



Malkhaz Songulashvili, Tbilisi

Most Reverend Dr. Malkhaz Songulashvili was born into a Baptist family in 1963. His father was Minister and Superintendent of the Tbilisi Region. His grandmother was a lay preacher in Soviet times. Songulashvili graduated from Tbilisi State University and taught at the same university for 18 years. He completed his doctoral dissertation in the UK through the Oxford Center of Mission Studies under the supervision of Prof Paul Fiddes. Songulashvili worked as a Bible translator for the Georgian Orthodox Church and the United Bible Societies for 28 years. He also served the Evangelical Baptist Church of Georgia as its leading Archbishop for 19 years, but resigned from the post in 2013 because of his stance on Homophobia and Islamophobia. In 2014, Songulashvili was appointed the associate professor in comparative theology at Ilia State University in Tbilisi, Georgia.

Presently, Songulashvili is the diocesan Bishop of Tbilisi and head of Peace Cathedral in Tbilisi. He teaches both at the university and the Baptist Theological Academy. He has been active in reconciliation and peace work among Christians, Muslims and Jews, and has also been involved in justice and freedom work both nationally and internationally.

Songulashvili holds a number of honorary titles and awards, including the Golden Cross, presented by Patriarch Bartholomew, Istanbul, 1993; Ecumenical Canon of Norwich Cathedral, Norwich, 2005; Ecumenical Canon of Wakefield Cathedral, Wakefield, 2006; Lambeth Cross by Archbishop of Canterbury, London, 2006; Order of St George by Patriarch Philaret of Kiev and All-Ukraine, Kiev, 2008; Cross of Nails by Bishop of Coventry, Coventry, 2010; Order of Christ the Savior by Patriarch Philaret of Kiev and All-Ukraine, Kiev, 2011; Honorary Citizen of Tbilisi, by the Mayor of Tbilisi, Tbilisi, 2013; Order of St Nicolas by the President of Georgia, Tbilisi, 2013; Pro Fide 2014 Award, by the Friends of the Martyred Church, Helsinki, 2014. Shahbaz Bhatti Freedom Award by First Step Forum, Berlin, Germany, January 16, 2015. Equality Award for his work promoting the rights of LGBTQ community, by Equality Movement, and NGO members, December 2019.

Songulashvili is married to Ala Kavtaradze.