



March in Peace. Act in Power.

July 17, 2025, Fifth Anniversary of the Death of Civil Rights Leader, John Lewis
Courthouse Park, Suffolk, Virginia

Suffolk Democratic Committee (sdcvirginia.org)

Today we honor the legacy of Reverend John Lewis, who as a young man decided to join the nonviolent movement for the rights of all Americans, as taught by Dr. Martin Luther King, jr. On March 7, 1965 (Bloody Sunday) he led peaceful marchers across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, AL., and was badly beaten by authorities. This was a turning point in the Voting Rights Movement. President Lyndon Johnson listened to public opinion and saw the Civil Rights Act 1964 as a moral imperative and a way to honor the slain President John Kennedy; and Bloody Sunday pushed the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Lewis served Georgia as a representative to Congress from 1987-2020. “Get in good trouble, necessary trouble, and help redeem the soul of America.”

Greetings: Linda Perkins: Co-chair of SDC Outreach Committee

Remarks: Leslie Rinaldi: Suffolk Democratic Committee Chairman

Reading Joleen Neighbours*

“Lift Every Voice and Sing” 1900-Lyrics: James Weldon Johnson. 1905-Music: J. Rosamond Johnson

Tanaya Thompson: Senior Lakeland High School, Senior Class President, and member of the inaugural class of Center of Performing and ProductionArts

Reading Linda G. Bunch*

Remarks from a Veteran: Bill Robinson, Retired Infantry Officer, US Army, and disabled Veteran and Veterans and Military Families advocate.

Reading Valerie Boykins*

Words and Prayers: Dr. Anita Lewis, Pastor and President of the Suffolk Interdominational Ministerial Alliance, and Community Leader

Reading Robin Holton*

Tanaya Thompson: “Lovely Day” composers Bill Withers and Skip Scarborough

Thanks to the many SDC members and friends who made this program possible.