

# everyday faith for churches

**Seven shifts to inspire  
Sunday to Saturday faith**



# Foreword

If we are to be a church that nurtures everyday faith, we need a renewed understanding of our identity as the church continually being gathered and sent. Too often we seem to have lost the connection between the 'doing' of gathered church and the 'being' of sent church. It is all there in the liturgy of the Eucharist.

We gather as the Body of Christ to give God glory and to grow in love and faith as we are nourished by God and sent out to nourish God's world. We do indeed need the ministry of the intercessors, the preachers, the worship leaders, the children's workers, the pastoral assistants, the Eucharistic ministers, the readers of Scripture and more, because this is about 'doing' church so that we can be sent out to 'be' the church.

We can spend a long time discussing what is lay ministry and what is discipleship and what is or isn't leadership, but what ultimately matters is how we as God's people are joining in with what God is doing Sunday to Saturday, so that among the people and places of our daily lives 'we who share Christ's body may live his risen life, and we who drink his cup bring life to others, and we whom the spirit lights give light to the world'.

For me it is all reflected in the opening words of the ordination service, which is not all about the clergy but rather about the church which is 'the Body of Christ, the people of God and the dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit'. This is about the baptismal calling of us all, 'summoned to witness to God's love and to work for the coming of his kingdom'.

The Rt Revd Rachel Treweek

Bishop of Gloucester

# What does it mean to be an Everyday Faith church?

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Since 2017 the Church of England has undertaken a concerted effort to adapt and change our culture of 'doing church' in order to release fresh imagination and energy for 'being church'. Called *Setting God's People Free*, this collective action aims to **enable the whole people of God to live out the Good News of Jesus confidently in the whole of life, Sunday to Saturday**. Hundreds of church communities have been trying out various ways to achieve this shift, focussing on what makes a real difference in supporting an everyday faith, every day.

It might sound an obvious statement to make, but these every day followers make up 98% of the Church of England. We are brilliantly served and supported by lay and ordained ministers, each called to serve the building up of the church. Yet all of us are called to serve God in and amongst the places and people that God sends us – in the 95% of our waking lives that are not spent in 'church activities'. Living out our faith in everyday life is an invitation to find and follow God in a richer way. But we have an even richer invitation: God invites us to be Christ's ambassadors (2 Cor 5:20) – to represent Christ in the places we spend our time, with the people we work alongside, share a home with, or simply meet.

This booklet offers seven shifts that have been proven to make a big difference in enabling everyday faith.



These shifts are not about adding new things, but more about doing the things we already do in a slightly different way. The seven ideas here have proved helpful to churches of all sizes and traditions, and you can introduce these shifts to your church in a variety of ways. It helps, though, to begin a conversation first with the leaders and members of your worshipping community.

This involves a simple process of:

- **SEEING**

Set time aside in a PCC discussion to ask some simple questions that will help you to find out more about where people spend their time Monday to Saturday (as well as Sunday).

- **SEEKING**

What works in one church may not work in another, but ideas have a way of sparking more ideas and leading you to find something that fits your congregation perfectly.

- **STARTING**

Choose just one or two ideas to begin with, and make sure you take time to keep talking about the difference these might be making for people.

One of the big things that some leaders and many members of congregations have discovered is that they know much less about what's going in people's Monday to Saturday lives than they thought and have shown much less interest than they imagined. So, ask people questions about where they spend their time during the week and then try to use these ideas to carry on a culture of curiosity. And don't restrict the questions or conversations to adults. How can we support our children and young people



in their challenges and opportunities? Equally, when new people come into church, rather than asking (once they've settled in) how they can help in the life of the church, why not find out first how we can get behind them?

Changing the conversations is one of the quickest ways to change the direction of a culture. You will find details on resources to help with this at [churchofengland.org/everydayfaith](https://churchofengland.org/everydayfaith), including information about **The Big Church Survey**, launching Easter 2020, to gather insights into how your worshipping community continues to seek and serve God all week.

To support church use of Everyday Faith, we suggest picking a month that fits well with your church. There are some times of the year when a new start might help; and there are key points where this might work well. You could use Everyday Faith on Plough Sunday in January, traditionally the time of year to ask for God's blessing on our labours. Pentecost Sunday highlights us being sent out as God's people in the power of the Spirit. And September, as 'back to school' time, is always a fresh start. Service outlines are available for these times at [churchofengland.org/everydayfaith](https://churchofengland.org/everydayfaith).

So, wherever you are on the journey – whether you're looking for ways your church could open the doors of people's imagination, or for ways of ensuring that the vision becomes a reality over the long haul – you'll find something to help you. Of course, there are other ideas out there, so please share what you've been trying and learning with others in your community, diocese and more widely through social media – tag it as **#EverydayFaith** and help to get our big conversation rolling.



# Visiting people in context

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Many clergy have found that the single most helpful action they can take to encourage a culture of everyday faith is visiting a church member in their workplace. This is one of the most useful ways of affirming wider Christian vocations. It also helps clergy see where their congregation are during the week – what it's like, and the people they're with.

Not only does this honour the people being visited, it can also spark completely different kinds of conversations, build a closer relationship with the person visited and almost always adds to the store of illustrations and applications for sermons! It's also a great thing to share on your social media and webpages.

Visiting this way does require clergy in particular to adjust their time, but you can begin small – once every six weeks or so. You may find it's so rewarding that you increase the frequency. Of course, anyone with some time can do this – curates, wardens, readers, deacons, homegroup leaders, any member of the congregation really.



Mark is a vicar of two rural churches. Quite a few people in his church commute to and from work; and recently he spent some time taking this journey with them. Reflecting on this gave him lots of food for thought for his own ministry role: "I want people in my church to be active and involved, to join in with the great things we have going on. What I see, though, is that people can't always do this. They have a lot going on in their lives, and this is where God is using them. So how do I as their pastor honour that? How do I find the resources to support them in their everyday faith?"

# Praying for Everyday Faith

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Prayers for everyday life are as important as praying every day. When praying changes, so do hearts. Of course, you can integrate a whole-life perspective into any element of a Sunday service but the intercessions is the most obvious moment: praying for people in particular sectors, week by week, or for occupations, or school activities that people in your church are involved in; perhaps beginning with successive letters of the alphabet – ‘D’ is for dad, driver, dentist, dancer, designer, design and technology lessons.

Similarly, think about widening prayers for people’s pressing needs to include their missional opportunities, too – not just praying for a nurse under pressure in the busier winter months but also how they might draw on God’s resources and find ways to minister grace and love to colleagues as well as patients. Or you can pray for someone to have patience with a difficult boss and how they might change the culture of their office; or pray for a young person in a football team that the way they go about things will speak of their Christian faith. Don’t just pray for a grandparent’s health but also that they might find ways to show and share their trust in Jesus with their grandchildren.

Share these prayers on your website and social feeds. If you are able, why not tag in some of the local connections that fit with each theme?



# This Time Tomorrow

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We are all probably aware that being followers of Jesus isn't confined to church activities. Most of us will pray or think about our faith at some point during the day. TTT (as most come to call it) is a two- or three-minute interview with someone in a congregation, in a Sunday or midweek service, about where they will be this time tomorrow. It's helpful to follow three simple questions:

- Where they will be?
- What challenges and opportunities they face?
- How can we pray for them?

It doesn't have to be people in big jobs and to begin with probably shouldn't be. And it shouldn't just be adults. Some people have found it helpful to find a person in the congregation to lead this time – and to help find the people to interview.

Your TTT slot can also be a useful story for social media. Most people will prepare their responses in advance so these can be posted online, ideally with a photo in the place they are discussing. Of course, for some people this might be sensitive, so do check beforehand and adapt answers for a public context. There are all kinds of variations on this: Selfie of the Week (people taking selfies of themselves in their context); filming your TTT volunteers on a phone; or the Big Selfie Project, where lots of people are asked to bring selfies from the past week into church.

Again, this values the everyday context and generates different kinds of conversations after the service and in groups.



This Time Tomorrow has proved to be the single most impactful congregational action a leader can take at the beginning of a journey to better enable Everyday Faith.



When Anne's church started doing *This Time Tomorrow*, Sophie, a dentist, shared her story of fixing teeth but also of caring for members of her team in times of great need, telling people about her faith when they asked what she did at the weekend, and praying with colleagues and patients (with their permission).

Anne says, "When Sophie shared her story, during our morning service in our *This Time Tomorrow* slot, we were all encouraged because she has been able to gently share how we can speak of our trust in Jesus with our colleagues at work, in a non-threatening way."



# What's noticed on notice boards or caught on the web?

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Notice boards tell the congregation what's seen to be important. Websites tell the world! What's there? Information about church-based activities? Always. Information about overseas mission? Sometimes. This is important, but in telling this we miss out on letting people know that people in our churches are out and about Sunday to Saturday – an everyday faith church, living out the good news Jesus brings as grandparents, shop workers, geography students, cleaners, vets.

Why not include a map of where the congregation spend time during the week on your church notice board or website – places of work, homes, schools, colleges.

You don't need to include the detail, but something that represents how people are serving their communities in their daily lives as well as in organised church projects. Or you could display a Prayer for the Week – included in the notice sheet – that focusses on a particular group of people.



## Commissioning all God's people

Many churches commission people for ministries in the church, but it's enormously powerful to also commission people for ministries beyond the church: for people changing jobs, or taking up new responsibilities in the community, or starting the school or university year, or moving into retirement.

Some do it on an ad hoc basis; some bigger churches have done this quarterly, praying for larger groups of people at the same time. It is a reminder to everyone that where God has placed us is important.

Part of the Everyday Faith journey includes celebrating what God has shown people who have found and followed him in their everyday lives.



The first Sunday in September the leaders of St Peter's ask all the school children of the church to come to worship with their school backpacks.

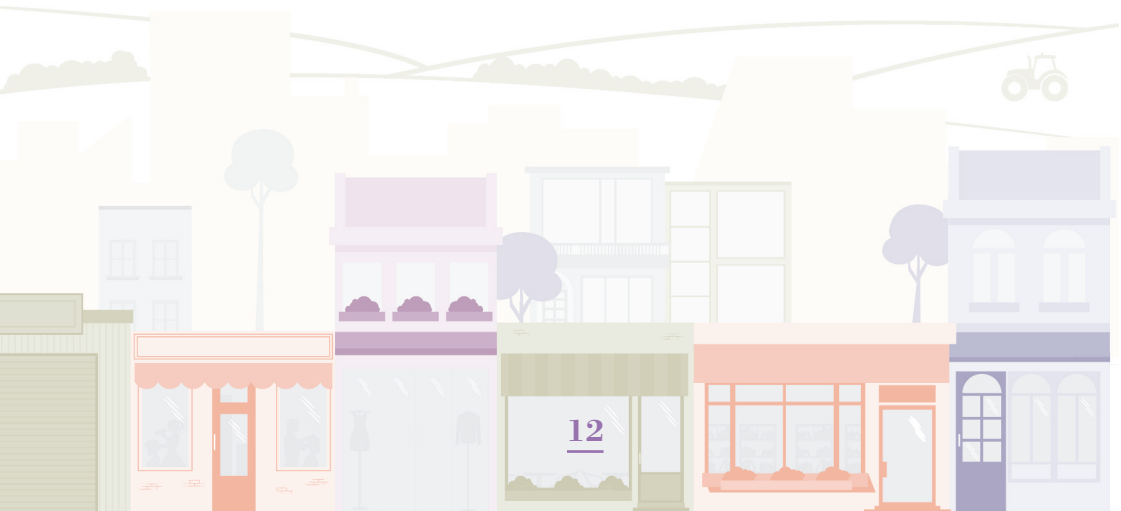
The congregation pray for all the children, sending them to their schools to be loving ambassadors of Christ.

The children love being the centre of attention. Each child's backpack is blessed for the school year ahead; and the children are all given a little card with a short Bible passage to carry with them in their bag throughout the year.

# Preaching matters

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Preaching is one of the most significant ways that churches have been able to sustain their attention to what's going on throughout the week. This is not because they have focused on certain topics, but rather that preachers – ordained or lay ministers – have maintained an everyday focus: they preach from a Bible that is concerned about all of life, about a God who is concerned about all of life, to a people who are called to 'go in peace, to love and serve the Lord' in all of life.



# Worship with the everyday in mind

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The shape of Anglican worship is designed to celebrate God in the midst of our everyday lives, help us to reflect on where we might have missed or messed up our calling as God's people, and send us out to serve God as Christ's people, fed by both the Eucharist and the word of God in Scripture.

Whatever our tradition, and whatever our intention, we don't always help people to make the connections that might really enable our witness as the church sent to 'bring life to others' and 'give light to the world'. What might help this?

Many of the shifts above will help to make these connections. It is also worth thinking about the images we use on service sheets and screens, or the banners or posters that people notice in worship spaces. Do people see the places and roles we are sent to serve in?

For liturgical services there are three areas where the resources of Common Worship may be supplemented to help emphasise our calling to an everyday faith, namely gathering, offertory and dismissal. It helps to think through this use intentionally, as there is a risk that the Common Worship liturgical resources tend to assume the link between our lives in the world and our shared corporate worship, rather than making it explicit. You can find links to further resources on shaping worship for everyday faith at [churchofengland.org/everydayfaith](https://churchofengland.org/everydayfaith).

Get creative and be specific. This prayer, written by Andy Stinton, is based on Psalm 107:1-3 as a gathering liturgy for the context he ministers in:

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,  
**his love endures for ever.**

Let the redeemed of God share their story,  
**for he has set us free.**

From north and south, east and west,  
**God calls his people to come.**

From office and school, factory and field,  
**God calls his people to come.**

From site and plant, hospital and home,  
**God calls his people to come.**

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,  
**his love endures for ever.**

*Gathered to be Sent: Worship that Connects  
with Everyday Faith (Grove Booklets).*



# Embedding the changes

None of the ideas above are instant fixes; none will change the culture overnight. It takes time and prayerful persistence to create a culture that helps people live out their daily lives more consciously with Christ. With that in mind, leaders have looked for ways to make sure they don't let it slide off their agenda. Consider:

- Regular reviews of a Sunday to Saturday focus at the PCC.
- Popping reminders in diaries, so ideas don't slip off priorities and thinking.
- Giving someone in the church – a warden or friend – permission to ask how the church is getting on with these changes.
- Making sure people's Sunday to Saturday ministry is included in prayer – in the Daily Offices and in team meetings.

Keep up to date by signing up at [churchofengland.org/everydayfaith](https://churchofengland.org/everydayfaith), and look out for the resources that your diocese provides to support everyday faith.

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**#EverydayFaith** is a Church of England discipleship campaign from Setting God's People Free, which aims to enable the whole people of God to live out the Good News of Jesus confidently in all of life, Sunday to Saturday.

Setting God's People Free is part of the Church of England's Renewal and Reform programme, aimed at helping us become a growing Church for all people and all places. For more information, visit [churchofengland.org/about/renewal-reform](https://churchofengland.org/about/renewal-reform).



# Explore God in everyday life with #EverydayFaith

**#EverydayFaith** invites you on a journey of living faithfully, hopefully and lovingly as a Christian in the 21st century.

A new booklet from Church House Publishing offers 21 daily Bible reflections to inspire you to find and follow God in the ordinary – and perhaps extraordinary – stuff of life. It includes real life stories of how others have found God at work in their lives, and a simple pattern of prayer to help you pause and be aware of God.



Find out more and join in at  
[churchofengland.org/everydayfaith](http://churchofengland.org/everydayfaith)

