

The Archbishops of Canterbury and York are pleased to announce the appointment of the Rt Revd Martyn Snow, Bishop of Leicester, as the next chair of the Central Readers' Council in succession to the Rt Revd Robert Paterson, Bishop of Sodor and Man. Bishop Martyn will take up the role on 11 November 2016. He will also become a member of the Ministry Council of the Archbishops' Council, with a particular brief for lay ministries.

The Central Readers' Council (CRC) works to enhance the contribution of Readers to the overall ministry of the Church, particularly to encourage the most effective collaboration with other forms of ministry, ordained and lay. The CRC is a separate charity and not part of the national church institutions, though its office is based in the Ministry Division at Church House, London and its staff work closely with the Division's staff. It serves Readers in both the Church of England and the Church in Wales.

Bishop Martyn said of his appointment: "I am honoured to have been asked to be chair of the CRC, especially in this anniversary year when we celebrate one hundred and fifty years during which Readers have been a vital part of the ministry of the Church of England and the Church in Wales. Now is the time to build on that heritage and look forward hopefully to the future contribution of Readers in partnership with other ministers to the mission and growth of the church."

Readers are lay ministers who have been selected, trained and licensed by the Bishop of a diocese to preach, teach and lead worship and to serve in pastoral, evangelistic and liturgical work. There are 9,000 active Readers in the Church of England. Many are licensed to a parish and some serve as chaplains, while others lead new forms of church and mission communities.

Bishop Robert Paterson says: "I am very pleased that Bishop Martyn is taking over from me as the new Chair of the CRC. The Council has moved a long way in the last few years and Bishop Martyn is ideally placed to steer lay ministries in the future."

Gertrud Sollars (Vice Chair of the Central Readers Council) says: "I am delighted that Bishop Martyn has been appointed to chair CRC and, on behalf of its Executive, would like to welcome him warmly. We look forward to working together with him at this time, which is crucial in the development of lay ministries."

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