

Influential Black theologian James Deotis Roberts dies at 95

by [Dawn Araujo-Hawkins](#) in the [September 2022](#) issue



(Facebook)

James Deotis Roberts, one of the pioneers of the Black theology movement, died in his sleep on July 26. He was 95.

Roberts, a former president of both the American Theological Society and the Interdenominational Theological Center, taught at several institutions throughout his career, including Howard University, Yale University, Duke University, and Palmer Theological Seminary.

He wrote extensively on political theology, reconciliation, and justice. His books include *The Prophethood of Black Believers*; *Black Theology in Dialogue*; *Black Religion, Black Theology*; *Liberation and Reconciliation*; and *Africentric Christianity*.

In 2013, the Baptist World Alliance honored Roberts for his dedication as an educator, calling him one of the most prominent theologians in the world. The following year, Roberts received the Beautiful Feet award from the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, which is given to those who have demonstrated “extraordinary work in social justice.”

In a statement, Iva E. Carruthers, general secretary of the SDPC, called Roberts a “force to contend with.”

“We will make sure that the young people who are coming along know about Dr. Roberts and study his work,” she said. “He was instrumental in our work to build bridges between the church and the academy, and we can do no less than continue that legacy.”