

Everyday Faith is an initiative across the Church of England to enable the whole people of God to live out the Good News of Jesus confidently in all of life, Sunday to Saturday.

Rotas. We're all asked to be on them, and we all live in fear of them. But instead of trying to avoid the eye of the church secretary, former HR manager Tina Molyneux decided to make a change. That change is now altering the lives and experience of faith of people across the Diocese of Oxford.

'I was invited on to lots of rotas at my church,' she says. 'Within a year, I'd been asked to join the coffee rota, the intercessions rota, the reading



'No one stopped to ask me about who I was and what my strengths and gifts were.'

This experience planted the seed of an idea to equip and mentor others, to listen to what their gifts are and what they feel enthusiastic about.

Today, the now Revd Tina Molyneux puts that into practice through 'personal discipleship plans' in the Diocese of Oxford.

Under the scheme, people have a mentor who listens to their enthusiasms and encourages them. Crucially, this is in a bid to see people live out their faith outside the church building, rather than in it.

'This is for people whether they are walking the dog, with their friends, at work, taking the kids to school, to help them to be more themselves and to notice God in the everyday and follow where He is calling them in the everyday,' says Tina.

The reaction? 'Amazing' is the word that is repeated time and again, as mentors and mentees talk about this over coffee.



Perhaps because of that reaction, the scheme, just 18 months old, is growing fast. Some 300 mentors have been trained to date, and that number is set to rise to 500 by the end of the year. Each of them is mentoring several people.

Tina put her HR experience into practice asking people if they felt encouraged and equipped by their churches when they began the mentoring scheme. Only half said yes. When they had experienced six months of mentoring, 100 per cent said yes: a huge change.

One of them is 74-year-old Fiona Fieldhouse. A lifelong Christian, Fiona joined the scheme because she ‘wanted to do more’, though she was already doing a lot within her church, helping with intercessions, flower arranging and parish visiting.

‘I felt I was contributing, but I wasn’t flourishing,’ she says. ‘The impact on me has been huge. I come from a generation where you are not allowed to say “I want to do more”. Why would God call me? I’m a non-entity.’



Fiona had always felt a deep desire to write but had never done it because allocating the time to writing made her ‘feel guilty’. Encouraged by her mentor, Fiona dusted off an idea for a novel and, as we chat, gets her recently published book, Alison’s New Beginnings, out of her bag.



How does it feel to be a published author? 'I have a content satisfaction,' she says. 'And I'm not cross any longer. I was cross all the time without knowing why, and it was because I was not allowing the writing to be valid. I didn't see it as part of what I should be doing.'

'The personal discipleship plan helped me a lot. My life has completely changed. It's astonishing at my age, to have new adventures. I'm amazed.'

Eighteen months on from the launch of the scheme, how does Tina feel? 'It has encouraged me in my own faith,' she says, 'seeing what God is doing in the world. He's active even when sometimes we think He isn't. I'm completely surprised by Him, and delighted.'



Everyday Faith and *Setting God's People Free* are part of the Church of England's **Renewal and Reform** programme, aimed at creating a growing Church for all people and in all places.

Find out more about Oxford's [personal discipleship plans](#).

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