONTINUE TO CUT STRIPS AT THESE DIMENSIONS UNTIL ALL FABRIC IS USED OR UNTIL YOU HAVE GATHERED APPROXIMATELY 100-200 STRIPS. RESERVE AT MINIMUM ONE STRIP PER PARTICIPANT, SET THESE STRIPS ASIDE.

4



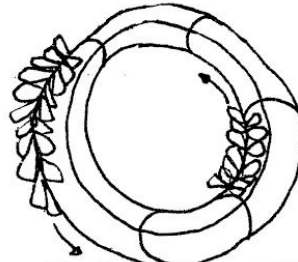
TAKE RESERVED FABRIC STRIPS. EACH WREATH PARTICIPANT SHOULD WRITE ONTO THEIR STRIP, (USING PERMANENT MARKER), ONE ACTION YOU CAN TAKE TOWARDS MAKING A CHANGE TO ANY SOCIAL ISSUE THAT CONCERNS YOU ABOUT YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD, COMMUNITY, NATION, OR THE WORLD. SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS & IDEAS WITH THE PERSON NEXT TO YOU.

5



USING THE ABOVE TYING & KNOTTING DIAGRAM, BEGIN TO TIE FABRIC STRIPS INDIVIDUALLY ONTO THE WIRE WREATH FRAME, NEATLY IN AN ORGANIZED FASHION. TIE STRIPS CLOSE TOGETHER.

6

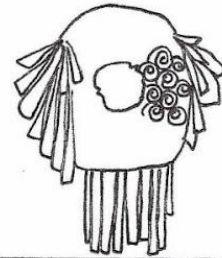


TIE STRIPS ONTO ALL THREE RINGS OF THE WIRE WREATH FRAME UNTIL COMPLETELY FILLED, EXCLUDING HANDWRITTEN SOCIAL CHANGE & UNITY FABRIC STRIPS. CONTINUE UNTIL FULL.

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Wreath Design



7



ONCE WREATH FRAME IS FILLED COMPLETELY AND THERE ARE NO GAPS OR SPACES, USE A HOT GLUE GUN TO SECURE HANDWRITTEN STRIPS VERTICALLY TO HANG FROM THE BOTTOM MIDDLE OF THE WREATH.

9

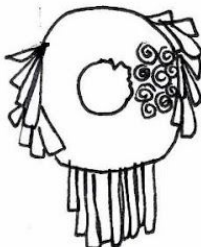
OPTIONAL* FABRIC ROSETTES



★ USING LEFTOVER OR ADDITIONAL FABRIC STRIPS, CREATE ROLLED FABRIC ROSETTES. MAKE A TOTAL OF 9 ROSETTES.

★ BEGIN WITH A KNOT AT THE VERY END OF ONE STRIP. HOLD THE KNOT WITH ONE HAND, AND USE THE OTHER HAND TO TWIST THE FABRIC TAIL CLOCKWISE; THEN ROLL FABRIC STRIP ONTO ITSELF AROUND THE KNOT, UNTIL THE STRIP IS COMPLETELY ROLLED INTO SPIRAL. HOT GLUE TAIL AT END.

11



WREATH IS COMPLETE & READY TO HANG!!!

★ REFLECT ON WHAT YOU HAVE JUST CREATED TOGETHER!

8

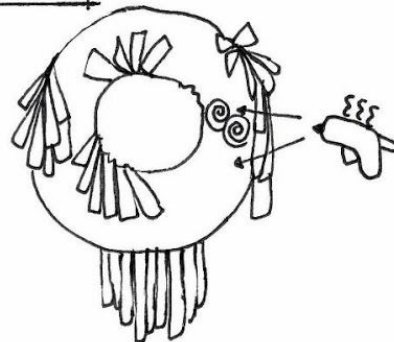
OPTIONAL*

★ CONSIDER THE SYMBOLISM OF THE NUMBER "9": UNIVERSAL LOVE, SERVICE TO HUMANITY, UNITY, STRENGTH, RESPONSIBILITY, COMPASSION & FREEDOM. AND HOW THESE CHARACTERISTICS RELATE TO THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF DR. KING.

★ ADD ADDITIONAL FABRIC STRIPS WITH HANDWRITTEN ACTIONS TOWARDS UNITY AND SOCIAL CHANGE, UNTIL THE STRIPS TOTAL A NUMBER OF 9. GLUE ALL ADDITIONAL STRIPS IN THE SAME MANNER AS THE OTHERS, REFERRING TO THE PREVIOUS STEP #7.

10

OPTIONAL*



★ USING THE HOT GLUE GUN, GLUE EACH ROSETTE INDIVIDUALLY CLUSTERED CLOSE TOGETHER ON THE MID-UPPER RIGHT SIDE.

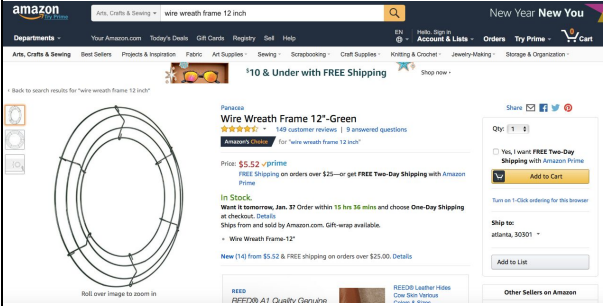
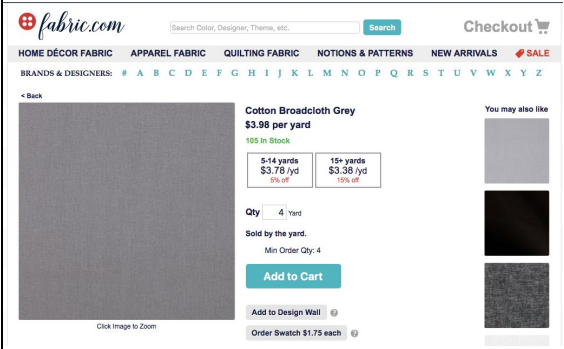

12



YOU ARE INVITED TO DISPLAY THESE WREATHS ALONG THE FUNERAL PROCESSION ROUTE ON APRIL 9th, 2018, ON THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF DR. KING'S FUNERAL, AND TO JOIN US AS WE RETRACE THE FUNERAL PROCESSION PATH FROM EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH TO MOREHOUSE COLLEGE, BEGINNING AT 11:30 AM.



SUPPLIES & MATERIALS:

What you will need:	Additional Notes:	Links:
-Wire Wreath Frame, 12"-16" AMAZON.COM, \$5.52 + shipping	**You can also check your local craft store for the frame or make one using metal wire. **Local in-store cost: \$3-\$5	https://www.amazon.com/Wire-Wreath-Frame-12-Green/dp/B004BPTGUU/ref=sr_1_3?ie=UTF8&qid=1514942564&sr=8-3&keywords=wire+wreath+frame+12+inch 
-100-200 strips of gray colored cotton, muslin, denim, other cotton fabric, or old, reused clothing. Depending on your wreath size, this amounts to approx. 1-2 yards of new, cotton fabric @ 36"W x 44"L, as seen in the link, at Fabric.com, \$3.78 + shipping. 1.5-2 yards for 12" wreath & 2-3 yards for 16" wreath & up.	**You will require an additional 18+ strips if you follow the optional portion of the activity. 1 yard of new fabric, should produce approx. 80-100 strips.	https://www.fabric.com/buy/fk-009/cotton-broadcloth-grey 
-(Optional): an additional ½ yard of bright colored fabric for the handwritten strips and rosettes	**Suggested colors: GOLD, OLIVE or CHARTREUSE GREEN, ORANGE **These strips may be longer and wider if you wish	
-1 Sharpie or permanent fabric marker, \$1.00		
-hot glue gun/sticks, \$5.75		

***ESTIMATED PER WREATH COST: \$16.00-\$20 (+ tax & shipping, if applicable)

***EACH WREATH APPROXIMATELY 1-4 PARTICIPANTS

Excerpt from Drum Major Instinct Sermon, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, Feb 4, 1968

Every now and then I guess we all think realistically (*Yes, sir*) about that day when we will be victimized with what is life's final common denominator—that something that we call death. We all think about it. And every now and then I think about my own death and I think about my own funeral. And I don't think of it in a morbid sense. And every now and then I ask myself, "What is it that I would want said?" And I leave the word to you this morning.

If any of you are around when I have to meet my day, I don't want a long funeral. And if you get somebody to deliver the eulogy, tell them not to talk too long. (*Yes*) And every now and then I wonder what I want them to say. Tell them not to mention that I have a Nobel Peace Prize—that isn't important. Tell them not to mention that I have three or four hundred other awards—that's not important. Tell them not to mention where I went to school. (*Yes*) I'd like somebody to mention that day that Martin Luther King, Jr., tried to give his life serving others. (*Yes*)

I'd like for somebody to say that day that Martin Luther King, Jr., tried to love somebody. I want you to say that day that I tried to be right on the war question. (*Amen*) I want you to be able to say that day that I did try to feed the hungry. (*Yes*) And I want you to be able to say that day that I did try in my life to clothe those who were naked. (*Yes*)

I want you to say on that day that I did try in my life to visit those who were in prison. (*Lord*) I want you to say that I tried to love and serve humanity. (*Yes*)

Yes, if you want to say that I was a drum major, say that I was a drum major for justice. (*Amen*) Say that I was a drum major for peace. (*Yes*) I was a drum major for righteousness. And all of the other shallow things will not matter. (*Yes*) I won't have any money to leave behind. I won't have the fine and luxurious things of life to leave behind. But I just want to leave a committed life behind. (*Amen*) And that's all I want to say.

If I can help somebody as I pass along,
If I can cheer somebody with a word or song,
If I can show somebody he's traveling wrong,
Then my living will not be in vain.
If I can do my duty as a Christian ought,
If I can bring salvation to a world once wrought,
If I can spread the message as the master taught,
Then my living will not be in vain.

Yes, Jesus, I want to be on your right or your left side, (*Yes*) not for any selfish reason. I want to be on your right or your left side, not in terms of some political kingdom or ambition. But I just want to be there in love and in justice and in truth and in commitment to others, so that we can make of this old world a new world.

