

# THE BRIDGE Contact

## **How to: Lead Contact Groups**

### **Contact Groups: *Places of widening relationships***

Contact Groups are an expression of church, made up of a mixture of those with faith, and those who are exploring faith. The groups are organised for, and informed by being relevant to those exploring faith. As such, they cover a wide range of contexts and often don't seem very traditionally 'churchy'. There may be a range of 'preliminary' activities or groups which may feed into or emerge into contact groups which help people explore faith. Contact groups begin with around 3-6 Christians, and over time includes others who are warm to finding out about Jesus. They meet in a variety of ways, places and frequency depending on what is relevant to those who are not Christians.

Below are a list of principles for leading Contact groups and possibilities for how they might look:

#### Principles

- Missional - these groups are set up for the purpose of helping people explore the Christian faith (less Christians per group)
- Relevant, accessible and flexible
- Creative - exploring new shared mission ventures
- Community and Bible used along the way appropriately
- Hospitality is important!
- May evolve into a Connect Group as people grow in faith

#### Contact Leaders:

- Set a culture of *widening relationships*
- Look for what the Spirit is doing in mission, where the new frontiers and connections are
- Think outside the box for what 'church' may look like
- Create places where faith can be explored; bible reading and prayer which is accessible and relevant to those exploring.
- Encourage and facilitate hospitality; create sustainable patterns of community
- Maintains sustainability (lightweight) and looks for ways to grow and multiply the group

- Engages with a Community, and encourages group members to do the same as becomes appropriate.
- Is accountable to the BLT and is huddled regularly

Possibilities (how it might look):

- Follow the [Godsend](#) app as a starting point for prayerfully discovering the missional opportunities God is giving you
- Use the [7P's of finding](#), defining and refining your missional focus. (in the Discipleship in a nutshell booklet)
- Follow the [6 Rhythms](#) to make disciples: 1. Know the Story, 2. Listen, 3. Celebrate, 4. Eat, 5. Bless, 6. ReCreate.
- [Discovery Bible Study](#). What's God saying? What are we going to do about it?

Example Contact Groups:

- Joining a sports team (or any other social grouping) together with the aim to love people and share faith.
- Garden of Hope, joining the plan for mission there.
- Focus on a school, club, library, coffee shop or other place of peace, becoming regulars who are missionaries in that space..
- Connecting to an existing social action project. Foodbank, Foodhub, Hope Into Action etc and praying and working towards sharing faith together in that context. ([Read Social Action and Faith Sharing by Andy Frost](#) £3.)
- Gathering people to explore faith using Alpha, Story of God, The Chosen or other relevant tools.
- Connect to an existing church event or project as prayer and mission support.
- And many more ideas you have or Holy Spirit is waiting to reveal...