In Memory of Dr. King

By Rachelle Kreisman

The King memorial can be found on the National Mall.

A piece of the nation's capital honors an important leader—Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. A memorial for King was built on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. It is the first memorial on the Mall to honor an African American.

A ceremony was held on November 13, [2006] to mark the start of construction. President George W. Bush and other leaders were among the thousands of people who gathered for the event.

"When the work is done, the King memorial will be a fitting tribute—powerful and hopeful and poetic—like the man it honors," Bush said at the ceremony.

The memorial has trees, flowing water, and a 30-foot statue of King. Quotes from King's speeches are carved into a stone wall.

A Great Leader

King (1929—1968) grew up in the U.S. South. At that time, the South was segregated, or separated by race. Under the law, black people were not allowed to attend the same schools as white people. They were forced to sit in the backseats of buses. They also had to use separate restrooms and drinking fountains.

King worked to change the laws by giving speeches and leading peaceful marches. Thanks to King and other leaders, civil rights laws were passed. Those laws make sure that all Americans are treated equally.
I Have a Dream

On August 28, 1963, Martin Luther King Jr. gave a speech in Washington, D.C. A crowd of more than 200,000 people came to hear him. In his speech, King said, "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."