

Born in Central Pennsylvania, the Rev. Dr. Lee H. Butler, Jr. is a lifelong Baptist and a first-generation beneficiary of the Post-Civil and Human Rights struggle in the United States.

Dr. Butler comes to Iliff School of Theology from Phillips Theological Seminary where he served as the Vice-President of Academic Affairs and Academic Dean, and the William Tabbernee Professor of the History of Religions and Africana Pastoral Theology since July 1, 2020. He is the first African American tenured full professor and the first person of color to hold the office of VPAA and Academic Dean and serve as Acting President at Phillips. As VPAA, his responsibilities included oversight and supervision of the Associate Dean, Registrar, Recruitment, Admissions and Financial Aid, Director of Theological Field Education, Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program, Director of Black Church Traditions Program, Dean of the Chapel, Faculty, and Dean of the Library.

During the shelter-in-place phase of the pandemic, he launched a COVID-19 task force, “The Living Together Task Force,” to establish protocols for reopening the seminary for on-campus classes and welcoming the larger community. He designed 2021 virtual annual ministry conference to focus on terror and violence against Native Americans and African Americans. Whereas 2021 was the centennial anniversary of the Tulsa Race Massacre, he developed programming to commemorate the event. He organized book talks, lectures, a Tulsa Race Massacre course taught by a visiting scholar, facilitated acclaimed artists performances, including Emmy Award winning actor, Mr. Keith David, who on two occasions performed selections from *God’s Trombones*, invited the President and Executive Director of the Children’s Defense Fund to give an address, and facilitated Mr. John W. Franklin, son of renowned historian, the late Dr. John Hope Franklin, to receive an honorary doctorate at the May 2021 Commencement. To invite an intercultural community to the work of critical race conversations, he inaugurated the Tulsa Race Massacre Lectureship creating a public forum on the dynamic history of the massacre and the lessons to be learned. In November 2022, he organized a Native American Heritage Month event to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the book *God Is Red*, by the late Vine Deloria, Jr. The evening included a greeting and brief reflection from Dr. Philip Deloria, son of Vine. Dr. Tink Tinker was present as the elder at the roundtable. He was also instrumental in bringing art exhibitions by acclaimed artists, Benjamin Harjo, Jr. (Absentee Shawnee-Seminole), Harvey Johnson (visual poet), John Biggers, Delita Martin (visual storyteller), and Kermit Oliver.

Before Phillips, he was the Distinguished Service Professor of Theology and Psychology at Chicago Theological Seminary (CTS). He joined the CTS faculty as assistant professor of theology and psychology in 1996. In 2006, he was promoted to the rank of full professor and became the first African American to achieve this rank at CTS. In 2017, he was installed in his endowed academic chair. He was a former director of the CTS Master of Divinity program, a former Acting Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Academic Dean, and the founder of the Center for the Study of Black Faith and Life at CTS. Through the work of the Center, he established the C. Shelby Rooks Lectureship as a tribute to the first African American to become president of a predominantly European American seminary and hosted the “Sisters with Sons in the Wilderness Roundtable,” a first of its kind major conference that gathered womanists and womanist collaborators to discuss the escalation of unarmed Black people killed in America. A LGBTQIA+ ally, he has served a mentor, advisor, colleague, and collaborator related to theological education and gender justice. He has facilitated and led study tours to Bahia, Brazil; to Ghana, West Africa; and to South Africa. In 2018, he gave a series of pastoral theology lectures in Seoul, South Korea at a professional counseling conference and four theological universities (Presbyterian Theological University, Methodist Theological University, Hanshin University, and Seoul Theological University).

Prior to his joining the faculty of Chicago Seminary, he was assistant professor of pastoral theology at Lancaster Theological Seminary from 1992-1996. An ordained minister of the American Baptist Churches in the USA since 1988, his professional development includes experience in pastoral ministry, chaplaincy, pastoral counseling, denominational and seminary administration.

Dr. Butler is a past president of the Society for the Study of Black Religion, a member of the American Academy of Religion, the Society for Pastoral Theology, the Institute for Signifying Scriptures, Society for Process Consulting, the Association of Black Psychologists, and a Board Member of the John Hope Franklin Center for Reconciliation.

He is an active publishing scholar. He is the co-editor of *The Edward Wimberly Reader: A Black Pastoral Theology* (Baylor University Press, 2020); author of *Listen, My Son: Wisdom to Help African American Fathers* (Abingdon Press, 2010), *Liberating Our Dignity, Saving Our Souls* (Chalice Press, 2006), *A Loving Home: Caring for African American Marriage and Families* (Pilgrim Press, 2000), and numerous articles published in many books and professional journals on the subject of pastoral care and pastoral psychology.

Dr. Butler received his PhD and Master of Philosophy in Psychology and Religion from Drew University. He holds a Master of Theology in Pastoral Theology from Princeton Theological Seminary, a Master of Divinity with a concentration in Pastoral Care and Counseling from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary (now Palmer Theological Seminary), and a BA in Religion from Bucknell University.