



ALLEN UNIVERSITY

2024

Founders' Day Convocation

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2024

11:00 A.M.

CHAPPELLE AUDITORIUM

DR. ERNEST MCNEALEY

PRESIDENT

BISHOP SAMUEL L. GREEN, SR.

CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

ALLEN UNIVERSITY HISTORY

Allen University was founded by the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in South Carolina under the leadership of Bishop John M. Brown on July 29, 1870. In an effort led by Reverend Simon Miller, 150 acres of land was purchased for the institution in Cokesbury, SC. The newly founded school was named Payne Institute in honor of Bishop Daniel A. Payne, a South Carolinian, and noted advocate for Black education. For its first 10 years, the school prospered in fulfilling its mission of developing an educated clergy in the face of repression and violent opposition during the Reconstruction

Era. Delegates to the Annual Conference in Spartanburg, SC in 1880, with Bishop William F. Dickerson presiding, voted to move Payne Institute to Columbia, SC. Concurrently, Payne Institute was renamed Allen University in honor of Bishop Richard Allen, founder of the AME Church.



Into the 20th century, Allen met the needs of students at all educational levels. The curriculum not only included courses in law, theology, and the arts, but coursework at elementary and high school levels. It was possible to enter Allen as a child in first grade and leave prepared to teach, preach, or prosecute/defend in the courts as fully trained educators, ministers, and lawyers. The grammar school closed in the mid-1920s, and the high school in 1933.

An influx of veterans pursued studies at Allen following World War II. In the 1940's, Departments of Humanities, Philosophy, Psychology and Religion were added to existing academic programs. During the 1960's, the University fielded highly successful athletic teams that competed in the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (SIAC). In 1970, the University marked a century of service with a Centennial celebration, and rededicated itself to the principles upon which it was founded.

Responsive to changes in society, Allen revised its curricula in the 1980s and began to pursue regional accreditation. The 1990s was a period of growth and development, that resulted in the first accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges. During that period, the John Hurst Adams Gymnasium was constructed. In the early 2000s, Arnett Hall received a major restoration, the Williams Residence Halls were constructed, and Chappelle Auditorium and Gallery were restored/renovated.

In 2016, Bishop Samuel L. Green, Sr. brought an enlightened system of governance to the institution that fueled dramatic change and growth. Under the leadership of its 30th President Dr. Ernest McNealey, the campus received a dramatic aesthetic facelift, NCAA athletics were returned, Reid and Higgins Halls were renovated, noteworthy capacity in information technology was acquired, the historic Waverly Hospital building was renovated and expanded, and the Boeing Institute on Civility at Allen University was launched. In 2018, the University moved from Level II to Level III to offer its first graduate program, the Master of Divinity degree via the newly formed Dickerson-Green Theological Seminary. The Seminary attained associate membership in the Association of Theological Schools 3-years later. In 2023, the University moved from Level III to Level V to offer its first doctoral program, the Doctor of Ministry.

The University has a distinguished history, rich in the tradition of promoting personal and spiritual growth, and in educating men and women to become productive leaders and citizens in an ever-changing world.

The Speaker

Rev. Dr. Allan Boesak



Professor Allen Aubrey Boesak studied Theology at the Theological Seminary of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church at the University of the Western Cape, was ordained in Immanuel Dutch Reformed Mission Church in Paarl in 1968 at age 22. In 1970, he started advanced studies at the Theological University at Kampen in the Netherlands and was awarded the Doctor's degree in Theology in June 1976. A week after the Soweto Uprisings, he returned to South Africa to become Chaplain to students at the University of the Western Cape, Peninsula Technicon, and Bellville Teachers College, and then minister at Bellville Dutch Reformed Mission Church.

Dr. Boesak served the church in various ecumenical positions, including as Moderator of his church, Senior Vice President of the South African Council of Churches and President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, representing over 70 million Reformed Christians in 150 countries. Under his leadership, the WARC declared apartheid a sin and a heresy and suspended the two white Dutch Reformed churches in South Africa for their moral and theological justification of the apartheid system. Over the years, Dr. Boesak became a world-renowned liberation theologian and a coveted speaker at global ecumenical events. He was keynote speaker at the World Council of Churches Assembly in Vancouver, Canada in 1983, and in 2014, keynote presenter at the Parliament of World Religions in Salt Lake City, Utah, USA. In October 2017, Yale University Divinity School hosted him as the Lyman Beecher Lecturer, its most prestigious lectureship series.

Dr. Boesak's involvement in public life and South Africa's freedom struggle began in 1976 with his leading role in resistance politics in South Africa. In 1983, he called for the formation of the United Democratic Front which would grow into the largest, non-violent, non-racial anti-apartheid formation in the history of the struggle. A fervent believer in direct, militant, non-violent action, he became its most visible leader at home and abroad. He worked with President Nelson Mandela, Archbishop Tutu, Rev. Frank Chikane, Rev. Beyers Naudé and a whole array of African and world leaders to end apartheid.

Professor Boesak is recipient of fourteen honorary Doctor's degrees and more than twenty international awards. Among those are the Robert Kennedy Human Rights Award, the Champion for Justice Award from the Indiana Centre for Middle East Peace, the Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Award from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Atlanta Georgia USA, and the King Hintsa Bravery Award from the Xhosa Royal House. Recently, he was introduced into the Martin Luther King Jr. International Board of Preachers at Morehouse College, Atlanta, Georgia, the only African thus far to have been afforded that honour.

Dr. Allan Boesak is an award-winning author of 24 books. His most recent publications include *Pharaohs on Both Sides of the Blood-red Waters*, *Prophetic Critique on Empire - Resistance, Justice and the Power of the Hopeful Sizwe* (2017); *Children of the Waters of Meribah - Black Liberation Theology, the Miriamic Tradition, and the Challenges of 21st Century Empire*, (2019), *Selfless Revolutionaries: Biko, Black Consciousness, Black Theology, and a Global Ethic of Solidarity and Resistance* (2021), and, co-authored with Rev Judge Wendell Griffen, *Parables, Politics, and Prophetic Faith, Hope and Perseverance in Times of Peril*, (2023). In the process of being published, is his new work, *The Fire, the River, and the Scorched Earth Between: Fifty Years of Black Liberation Theology through the Lens of Allan Aubrey Boesak* a 4-Volume set containing the texts of a series of lectures on Black Liberation Theology, essays, and sermons.

Professor Boesak has taught across the world and continues his teaching and preaching while remaining active in global struggles for human rights. He is especially active in the advocacy of Palestinian rights and freedom. Having served as Professor of Theology at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, Indiana, USA from 2012-2016, he is now retired Professor of Black Liberation Theology and Ethics at the University of Pretoria, Theologian in Residence for the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, Chicago, USA, and the President of the Sankofa Institute for Pan African Leadership and Prophetic Ministry. He is married to renowned investigative journalist Dr. Elna Boesak.

2024 Founders' Day Convocation

Dr. Ernest McNealey, President
Presiding

PRELUDE

Allen University Music Department

**THE PROCESSIONAL

"God of Our Fathers"
George W. Warren

Dr. Alan Rudell, Organ

*OPENING HYMN #77

"Come thou fount of every blessing"
Nettleton

All Assembled

INVOCATION

Rev. E. Robert Thomas
University Chaplain

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Old Testament

Deuteronomy 6:20-25

Dr. Daniel Hembree, Dean
Dickerson Green Theological Seminary

New Testament

Acts 14:21-26

Dr. Tara Taylor, Chair
Department of Social Science

OCCASION: A Video History

President Ernest McNealey
Ms. Carol Bowers, Dean, Flipper Library

MUSICAL SELECTION

"Acclamation"
from Gospel Mass by Robert Ray

AU Concert Choir
Dr. Angela S. Blalock, Director
Dr. Alan Rudell, Piano

GREETINGS FROM THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Bishop Samuel L. Green
Chair, and Presiding Prelate, 7th District AME Church

GREETINGS FROM THE UNIVERSITY

Dr. Lisa Long
Provost and Vice President, Academic Affairs & Student Affairs

GREETINGS FROM THE STUDENT BODY

Mr. Leyton Taylor
President, Student Government Association

GREETINGS FROM THE ALUMNI

Mr. Lamar Brown
President, General Alumni Association

INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER

Bishop Samuel Green

MUSICAL SELECTION

“Incantation and Dance”
William Grant Still

Dr. Caleb Carpenter, Saxophone
Assistant Professor of Music
Dr. Alan Rudell, Piano

FOUNDERS’ DAY ADDRESS

Professor Allan Boesak, President of the Sankofa
Institute for Pan African Leadership and Prophetic Ministry

MUSICAL SELECTION

“Credo”
From Gospel Mass

AU Concert Choir
Dr. Angela S. Blalock, Director
r. Alan Rudell, Piano

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Ernest McNealey

*THE ALMA MATER

All Assembled

THE ALLEN UNIVERSITY ALMA MATER

Allen, to thee we lift our hearts and voices
Allen, to thee life’s choicest gifts we pray.
And ever as we leave thy dear walls and halls so steeped in glory.
Guard well thy children; guard and guide us on our way
Guard well thy children; guard and guide us on our way.
When other sons so true and daughters loyal
Shall to their Alma Mater shout praises free,
We, too, shall ever stand at thy side and sing aloud forever,
Allen, fair mother, we pledge our love to thee,
Allen, fair mother, we pledge our love to thee.

– McClain

THE BENEDICTION

Bishop Samuel L. Green, Sr.

**THE RECESSIONAL

“GOD OF OUR FATHERS”
Warren

Dr. Alan Rudell, Organ

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"All That Can Be Imagined"

Allen University is an academic community which provides students an opportunity to obtain associate, baccalaureate and graduate degrees in liberal arts and professional programs in traditional and distance education formats. The University has a strong unalterable commitment to teaching in delivery of its associate, baccalaureate and graduate programs.



"We teach the mind to THINK, the hands to WORK, and the heart to LOVE."

1530 HARDEN STREET
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA 29204
(803) 376-5900
www.allenuniversity.edu