

Funeral for Rev. Onie Cooper well attended



Photo of Rev. Onie Cooper displayed at his funeral PHOTO Bilde

A funeral for the late Reverend Onie Cooper was held on the morning of Friday, April 15, 2011, at Second Baptist Church in Reno, Nevada. Rev. Cooper passed away at Saint Mary's Regional Medical Center on April 6 at the age of 86.

A two-hour program of scriptural readings, special presentations, song, and family reflections celebrated the life of Rev. Cooper with a crowd of attendees that stretched out of the church sanctuary, onto the stage, and into the hallway.



Bishop Gene Savoy Jr. addressing funeral congregation.
PHOT Bilde

Among the special presenters was The Right Reverend Gene Savoy, Jr., president of the Nevada Clergy Association and chairman of the Northern Nevada Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Committee, who was asked to make a few remarks on behalf of Reverend Cooper, at the request of Rev. Cooper's wife, Mary.



Mary Cooper reflecting PHOTO
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Reverend Onie Cooper and Bishop Gene Savoy Jr. became good friends over the years. Bishop Savoy was invited by Revrend Cooper to serve on the Holiday Committee in January 2009. In November of that same year, as Rev. Cooper's health began to fail, he asked Rev. Savoy to take his place as chairman. Since that time, through the auspices of the Nevada Clergy Association, Bishop Savoy has carried on the tradition, begun by Rev. Cooper, to honor the life, work, and legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by planning the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Service and Memorial Caravan, which drives the 21-mile stretch of US Highway 395 named after Dr. King.

It is of interest that Rev. Cooper was first introduced to the International Community of Christ in 1999, when the Advocates of Religious Rights and Freedoms enshrined Dr. King as an Advocate of Human Spiritual Rights. At that time, the late Most Right Reverend Gene Savoy Sr. also forged a friendship with Rev. Cooper. At Bishop Savoy's funeral in 2007, Rev.

Cooper was among those who spoke in recognition of Bishop Savoy's work.