



# Am I <sup>></sup> called?

ILLUMINATE GUIDE



a partnership

between The Light  
College & Myriad

Myriad inspires and  
serves everyday  
people to form new  
church communities

This guide will provide: principles for considering a calling to planting; action steps for progressing your calling to planting.



**Am I called to  
start a new  
church  
community?**

Are you in the process of figuring out whether God may be calling you to plant or start something new – could that be a new form of church? You might find the following questions helpful to use in your process of discernment:

## **Yearning**

New church communities often grow from an awareness that certain groups of people are not connecting with the existing church expression in that area.

**Have you become increasingly aware of a yearning for a group of people who are not connecting with, or are unable to access existing forms of church?**

**Do you imagine what church could look like for a new group of people outside of the existing church?**

## **Life experience**

God prepares people to lead new church communities in very different ways: Many people use skills that they have learned in a secular workplace, others have gained leadership experience within their existing church. For some planters, the best qualification they have is life experience or a deep knowledge and understanding of a place, having lived there for many years. While some planters have educational or theological qualifications, it is not a pre-requisite.

**What is in your story that may have prepared you to be someone God could be calling to lead a new church community?**

## **Hearing the voice of God**

The call to start a new church community may well have come from a sense of God speaking to you: a stirring in your heart. This may be through a feeling of a deep connection with a place or community, or through recognising the still quiet whisper of God.

**In what ways has God spoken to you or nudged you? Are there particular ways God has confirmed this to you or others?**

## **Team**

Planting a new church community will need more than a lone planter. You may be the one who God has initially inspired but it will be essential for you together team around you.

**Are you someone who is able to gather a team?**

# **Discerning with others**

The discernment journey may begin alone but discerning a calling is ultimately something that takes place in community with others. An essential part of discerning the call to lead a new church community, is to share that calling with your church leader or somebody in oversight.

As you meet with this person, you might like to discuss the following principles:

### **Champion**

Supportive oversight from others in church leadership is one of the most important confirmations of a calling to lead a new Christian community. Is there a leader who is willing to 'champion' the potential new church community?

### **Confirmation**

Your champion or oversight minister will know you and will have seen you serve in different ways in the church community. They have an essential role in confirming if they, and others in the church, see the gifts and God-given potential in you to be able to fulfil this calling.

### **Capacity**

Embarking upon the journey to start a new church community, even when being done with others, is demanding. It will take time, energy and emotional input (Luke 14.28). Consider the potential impact on family and work life and reflect on how God is making it possible for you to undertake this role.

### **Care**

Discerning your calling to plant a new church community is only the beginning: Having relationships and structures in place that will support you throughout the planting journey will be essential. Talk about what that support could look like in your context.

Illuminate will provide a wealth of resources and support to equip you for your planting journey.

# What should I do next?

The process of discernment should develop in the context of prayer. As you begin to experience the first 'nudges' of vision or imagination for a new church community, pray that God would give you His vision and imagination for what could be. Ask God to reveal to you how your story, your experience and your gifts could be used to fulfil God's mission in this place.

## **Who could you invite to pray with you to hear the call of God for your area?**

Arrange a meeting with your church leader. You might like to use the section 'Discerning with others'.

If your church leader agrees that you should explore planting further, contact illuminate and they will guide you in the next steps to take. Here are some questions to help you with your discernment as you think and pray:

### **Context and Calling**

What has led you to this point? What is your motivation/passion? What has God been showing you recently? What is your long term plan?

## **Conviction**

What do you sense God is saying about the group of people you want to build church with?

## **Commitment to team**

How do you feel about gathering team for this?  
Are you accustomed to developing things alone or in a team - what challenges may this pose for you?

## **Champions**

Who are the people around you that may champion or support you in this? Who are the people who would commit to start praying about this?

## **Capacity**

Do you have the capacity for starting something new? Are there things you need to stop doing to allow this to happen? How do you feel about joining a learning community with others on a similar journey? The illuminate web page will give you a better idea of the commitment needed to join your local hub.

## **Competency**

What life skills and experience do you bring with you?

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# Am I ready?

The minimum requirement at this stage is three things:

Do you have a firm conviction to start a new church community?

Are you committed to gathering a team to do this?

Do you have someone to champion you and bring oversight from your church?

Arrange a meeting with your church leader / champion. Use the section 'Discerning with others?' and talk and pray through the sections.

If your church leader agrees that you should explore planting further, please contact Sally Dowell at illuminate

**[illuminate@lightcollege@ac.uk](mailto:illuminate@lightcollege@ac.uk)**

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## Contact Illuminate



[www.lightcollege.ac.uk/illuminate](http://www.lightcollege.ac.uk/illuminate)



[illuminate@lightcollege.ac.uk](mailto:illuminate@lightcollege.ac.uk)



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