

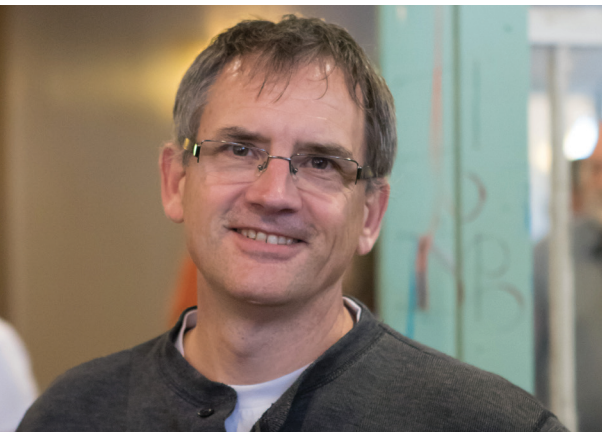


CANADIAN
BAPTISTS
of Ontario
and Quebec

HOW TO START A *CAFÉCHURCH*



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What is cafechurch?

It's church, *but not as you know it.*

cafechurch is coffee with a conscience. 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, great coffee and great chat!

Find a welcome for everyone—whether a church-goer or not!

"I love when a church explores Gospel-shaped ways of living faithfully present in their community. *Cafechurch* could be a beautiful and innovative way for your church to re-imagine ministry for this time and in your place."

Dallas Friesen
Indwell, Hamilton, ON





Three keys to a good start

As we encourage churches to start running *cafechurch*, we seek to emphasize the importance of starting well. The temptation is to immediately launch into the how-to practicalities, but it helps to take a step back and consider the answers to the following questions:



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*.



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.



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 from 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.
- **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 give 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.



Connecting with us

For more information about *cafechurch*, connect with us!

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In 2005 Cid Latty started a *cafechurch* in a High Street coffee shop. This event became so successful that he was given permission to put a *cafechurch* in every available store in the UK. Over the next ten years he helped over a hundred churches start cafe churches all over the UK. Coupled with this he served in pastoral ministry for 15 years with the Baptist Union of Great Britain before joining CBOQ as the Congregational Development Associate.





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