



The Martin Luther King Coalition leads the procession down Franklin Street in Chapel Hill.

Photo: Delvin Davis

# Reflections on the MLK Day March

By Sylvia Bridges

**On Jan. 18, 1999, I had the opportunity to gather with more than 500 people from the Research Triangle in front of the Chapel Hill Post Office for a Martin Luther King Day March and rally.**

This event, which drew people of many different races, began with the gospel selection "The Storm is Over Now" sang by the Faith Tabernacle Youth and Young Adult Choir. It ended with the inspirational words of UNC Student Body President Reyna Walters, who spoke about non-violence.

Fred Battle of the Chapel Hill/Carrboro NAACP pointed out that what might be affordable for whites might not be affordable for blacks. A white person may consider affordable housing to range from \$100,000 to \$125,000. But a black person may consider affordable housing to range from \$65,000 to \$100,000. The government defines affordable housing as rental housing that costs no more than 30 percent of total family income. For homebuyers, it is housing that costs no more than 2.5 times the annual family income. Even with this equation, many families are unable to afford housing in our community. Verla Insko of the N.C. House of Representatives said that at the state level, more than half the people pay 50 percent of their income on rent and live in substandard housing.