

Pastor Sam Rodriguez Helps First Family Mourn Via Livestream Service

Pastor Sam Rodriguez of New Season Church (Assemblies of God) in Sacramento, California, was asked by President Donald Trump and his family to deliver a service Sunday morning on behalf of Robert Trump, the president's younger brother, reports . Robert Trump died Saturday night at the age of 71.

Rodriguez, a renowned California pastor who is president of the National Christian Hispanic Leadership Conference, was also the first Pentecostal minister invited to speak during a presidential inauguration. He spoke for President Trump's 2016 inaugural ceremony, praying Scripture from Matthew 5:3-16.

White House Press Secretary Kayleigh McEnany announced the service in an early-morning tweet Sunday, inviting followers to join President Trump "as he watches Pastor Sam Rodriguez at New Season church at 8 am ET."

Join President @realDonaldTrump as he watches Pastor Sam Rodriguez at New Season church at 8 am ET – 🇺🇸

– Kayleigh McEnany (@PressSec) August 16, 2020

"It was an early wake-up call," Rodriguez told KCRA News. "And so we showed up, got everything together, and by the grace of God we were able to minister," he said. The service was streamed online at 5 a.m. Pacific time.

"We want to pray for our president, for his family in this time of grief," Rodriguez said during the service. "I ask You to invade the White House with Your comforting Spirit. I ask You to touch the president's heart, the first lady, the entire Trump family." He reminded the first family and his

congregation that God never runs out of mercy and comfort for times such as these.

Rodriguez told KCRA that “for the White House to reach out to yours truly—it’s humbling. I have no words. ... This totally came out of the blue.” He said he was playing basketball with his sons and almost missed the White House call when staffers reached out to him with the president’s request.

Rodriguez said the service helped bring people together despite political differences. “Regardless if you’re Republican or Democrat—he lost his brother. And as a human being, that should prompt all of us. But it was great to see Republicans and Democrats on stage this morning, as part of our worship set, praying for our president.

“To me, that’s America. That’s beautiful.” {eoa}