

Church leaders are being provided with more support to encourage congregations to discover God's call in their lives in a new set of resources published today by the Church of England.

Research and good practice gathered in dioceses on developing a range of vocations from lay and ordained ministry to religious life has been made available by the Church of England's [**Church Support Hub**](#).

The church wants to find new role models, increasing the number of minority ethnic vocations, young vocations, and encouraging women to take up more leadership roles.

Parish and diocesan leaders are encouraged to grow a pro-active culture of vocation by providing opportunities to get involved and praying and teaching about vocation.

The material has been published in advance of Vocations Sunday (April 17) when parishes ask congregations to reflect on God's call in their lives both in the Church of England and in the wider world.

Resources to encourage prayer for a renewal and increase in vocations throughout the Church of England have been launched in conjunction with the website.

'Prayer Postcards' to share with people seeking to discover their vocation and resources to mount seven days of prayer for vocations to ministry and other roles in the Church have been published on the [**Church Print Hub**](#).

The campaign comes after the General Synod backed moves to increase the number of candidates for ordination by 50% over the next five years and to increase the youthfulness and ethnic diversity of candidates.

The Bishop of Guildford, Andrew Watson, said: "Every Christian has a unique part to play in God's great plan of salvation, both through their church involvement and in their mission to the wider world.

"Vocations Sunday 2016 is a great day to reflect on what *our* part in that plan might be, at a time when our Church is urgently praying for an increase in the number and range of vocations, both lay and ordained."

Nigeria-born Martha Weatherill, a first year ordinand at St Stephen's House in Oxford, spoke of how her calling to be ordained was inspired after attending a Minority Ethnic Vocations Conference supported by the Committee for Minority Ethnic Anglican Concerns (CMEAC) and the Ministry Division of the Church of England.

"I've always served, doing one thing or another in the Church, but I saw myself as someone who was going to graduate and get a job in the City as an accountant," she said.

"Four years ago when I was serving in a care home, a woman who was a resident said to me 'thankyou so much for the Holy Communion service,

without this we wouldn't get access to the Church or have communion.'

"At that point, I felt like a switch had been turned on, as if the Lord was saying to me that this was my destiny, this was what I was born to do."

The [Church Support Hub](#) helps provide churches with information they need about occasional offices and other key opportunities for ministry and mission.

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