
Jamaica-born woman appointed vicar of UK Parliament

A 38-year tradition came to an end when Jamaica-born Rose Hudson-Wilkin was appointed vicar of the British Parliament, going against the Church of England's pick, Canon Andrew Tremlett.

Speaker John Bercow picked the Rev Hudson-Wilkin, putting an end to a long tradition of the parallel posts of House of Commons chaplain and rector of St Margaret's being held by the same person.

St Margaret's is the parliamentary church, controlled by Westminster Abbey, and Tremlett will assume the post as its rector and be made a canon of Westminster.

Hudson-Wilkin, 49, was born and raised in Montego Bay, St James. The Church Army, a Church of England organisation, trained her to be an evangelist and she left for England at 18 to study at the college.

In 1994, she became a priest in the West Midlands. Since then, she was a member of the Broadcasting Standards Commission and was honoured in 2008 by being appointed one of 36 Anglican chaplains to the queen.

Parliament's new vicar is known for her stance against racism and has called on the Church of England to apologise for the role it played in slavery. She also supports arguments for the gay-rights movement in the Church.

Typically, the joint post of Commons chaplain and St Margaret's rector paid £45,000.

However, the separation of the two posts means Hudson-Wilkin will be paid £25,000 and denied a Westminster apartment, usually reserved for the Commons chaplain, which will go to Tremlett.