

Church Deacon Killed While Protecting Children at Easter Event: 'He Died a Hero'

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." – John 10:11

That powerful Bible quote rang painfully true over the weekend for people of faith in the Magnolia State.

A tragic shooting at a church-sponsored Easter egg hunt Saturday afternoon in Gulfport, Mississippi, has left a beloved deacon dead.

The event took place at the Goldin Sports Complex. It was hosted by Empowerment Ministries Christian Center for families in the community, according to People magazine.

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Deacon Eddie Shed, 39, was killed while attempting to protect others. WLOX-TV reported that he intervened during a violent dispute, simultaneously shielding children from harm. The shooting stemmed from a child custody dispute, police confirmed. Tyran Deion Gable, 24, of Saucier, Mississippi, was charged with first-degree murder and aggravated assault.

Gable allegedly targeted the mother of his child during the dispute, and Shed was shot after he stepped in to protect her, witnesses said.

Church member Alexis Weathersby praised Shed's bravery, per WLOX.

"He died a hero doing what he does best, and that's protecting and that's loving and that's looking out for everyone," she

said.

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Shed was the head of the church's security team. His actions during the incident reflected his lifelong commitment to serving others.

"He paid the ultimate price for his valor, and we are deeply saddened by this loss," pastor Gregg Magee of the EMCC stated, per People. "Deacon Shed was a pillar of strength within our community and a beacon of light and hope.

"His unwavering faith, kindness, and dedication to serving others have left an indelible mark on all who knew him."

Two others were injured in the shooting. One victim was life-flighted to a hospital in another state with life-threatening injuries, while another was taken to a local hospital.

Gable was also shot during the confrontation and was treated at a hospital.

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The shooting unfolded at the end of the Easter egg hunt.

Police arrived at the scene around 2:05 p.m. WLOX originally reported that they detained three suspects initially, though only Gable has been formally charged, People reported.

The church held a live-streamed service on Sunday, the day after the shooting. The service provided a space for the community to grieve Shed's death together.

EMCC is accepting donations to assist with funeral expenses. The church is also supporting medical costs for the injured victims.

Gulfport Police are continuing their investigation and have asked anyone with information to come forward to assist in the case.

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