



Chief Vance gives speech on Men's Day

By Daphne M. Higgins
Religion Editor

Scripture shares that service is the task with which God charged all Christians. The police chief for the city of Jackson, Lee Vance, expressed that service has been ingrained in him and this act is what he expects his department to offer to all of the residents of Jackson.

Vance took the podium at College Hill Missionary Baptist Church, 1600 Florence Ave., Jackson, as the guest speaker during the church's recent annual Men's Day Program.

Vance, no stranger to working with and for others, acknowledged that he developed his work ethic as a young man while working at United Parcel Service in Jackson. "UPS doesn't build a tangible product. What they provide is service. Like UPS, our job at the Jackson Police Department is to provide service."

Vance, a member of Anderson United Methodist Church, was appointed as the chief of the Jackson Police Department Sept. 8, 2014. The Jackson resident declared that he loves the city and wants nothing but the best for it and once named the chief cop, he would work diligently to fulfill a promise that he'd made to himself – help to make Jackson the best that it can be.

"It came to me that we need to lay a solid foundation; we need to build from the bottom up. We have great chaplains in JPD and at my request, we were all called together to pray. In order to build, if you want talent and you want power, why not ask the greatest builder in the universe for help," Vance said. "You know that it's controversial to pray in public. Former news anchor, (the late) Bert Case asked me if I was going to get in trouble. I told him, I didn't know and I didn't care. We moved on with the prayer service and what followed was awesome. Crime has been going down every since."



Jackson Police Chief Lee Vance gave the keynote address for College Hill M.B. Church's Men's Day Program June 19.

Program
Continued on page 3



Events slated to commemorate Meredith's 1966 strides

By Shanderia K. Posey
Editor

On June 5, 1966, James Meredith began a 220-mile solo walk from Memphis, Tenn., to Jackson in protest of a system of white supremacy in Mississippi and to encourage African Americans to register to vote.

On the second day of his self-described Walk Against Fear while in Hernando, Meredith was shot by a sniper who was bent on ending the walk and Meredith's life.

When word spread across the nation of the ordeal, national civil rights leaders including Martin Luther King Jr., Stokely Carmichael and several others came together to continue Meredith's efforts and the March Against Fear was born. As a result of the march, about 4,000 African Americans registered to vote.

Events taking place this week in Canton and in Jackson at Tougaloo College, the Smith Robertson Museum and Cultural Center as well as the state Capitol will commemorate the March Against Fear 50 years later.

The locations of the events are particularly significant since the



Martin Luther King Jr. and James Meredith (top photo) walk side-by-side during the 1966 March Against Fear in Jackson. The photo is included in the "James Meredith: Am I Or Am I Not a Citizen" exhibition at the Smith Robertson Museum and Cultural Center. The photo is from Bob Fitch Photography Archives and Stanford University Libraries. COURTESY USE FROM SMITH ROBERTSON MUSEUM

Another iconic photo (above) from 1966 also on display at the museum is one taken by Jack Thornell of Meredith after he was shot in Hernando June 6, 1966 during his solo Walk Against Fear. MISSISSIPPI LINK FILE PHOTO

1966 march went through Canton, stopped at Tougaloo and then ended at the state Capitol on June 26.

John Brown, 66, of Canton was a teenager and participant in the 1966 march. At age 15, he was a member of the NAACP's youth chapter and eager to get involved especially after watching countless national news reports of the march.

"I was like all the other teenag-

ers at that time. I just wanted to be a part of the march and hear from Dr. King. That was a big day for us," Brown said. "We knew we were bringing about change, but we didn't know how much danger we were in. We were saying to white supremacists that your way of life was coming to an end."

Flonzie Brown Wright, 73, of Canton was the branch manager of Canton's NAACP at the time. King called her before coming to

EVENTS

- June 23. Events will take place from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. A march is set for 9 a.m. at Southern Hill Baptist Church. At noon a Mississippi Freedom Trail Marker will be unveiled at the Canton Courthouse. Civil Rights tours are planned from 1-5 p.m. At 6 p.m. James Meredith will speak at a program at Mt. Zion M. B. Church, 305 N. West St.
- June 25. Events will take place from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Tougaloo College. At 10 a.m. a ceremony to honor 1966 marchers is planned at Woodworth Chapel. At 12:30 p.m. a luncheon is planned. An author's roundtable is set for 2:30 p.m. and a presentation at 4:15 p.m.
- June 26. Events begin from 2-4 p.m. at the Smith Robertson Museum and Cultural Center. At 4 p.m. attendees will walk to the state Capitol where Meredith will speak.

Canton seeking her assistance in ensuring marchers would be fed

March
Continued on page 3

Southern Baptist leader's work in state had been unrecognized

By Natalie Bell
Special to The Mississippi Link

During his recent book talk at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Texas State University professor Oren Renick lifted a veil of silence that hid a history, long documented, yet little known in the present era of the civil rights work of the late Rev. Dr. William P. Davis.

Renick's book, titled "Smoke Over Mississippi," is a biography of Davis' 1960s interracial work on behalf of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

Davis was a friend and mentor to Renick, who was a graduate student at Baptist-affiliated Mississippi College in the late 1960s, and began researching the Baptist mission leader's work in those days.



Former Mississippi First Lady Elise Winter joins her husband, former Gov. William Winter (center), as they visit with author Oren Renick, following a June 16, talk on his book about Rev. William Penn Davis. PHOTO COURTESY OF MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE

Besides Davis' key role in helping build two statewide, black Baptist institutions, he orchestrated a national, interracial and interdenominational move-

ment, called the Committee of Concern, to aid black churches burned due to Ku Klux Klan

Book
Continued on page 3

Hinds County D.A. arrested

The Mississippi Link Newswire

Hinds County District Attorney Robert Shuler Smith was arrested June 22, following a joint investigation by the Attorney General's Office and the FBI into allegations that Smith illegally advised or defended individuals charged with crimes, Attorney General Jim Hood announced.

Smith, 45, of Jackson, was arrested at his office by investigators with the Attorney General's Office and the Hinds County Sheriff's Office. He was charged with six counts of violating Mississippi Code Section 97-11-3, a misdemeanor. That law states that the attorney general or district attorney shall not "consult, advise, counsel or defend" a person charged with a crime or misdemeanor.

The joint investigation between the Attorney General's



Smith

Office and FBI revealed that Smith violated Mississippi law related to his involvement with two different criminal defendants while serving as district attorney.

Smith was booked into the Hinds County Jail. If convicted, Smith could be removed as district attorney and prohibited from holding any other elected office or government position. Additionally, he faces a \$500 fine.

"It is particularly sad to have to prosecute and seek removal from office a fellow prosecutor," said Hood. "We greatly appreciate the hard work of the FBI on this case, and we hope to resolve this as soon as possible."

During a press conference Wednesday evening, Attorney

Chokwe Lumumba Jr., who has announced his candidacy for Jackson mayor, spoke in support of Smith.

"These charges do not meet the smell test," Lumumba said. "They are politically motivated. These charges come from the same AG's office, which mounted an attack to campaign against Robert and take the seat from him, so what they could not achieve by popular vote ... they decided to design a scheme in order to attack him in a legal capacity."

As with all cases, a charge is merely an accusation, and a defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

The FBI requests that anyone with information on other corruption matters contact the FBI Jackson office at (601) 948-5000.

Inside
Dept. of Health reminds parents to get kids immunized for school
Page 6

Nine Mississippi students win state writing award
Page 7

Gospel artists inspire for good cause during McDonald's tour
Page 14



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