



The Church of England has appointed The Revd Helen Fraser as its new Head of Vocations, a key role in leading efforts to encourage more women and men to come forward for ordained ministry.

An Associate Vicar at St Mary's in Reigate, Surrey, in the Diocese of Southwark, Helen has taken up her post at Church House in Westminster.

Her appointment comes as the Church of England seeks to build on a 22% increase over the past two years in the number of people starting training for ordained ministry, nearly half way towards a national aim of a 50% rise in candidates by 2020.

The drive to encourage more people to consider ordained ministry is part of the Church of England's Renewal and Reform programme, aimed at ensuring that the Church of England becomes once more a growing Church for all people, in all places.

Helen grew up in Sussex before studying law in Manchester and practising banking law in the City for 10 years. She sensed a call to ordination whilst worshipping at Emmanuel, South Croydon, and trained at Trinity College, Bristol.

Her curacy was served in Chipstead, Surrey and for the last five years she has been Associate Vicar at St Mary's, Reigate, where she has had particular responsibility for discipleship, training and vocations.

She has also been a director of the Churches' Mutual Credit Union (CMCU) in its set-up phase, a primary school governor and a trustee of Trinity College, Bristol.

The Bishop of Guildford, Andrew Watson, who is chair of the Church of England's Ordained Vocations Working Group, said: "It's very good indeed to welcome Helen to the Ministry Division. She brings considerable skills and experience and she is assured of my prayers as she takes on this important role.

"Ordained ministry matters, not because our clergy are the only ones who can bring the good news of Jesus Christ, but because they are able to help lead and support the mission of the people of God in homes, workplaces and wider communities."

The Revd Mandy Ford, Director of the Ministry Division, said: "We are really delighted to welcome Helen to our team. Thanks to individuals, parishes and dioceses responding to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and the encouragement of diocesan and Ministry Division staff, we have seen an encouraging rise in the number of people coming forward for ordained ministry. Helen has an impressive track record and her skills and abilities will be crucial in helping to build on this success."

Rev Helen said: "I am thrilled to be taking up the post of Head of Vocations. Whilst realistic about the work we have ahead of us, I'm delighted to be helping the Church of England bring forward its ambitious vocational objectives as part of the Renewal and Reform Programme.

“I very much look forward to working with diocesan teams, colleagues in Church House and all those who are contributing to the renewed sense of discipleship across the whole church, and in particular to the increase in both number and diversity of those entering training for ordained ministry.”

Helen enjoys film, theatre, cooking, travel and singing. She is married to Simon and they have two children.

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