

PLYMOUTH CHURCH: 175 YEARS OF MAKING HISTORY DR. KING'S DREAM COMES TO BROOKLYN

When we think about Plymouth's history, the congregation's work in the 19th century to end slavery and help individuals find freedom often comes to mind. But there have been many important milestones in Plymouth's advocacy for racial freedom and equity between that time and now.

In 1963 the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke at Plymouth at the invitation of its Senior Minister Harry Kruener. The two had met while attending graduate school at Boston University.

Dr. King spoke to packed house in the Sanctuary on February 10th that year. He gave a speech called "The American Dream." Many of its passages echo in the speech he would give just six months later on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., well known to us now as his "I Have a Dream" speech. At Plymouth, Dr. King would have been looking from the lectern toward the stained glass window of Abraham Lincoln; in Washington, D.C., Lincoln's image would loom large behind him as he spoke many of the same words.

The speech at Plymouth was recorded but the tape disappeared for a several decades. It was not until just a few years ago that it was rediscovered: As Bruce Oelschlager, our Minister of Music, was sorting through old boxes of reel-to-reel choir recordings, he pulled out the one that had been made on the day of Dr. King's visit.

If you would like to listen to a version of this speech on your own, [it can be found here](#).

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