

# RELIGION

## Ebenezer Baptist Restoration Complete

Church was cornerstone to MLK's legacy

(AP) -- The voice of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. again filled the halls of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta and a pipe organ triumphantly announced the reopening of the sacred sanctuary regarded as the birthplace of the civil rights icon's vision of justice, equality and a nonviolent society.

The King family was joined April 15 by members of the civil rights movement and Interior Secretary Ken Salazar Friday in celebrating the reopening of Ebenezer, called the cornerstone of King's legacy. Salazar said the church is "hallowed ground for a nation still very much in progress."

Ebenezer's Heritage Sanctuary has been restored to its original appearance from 1960 to 1968, when King co-pastored there with his father. Work began on the \$8 million project in 2000, and includes a return of the original pulpit furniture and furnishings, architectural and paint finishes, the baptismal pool and choir loft seating.

It also restored King's most important title: preacher, said his youngest daughter, Bernice King, who delivered the keynote address



Martin Luther King III, the son of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., speaks during a April 15 ceremony to mark the restoration of the sanctuary of the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta where his father preached. (AP photo)

at the ceremony.

Excerpts of King's most famed sermons were piped into the sanctuary before the ceremony began.

"Much comes to my mind as I stand here this afternoon, because I grew up in Ebenezer," a smiling Martin Luther King III, president

and chief executive officer of The King Center, told the audience.

His daughter, Yolanda Renee King, opened the ceremony by ring-

ing a liberty bell near the pulpit.

The Rev. Joseph Lowery attended the ceremony and said he had many fond memories of the church, where he often met to discuss strategy for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, which he co-founded with King in 1957.

"I can't tell you how it feels to me to be standing here in this spot, in this place, at this hour," Lowery said from the pulpit where King delivered his sermons more than four decades ago. "This church and this ministry have been significant in the history of this country for a long time. I thank God that it remains here to be seen."

King was born just blocks from Ebenezer on Auburn Avenue in downtown Atlanta, and grew up in the church. His father, the Rev. Martin Luther King Sr. — known as "Daddy King" — preached there and was a local civil rights activist. His grandfather, A.D. Williams, preceded him and also fought segregation during the early 20th century.

King is also buried next to the church, in a crypt alongside his widow, Coretta Scott King.

Ebenezer is the anchor of the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site, which welcomes more than 700,000 national and international visitors annually

### In Loving Memory

#### Bill Moore

William Curtis "Doc" "Bill" Moore was a man changed by his walk with the Lord. Like Saul to Paul, he stood boldly for the gospel word. He proudly served St. Jude Church as a deacon and adult Sunday School teacher.



As a volunteer at Volunteers of America Men's Rehabilitation Center, he loved, cared and served the community.

He was born Sept. 8, 1942 and died on April 3, 2011.

Left behind are his wife Kathy; son Ricco Brack; sister Martha Ervin; and many family, step-family, church family and loved VOA family members.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, May 7 at 11 a.m. at St. Jude Church, 5503 N.E. Prescott St.

In lieu of flowers, it is Bill's wish that any donations be made to the VOA Al Forthan Scholarship Fund, 2318 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Portland, OR 97212.

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