

Biography of Dr. Brad R. Braxton

Dr. Brad R. Braxton is the Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer at St. Luke's School, a coeducational independent school in New York City. He also is the Curator for Living Religions in Twenty-First-Century America at the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage in Washington, DC. He holds a Ph.D. in New Testament studies from Emory University, where he was a Woodruff Fellow, a Master's degree in theology from the University of Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar, and a B.A. degree in religious studies from the University of Virginia, where he was a Jefferson Scholar and a member of Phi Beta Kappa.

He is the author of three scholarly books and numerous essays exploring the intersection of religion and social justice. His books *No Longer Slaves: Galatians and African American Experience* and *Preaching Paul* are frequently used in divinity school courses.

Dr. Braxton is a seasoned educator who has held professorships at Southern Methodist University, Vanderbilt University, and Wake Forest University, as well as lectureships at Georgetown University, Harvard Divinity School, and McCormick Theological Seminary. He recently was a Distinguished Visitor at the Lake Institute on Faith and Giving at Indiana University's Lilly Family School of Philanthropy.

Dr. Braxton is an ordained Baptist minister and a highly sought-after lecturer and public speaker. His speaking engagements have included appearances at influential institutions such as Duke University, Emory University, Morehouse College, Princeton University, and Yale University.

Dr. Braxton preached at Westminster Abbey in London, England in 2007. Only a select group of American ministers have had the privilege of preaching in that historic pulpit. His Westminster Abbey sermon on social justice and non-violence was part of the bicentennial commemoration of the abolition of the slave trade in the British Empire. He also has lectured and preached in Benin, Canada, Ghana, and South Africa.

His leadership has extended beyond the academy to the arenas of museums, philanthropic organizations, and faith-based communities. He formerly served as the Director of the Center for the Study of African American Religious Life at the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, DC, the Program Officer for Religion in the Public Sphere at the Ford Foundation in New York City, and the Senior Minister of the Riverside Church in New York City.

In 2011, Dr. Braxton founded The Open Church of Maryland, a culturally inclusive congregation in Baltimore committed to courageous social justice activism and compassionate interfaith collaboration. He continues as a visionary pastoral leader at The Open Church amid his duties at St. Luke's School and the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage.

His wife, Lazetta Rainey Braxton, is a nationally recognized Certified Financial Planner and Co-Founder and Co-CEO of 2050 Wealth Partners, a firm that provides wealth management and comprehensive financial planning. They are the proud parents of a daughter, Karis, an inquisitive high school student who loves to dance and draw. The Braxtons also enjoy the company of Sampson, their Labrador Retriever/Terrier.