Duke University Chapel is an icon of the university, a vibrant center for ecumenical Christian worship, and a sanctuary for all people.
OUR MISSION
Through worship, student ministry, community connection, interfaith engagement, and the arts, Duke Chapel stands as a beacon of Christian hope that bridges faith (religio) and learning (eruditio).

VISITOR INFORMATION

ACADEMIC YEAR ............................................. 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
SUMMER & ACADEMIC BREAKS .................. 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
HOLIDAYS ..................................................... 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Duke Chapel is sometimes closed to the public for weddings, funerals, and other private events. Please contact us or check chapel.duke.edu/events before planning a visit.

SERVICES, CONCERTS, AND EVENTS
Duke Chapel is host to worship services, concerts, university ceremonies, and other events throughout the year. Something is happening at the Chapel almost every day! Learn more at chapel.duke.edu/events.

TOURS
Guided tours of the Chapel are available by appointment. Call or email us to schedule one.

#FINDSANCTUARY
Join us in an exploration of the many ways and places people find sanctuary by using the hashtag #FindSanctuary.

TOWER ACCESS
The Chapel’s tower is closed to the public. By appointment, it is open to groups of Duke students, faculty, and staff in accordance with the Chapel’s tower climb policies.

RESTROOMS
Public restrooms are available in the Bryan Center, Page Auditorium, and the Divinity School.

PARKING
The closest public parking area to the Chapel is the Bryan Center Parking Garage at the end of Science Drive.

CONTACT US

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**A BRIEF HISTORY**

One April day in 1925, James Buchanan Duke walked through a forest with his friend, William Preston Few, in the hope of finding a suitable site for a new university. Walking away from Durham along a plateau full of pines, gums, hickories, and oaks, Duke paused at the highest point and said: “Here’s where it ought to be.” He decided that the Chapel should stand at the center of the university.

“I want the central building to be a church, because such an edifice would be bound to have a profound influence on the spiritual life of the young men and women who come here.”

Among the buildings of West Campus, Duke University Chapel was the first to be planned and the last to be built. The cornerstone was laid on October 22, 1930, but construction continued for the next two years. Students often gathered near the huts of the stone carvers that occupied the land directly behind the construction site; they enjoyed watching the Chapel rise higher and higher.

The Chapel was first used for Commencement in 1932 and was formally dedicated on June 2, 1935. In 2015-16, Duke University invested $19.2 million in a significant restoration of the Chapel.
ARCHITECTS & ARTISANS

The architectural style of the Chapel is inspired by English Gothic and represents one of the last great collegiate Gothic projects in this country.

The chief designer of the Chapel was Julian Abele, a prominent African-American architect in the firm of Horace Trumbauer in Philadelphia. A plaque in the Chapel’s narthex honors his architectural legacy at Duke and elsewhere.

The stone carving in the Chapel was sculpted by John Donnelly, Inc., of New York. All of the woodwork was fashioned by Irving and Casson, A. H. Davenport, Inc., of Boston, and designer Charles H. Crowther.

The 77 stained-glass windows and the ornamental lead-and-gold symbols in the doors were designed and made by G. Owen Bonawit, Inc., of New York, along with designer S. Charles Jaekle and craftsman Hugh Doherty.

Charles Keck, of New York, sculpted the recumbent statues on the tombs in the Memorial Chapel. The ironwork was hewn by the William H. Jackson Company of New York.

Learn more about the Chapel’s history at bit.ly/DukeChapelExhibit
THE STONE

The Chapel is constructed of stone from the Duke Quarry near Hillsborough, North Carolina, located twelve miles west of Durham. The trimmings, lectern, pulpit, and the balustrade and vaults of the choir are of limestone from Bedford, Indiana. The walls of the nave and vaults of the nave and transepts are composed of Guastavino tile, a stone composite material.
Members of the Duke family were devout Methodists. Although Duke Chapel is not a Methodist church, above the portal are sculptures of those who helped advance the American Methodist movement.

The Thomas Coke meant to be depicted was actually a heavy, clean-shaven man who wore clerical garb. It is believed the sculptor accidentally used a photo of British judge Lord Chief Justice Thomas Coke as his model, so the statue is of a thin man in a hat with a beard.
A statue of Robert E. Lee in the main entrance portal of Duke Chapel was removed by the university on August 19, 2017.

In the Sunday morning worship service that followed, Duke Chapel Dean Luke A. Powery said the empty space may represent “a hole that is in the heart of the United States of America, and perhaps in our own human hearts—that hole that is from the sin of racism and hatred of any kind.” But, he said the empty space may also represent “an openness toward the possibility of healing, even in our day.”

The statue will be preserved so that students can study Duke’s complex past and take part in a more inclusive future. Read the university announcement at bit.ly/leestatue.

Accidentally depicted on Robert E. Lee’s belt buckle were the letters “US” instead of “CSA” (Confederate States of America). The carver scratched through the letters, but they still remain visible.
STAINED-GLASS WINDOWS

The Chapel’s 77 windows depict biblical characters and stories.

The clerestory (upper) windows of the nave and chancel are devoted to the Hebrew Scriptures. The twelve medallion (lower) windows of the aisles illustrate the Christian Scriptures’ New Testament stories. The two large transept windows and the great altar window contain prominent figures from the Bible.

Right: The subjects of the windows in the narthex (entrance) are noted Old Testament women.

Above: Six scenes from the life of Jesus, painted in black on amber glass, appear in the two entrance halls on either side of the narthex.

Left: In the two small turrets leading to the triforia (upper arcade) are ten windows whose subjects are chiefly the favorite biblical warriors of the Middle Ages, such as Joshua, Judas Maccabaeus, Jehosaphat, Hezekiah, and St. Longinus.

Face of God
Peter, Andrew, Jesus, James, John
James, Jude, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew
Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah

- Old & New Testament Portraits
- Archangels

Joshua
Moses
Gideon
Samson

Solomon (U)
The Prodigal Son (L)
David (U)
The Last Supper (L)

Tobit (U)
The Ascension (L)
St. Paul’s Preaching (L)

Esther
Hannah
Naomi
Ruth

Rebekah
Hagar

Jacob (U)
The Transfiguration (L)
Isaac (U)
The Death of
John the Baptist (L)
Abraham (U)
Jesus’ Baptism (L)
Melchizedek (U)
Jesus’ Youth (L)
Noah (U)
Nativity (L)
Adam (U)
Annunciation (L)

Archangels

Adam (U)
The Annunciation (L)
Noah (U)
The Prodigal Son (L)
Adam (U)
The Last Supper (L)

Jacob (U)
The Ascension (L)
Isaac (U)
The Resurrection (L)

Old & New Testament Portraits
The windows of the Memorial Chapel are made of silvery tinted glass (above-left), a technique called grisaille, and the windows of the crypt are composed of purple glass and lead grilles (above-right).

The largest window is 17 1/2 feet by 38 feet, and the smallest is 14 inches by 20 inches.

The number of figures in the windows totals between 800 and 900. There are 301 larger than life-size figures.

More than one million pieces of glass, varying in thickness from 1/8 to 3/16 of an inch, were used to create the windows.

The primary colors are yellow, ruby red, and blue; other colors are brown, white, purple, and green. The glass is stained all the way through using a technique called “pot metal glass,” which makes for rich colors. Different colors of glass come from different countries, including Belgium, England, France, and the United States.

S. Charles Jaekle of G. Owen Bonawit, Inc., in New York, along with fourteen other artists and craftsmen, designed and composed the windows. It took them almost three years to complete the project.

“Goggle-eyed, splay-footed saints”

At first glance, the figures in the windows might look a bit cartoonish, with bulbous eyes and big feet and hands. This is intentional. When the windows were designed, these features were exaggerated to ensure that the figures in the windows would be clearly visible from the ground. When asked about this decision, window designer Bonawit remarked, “If we had used pretty faces in the chancel, transept, and clerestory windows… it would have been impossible to know that the pretty faces were faces at all.”
MEMORIAL CHAPEL

To the left of the chancel and behind the iron gates is the Memorial Chapel. On the altar are three limewood figures: St. Paul, Jesus, and St. Peter.

Entombed in the Memorial Chapel are the benefactors for whom the University is named, Washington Duke and his two sons, Benjamin N. Duke and James B. Duke.

The sarcophagi and the Memorial Chapel were gifts of the Duke Memorial Association. Organized in 1928 by James A. Thomas, the association received contributions from friends of the Dukes all over the world.

On the ceiling in the Memorial Chapel, a boss (ornamental ceiling stone) with the Duke family coat of arms can be found. There are also plaques on the wall honoring philanthropists Doris Duke, daughter of James B. Duke, and Mary Duke Biddle Trent Semans, granddaughter of Benjamin N. Duke and also a Duke University graduate and trustee.
CRYPT

Between the Memorial Chapel and the chancel, a flight of steps descends to the crypt. Here are buried the following people:

- **William Preston Few**, first president of Duke University
- **Mrs. Nanaline Holt Duke**, wife of James B. Duke
- **J. Deryl Hart**, fourth president of Duke University
- **Mrs. Mary Johnson Hart**, wife of J. Deryl Hart
- **Terry Sanford**, sixth president of Duke University, U.S. Senator, and governor of North Carolina
- **Mrs. Margaret Rose Sanford**, wife of Terry Sanford

The ashes of **James A. Thomas**, chairman of the Duke Memorial Association, and **James T. Cleland**, former dean of Duke Chapel, and his wife, **Mrs. Alice Mead Cleland**, are also interred here.
Duke University Chapel is home to three outstanding pipe organs—each in a different style—that are used regularly for worship services, concerts, and teaching. A fourth organ is a movable “positive” instrument for accompanying smaller ensembles. The organs can be heard weekly in Sunday worship services, and also at weddings and funerals. In addition, the Chapel sponsors a free organ recital series featuring some of the world’s premier organists.

**KATHLEEN MCCLENDON ORGAN**
The Kathleen Upton Byrns McClendon Organ is the Chapel’s original organ, installed in 1932 and reconditioned in 2007-08. This remarkable instrument, the last major organ produced by the Aeolian Organ Company (New York)
before it merged with the E. M. Skinner Organ Company, is the firm’s only significant organ built for a church. Designed in the late Romantic Anglo-American tradition, the organ is known for its extremes of dynamic expression and the orchestral voicing of its individual stops. The visible pipes only hint at the Aeolian’s size; approximately 6,900 pipes are located in deep chambers behind elaborately carved oak screens on both sides of the choir and in the transepts. The organ is played from a new four-manual-and-pedal console located in the choir stalls on the left.

The Benjamin N. Duke Memorial Organ, constructed by Flentrop Orgelbouw (Holland) and dedicated in 1976, is located toward the Chapel’s front entrance in the great arch separating the narthex and the nave. This mechanical action organ, conceived in late Baroque style, contains more than 5,000 speaking pipes controlled by four manual keyboards and a pedalboard. The imposing main case, about 40 feet high but less than five feet deep, is made of solid mahogany and painted in various hues accented by gold leaf. One of the instrument’s five divisions is housed in a separate case on the gallery rail, hiding the keyboards from view. Both tonally and visually, the magnificent Flentrop organ reflects the ethos of 18th-century Dutch and French organs.

When Duke Chapel was first built, its acoustics were deliberately deadened for clarity of speech by using sound-absorbing Guastavino tile. At Dirk Flentrop’s insistence some forty years later, the acoustics of the Chapel were altered to provide an acceptable environment for the new organ before it was installed. The absorptive tile was coated with a sealant to increase the reverberation time, and a time-delay sound system was installed to accommodate the spoken word.
Located in a “swallow’s nest” gallery, the Brombaugh organ (1997) in the Memorial Chapel is modeled after late Renaissance Italian instruments. Expanded somewhat to accommodate other schools of organ literature as well as service music, this two-manual-and-pedal organ of 960 pipes produces gentle, sparkling tones on very low wind pressure. The organ is tuned in meantone temperament (with 14 notes per octave, offering choices of D-sharp/E-flat and G-sharp/A-flat), the tuning system preferred for most organs in the 16th and 17th centuries. The carved pipe shades are made from Appalachian oak, and the top of the richly polychromed case is adorned with the Duke family crest.

This diminutive single-manual instrument by Bennett and Giuttari (2014) is based on a 17th-century German Kistenorgel (box organ), and is used primarily with small choirs and instrumental ensembles. Although it usually resides in the chancel, the organ is portable and can be moved to other parts of the Chapel for services and concerts. All of its 153 pipes are made of wood and fit within the white oak case.

Inside the Chapel tower is a 50-bell carillon. The carillon was a surprise gift promised in 1930 by George G. Allen and William R. Perkins of the Duke Endowment, made in honor of James B. Duke. Its inaugural recital was in 1932, and 10,000 people attended.

The largest bell, G-natural in pitch, weighs 11,200 pounds and measures 6 feet 9 inches at the mouth; the smallest bell weighs 10 1/2 pounds and is 6 3/8 inches in diameter.

The university carillonneur performs a fifteen-minute recital on weekdays at 5:00 p.m., and before and after the Sunday morning worship service at 10:30 a.m. and 12:15 p.m.

Greeting the arrival of the carillon in 1932 were (from left to right) President William P. Few, Dean William H. Wannamaker, Vice President Robert Lee Flowers, and F. C. Godfrey of the Taylor Bell Foundry.

While many modern bells are played electronically, the Duke carillon is always played by hand. The current university carillonneur, Samuel Hammond, began playing the carillon in 1965 while a Duke undergraduate and was designated Duke University Carillonneur in 1986.
The Life of DUKE CHAPEL
WORSHIP

The Chapel offers **more than 200 opportunities for worship** each year. In addition to the rich worship tradition embodied in the ecumenical Christian worship service at 11:00 a.m. on Sundays, the Chapel is home to a regular rotation of prayer and worship throughout the week. Special services each year include Blessing of the Animals, Jazz Vespers, All Hallows’ Eve, Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Holy Week, and Easter. Many of the Chapel’s services are broadcast live online, on the radio, and on the Duke Hospital TV system.

The Chapel is also home to the **Congregation at Duke Chapel**, an interdenominational church home for people who consider the Chapel to be their primary place of worship.

*Learn more and find service times at chapel.duke.edu/worship*

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**Duke Chapel Recordings**

COMMUNITY

The Chapel provides a pastoral presence on campus and beyond by hosting **significant university ceremonies and community gatherings**, as well as by nurturing relationships across social, cultural, and political divisions. It is a cherished site for **weddings, baptisms, and memorial services**.

The Chapel fosters **connections with the wider Durham community** by partnering in ministry with local churches and nonprofits.

The main sanctuary (the nave and transepts) is open to the public year round and receives more than 200,000 visits per year. It provides a hospitable place for **prayer, reflection, and meditation**.

Learn more at chapel.duke.edu/community

PATHWAYS FELLOWS

Through the PathWays Fellows program, recent graduates spend a year living in Christian community at the PathWays House in the West End neighborhood of Durham and serving the wider community through work in nonprofits, churches, or businesses.

Learn more at chapel.duke.edu/pathways
STUDENT MINISTRIES

Duke University is committed to creating a rigorous scholarly community characterized by generous hospitality toward diverse religious and cultural traditions. Duke Chapel acts as a convener of conversations around the diversity of religious identity and expression on campus. It has administrative oversight over Religious Life at Duke, which comprises more than twenty campus faith groups.

The Chapel’s PathWays ministry provides opportunities for Duke students to hear and respond to God’s call for their lives on campus, in Durham, and beyond—through study, artistic expression, counsel, service, and living in community.

Interfaith Engagement at the Chapel promotes dialogue and collaboration among faith groups by facilitating the campus Religious Life groups, convening the Faith Council, organizing the Duke Interreligious Scholars program, and advising the Duke Voices for Interfaith Action student group.

A number of Chapel staff bridge faith and learning in the classroom by teaching courses on ethics, choral music, interfaith relations, preaching, and more.

Learn more at chapel.duke.edu/student_ministries

EXPLORING FAITH THROUGH THE ARTS

Duke Chapel is active in partnering with students, artists, and scholars to explore the intersection of faith and the visual, literary, and performance arts.

Learn more at chapel.duke.edu/arts
Music at Duke University Chapel works to create high-quality musical experiences that stir the hearts and minds of those who hear it, through worship services, concerts, and other events. Building outward from a variety of sacred music traditions, Duke Chapel Music comprises three choirs—the Duke Chapel Choir, the Vespers Ensemble, and the Evensong Singers—that sing in Sunday morning worship, Sunday afternoon Evensong, and Thursday evening Vespers services. The Chapel's music directly involves hundreds of student and non-student singers, as well as large numbers of professional instrumentalists. In addition, the staff collaborates with many guest choirs and student music groups, including United in Praise, a gospel choir and praise dance ministry.

PRESENTING HANDEL’S MESSIAH

For more than eighty years, Duke Chapel has presented G. F. Handel’s Messiah. The beloved concerts feature the Duke Chapel Choir, orchestra, and renowned soloists.
SUPPORT DUKE UNIVERSITY CHAPEL

Duke University Chapel is funded by university allocation, named endowment income, and more than 2,000 individual gifts and grants from visitors and friends of Duke Chapel.

You can be a part of the life of Duke Chapel by making a tax deductible donation in any amount at gifts.duke.edu/chapel.
ENGAGE WITH DUKE CHAPEL
There are many ways to engage in the life of the Chapel

BELONG to one of the many communities connected to the Chapel, including the Chapel Scholars, PathWays Fellows, C. Eric Lincoln Fellows, Interreligious Scholars, Religious Life groups, and Congregation at Duke Chapel.

EXPLORE your beliefs, and the beliefs of others, through the arts, interfaith dialogue, reading groups, and service-learning opportunities.

GIVE to the Chapel to support its mission. Donate online at gifts.duke.edu/chapel or mail a check to: Duke University Chapel, Box 90974, Durham, NC 27708-0974.

PRAY with us and for us, and tell us how we might pray for you!

SERVE in worship, on campus, and around Durham.

SING in one of the Chapel’s choirs to learn music, form friendships, and be inspired.

Engage with the Chapel at chapel.duke.edu/engage