

# Deaths

News in the [July 12, 2005](#) issue

**Theodore A. Gill**, 85, a prominent Presbyterian theologian and educator who was also a civil rights activist, ecumenist and magazine editor, died in Princeton, New Jersey, on June 10 after a lengthy illness. In the 1960s he was one of a group of white Protestant church leaders who championed the civil rights movement. While president of San Francisco Theological Seminary, Gill led students and staff in accompanying civil rights leader Martin Luther King during the 1965 voting rights march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama. Such activism did not endear Gill to some of the institution's donors, who later withdrew pledges for the seminary. Gill, who served as its president from 1958 to 1966, recalled later that "the high point of my career in the ministry was the week that I cost my seminary five million dollars." Prior to heading the seminary, Gill worked in Chicago for a few years as managing editor of the *Century* and editor of its sister publication, the *Pulpit*. His passions included the arts in religion and higher education. In 1968, a year marked by campus demonstrations, Gill addressed the World Council of Churches assembly in Uppsala, revealing his discomfort with patterns of conformity in higher education. "Some of the brightest and best of our youth flame now in revolutionary dissatisfaction with the goals they see accepted by those who teach them, affect them, direct them," he said. "They distrust the values commonly invoked." His own teachers included theologians Paul Tillich, Emil Brunner, Karl Barth, Josef Hromádka and Reinhold Niebuhr. Gill also was on the faculty of the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City from 1971 to 1989.

**Kenneth Taylor**, 88, creator of the easy-to-read paraphrase of scripture *The Living Bible*, died of heart failure June 10 in Wheaton, Illinois. With a master's degree in theology, Taylor began paraphrasing the Bible in the 1960s so his children, confused by the King James Version, could read and understand it. Unable to interest publishing companies, he founded Tyndale House, which published his paraphrased work in 1971. For the next three years, Taylor's edition was the best-selling book in the U.S. After some scholars criticized Taylor's paraphrase for changing the meaning of many Bible passages, Tyndale House published a new translation in 1996, *The New Living Translation*, keeping the conversational style of Taylor's original. Tyndale

House, based in Wheaton, is known now for its Left Behind fiction series.