



How to ...

Start a cafechurch

What is cafechurch?

It's church, but not as you know it. It's the fresh expression of community in coffee shops or your own venue dealing with issues from a faith perspective.

At cafechurch you'll tackle issues such as fair trade, the environment, stress, adoption, parenting, debt and divorce, together with quizzes, interviews, round table discussions, live music with great coffee and great chat!

The cafechurch network offers training, advice and further practical information via its website: www.cafechurch.net

Three keys to a good start

It is tempting to launch immediately into the 'how to' practicalities when starting a cafechurch, but it helps to take a step back and consider the answers to the following questions:

1. Why do we want to start a cafechurch?

Cafechurch is about meeting people where they already are – starting from there and building friendships that allow people to be embraced by God. Forming transformational relationships is at the heart of why we do cafechurch.

2. Who are we seeking to connect with?

Are you seeking to connect with people who are 'un-churched', 'de-churched', 'semi-churched', 'post-churched', or 'anti-church'? (Stuart Murray, Post Christendom). You may not view people in these terms, but the way you run cafechurch will affect which people you draw.

3. Do we have the resources we need?

Does your team or the church need re-envisioning or further training? Do you have the right people on the team?

Being as specific as possible in answering these questions, from the word go, helps to build a solid foundation from which to grow cafechurch.

How to welcome people

- A welcome is different to a greeting. A greeting is saying 'Hello, how are you?' but a welcome goes further than that and makes someone feel more at ease.
- Here are some tips to help you make people feel welcome at your cafechurch:
- Pray together as a team before your event begins. This sets the best possible tone for everyone involved and God will act on your prayers!
- Have one or two welcomers at the door to greet people
- Ensure that welcomers have others available to direct guests to sit with – especially those who arrive on their own
- If you see people on their own, invite them to sit with you and your friends

- Having a quiz available on the tables at the beginning allows people who do not necessarily know each other to engage in conversation in a relaxed way
- Have table hosts – they can make sure everyone has the opportunity to engage in conversation
- Offer to get people their refreshments
- Make follow up cards available, so people know that you are interested in their needs and want to keep in touch.

Keep it fresh

Whether you have just started running cafechurch events or have been doing it for years, a big challenge is to keep it fresh. Here are some tips:

Pray; it matters to God that you talk with him. He longs to bring people to himself. Praying by yourself and with others is going to open up opportunities and bless you no end.

Meet outside of cafechurch events; organise times outside cafechurch events when you get together with team and with others who come to cafechurch. This could include meals together, trips out, Bible study or helping out with a local project.

Reward and celebrate; even the smallest milestone should be celebrated and successes noted and rewarded. Plan what milestones might be marked and keep things realistic – e.g. a staff member asks us what this is all about, someone asks us to pray for them, we each invite one person to the next event.

Make sure everyone in the team can feedback easily; everyone's ideas and suggestions matter. Create relaxed opportunities for constructive feedback and new ideas. Review what you are doing and how you are doing it, as a team. Make sure you reward and celebrate though, to avoid it feeling like a chore.

Ask people around you for suggestions; if you are in a coffee shop, why not ask staff what subjects they would like to talk about? Ask guests the same thing.

Mix & match; if you usually have a talk or a musician, try something else instead. Do something fun such as an 'open mic' night.

Bear one another's burdens; Galatians 6:2 says 'Bear one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ.' Share problems, difficulties, joys and hopes as a team and be prepared to help each other out.

Further Information

www.cafechurch.net

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