

# MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. FREEDOM CENTER

NONVIOLENCE • EQUALITY • YOUTH • ECOLOGY

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. FREEDOM CENTER ANNOUNCES INAUGURAL BENEFIT DINNER “SOMETHING BIGGER THAN OURSELVES” TO SUPPORT YOUTH LEADERSHIP AND NONVIOLENT SOCIAL SHANGE THROUGH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

### MARCH 7 DINNER AT TAYLOR MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH IN OAKLAND TO FEATURE GUEST SPEAKER, NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED CIVIL RIGHTS AND POLITICAL LEADER DR. AMOS C. BROWN

Oakland, CA, January 30, 2019 – The Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Center will host “Something Bigger Than Ourselves,” its inaugural benefit dinner on March 7 in Oakland to support its award-winning programs that develop youth leadership and nonviolent social change through civic engagement for all. The event is chaired by Freedom Center Board of Directors Presiding Chair, the **Hon. Elihu M. Harris**, and will be given Thursday, March 7, and will begin Thursday, March 7, at 5:30 pm in the Harris Fellowship Hall of Taylor Memorial United Methodist Church, 1188 12<sup>th</sup> Street in Oakland. The evening will feature a reception and dinner, with guest speaker **Dr. Amos C. Brown**, an internationally recognized civil rights and political leader, who President of the San Francisco chapter of the NAACP and Pastor of Third Baptist Church of San Francisco. The event takes its theme and spirit from **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.**, who said, “Involving yourself in something bigger than yourself is transformative.” Tickets for the benefit dinner are \$100 and sponsorships are available; for more information and to buy tickets, visit [www.mlkfreedomcenter.org](http://www.mlkfreedomcenter.org).

Elihu Harris commented, “Since its inception the Freedom Center has worked with thousands of middle and high school students to develop youth leaders trained in civic engagement, nonviolent social change activism, written and spoken word presentations and, most importantly, direct action. We invite and encourage the community to join us on March 7 to support this life-changing organization.”

### About the Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Center

The Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Center brings together individuals and organizations of diverse ages, races and socioeconomic backgrounds, working side-by-side to increase civic engagement for a healthy democracy.

The Center brings best practices from the nation's Civil Rights Movement to the forefront in community education, training and practice, building strong community partnerships with proven results.

The Martin Luther King Jr Freedom Center collaborates with educational, faith-based and community-based initiatives to advance youth and family civic engagement, ethical leadership, and economic and educational equity through personal transformation, in the East Bay Region's most vulnerable high-poverty communities.

The Freedom Center was founded and inspired by Oakland community organizations that had united to sponsor an annual parade to commemorate the King Holiday. These activists organized busloads of East Bay community members who traveled to Sacramento and testified on a bill creating a state-sanctioned center dedicated to the Life and Legacy of Dr. King, civic engagement, youth and nonviolence. The legislation was written by then State Assembly member Barbara Lee and enjoyed the support of Governor Pete Wilson. A later Memorandum of Understanding articulated the By Laws and Articles of Incorporation for the Freedom Center, and was signed by representatives of the City of Oakland, the East Bay Regional Park District, the Port of Oakland, the California State Coastal Conservancy, the March & Rally Committee and the Oakland City Council and State Assembly Members in 2001.

### **About Rev. Dr. Amos C. Brown**

Known among World leaders, presidents, celebrities and academicians alike for his trademark activism, intellectual discipline and masterful oratory, Dr. Amos C. Brown is a legendary civil rights leader. Tutored by Medgar Evers, Benjamin Mays, Samuel Williams, J. Pious Barbour, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as one of the eight students in the only class Dr. King taught in his lifetime at Morehouse College.

A native of Jackson, Mississippi, Dr. Brown has been Pastor of San Francisco's Third Baptist Church since 1976. As a scholar, theologian, preacher and social activist, he has maintained a marriage of piety and political action in his ministry. He was equipped for great and distinct ministerial leadership through his training at Morehouse College, B.A. (1964) and earned degrees of Master of Divinity from Crozer Theological Seminary and the Doctor of Ministry from United Theological Seminary. Before accepting the call to Third Baptist, he served as pastor of Saint Paul's Baptist Church in West Chester, Pennsylvania and Pilgrim Baptist Church in St. Paul, Minnesota. Dr. Brown has never seen the issues of society as separate from the mission of the church, especially when the members of the church are directly affected by systems of evil.

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