

Vocations

"The young are called; the elderly are called. There is no retirement from the Christian pilgrimage.Women are called and men are called.....God 'has no favourites'We are all called no matter what our occupations may be. There is no special status in the Kingdom for those in 'top jobs' or 'important responsibilities' "

Vocations Sunday is an opportunity for churches to encourage everyone to reflect, discover and recognise God's call to them.

Ideas and suggestions for Vocations Sunday – or for a Vocations-themed service at any time

Invite a guest preacher

Invite someone to preach who has been recently ordained or licensed, or who is in training. (Contact the DVO dvo@stalbans.anglican.org for suggested names). You could consider an interview format as an alternative to a conventional sermon.

Choose suitable hymns, prayers and liturgy to support the theme

There are suggestions for all of these on the Vocations Sunday page of the Church of England website which now has its own dedicated domain name:

www.vocationsunday.org

Put an article in your magazine or pew sheet

There is an excellent article by Christina Rees on the C of E website, and a shorter one by Stephen Ferns which might fit onto your pew sheet.

Ask your home groups to think about 'Calling'

There is material for small group study on the website, including Bible Study notes by Dennis Stamps

Vocations – resources

Websites

(NB most of these websites contain links to each other so it doesn't matter much where you start.)

The **St Albans Diocese** website has a brief section on Vocations. From the Home page go to 'Resources' then 'Developing People and Parishes'

<http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/Resources/Developing-People-and-Parishes/Vocation>

The 'Resources and courses' link from this page takes you through to some useful external pages, some of which are also included below. It also has details of our own course 'Seeking the Way' which runs on three Saturdays in the autumn.

The **Church of England** website has a Vocations section with an extensive reading list and a summary of the criteria for selection for ordination. Click on 'Clergy & Office holders' at the top of the Home page then go to 'Ministry.' Here you will also find a separate Readers page (and a whole separate Readers website).

<http://www.churchofengland.org/clergy-office-holders/ministry.aspx>

'**Call waiting**' is a website specifically aimed at young vocations to ordained ministry in the Church of England. Well worth directing young people to this site.

<http://www.callwaiting.org.uk/>

Conferences and courses

In this Diocese we run an annual course, '**Seeking the Way**', for anyone considering how and where to serve God and his Church. This takes place on three Saturdays in the autumn. A leaflet and booking form are available via the Vocations page (resources and courses link) on the Diocesan website.

There is a wide range of one day and week-end conferences available nationally, offered by the Church of England, most theological colleges and other organisations such as CPAS. The best list I have found of these is on the Events page of the Call Waiting site.

<http://www.callwaiting.org.uk/events.aspx>

Vocations Team

There are two Vocations Advisers in each Archdeaconry. They are available to meet with anyone who is considering a vocation to licensed ministry, to help in their

discernment process. They may also be available to help with local parish or deanery vocations events or initiatives. If you have someone in your parish who wishes to explore their vocation to licensed ministry (ordained or Reader) please send them in the first instance to a VA who will meet with them and refer them on to the DDO or the Reader Selection Secretary.

The Diocesan Vocations Officer (DVO) is a new part-time post with a specific remit to encourage vocations, especially among young people. The DVO is available to help parishes, deaneries or any group who want to put on an event with a vocations content. Both he and the DDO are available to speak at Deanery Synods, PCC's and other Church meetings, and to preach by invitation.

Books

There is a huge amount of literature available, and an extensive reading list on the Church of England website (go to 'Vocations' then 'Books')

<http://www.churchofengland.org/media/56410/callwaiting-reading-list.pdf>

Here is a very short selection:

Francis Dewar, *Invitations - God's Calling for Everyone* (SPCK 1996)

Francis Dewar, *Called or Collared* (SPCK, 2000)

Ian Aveyard & David Muir, *Fit for the Purpose* (St John's College Extension Studies, 2001)

Liz & Andrew Barr, *Jobs for the Boys? Women who became priests* (Hodder, 2001)

Steve Croft, *Ministry in Three Dimensions* (DLT, 2008)

George Guiver (ed.), *The Fire and the Clay* (SPCK, 1993)

Cathy Rowling & Paula Gooder, *Reader ministry explored* (SPCK 2009)

And finally, if you have a question, do please get in touch!

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