



The Church of England is engaged in a process of reflection and learning in recognition that it has not been the welcoming 'spiritual home' it aspires to be for many people whose family heritage lies within Commonwealth countries and the wider world.

In the 2020 report 'From Lament to Action', the Church recognised that its 'good intentions' towards being a church where people of diverse backgrounds could feel at home, had never been properly resourced or followed through in terms of policies or practical actions.

In response to this important report, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York established the Archbishops' Commission for Racial Justice to drive change within the Church and implement the recommendations of 'From Lament to Action'. The Racial Justice Unit has been established to resource this work at all levels of the Church – within parishes, schools, deaneries, dioceses, cathedrals and Theological Education Institutions.

Fundamentally, the unit exists to try to help churches in England think through and implement an approach to 'being church' which allows everyone within our local church communities to contribute and belong, whether their family have lived in the area for generations – or for just a few weeks.

About the Racial Justice Unit

The Racial Justice Unit works in close partnership with stakeholders across the whole church who can 'make a difference', as only a holistic approach can contribute to greater racial justice. We will only get a diverse selection of people offering themselves for ordination within the church if families from diverse backgrounds feel actively welcomed within our parishes and our schools.

However, even if we succeed in getting a more diverse pool of candidates for ordination, we still have to ensure that their vocation is nurtured appropriately, and they are able to progress as clergy into positions of responsibility and seniority. Speaking broadly, our task is to help everyone within the Church of England understand that our shared mission is not about perpetuating a form of church life that harks back to life 'before the war', but one that reflects the giftings and priorities of the diverse population of Britain today.

The Racial Justice Unit is led by Director Revd Guy Hewitt and Deputy Director Revd Dr Sharon Prentis and supported by staff to achieve the Unit's objectives. You can contact the Racial Justice Unit at racialjusticeunit@churchofengland.org.

Reporting racial incidents in the Church

It's safe to speak out.

A racial incident involves behaviour perceived as motivated by racial hostility or prejudice, such as bullying, verbal abuse, racist jokes, exclusion, malicious complaints, threats, or physical attacks.

To report a concern and access support, contact Race Equality First on 029 2048 6207 through whom can also access confidential counselling, independent advice to explore your options, and/or contact with the Racial Justice Unit.

A racial incident is any incident or alleged incident which involves behaviour, act or a series of actions by a person or group which is perceived by the individual to be motivated, wholly or partly, by racial hostility or racial prejudice towards them or others. Such behaviour may include: bullying or intimidation; verbal abuse, insults, or racist jokes; sharing of racially offensive comments or material; exclusion from normal conversation or activities; malicious complaints; verbal or physical threats or attack; or encouraging others to commit any such acts.

[Read the press release for further information about this initiative.](#)

Work we are doing

Our work continues. Learn more about the current national initiatives to address racial justice.

Racial Justice funding

Applications are being invited for funding to help implement the recommendations of From Lament to Action, the report of the Archbishops' Anti-Racism Task Force into racial justice in the Church of England. [Learn about the initiative in this article.](#)

Interested? Download the [application form](#) and [guidance notes](#). Any enquiries can be sent to racialjusticeunit@churchofengland.org.

Register with the UKME/GMH communication network

The Church of England's Racial Justice team is seeking to mobilise all Global Majority Heritage (GMH)/UK Minoritised Ethnic (UKME) clergy, ordinands and lay ministers and leaders to join an ethnocultural communications network. Such networks form part of a wider governance, management, and change agenda to help promote equality, diversity, and inclusion. [Learn more and register now.](#)

Archbishops' Commission for Racial Justice

The [Archbishops' Commission for Racial Justice](#) has been mandated to drive 'significant cultural and structural change on issues of racial justice within the Church of England.

The purpose of the Commission is to set out a compelling agenda for change, in careful gospel-driven discernment, balancing the needs of individuals, communities, and society, maximising opportunities, and ensuring fairness for all. In order to understand why disparities exist, what works and what does not, the Commission is listening and learning from processes of participative engagement, and is considering detailed quantitative data and qualitative evidence, commissioning new research and inviting submissions where necessary and engaging with stakeholders and conversation partners across and beyond the Church.

The 11 Commission members, under the chairmanship of Lord Boateng, bring together a range of experience and expertise within and beyond the church. Members include specialists in areas such as Theology & Racial Justice; Ecclesiology & Liturgy; Formation & Theological Education and History & Politics. Most of the Commissioners are not members of the Church of England and their role is to bring an independent perspective and a process of external accountability to the church.

The Commission is reporting to the Archbishops every six months during the three-year period 2021-2023, with recommendations to help the Archbishops fulfil their commitments to identify, respond to, and root out systemic racism in the Church.

Resources

- [Progress on Racial Justice across the Church of England Dioceses](#)
- Truth Telling: Slavery and the Anglican Church is an online seminar series in collaboration with the Centre for the Study of International Slavery, University of Liverpool: [Panel 1 - 'People not Property, Names not Numbers'](#) | [Panel 2 - 'Women, Slavery and the Church'](#)
- Archbishops' Commission for Racial Justice reports: [Spring 2022](#) | [Winter 2022-23](#) | [Summer 2023](#) | [Winter 2023-24](#) | [Summer 2024](#)
- [Liturgical resources for Racial Justice Sunday 2024](#) from the Church of England
- [Liturgical resources for Racial Justice Sunday 2024](#) from Churches Together in Britain and Ireland
- [Resources for Black History Month](#)

Networks

There are a number of independent networks designed to support UKME clergy and church members. We're working together to promote the profile and participation of UKME Anglicans in all structures of the Church. Learn more below.

Anglican Minority Ethnic Network

Anglican Minority Ethnic Network (AMEN) is an independent group promoting the presence and participation of Minority Ethnic Anglicans in all structures of our church in the service of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

“Independent” conveys the idea that the Group is not part of the formal structure of the Church of England; the Group will work with and has the blessing of **CMEAC**, but is not formally part of CMEAC. The sense that the Group will promote minority ethnic participation in “all” structures is also important, although particular attention would be paid to participation in senior leadership. Finally, it is important to us to emphasise that what we do is not just for our self interest, but for the “service of the Gospel”.

Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns

The role of the **Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns** (CMEAC) is to identify, monitor and take forward concerns of BAME Anglicans and make recommendations for change. The Committee has responsibility for addressing issues, in as far as they have implications for BAME groups within the Church and the wider community.

CMEAC is a committee of the Archbishops’ Council and is accountable to the Church of England’s highest decision-making body, the **General Synod**.

We believe that there should be a reflection of BAME Anglicans at all levels within the church, acknowledging that we are all part of the body of Christ “made in the image of God, fully human”. In this way, the contribution of every part of the body is valued, recognised and supported.

Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller Friendly Churches

We are a small group of passionate people from various backgrounds and denominations with different experiences. We seek to challenge prejudice and work for harmony, understanding and co-operation between communities, churches and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people.

The vision of **Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller Friendly Churches** is to support churches to include Gypsies, Roma and Traveller people in the regular life of the church.

Ideally, each local congregation would offer support appropriate to its setting. This could be to European Roma, to local settled Gypsies and Traveller communities, or to those who are roadside and effectively homeless.

We will seek to promote and celebrate the engagement of churches across denominations as well as any other religious or secular groups working towards similar aims.

The General Synod of the Church of England passed a resolution in February 2019, which included asking all dioceses to appoint chaplains for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people. This was because synod acknowledged the frequent occurrence of serious racial prejudice, alongside episodes of hate crime, and significant poor outcomes in health, education, housing and other measures of social well-being for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

Through our work, we have encountered various forms of hate and ingrained negative stereotypes against the communities, stemming from a lack of cultural awareness and understanding. We are here to help churches build bridges with the communities and support positive engagements within their neighbourhoods.

Persian Syrian and Parsi Churches

Mainly Muslim background Christians rooted in Iran and the Middle East (countries from former Persian Empire) has formed a strong presence within Britain. Anglican Dioceses such as London, Manchester, Guilford and Leicester have **clergy from these backgrounds working with these communities**.

Revd Mohammad Eghtedarian was originally from a strict Muslim family in Iran. He moved to the UK as an asylum seeker and was invited to church by a local parish vicar. He gave his life to Jesus in a detention centre in the UK and later became an Anglican ordained minister, serving his curacy at Liverpool Cathedral, a chaplaincy post in Ankara, Turkiye and then served as Intercultural Pioneer Minister in Leicester. Since 2022, he works for Christian Aid.

His passion is sharing the Good News of Jesus to people from various backgrounds, especially Persian people, and helping them to grow as His disciples and expanding the Kingdom of God.

The Tea House

The vision of The Tea House is to raise the profile and participation of Chinese-heritage clergy in all structures of the Church.

Tea Houses are informal settings where people drop in as often or as seldom as they like. Tea Houses are also intimate spaces where friendships can be built. It is hoped that The Tea House will provide a place for fellow Chinese heritage clergy and Ordinands to meet, cultivate friendships and support one another in their respective journeys in the Church of England.

Tea Houses are places where social information is gathered and spread. The Tea House offers a space where we can share interesting news and happenings that are of relevance to the group. Some Tea Houses have stages built for performances. We are considering inviting guests to speak on pertinent topics over Zoom, or arrange meet-ups to discuss a book, topic or current issues.

Tea Houses assume a certain level of etiquette and decorum. We hope that the imagery of a Tea House will remind us to listen and speak respectfully, to show deference and courtesy, and to value one another's opinions.

UKME Ordinands and Curates

We support UKME/GMH ordinands and curates in the Church of England.

The United Kingdom Minority Ethnic Ordinands and Curates network (UKME OC) within the Church of England are an independent group created by and for ordinands and curates and those who have just passed their BAP and preparing to go for training within the Church of England.

The network seeks to support and encourage ordinands and curates of UKME/GMH in the Church of England within Dioceses and Theological Colleges in their journey towards priesthood, and can be contacted on ukmeordinands@gmail.com.

Zimbabwe National Anglican Fellowship

Zimbabwe National Anglican Fellowship (Zinafe) is a Christian fellowship. We are a registered charity that works within the Anglican Communion. Our vision is to be a Christ centred fellowship where people have the freedom to find hope and to be transformed. Our mission is to be at the heart of the Zimbabwean Anglican fellowship in the diaspora radiating God's love, to become part of something greater and to grow in the love of God.

We are rooted in the stories of the Bible and believe worship is something that can be expressed in everything we do. Our philosophy is founded on the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Zinafe offers regular prayer of intercession opportunities online.

Zinafe has a strong youth section: Anglican Youth of Zimbabwe, who host a dynamic summer conference each year.

We welcome everyone to be part of our fellowship. Get in touch today via [the website](#) or come and visit them in person at one of their regional centres.

Source URL: <https://www.churchofengland.org/mission-ministry/inclusivity/racial-justice>