

East St. Louis mayor is keynote speaker at this year's Alton Branch NAACP King Service

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - The Alton Branch NAACP will hold its 38th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration Service at 3 p.m. Sunday at Tabernacle Baptist Church, 2621 Amelia St. in Alton with a theme, “The Journey Is Not Over After 50 Years: Let’s Do More!”

Rev. John Buford is the host pastor of Tabernacle Baptist Church.

The service has a long tradition and has always been an event which is held to honor the outstanding accomplishments of Dr. King and all that he did for the Civil Rights Movement,” Alton Branch NAACP Andy Hightower said. The NAACP is committed to retooling and refreshing the association to best confront 21-Century challenges.”

Hightower said this year’s theme is meant to evoke an understanding of what Dr. King, a man of peace and action, and the millions who marched with him, felt so many years ago.

“Although 50 years will have passed since his assassination, we must recognize that we are still in the midst of a fight for equality for all,” Hightower said. “Let’s unit and show our solidarity to Dr. King’s dream on Sunday. So many cities will be remembering the legacy of Dr. King on that day. Let’s put Alton on the map by making this a record breaking attendance. We are asking everyone attend this free public event. This event will be inspirational, life-altering and memorable.”

Hightower continued: “In taking this event to another level, we are honored to have the Honorable Mayor Emeka Jackson-Hicks of East St. Louis, as our keynote speaker. “We are also honored to have Leah Beacoat, director and founder of 3 Purple Coats. She will be presenting the 3 Purple Coats Youth Troupe in a skit titled: ‘What if Martin Luther King Did Not Dream.’”

The inspirational Riverbend Choir under the leadership of Rev. Shelia Goins will mesmerize us with their gospel melodies. Pastor Steven Helfrich of The Bridge Church in Alton will be receiving the 2018 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Award because of his dedicated work and support throughout the years.

The co-chairpersons of the NAACP King event are Joe Williams and Rosetta Brown.