



**UNITED  
COMMUNITY  
MINISTRIES**

*At the Heart of Community*

**ucmagency.org**

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United Way #8199 CFC #37839

***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

Date: January 11, 2016  
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**MEDIA ADVISORY:  
MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. WEEKEND EVENTS  
BENEFITING UNITED COMMUNITY MINISTRIES (UCM OF ALEXANDRIA)**

The Martin Luther King, Jr. federal holiday has become known as a day to celebrate community service. UCM has ways to honor Dr. King's legacy all weekend long. Community members are invited to join United Community Ministries (UCM) at the following community fundraising events over the Martin Luther King Jr. federal holiday weekend.

- **Stuff the Bus Food Drive - Sat., Jan. 16**
- **21<sup>st</sup> Annual Ventures in Community (VIC) Choir Festival - Sun., Jan. 17**
- **MLK 8K Run and 5K Run/Walk – Hosted by Metro Run Walk - Mon., Jan. 18**

Detail for these events is provided below. Additional information about UCM upcoming events is at: [www.ucmagency.org/events](http://www.ucmagency.org/events).

***Event: Stuff the Bus Food Drive***

Date: Saturday, Jan. 16

Time: 9:30am to 4:30pm

Location: Shoppers Food at Mount Vernon Plaza Shopping Center, 7660 Richmond Hwy., Alexandria VA

**Event Details:**

Help stock the UCM Food Pantry for the winter months to fight local hunger at the annual Stuff the Bus Food Drive. Fairfax County partners with MV Transportation for this annual campaign across the county. Look for the Fastran bus outside the store and volunteers inside. Most needed items include canned tuna, rice, boxed cereal. All food and check/cash donations on this date go directly to UCM. Community members who cannot attend the Food Drive are welcome to make a financial donation to the Food Pantry at [www.ucmagency.org](http://www.ucmagency.org) (designate "Stuff the Buss" in comments section). If you'd like to volunteer at the event, email [info@ucmagency.org](mailto:info@ucmagency.org).

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**Event: 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Ventures in Community (VIC) Choir Festival**

Date: Sunday, Jan. 17

Time: 4:30pm

Location: Good Shepherd Catholic Church at 8710 Mt. Vernon Memorial Hwy., Alexandria VA

**Event Details:**

Enjoy beautiful music and fellowship as several area choirs perform for your enjoyment at the 21st annual VIC Choir Festival. No admission charge, but a free-will donation will be collected at the door to benefit several area charities, including UCM.

The mission of Ventures in Community is to unite the faith communities of Southeast Fairfax County to advocate for and serve people in need. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of most months at 11.30am. For more information about Ventures in Community including to receive e-mail notices, contact Cristina Schoendorf at [cristina.schoendorf@ucmagency.org](mailto:cristina.schoendorf@ucmagency.org).

**Event: MLK 8K Run and 5K Run/Walk – Hosted by Metro Run Walk**

Date: Monday, Jan. 18

Time: 9am

Location: Hosted by Metro Run Walk at Burke Lake Park at 7315 Ox Road, Fairfax Station VA.

**Event Details:**

Join your neighbors and bring your friends to start the day with healthy exercise for a good cause. Registration: \$35 chipped bib and \$25 non-chipped bib regardless of distance; includes T-shirt and refreshments. Online registration preferred through midnight Jan. 16. Event proceeds benefit UCM's mission to help neighbors in need achieve self-sufficiency. Register at [www.metrorunwalk.com](http://www.metrorunwalk.com). Questions: contact event administrator at 703.913.0313.

**United Community Ministries (UCM)** mobilizes the power of community to equip, educate, and empower people to measurably improve their lives. For more than 46 years, UCM has provided a vital connection between people in need and the people committed to helping them thrive.

Services include:

- **Immediate Help.** For families and individuals in crisis, UCM provides food, financial aid, counseling, and referrals to other resources.
- **Education and Employment.** Services such as job training and coaching, early care and learning, ESL and citizenship classes, and parental education help people achieve stability and self-reliance.
- **Community Engagement.** UCM's neighborhood centers, with after-school programs and leadership training, engage youth and families in skill-building and broader social networks for success.

In Fiscal Year 2015, thanks to generous community support, UCM provided life-changing assistance to 10,200 individuals in 4,000 families in the Alexandria portion of Fairfax County. This included 5,000 children – more than any other agency in the Huntington-Mount Vernon area.

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