Brother wants Ray's funeral in Nashville

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Relatives and supporters of James Earl Ray, the convicted assassin of Martin Luther King Jr., are trying to arrange a public funeral in Nashville.

Jerry Ray said yesterday that he wants to have the funeral for his brother in about three weeks. He said he hopes relatives of King, who joined in his efforts to get a trial for his brother, will attend the funeral.

A spokeswoman for the King family did not return a telephone message yesterday for comment on whether someone would attend.

The Rays had discussed having the funeral at the 650-member black church in Memphis where Ray's pastor used to officiate. But Jerry Ray said yesterday that he decided to hold the funeral in Nashville, where his 70-year-old brother died Thursday in a state prison.

Ray said one reason the funeral will be delayed is to make sure his brother's pastor, the Rev. James Lawson, will be available to officiate.

Lawson invited King to speak to striking sanitation workers in Memphis in 1968. It was on that trip that King was shot on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel. Lawson is among those who believe Ray was innocent or acted with help from others.

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