

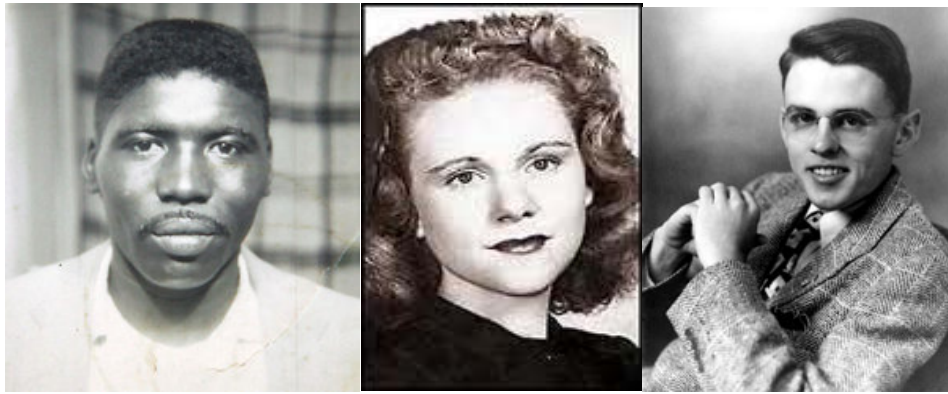


# SCOPE50 News

The Struggle Continues!  
SCOPE50.org

June 2024

They gave their lives for your right to vote!



*Jimmie Lee Jackson – age 26  
Beaten and shot Feb. 1965  
in Marion, AL*

*Viola Liuzzo – age 39  
Killed by the Ku Klux Klan  
March 1965 in Selma, AL*

*Rev. James Reeb – age 38  
Beaten to death, March 1965  
in Selma, AL*

REGISTER TO VOTE NOW!

*“Your vote is precious, almost sacred. It is the most powerful nonviolent tool we have to create a more perfect union.” - John Lewis, 2012*

Vote on  
Tuesday, November 5, 2024

You have no excuse. You can:

- Vote in person
- Vote by mail
- Vote early

### SCOPE50's Public Service Announcement

SCOPE50 was fortunate to have Carolyn Murray, a local news anchor at WCBD-TV in Charleston, agree to do a PSA for our get-out-the-vote effort. You can access the PSA at either our website (SCOPE50.org) or our Facebook page. You are welcome to use the PSA in whatever you are doing in your community and state.



We also have a letter that can be sent to churches, which you may find useful in your community:

My brothers and sisters of the clergy,

Faith and action go together. Hebrew 11:29-30 talks about faith and how faith can change the lives of people and their circumstances. It talks about faith and action. It gives as an example the Israelites who are escaping slavery in search of freedom and that the Red Sea opened up so they were able to cross it as if on dry land. Another example given is the walls of Jericho tumbling down when the people marched around the city.

I'm sure I don't have to remind you that the faith community – the church – is supposed to stand in the gap and speak for those who have no voice. To speak for those who are suffering. That is the call of the church. And Jesus demonstrated that to us when he overturned tables in the temple because the voice of the church was silent.

So I'm calling upon you in our time to speak. I'm calling upon you to promote voter registration and to get out the vote here in 2024. We can't just simply say that we have nothing to vote for; some-times you have to vote against. Sometimes you have to take a stand against evil and corruption. And I dare say this is what we are facing today. We are in a moral dilemma. Our families are falling apart. Violence is taking too many lives. The world seems to be changing rapidly.

As leaders of the church, we must speak truth. We must speak the truth of Jesus. We can't just say that the church doesn't get involved in social action and that we don't get involved in politics. Jesus was involved in social action. Jesus healed the lame man on the day of rest because he saw a need. The church cannot afford to be silent.

I would encourage you to make sure that every member of your congregation is registered to vote, and that each member votes in November. We must preach it from the pulpit – this is a part of the work of God. Jesus did not sit by when he saw pain. He tried to ease it. When he heard crying, he tried to wipe away the tears. Brother and sisters, now is our time to go into the wilderness. I ask you to get as many people registered as possible during this election season. If people need rides, use your vans. In the first two weeks of October, preach to your congregation about the importance of voting, about their responsibility to one another, to our society. Because that is what our faith calls us to do. Our faith calls for us to love one another, to stand up for one another, to fight against sin and evil no matter where it takes place.

Thank you for your efforts and for doing the work of our God here and now.

Sincerely,

### *In Memorium*

We lost two freedom fighters this month: Rev. James Lawson, Jr. and Rev. Fred Taylor.

**Rev. Lawson** passed on June 9 at the age of 95. Many of you who were in the SCOPE Project in 1965 may remember him. William Braude, one of the SCOPE volunteers, wrote to me upon learning of Rev. Lawson's passing, saying that he remembered him as a great teacher during the SCOPE training. Lawson was a close adviser to Dr. King, who called him "the leading theorist and strategist of nonviolence in the world."



Following are excerpts from the obituary posted at The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute, Stanford University:

"As a minister who trained many activists in nonviolent resistance, James Lawson made a critical contribution to the civil rights movement. In his 1968 speech, "I've Been to the Mountaintop," Martin Luther King spoke of Lawson as one of the "noble men" who had influenced the black freedom struggle: "He's been going to jail for struggling; he's been kicked out of Vanderbilt University for this struggling; but he's still going on, fighting for the rights of his people"

"Lawson was born in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, in 1928. He earned his AB from Baldwin-Wallace College in 1951 and his STB from Boston University in 1960. A draft resister, Lawson was imprisoned in 1951 for refusing to register with the armed forces. Following his parole from prison in 1952, he traveled to India and performed missionary work with the Methodist Church. While in India, he deepened his study of Gandhi's use of nonviolence to achieve social and political change.

"When Lawson and King met in 1957, King urged Lawson to move to the South and begin teaching nonviolence on a large scale. Later that year, Lawson transferred to Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, and organized workshops on nonviolence for community members and students at Vanderbilt and the city's four black colleges. These activists, who included Diane Nash, Marion Barry, John Lewis, Bernard Lafayette, and James Bevel, planned nonviolent demonstrations in Nashville, conducting test sit-ins in late 1959. In February 1960, following lunch counter sit-ins initiated by students at a Woolworth's store in Greensboro, North Carolina, Lawson and several local activists launched a similar protest in Nashville's downtown stores. More than 150 students were arrested before city leaders agreed to desegregate some lunch counters. The discipline of the Nashville students became a model for sit-ins in other southern cities. In March 1960 Lawson was expelled from Vanderbilt because of his involvement with Nashville's desegregation movement.

"Lawson and the Nashville student leaders were influential in the founding conference of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), held April 1960. Their commitment to nonviolence and the Christian ideal of what Lawson called "the redemptive community" helped to shape SNCC's

early direction. Lawson was involved with the Fellowship of Reconciliation from 1957 to 1969, SNCC from 1960 to 1964, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) from 1960 to 1967. For each organization, he led workshops on nonviolent methods of protest, often in preparation for major campaigns. He also participated in the third wave of the 1961 Freedom Rides. Lawson continued to work with various civil rights groups following King's assassination. In 1973, he became a board member of SCLC and served as president of the Los Angeles chapter from 1979 to 1993. He was also the pastor of Holman United Methodist Church in Los Angeles from 1974 to 1999."

**Rev. Frederick Douglass Taylor** passed on June 21. Fred Taylor was born in Prattville, Alabama, in 1942. He was raised by his grandparents, who moved to Montgomery in 1953. Two years later at the age of 13, under the direction of his pastor, Rev. Ralph David Abernathy, Fred became involved with the Civil Rights Movement handing out leaflets during the Montgomery Bus Boycott.



After getting a B.A. degree from Alabama State University in 1965, and a Master of Divinity degree from the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta in 1969, he began working for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, then under the leadership of Abernathy, in the department of Chapters and Affiliates. By 1973, Taylor had risen to Director of the department. He oversaw an effort to strengthen the organization's network of chapters and affiliate organizations.

In 1984 Taylor became Director of Direction Action and Convener of SCLC's Crisis Intervention Committee. In these related roles, he was responsible for coordinating direct action efforts such as 1988's Martin Luther King Pilgrimage for Economic Justice and the 1985 boycott of Winn Dixie supermarkets, as well as intervening on behalf of community members experiencing racial discrimination and other hardships. Even as Director of Chapters and Affiliates, Taylor had been involved in planning many direct action events, including the southern leg of the 1976 Continental Walk for Disarmament and Social Justice.

When remembering Taylor, the Atlanta City Council highlighted his unique approach to leading protests. They said he would sing spiritual hymns and freedom songs into a megaphone in order to keep the marches in sync. "Rev. Taylor was a fearless crusader for justice and equality whose example is one of pure self-sacrifice for the upliftment of others," Atlanta City Councilman Michael Julian Bond said in a statement. "My personal journey with him was a blessing. From being inspired by his example, to being guided by his wisdom as a mentor, and finally, to cherishing his friendship, I am forever grateful. I had the honor of recognizing his contributions at the City Council a few years ago. I extend my deepest condolences to his family, affiliations, and the community that loves him dearly."

## Willie Mays

We should also mention the passing of Willie Mays on June 18 at the age of 93.



Mays was born in Westfield, Alabama, about nine miles west of downtown Birmingham, and played in the Negro League for the Birmingham Black Barons in 1948 at 17 years old, just a year after Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier with the Dodgers in 1947. He spent the rest of his career in the National League (NL), playing for the New York/San Francisco Giants and New York Mets.

Widely regarded as one of the greatest players of all time, Mays won two National League MVPs, was a 12-time Gold Glove recipient, a four-time National League home run leader, a World Series champion, and made the All-Star game 24 times.

## Congress Honors Albert Turner Sr.

On the anniversary of Albert Turner's death, Congress introduced legislation to rename the Marion (Alabama) Post Office building to honor his legacy.



Albert Turner Sr. died on April 13, 2000, as the Commissioner of Perry County's District 1, the same seat held by his son today, Chairman Albert Turner Jr. The Bill, known as House Bill 7893, is sponsored by Congresswoman Terri Sewell and co-sponsored by the Alabama Delegation. In her statement, Congresswoman Sewell expressed her admiration for Albert Turner Sr., describing him as a Civil Rights icon whose contributions to Alabama and the nation should never be forgotten. The "Albert Turner Sr. Post Office Building" will serve as a constant reminder of his invaluable legacy. The Bill will head to the Senate, after which the President will sign it to make it law.

Turner Sr. was the Alabama Field Director for SCLC. Dr. King chose Albert Turner Sr. to lead the entire State of Alabama from 1965 to 1972 to obtain voting rights for African Americans. In Selma on March 7, 1965, Albert Turner Sr. insisted that the march must go on, against Dr. King's orders not to march. The result of that march was known as "Bloody Sunday." Shortly after that, the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act occurred. In addition to "Bloody Sunday," Albert Turner Sr.'s legacy includes being one of the first to successfully take on the Department of Agriculture for discrimination against Black Farmers, petitioning the government to provide a food subsidy (Food Stamps) for people experiencing poverty, integrating the Perry County School District, causing redistricting of the State of Alabama on all levels of government.

### Wall of Memory

We are in the process of updating our Wall of Memory. The following names will be added to it: Harry Belafonte, Stoney and Shirley Cooks, Helene Gutherz, Shelby Jacobs, Claire Kastner, Dexter King, Jim Lawson, Dallas Lindgren, Melzenia Maddox, Andrew Marrisett, Sidney Poitier, Terrie Randolph, Joseph “Rugsy” Ruggerio, and Fred Taylor. If you know of others that should be added, please let me know.

### SCOPE – 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1965 SCOPE project will take place in 2025. The SCOPE50 Board of Directors has been discussing the possibility of having a reunion of SCOPE volunteers as we did in 2015. Since it is also the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Bloody Sunday, we thought it might be a good idea to hold the SCOPE reunion during the same time as the Selma Jubilee, which is scheduled for February 27-March 2. Unfortunately, there are few hotels in Selma, so we would plan to stay in Montgomery. In that way we could participate in some of the activities in Selma as well as visit the many Civil Rights sites in Montgomery. You will be getting more information in the coming weeks. We will be asking who might be interested in attending, so that we are able to finalize our plans.