



Day 3: Friday, Feb. 3

An Initiative of Pikes Peak Habitat for Humanity in
Celebration of the 2023 UN World Interfaith
Harmony Week

For the third day of our interfaith challenge, learn about the racial reconciliation roots of Habitat for Humanity:

1 HABITAT'S RACIAL RECONCILIATION ROOTS

Did you know that the seeds for Habitat for Humanity's mission grew out of a farming community in Georgia? In 1942 Clarence Jordan, a farmer and Greek New Testament scholar, created [Koinonia Farms](#), an interracial, Christian farming community unique for its tight-knit bonds, recognized for its commitment to the dignity of all people, and known for its support of equality. Despite boycotts on Koinonia products, the destruction of farm tools, and other backlash, the community members at Koinonia farms endured, remaining committed to equality and racial reconciliation.

In this midst of hostility, Koinonia Farms received encouragement from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who wrote:

"God grant that this tragic midnight of man's inhumanity to man will soon pass and the bright daybreak of freedom and brotherhood will come into being."

"We still await that daybreak. While much has been done, so much more work remains. This will never be a world of equality, of fairness or of human decency that leaves no room for poverty, prejudice or violence, unless we build it. Bold actions speak louder than words. Working together, side by side, is what will continue to move us from tragic midnight to glorious morning."

For future Habitat for Humanity founders Millard and Linda Fuller, the farm's commitment to economic equality for all residents was infectious. After a transformational visit to the farm, the Fullers developed a new "partnership housing" initiative with Jordan in 1968 centered on the concept of those in need of housing working hand-in-hand with volunteers to build their home. While the houses were built at no profit, the 20-year-no-interest mortgage paid by homeowners supported a fund to build for homes for more families. This initiative led the Fullers to eventually found Habitat for Humanity in 1976.



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Joseph Johnson and his family celebrate their final mortgage payment on the farm with a mortgage burning ceremony

While Habitat for Humanity has grown exponentially over the years and our programs have diversified, our commitment to racial reconciliation and “Building the Beloved Community” as described by Dr. King has remained unchanged from our Koinonia Farm roots. As an organization, we heed the words of Dr. King on the power of collective action and recognizing that equality will not come unless we work toward it together. Here in El Paso County, it’s our turn – as individuals, community members, diverse faith communities, and community groups – to help build the “beloved community” locally.

2 DAILY ACTION OPTIONS

- 1) Learn more about Clarence Jordan’s life and dedication to equality in [this article](#).
- 2) Comment on Pikes Peak Habitat’s post about the racial reconciliation roots of Habitat on either Instagram or Facebook.
- 3) What positive examples have you seen of community groups, faith communities, or organizations supporting racial reconciliation locally? Where could more work be done? Jot down your answers.

Article Sources:

Habitat for Humanity International. [“World Equality, Fairness and Human Decency.”](#)

Habitat for Humanity International. [“Love Never Quits.”](#)