



MILWAUKEE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Supervisor Felesia A. Martin - District 7

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, July 30, 2026

Contact: Eddie Cullen (414)793-0347

Five Years After Establishing C.T. Vivian Day, Supervisor Martin, Milwaukee County Continue to Honor a Civil Rights Trailblazer

MILWAUKEE – Milwaukee County Supervisor Felesia A. Martin today commemorated C.T. Vivian Day, honoring the life and enduring legacy of the Reverend Cordy Tindell "C.T." Vivian, a Freedom Rider, civil rights leader, minister, educator, and steadfast advocate for voting rights whose work helped shape the modern Civil Rights Movement.

In 2021, Supervisor Martin authored the [resolution](#) establishing July 30 as C.T. Vivian Day in Milwaukee County, creating an annual opportunity to recognize Vivian's contributions to civil rights, educational opportunity, and the ongoing pursuit of justice.

Born on July 30, 1924, Reverend Vivian was a close advisor to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and served as National Director of Affiliates for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. As a Freedom Rider and leader of nonviolent campaigns across the South, he helped advance the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. His courageous confrontation with Sheriff Jim Clark outside the Dallas County Courthouse in Selma became one of the defining moments of the Voting Rights Movement. He later created the VISION program, which became the model for the federal Upward Bound program, expanding access to higher education for generations of students. In recognition of his lifetime of service, President Obama awarded Vivian the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2013.

"Reverend C.T. Vivian dedicated his life to expanding opportunity, protecting the right to vote, and reminding us that lasting change comes through courage, compassion, and nonviolent action," said Supervisor Martin. *"When Milwaukee County established C.T. Vivian Day, we affirmed our commitment to preserving the legacy of a leader whose work continues to inspire us. His example challenges each of us to stand up for justice, invest in the next generation, and continue the work of building stronger, more equitable communities."*

Supervisor Martin encouraged residents, educators, and students to learn more about Reverend Vivian's life and contributions, emphasizing that his legacy remains especially relevant as communities continue working to expand civic engagement, educational opportunity, and equal access for all.

"Reverend Vivian showed us that leadership is measured not only by the causes we champion, but by the people we empower," Martin said. *"As we celebrate C.T. Vivian Day, may we honor his legacy by continuing to serve our communities with integrity, purpose, and an unwavering commitment to justice."*

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Celebrating
C.T. VIVIAN DAY
July 30th

***"You can turn your back on ME, but you cannot turn
your back upon the IDEA OF JUSTICE."***

Milwaukee County Resolution 21-240
Honoring a civil rights leader, Freedom Rider, and champion for justice

- Rev. C.T. Vivian
July 30, 1924 - July 17, 2020