



January 2024

Holidays and Celebrations

January 6

Día de los Reyes

January 7

**Orthodox
Christmas**

January 15

**Martin Luther
King Jr. Day**

January 27

**Commemoration
in memory of
Victims of the
Holocaust**

Día de los Reyes / Three Kings Day / Epiphany

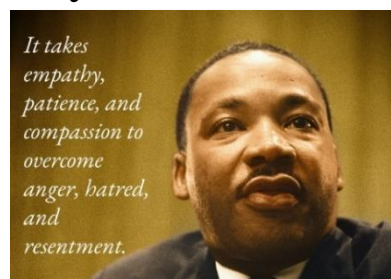
Christians in Spain, Puerto Rico, Mexico and many other Latin American countries celebrate the arrival of the three kings in Bethlehem that came to worship the newborn Christ child. On this day, children receive presents from the three kings, and there are parades and family gatherings. This day is celebrated at all [area Catholic Churches](#).

Orthodox Christmas

The Orthodox Church celebrates Christian holidays on a different calendar than the Christian calendar most of us are familiar with. Dubuque is home to [St. Elias Greek Orthodox Church](#), and it is well worth a visit!

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

This annual holiday is set as a day to celebrate, and commemorate the life, legacy and impact of [Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.](#) It is an opportunity to reflect on the ongoing struggle for civil rights, equality, and justice. This day has been designated by Congress as a [national day of service](#). To honor Dr. King's memory, attend a commemorative event or educational opportunity, engage in community service that aligns with Dr. King's commitment to social justice, or spread awareness of Dr. King's message of equality, love, and nonviolence. See page 4 for more information about the [Dubuque Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration](#) on Monday, January 15.



Commemoration in Memory of Victims of the Holocaust



This date marks the anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi concentration and extermination camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau. We use this date to honor the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust. Perhaps use this day as an opportunity to [learn more about the Holocaust](#), to remember those who died, and to ensure it never happens again.

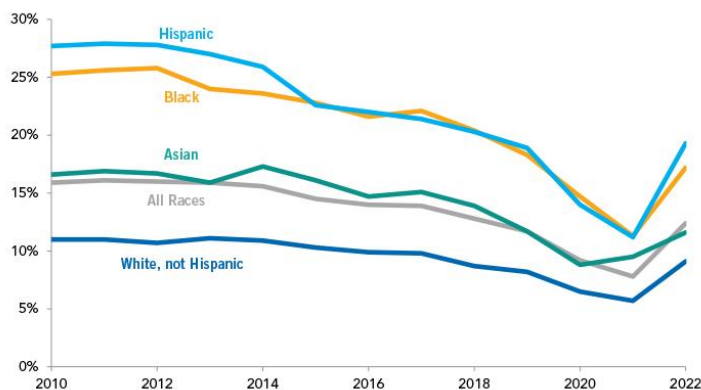
January is Poverty Awareness Month

I once met someone who told me about his son's experience seeing poverty for the first time while stationed in Hungary. I reminded my friend that, in fact, we have a lot of poverty here in the United States, too. When most people think of the word "poverty", they think of someone living on the streets or foraging through trash bins. While that is certainly a very vivid image of poverty, much of poverty in Iowa has a different face.

Poverty in Dubuque is the rundown house whose low rent is still barely affordable for the family living in it. Poverty is those who rely on the over nine thousand toys that were given away this year at Toys for Tots to provide Christmas for their kids. Poverty is the single mom and her five children who were going to walk two miles home in 30° weather at 9:00 at night because the buses had stopped running and she couldn't afford a cab.

Poverty exists when people lack the means to satisfy their basic needs.¹ In the U.S., it's also uncertainty about where they're going to get food and how they're going to pay their bills. Many people think that to escape poverty, all one has to do is to work harder. In fact, many people living in poverty are working the hardest of us all by holding down two or three jobs.

In the United States, Hispanic and Black individuals have much higher poverty rates than other groups.³



SOURCE: United States Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Income in the United States: 2022, September 2023.
NOTE: SPM data are used.
© 2023 Peter G. Peterson Foundation

PGPF.ORG

Causes of Poverty

- Social injustice (discrimination, systemic racism, bias)
- Lack of, or poor-quality, education
- Physical and/or mental health disabilities
- Unemployment
- Lack of livable wages / income inequality
- Lack of affordable housing
- Other socioeconomic factors



Effects of Poverty

- Family problems (the poor are at greater risk for domestic violence and divorce)
- Access to education (underfunded and overcrowded schools, high dropout rates)
- Health risks (mental illness, chronic disease, lower life expectancy)
- Higher rates of incarceration (the poor account for the bulk of street crime)
- Housing instability (higher risk of homelessness, lack of affordable housing)
- Safety concerns (the poor also account for the bulk of victims of street crime)

Dubuque Poverty Statistics for 2021²

- Residents below the poverty level: 12.3%
- Foreign-born residents below the poverty level: 20.3%
- Children below the poverty level: 12.9%

Written by Ann Marie Jannette

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/poverty>

² <https://www.city-data.com/poverty/poverty-Dubuque-Iowa.html>

³ <https://www.pgpf.org/blog/2023/09/7-key-trends-in-poverty-in-the-united-states>

Culture Creators

A Sense of Belonging

What is belonging?

When you feel like you can be your authentic and true self without fear of judgement.

- Employees feel seen, heard, valued, and respected at work.
- Belonging is about “how you feel”



Why is a sense of belonging important?

- Psychological safety
- Fundamental for a meaningful & satisfying life
- Gives you meaning and purpose
- Source of fulfillment
- Fewer feelings of isolation and depression
- Better employment engagement
- Better collaboration and problem solving
- Employee retention
- Improved productivity

How do we build a sense of belonging?

- Acknowledge other people's feelings of exclusion
- Ask others how they are doing
- Create an atmosphere of compassion and acceptance
- Consciously invite everyone to the conversation
- Listen, don't just hear what others are saying
- Open dialogue helps strengthen relationships and cultivate belonging



How can YOU give someone the gift of feeling like they belong?

Allow yourself to be vulnerable and acknowledge your biases.

Recognizing unintentional bias creates learning moments that help people to feel they can be their authentic true selves and still belong in the group.

Everyone wants to FEEL like themselves, ACT like themselves, and BE their true selves. To do that, we must feel a sense of belonging which is nurtured by the people around us.



News and Updates



A Note from Dr. Gisella Aitken-Shadle

Welcome to the first edition of the Diversity in Dubuque newsletter, a monthly update on local events celebrating our community's diversity and an opportunity to share ideas and spark conversation about how we can be more inclusive in our work serving the Greater Dubuque community.

In this first edition, I want to introduce the theme for this year: belonging. Belonging is when the members of an organization or community are not only included but feel respected and accepted. Each month this year, the newsletter will include helpful ideas on how you can build a sense of belonging and inclusion in your department, business, or organization.

In January, we celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the pioneering advocate for civil rights. Dr. King was guided by the vision of what he called the "beloved community," a world in which everyone has equitable access to what they need to thrive, where everyone can participate in the community, and where everyone feels a sense of belonging and connectedness. It's a powerful vision that we strive for through the City of Dubuque's commitment to ideals such as sustainability, inclusion, human rights and equity. This January let's not just look back on Dr. King's legacy, but also think about how we can contribute to building a more welcoming community here in Dubuque.



January 15, 2024 at 7:00am

Grand River Center

Cost: \$25 adults / \$10 youth

[Register by January 8](#)

Leading with Strength of Soul



Keynote Speaker:

Dr. Ruth Haley Barton

founder of the Transforming Center, a ministry dedicated to strengthening the souls of pastors and Christian leaders.

Monthly Talking Points

- How am I fostering a sense of belonging through my actions?
- What can I do to honor and promote Dr. King's vision?
- How can I extend a hand-up for low-income families in our community?



Dr. Gisella Aitken-Shadle, Ed.D.
Chief of Equity and Human Rights
gaitken@cityofdubuque.org
563-589-4190

Ann Marie Jannette
Equity and Human Rights Specialist
ajannett@cityofdubuque.org
563-589-4219