

The Tragedy of Breonna Taylor

This article is from the "Among Friends" section of the Church of God Big Sandy's website, churchofgodbigandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of June 20, 2020.

By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—On May 14, 2020, I discovered a news story about an innocent victim.

On March 13, 2020, police in Louisville, Ky., shot and killed Breonna Taylor. In most stories where police unintentionally shoot a citizen, that person was initially involved in criminal behavior. However, Breonna was not committing a crime.

The article (written by Bridget Read) was titled "Breonna Taylor Was Shot and Killed by Police in Her Own Home." I would like to share excerpts of that article with you.

Breonna Taylor, 26, an EMT and aspiring nurse in Louisville, Ky., was shot eight times by police after they barged into her home in the middle of the night in March in what her family is calling a botched drug-warrant execution. No drugs were found.

What happened to Breonna Taylor?

According to the Taylor family, plainclothes police officers arrived at Taylor's apartment at around 12:30 a.m. on March 13.

- Taylor and her boyfriend, Kenneth Walker, were asleep in a bedroom and woke up suddenly, believing that someone was breaking in.

- Police entered "without knocking and without announcing themselves as police officers," the lawsuit says.

(LMPD insists they "knocked on the door several times and announced their presence as police who were there with a search warrant." The lawsuit contends that multiple neighbors gave statements contradicting this claim.)

- According to his attorney, Walker fired a shot in self-defense and struck an officer in the leg. Walker is a licensed firearm carrier.

- In response, police opened fire, shooting more than 20 rounds into Taylor's home, striking objects in the living room, dining room, kitchen, hallway, bathroom and both bedrooms.

- Taylor was shot at least eight times and was pronounced dead at the scene.
- Walker was arrested and charged with assault and attempted murder on a police officer. Later in the month, he was released from jail on home incarceration.

Why did police come to her apartment?

The lawsuit raises questions about why police targeted Taylor's apartment in the first place. Her family maintains that it was a botched search-warrant execution.

Records show that the narcotics investigation focused on a suspect named Jamarcus Glover, who was believed to be connected to a "trap house" more than ten miles from Taylor's apartment.

Police believed that Glover was receiving mail and keeping drugs or money earned from drugs at Taylor's home, and a judge signed off on a search warrant that included Taylor's address just before 1 a.m. on March 13.

The warrant included a "no knock" provision, which allowed law-enforcement officers to enter Taylor's house without identifying themselves.

But the Taylor family attorneys say that Glover, the main target of the investigation, was already "located and identified by LMPD prior to the warrant being executed at Breonna's home."

"Breonna had committed no crime, posed no immediate threat to the safety of the defendants and did not actively resist or attempt to evade arrest prior to being repeatedly shot and killed by the defendants," the suit argues.

[On June 11, the city council voted 26-0 to pass an ordinance banning no-knock search warrants—called "Breonna's Law."]