



FINAL DAY BEGINS WITH SPECIAL KEYNOTE ADDRESS

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

7:30 - 8:30 FULL BUFFET BREAKFAST

The original agenda said continental breakfast, but it has since been upgraded, so join us in the Ambassador Ballroom for a full breakfast.

8:30 - 9:30 KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Dr. Samuel Kyles will share details about his life as a civil rights advocate.

12 - 2 AWARDS LUNCHEON

Ambassador Ballroom

2:15 - 4 WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

This open discussion will include a sharing of lessons learned from all conference attendees.

4 CLOSING REMARKS

[FULL AGENDA](#)

Today we are pleased to have the Reverend Samuel "Billy" Kyles with us.

Dr. Kyles has been the pastor at Monumental Baptist Church in Memphis since 1959 and was with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. when he was assassinated on April 4, 1968.

After Memphis sanitation workers went on strike in February, 1968 due to low wages and inhumane working conditions, Kyles helped to form and lead the effort to gain community support for the striking workers. Part of that effort involved persuading the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to come to Memphis in support of the strike.

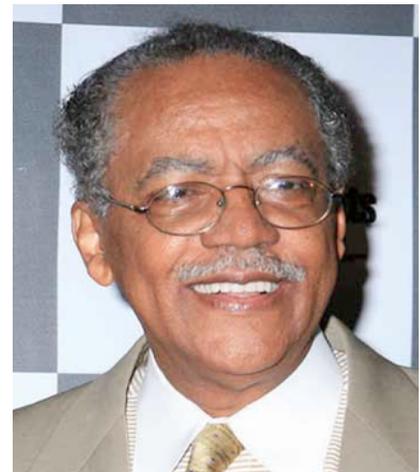
Dr. King led a major march that ended uncharacteristically in violence. It was later learned that the violence was caused by paid provocateurs.

Before this was known, Dr. King's disappointment with the violent ending gave way to determination that another peaceful march would be held.

Back in Memphis, Kyles and several ministers and civic leaders had been putting together nightly rallies and raising money for the strike. They organized a major rally in preparation for another big march. The rally was held at Mason Temple, the unofficial headquarters for the protest activity, on April 3, 1968.

It was on that evening that an enthusiastic, packed crowd heard Dr. King give what has come to be known as the "Mountaintop" speech. In it, he gave an unusual glimpse into his personal fears and challenges, as well as his prophetic insights into his own fate.

The next day Kyles and his family planned to host Dr. King and his



entourage at their home for a home-cooked meal. Dr. King was assassinated as they prepared to go to the Kyles' home. The last hour of Dr. King's life he spent with Kyles and Rev. Ralph Abernathy in his room at the Lorraine Motel. Rev. Abernathy has since passed on, leaving Kyles as the only living person that actually spent the last hour of Dr. King's life with him.

Kyles has maintained his involvement with civil rights work since the 1960s. He is a member of several civic and professional organizations.

He was appointed by President Bill Clinton to serve on the Advisory Committee on Religious Freedom Abroad.

Kyles has appeared in several television documentaries about the life and assassination of King and has toured the country extensively, speaking on King and his message. Kyles has received many honors and awards, including the Tennessee Living Legend Award in 1992.