



# 50 Ways to *Cultivate a Culture of Call*

## Communication

### *During Worship*

1. At least once a year, preach on responding to God's [call](#). Include Biblical examples, but also be transparent about your own call story.
2. Use the ["Call - Listening for God's Voice in Everyday Life"](#) sermon series curriculum during worship.
3. Download [Worship Resources from GBHEM](#) - including liturgy, sermon starters, reflection questions, video stories, and bulletin inserts.
4. Distinguish between ministry and vocational ministry. All Christians are called to minister, and some are called to vocational ministry.
5. Recognize and celebrate lay involvement as ministry, not volunteer work, in sermons and media.
6. Use the [Culture of Call Children's Message](#) during worship to connect with kids about being called.
7. Utilize church communications (social media, newsletters, devotionals, bulletins, etc.) to reinforce call - define it, celebrate those who have answered the call, encourage others to consider God's call on their lives. Describe the various forms of Christian service in your local church.
8. Provide [information](#) about the various ministry tracks in the UMC.

### *Within Relationships*

9. Actively seek out leaders and ask, "Have you considered if God has something in mind for you in ministry?"
10. Identify and name the gifts you see in your children, youth, and young adults.
11. Invite speakers, storytellers, and other pastors/ministers to speak with those called to vocational ministry.
12. Connect with parents of kid leaders, and equip them to encourage children in ministry. This requires conversations about extracurricular priorities.
13. Ask Children and Youth Ministries leaders to be your eyes and ears during their programming and identify young leaders.
14. Have ["5 Cups of Coffee"](#) with your leaders, who may feel called to vocational ministry.

### *During Other Programming*

15. Use your Confirmation class as an opportunity to ask the question, "What will you do with your life in the light of your faith?"
16. Implement the [Mission:Called](#) Children's Vacation Bible School that focuses on God's call on our lives.
17. Encourage adult Small Groups and Sunday School classes to use curriculum that focuses on a call to ministry and service (two examples: [Live Your Calling](#) by Kevin and Kay Marie Brennfleck; [Serving from the Heart](#) by Carol Cartmill).
18. Perform a [Self-Audit](#) with some leaders in your congregation to see how you're doing.

## Affirmation

19. Every year, identify certain people whom you believe God may be calling to some form of Christian service. Connect with these people on a personal level and offer to mentor them.
20. Conduct an all-church [Spiritual Gifts Assessment](#) in conjunction with a sermon series on the Body of Christ and the various areas of ministry. Offer realistic ways for people to practice their spiritual gifts in your context.
21. Recognize that some are called to vocational ministry, while others are called to lay ministry. Practice discernment on a case-by-case basis; help steer those called to vocational ministry to do so, and steer those called to lay ministry to that.
22. Share the [FTELeaders Youtube Discernment and Vocation Playlist](#) to those exploring vocational ministry.
23. Emphasize spiritual formation and discipleship as leaders explore their call.
24. Send care packages and cards on birthdays and around the holidays to your key leaders, seminary students, or others discerning ministry. Appreciate those in ministry with you!
25. Name specific ways you appreciate your leaders; identify where they excel, and let them know through recognition or a letter.
26. Support your church's current seminary students by praying for them, sending letters or e-mails, and offering opportunities to do ministry when they are back in town. If there is no one in seminary from your church, reach out to a nearby seminary and encourage current students anyway!
27. Pray with and for your current leaders in ministry with you.
28. Pray for your future leaders in ministry with you.
29. Share information about lay ministry opportunities: lay servants, lay speaker, certified lay minister, deaconesses and home missionaries, certification in specialized ministry.
30. Keep a few copies of [The Christian as Minister](#), written for ministry candidates, and give them to those who are discerning their call.
31. As you continue encouraging your discerning leaders, be sure they (and you!) are aware of the [credentialing steps](#) necessary for vocational ministry in the GPUMC.

## Empowerment

32. Provide a variety of ministry opportunities for those who are exploring their call to ministry.
33. Exhibit a gracious spirit that provides a safety net and encouragement to innovative leaders experimenting in their ministries. Release them to learn and dream!
34. Be willing to let go and allow others to take on ministry responsibilities - delegate!
35. Invest your time and energy in developing your leaders.
36. Offer youth unpaid internship opportunities and train them to succeed.
37. Intentionally invite lay people to serve up front in weekly worship services. Reading scripture, leading the kids' message, serving communion, and participating in the music ministries are great first steps.
38. Empower others to speak up when they suspect leaders are called to vocational ministry.
39. Build your own in-house pulpit supply with lay servants and leaders called to vocational ministry.

### *Opportunities for Youth*

40. Send your youth group to the [OneEvent](#) or [Summer Camp](#).
41. Encourage particularly gifted youth to serve as a member of [Conference Council on Youth Ministries](#).

\*Links to all of these resources can be found at [www.greatplainsumc.org/nurturingcall](http://www.greatplainsumc.org/nurturingcall).\*

42. Include a [Conference Confirmation Rally](#) in your Confirmation program, which includes “Deep Student Leadership Training.”

#### *Opportunities for Young Adults*

43. Encourage college students to apply for a [Summer College Internship](#) through the GPUMC.
44. Encourage discerning young adults to attend [Exploration](#).
45. Encourage young innovative people to apply for [Spark](#) grant to begin a new ministry in your local church.
46. Inform ethnic minority college and/or seminary students about the [Journey Toward Ordained Ministry](#) grant and leadership development experience.
47. Send your gifted young speakers to the [Young Preachers Festival](#) to hone in on their preaching skills.

#### *Opportunities for Adults of All Ages*

48. Advertise and offer local and conference-level [service opportunities](#).
49. Send your church’s leaders in all areas to [Leadership Institute](#).
50. As a leader becomes more convinced of his/her call to vocational ministry, connect him/her to a [Candidacy Summit](#), offered twice a year.

For more information about ways to cultivate a culture of Call or exploring a call to ministry, contact:

Rev. Ashlee Alley Crawford

Clergy Recruitment and Development Coordinator

Great Plains UMC

[aalleycrawford@greatplainsumc.org](mailto:aalleycrawford@greatplainsumc.org)

785-414-4216

[www.greatplainsumc.org/exploringcall](http://www.greatplainsumc.org/exploringcall)