

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have appointed the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, the Rt Revd Martin Seeley, as the next Chair of the Ministry Council of the Church of England following his election as a member of the Archbishops' Council. Bishop Martin succeeds the Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft, Bishop of Oxford as Chair of the Ministry Council and will take up the role after Easter 2017.

The Ministry Council is responsible for advising the House of Bishops and the dioceses over the work of nurturing vocations to ministry, the selection and formation of candidates for ministry and continuing ministerial development and deployment. It has a key role in the Renewal and Reform agenda for growing vocations to ministry by 50%, the encouragement of lay ministries and developing forms of ministry which enhance collaboration, mission and developing disciples.

Bishop Martin said of his appointment: "I am honoured to have been asked to chair the Ministry Council at a critical moment in the development of ministry in the Church of England, both lay and ordained. The current mission and ministry challenges for dioceses and the Church of England as a whole are significant and I look forward to working to develop as well as sustain the best in our traditions of ministry and ministerial formation."

Bishop Martin was Principal of Westcott House, Cambridge, a leading theological college, from 2006 to 2015, and was President of the Cambridge Theological Federation from 2013 to 2015. He also served as Vicar of the Isle of Dogs, Tower Hamlets, from 1996 to 2006.

Bishop Steven Croft says: "I am very pleased that Bishop Martin is taking over from me as the new Chair of the Ministry Council. His wide experience both as a parish priest and as a theological college principal will be of great value in a period of extensive change in parishes and local churches as well as in ministerial education."

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