



Biography of the Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley

Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley is the Senior Pastor of the historic Alfred Street Baptist Church in Alexandria, Virginia, where he serves as only the eighth pastor in the church's more than 200-year history. Under his visionary leadership, Alfred Street has grown to more than 12,000 members with a weekly viewership exceeding 25,000, expanding its reach and ministries while steadfastly upholding its call to spiritual formation, social justice, and community engagement.

A nationally recognized voice for justice, compassion, and grace, Dr. Wesley is celebrated for preaching that speaks powerfully to both the heart and conscience. His sermons—including *When the Verdict Hurts*, *A Rizpah Response*, and *Tell Your Own Story*—have been archived in the National Museum of African American History and Culture and affirmed in national media for their relevance and resonance. Honoring his transformative ministry, Dr. Wesley was inducted into the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Board of Preachers of Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia in 2015. In his three decades of preaching, he has led public witness on critical social issues and is widely regarded as a prophetic leader in the contemporary Black church.

As a servant leader, he has guided SEEK, an annual Kingdom-wide fast, uniting more than 25,000 covenant partners in prayer, consecration and the collective pursuit of God's will. Committed to the spiritual growth of young people, Dr. Wesley has served thousands of young adults through Alfred Street's CAYA (Come As You Are) ministry. Through his annual conference, The Convening, he mentors and pours into the next generation of emerging ministers, preachers, and pastors.

His influence has been recognized across industries and organizations to include The Root 100, UNCF, the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, and the NAACP, which honored him with the Chairman's Award for his work in social justice at the 47th Annual NAACP Image Awards.

A native of Chicago, Dr. Wesley graduated magna cum laude from Duke University with a degree in biomedical and electrical engineering. He left medical school in obedience to his call to ministry, later graduating summa cum laude from Boston University School of Theology as a Martin Luther King Jr. Scholar. He earned his Doctor of Ministry in preaching from Northern Baptist Theological Seminary and holds multiple honorary doctorates.

Dr. Wesley serves on several boards, including the Hampton University School of Religion Board of Visitors, the Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Missionary Convention, and the Flint Hill School Board of Trustees. He is the former chair of the United Negro College Fund's National Interfaith and Education Initiative and former vice-chair of the John Leland Center for Theological Studies. He has also served on the Board of Visitors at Duke Divinity School and the Board of Trustees at Virginia Union University.

The proud son of the late Rev. Dr. Alvin and Helene Wesley, Dr. Wesley represents the fourth generation of Baptist preachers in his family. A devoted father, his greatest joys are his sons, Howard-John II (“Deuce”) and Cooper Reece. In his free time, he enjoys golf, movies, spades, and cooking. The 78th Laurel Wreath Laureate and national chaplain, Dr. Wesley is a lifetime member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., as well as a member of Sigma Pi Phi. More than any accolade, his greatest desire and achievement is to make glorious the name of Jesus.