

Plans to encourage the Church of England's one million regular worshippers to be more confident in spreading the Christian message in their everyday lives were given the backing today of the General Synod.

Members of the General Synod welcomed the Church of England's campaign *Motivating the Million* aimed at helping congregations in speaking about and living out their faith in homes, communities and workplaces.

The plans include work to create more lay leaders in the Church of England and a project to help build the confidence of worshippers to invite their friends to church events.

The General Synod also gave its backing to a call for all the Church of England's 12,500 parishes to become involved in the global prayer movement 'Thy Kingdom Come' for more people to come to know Jesus Christ.

Rev Barry Hill, from the Diocese of Leicester, moving a motion at the General Synod commending the work of the Church of England's Evangelism and Discipleship department, said evangelism could not be left to clergy alone.

"Evangelism doesn't belong to any one part of the Church, it needs all of our church to reach all of our nation," he said.

He added: "Most people know a Christian – most people don't know a bishop or even a vicar.

"So we need to learn from the examples of the whole people of God, showing and telling what this looks like in workplaces and schools and homes and hospitals."

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, said evangelism and discipleship are at the foundation of Christian life. "Discipleship and evangelism embed in us the gift of the love of Christ," he said.

The Bishop of Leicester Martyn Snow described evangelists as a 'gift' to the Church.

"We need more evangelists because their gift to the Church is precisely in the area of equipping every person to be a witness," he said.

"Today's evangelists will not be lone rangers – today's evangelists will not be loud extroverts who frighten everyone with their enthusiasm.

"The evangelists of today need to be team members who mentor and coach others in everyday faith conversations, helping people to overcome their anxiety and helping them to think through the tough questions that anyone who publicly owns the name of Christian will get asked."