

Three clergy from UK Minority Ethnic/Global Majority Heritage backgrounds have been elected to serve on the House of Bishops as part of action towards making the leadership of the Church of England more representative, it was announced today.



RevdÂ Canon Arun Arora, co-chair of the Archbishopsâ Anti-Racism Taskforce, Revd Canon Dr Chigor Chike, Chair of the Anglican Minority Ethnic Network and Revd Shemil Mathew, Vice Dean of Emmanuel Theological College, have been elected to serve as âparticipant observersâ at the House of Bishops.

Their election brings the number of people from UKME/GMH backgrounds on the House of Bishops to 11, with eight bishops âone diocesan and seven suffragans - either members or participant observers.

Under the scheme approved earlier this year by a Committee of the House, at least 10 UKME/GMH people will take part in meetings of the House âeither as existing members or âparticipant observersâ.

The scheme was backed following the publication of *From Lament to Action*, the report of the Archbishopsâ Anti-Racism Taskforce in April last year. It called for UKME/GMH participant observers to attend the House of Bishops until such time as there are six UKME/GMH bishops able to sit as members.Â

The recommendation was based on temporary provision introduced in 2013 under which women first took part in meetings of the House ahead of legislation opening the way for female bishops.

In separate action in line with recommendations from *From Lament to Action*, new members from UKME/GMH backgrounds will be elected to serve on the Houses of Clergy and Laity in time for the General Synod meeting in York later this year.

Canon Dr Sanjee Perera, the Archbishops' Adviser on Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns, said: "While this is only a first step, I am deeply encouraged that we are finally able to celebrate this change and welcome UK Minority Ethnic people into the House of Bishops with a real diversity of experience and culture."

"This is about inclusion, engagement and being able to say that our governance structures are beginning to make small changes towards racial justice."

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More information

The Bishops and Clergy of UKME/GMH background who now serve on the House of Bishops are as follows:

" Bishop of Chelmsford Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani; Bishop of Dover Rose Hudson-Wilkin. Suffragan bishops elected to the House: Bishop of Bradwell Dr John Perumbalath; Bishop of Woolwich Dr Karowei Dorgu. Suffragan participant observers: Suffragan Bishop in Europe, Dr David Hamid, Bishop of Loughborough, Saju Muthalaly and Bishop of Willesden Lusa Nsenga-Ngoy. Ven Dr Rosemarie Mallett, the next Bishop of Croydon, will also join as a participant observer."

" The House of Bishops which is both part of the General Synod and a body in its own right has 53 places and is made up of the most senior bishops in the Church, including all of the diocesan bishops and some elected suffragans."

" From *Lament To Action* recommended: One UKME/GMH clergy elected from each region to attend meetings of the House of Bishops as participant observers for three year periods until such time as there are six UKME/GMH bishops able to sit as members of the House."

" The plans as agreed earlier this year involved electing three UKME/GMH members of the clergy and inviting three UKME/GMH bishops to serve as participant observers. Taken together with the four UKME/GMH bishops who are currently members of the House, this will ensure a total of 10."

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