

Birthday Story for Martin Luther King

— Jessica Oswald

Once there was a big angel and a little angel. The little angel helped the big angel as they worked in heaven. They would float from the sun to the moon to the stars, always helping. The little angel's favorite work was to mine for jewels in heaven. The little angel loved the shiny red, blue, green and yellow jewels and how they sparkled.

Sometimes, while the little angel was working in heaven he would peer through the clouds and see the earth. He saw many beautiful things: big mountains, sparkling rivers, tall trees, children playing. These sights made him happy. But he also saw some things that made him sad and mad. He saw grown ups who were not being good and true in their hearts. They were being unkind and not making fair rules for everyone.

The little angel said, "I want to work on the earth." "Yes," replied the big angel. "It is time for you to go there. You have very important work to do on the earth. I want you to know it will not be easy for you there. The wind will blow hard and it will sometimes

be very cold.

"The jewels you found in heaven will help you in your work on earth. The red jewel will bring you courage to face all of the challenges you will have on earth. The blue will bring the love needed to help others listen and find strength. The green will bring patience so you never give up, and the yellow will bring joy and happiness. All of these things you have inside of you, but the jewels will be a reminder of what you already have."

So the little angel took the jewels and then prepared for his journey down the rainbow bridge to earth. He went to the top of the rainbow bridge and looked in each treasure chest. In the first the angel picked earth skin. There were so many beautiful colors to choose from. Some were dark, as dark as walnut, others lighter like maple, or peach. Some honey, some amber, others deep, rich red like the earth. This little angel chose the color of a black walnut. Then, in the next treasure chest the angel chose hair. Just like the first treasure

chest, there were many beautiful colors and styles. There were as many colors as in the first chest. Some as white as the white birch, others as dark as the night. Some straight, some curly, others thick or wavy. This angel chose thick, curly hair as dark as the night sky. Next, the little angel opened the third chest and picked just the right color eyes for himself. They were a rich brown and from the last treasure chest the little angel picked a voice that was deep and wise.

And so it was time for the little angel to say goodbye to his big angel. He slid down the rainbow bridge. And there a mother and father were waiting for him. The mother and father were overjoyed that a child had come. They could not decide what to call him, but the angel whispered into their ears and said, "You shall call him Martin Luther King, Jr. For he will be a good king to the people."

Today we celebrate the birthday of this very important man. Even though he is no longer on the earth, we still remember all the good deeds he did.

He was brave and strong and true. He said all people must be treated fairly and with respect no matter what color skin they chose to come to the earth with.

And we still remember Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. because our work in making this world a better place is not done. We still have to remind people that everyone must be treated kindly, fairly, and with love.

And, do you know, each of us has gems that sparkle inside of us? Red for courage, blue for love, green for patience, and yellow for joy and happiness so we can do good work for everyone. ♦

*Starting as a parent 16 years ago, **Jessica Oswald** has worked in Early Childhood in different capacities for the last 9 years at Green Meadow Waldorf School. Currently she is the Forest Preschool teacher and chair of the EC section at Green Meadow. She grew up in Brooklyn, NY and has somehow found herself spending her days with a wonderful group of children in the forest.*

Honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Through Our Daily Kindergarten Life

~ Laura Esposito

The following is a short excerpt from a bi-weekly news email to class parents that describes how Dr. King is remembered and honored through deeds as well as words in our culture of caring.

Dear Parents,

As we reflect on Martin Luther King Jr. and the events of this year, I'm reminded of King's words that everybody can be great because everybody can serve in some little way, regardless of age, ability, or other differences. From early childhood through the grades, it is woven into our curriculum for children to develop their unique character and qualities, to let their light shine, and to encourage others to shine with them. King's beliefs are living day to day in the kindergarten from: "All are welcome to play"; asking if a friend is okay when they have fallen; giving and caring selflessly for plants, animals, classmates, and family; encouraging a friend to "Be brave!" when things are hard. The children learn by example, which is why it's so important for us, as the adults in the world, to always be striving to be worthy of imitation. ♦

"An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity."

~ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Laura Esposito is lead teacher of a mixed-aged kindergarten class at the Kimberton Waldorf School. Her bi-weekly parent newsletters give families an intimate peek into the classroom in these times when access for parents is restricted. Vignettes offer parents insight into how the curriculum is supporting their children's development in body, soul, and spirit.