

Neil Albert Salonen

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Neil Albert Salonen (born 1946) is president of the University of Bridgeport, a private university in Bridgeport, Connecticut.^[1] He is a member of the Unification Church and became the president of the Unification Church of the United States in 1972.^[2] In 1974 he led the National Prayer and Fast Committee, a group founded by Unification Church leader Sun Myung Moon to support United States president Richard Nixon during the Watergate scandal.^[3] In 1976 Salonen met with Senator Bob Dole to defend the Unification Church against charges made by its critics, including parents of some members.^[4] In that year he was president of the Freedom Leadership Foundation, an anticommunist and pro South Korean propaganda organization, as well as church president.^[5] In 1980 Salonen was succeeded as the president of the American church by Mose Durst.^[6] In 1997 he served as master of ceremonies at a blessing ceremony for about 20,000 engaged and married couples presided over by Rev. and Mrs. Moon and held in Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium in Washington D.C..^[7] In 2002, Salonen was selected to serve on the Presidents Leadership Group, "a body of higher education presidents and chancellors who have declared their commitment to student substance abuse prevention."^[8]

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