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# Rev. Rashim Merriwether Appointed to Special Assistant to the Bishop on Ethnic Concerns and Initiatives

*New Cabinet Position Will Bring Forth Conversations on Ethnic Issues*

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The Arkansas Conference is proud to announce that the Rev. Rashim Merriwether has been appointed as the Special Assistant to the Bishop on Ethnic Concerns and Initiatives, a newly created Cabinet-level position within the Conference leadership.

In his new position, Merriwether will be tasked with bringing forth conversations on ethnic issues and how they relate to the Arkansas Conference.

“This will come through work in connectional ministries, dismantling racism and collaborative efforts with BMCR, ELC, and other ministry efforts along with initiatives identified by the Bishop,” Merriwether said.

Bishop Gary Mueller said that he is excited to have Merriwether on the Cabinet and looks forward to the conversations and ideas that he will bring to future meetings.

“Rashim has many years of experience working with communities of all different backgrounds. I’m so grateful to have his wise counsel on the Conference Cabinet to help United Methodists in Arkansas dismantle racism in our communities and build stronger relationships between our diverse churches.”

“I feel the weight of both necessity and responsibility in this position,” Merriwether said. “The General Commission on Religion and Race was created in 1968. GCORR was established inviting conversation at a common table to address systematic and systemic racism, while seeing the importance of conversation on dismantling racism and its effects and mechanisms ( i.e. segregation, Jim Crow laws, and any exclusionary tactics), with an intentional purpose and timeline. The goal was, and still is, to be an authentic, responsive, and vital church.

“It is my goal to add relevant conversation and experience to this initiative begun in 1968. I look forward to working towards dismantling racism, working to make the experiences, calls, and service of all ethnic people relevant and connective in the work and goals of The Arkansas Conference of the United Methodist Church.”

Merriwether is currently the senior pastor at Hunter UMC in Little Rock. He previously served as senior pastor at St. James UMC in Fayetteville, and the Director of Ethnic Faith Communities in the Arkansas Conference.

To get in touch with Rev. Merriwether, contact him at [rashim.merriwether@arumc.org](mailto:rashim.merriwether@arumc.org).

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