



Dr. Bernard LaFayette, Jr. (Freedom Rider) It is an understatement to describe Bernard LaFayette, Jr. as passionate about the philosophy and methodology of Kingian Nonviolence! He is a Civil Rights Movement activist, minister, educator, lecturer and an authority on the strategy of Nonviolent Social Change. He has devoted his life, thus far, to his final marching orders from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1968, to "institutionalize and internationalize Nonviolence." Dr. LaFayette was a co-founder of the Student Nonviolent

Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in 1960. He was a leader of the Nashville Movement Lunch Counter Sit-Ins, 1960, and the Freedom Rides, 1961.

He directed the Alabama Voter Registration Project in Selma in 1962. He was appointed National Program Administrator for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and National Coordinator of the Poor People's Campaign by Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1968. Dr. LaFayette has served as Director of Justice and Peace in Latin America, Chairperson of the Consortium on Peace Research, Education, and Development, Director of PUSH Excel Institute, and minister of the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Tuskegee, Alabama.

An ordained minister, Dr. LaFayette earned his B.A. from the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville, Tennessee, and his Ed.M. and Ed.D from Harvard University. He held a Peace Chair at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota, while serving as Director of the Nonviolence Peace Education Center. He served on the faculties of Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta and Alabama State University in Montgomery, where he was Dean of the Graduate School. He was principal of Tuskegee Institute High School in Tuskegee, Alabama and a teaching fellow at Harvard University.

Dr. LaFayette's publications include his Doctoral Thesis, "Pedagogy for Peace and Nonviolence;" "Campus Ministries and Social Change in the '60s" published in the Duke Divinity Review; "The Leaders Manual: A Structured Guide and Introduction to Kingian Nonviolence" and the "Curriculum and Training Manual for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Nonviolent Community Leadership Training Program," both written with David Jehnsen. He and David Jehnsen also were responsible for drafting the first proposal for the U. S. Institute of Peace.

He is the author of *In Peace and Freedom: My Journey in Selma*, which he wrote with Kathryn Lee Johnson, published in 2013. Congressman John Lewis, in his foreword to the book, states, "A powerful history of struggle, commitment, and hope. No one, but no one, who lived through the creation and development of the movement for voting rights in Selma is better prepared to tell this story than Bernard LaFayette himself." This book was honored with the prestigious Lillian Smith Book Award in May, 2014. He is an editor of *The Chicago Freedom Movement: Martin Luther King, Jr. and Civil Rights Activism in the North*, published in 2016.

Dr. LaFayette is a former President of the American Baptist College of ABT Seminary in Nashville, Tennessee; Scholar in Residence at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change in Atlanta, Georgia; and Pastor Emeritus of the Progressive Baptist Church in Nashville, TN. He was founder and Director of the Center for Nonviolence and Peace Studies at the University of Rhode Island from 1998 until 2006.

From 2006 until 2015, he held the position of Distinguished Senior Scholar in Residence at the Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. He founded the Emory Center for Advancing Nonviolence (ECAN). He teaches an online class through Coursera and Emory University that sheds light on the often overlooked strategic planning that supported the direction of the events of the Civil Rights Movement. It is called "From Freedom Rides to Ferguson: Narratives of Nonviolence in the American Civil Rights Movement." He currently holds the position of Chairman of the Board of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) founded by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He is now a faculty member at Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama.

Some of his awards include receiving the Bill of Rights Award by the Tennessee ACLU in 1999; the University of Rhode Island Diversity Award for Lifetime Achievement in 2005. He was awarded a Doctor of Humane Letters by Mount Holyoke College in 2012. He was the National Civil Rights Museum's National Freedom Award recipient for 2012. The following statement was made when the award was presented: "He never stopped believing in the future, even when he was arrested with other Freedom Riders in Jackson, Mississippi, and jailed in Parchman State Prison Farm in 1961."

In 2014, he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the University of Rhode Island. He received the "I Am a Man" award in Memphis, Tennessee on April 4, 2016. In November, 2016, he traveled to Durban, South Africa, to receive The Mahatma Gandhi International Award for Reconciliation and Peace. The award is presented by the Gandhi Development Trust by Ela Gandhi, the social activist granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi.

Dr. LaFayette has traveled extensively as a lecturer and consultant on Peace and Nonviolence, including to South Africa, Haiti and the United States. In Colombia, South America, youth are trained in Nonviolence by prison inmates as a result of his time spent there. Tens of thousands of militants in Nigeria are turning in their arms after being trained in Nonviolence as part of a government amnesty program.

He is featured in the book, *The Children*, by David Halberstam, written in 1998. He is featured in numerous documentaries, including "A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict," "Freedom Riders: The Story of the Civil Rights Movement Interstate Busing Protest Campaign" (American Experience) and is an in-demand speaker and trainer across the nation and the world.

He is married to the former Kate Bulls and is the father of two sons and seven grandchildren.