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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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*Monday, Jan. 15, Portsmouth's South Church*

## **MLK Day Pancake Breakfast is Back!**

PORTSMOUTH, NH – For the first time since 2020, the Seacoast NAACP will host its traditional MLK Day pancake breakfast and celebration, beginning at 8:30 am, Jan. 15, at South Church, 292 State St.

The breakfast, first held in the early 1980s, was suspended because of COVID-19.

“Dr. King’s hopes are still our hopes,” said Sandra Clark Kaddy, chair of the breakfast organizing committee. “There are things today he would be extremely proud of, and other things that would disappoint him. This breakfast is a way to share our love and share our hope.”

The event is free and open to the public, although donations will be collected to help cover costs.

Assistant Mayor Joanna Kelley, will offer the keynote address. Performances include gospel singer/musician Nate Scott, and spoken word artist Chenelle Physic, both Boston-based entertainers. Scott, according to Clark “set the house on fire” with his music during a past Portsmouth concert she organized to celebrate MLK Day.

In addition, Seacoast actor Kevin Wade Mitchell will read MLK’s Noble Peace Prize acceptance speech.

The Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire, with headquarters on Court Street, just behind South Church, will offer a guided tour of the Portsmouth trail at 12:30 pm, following the breakfast celebration.

Rev. Bob Thompson, president of the NAACP Seacoast, will preside over the event. Along with that organization, breakfast sponsors include Black Lives Matter-Seacoast, Jukwaa Mazoa, Seacoast African American Culture Center and the Black Heritage Trail of New Hampshire.

Almost immediately after the 1968 murder of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr., a movement began to formally recognize his birthday, Jan. 15, as MLK Day. The movement grew, slowly, but steadily, attracting musicians and youth. By the time a national holiday was finally approved in 1986, Stevie Wonder had written a birthday tribute to MLK; six million signatures

had been delivered to Congress in support of the holiday; and 44 states had declared their own MLK Day.

New Hampshire and Arizona were notable holdouts. Arizona voters approved the holiday in 1993 after the NFL threatened to never hold a Super Bowl in that state if it didn't. In New Hampshire, the General Assembly repeatedly rejected an MLK holiday. But in 1997 that rejection was by only one vote, and in 1999, it was approved.

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## **EVENTS NOTICE**

**MLK Day Pancake Breakfast** and celebration will be held at 8:30 am, Monday, Jan. 15, at South Church, 292 South St., Portsmouth, NH. Organized by the NAACP-Seacoast. Free and open to the public.