

## How to grow our church

### Principles of Growing Churches for All

No. 12: A Heart for the Lost

What does the word 'evangelism' bring to mind? Probably more guilt than excitement!! While most Christians would agree that it's something we should be doing, they would also admit that we don't do it very well.

In describing the early church, alongside worship, discipleship, community and service, Luke says, 'And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved' (Acts 2: 42-47). Evangelism was a natural outflow of their life together: 'If the church exists to live and proclaim the kingdom of God and the lordship of Christ, then everything the church can have an evangelistic dimension' (Graham Tomlin, *The Provocative Church*).



The success of the Alpha Course over recent years bears this out! Today people become Christians primarily by first belonging to a Christian group or community and then believing in God, rather than the other way round. Therefore, the whole Christian community has a part to play in sharing the good news, as well as those gifted in evangelism.

If we want to be intentional as a church about sharing a heart for the lost, think about the following questions:

- Does our church have a place for searchers to explore and ask questions, using Alpha or something similar?
- In what ways do we help people to share their faith with others?
- Having made contact with seekers, how do attract them to join a nurture course?
- Does our current course start far enough back, in terms of the questions that people are asking?
- To what extent are people comfortable in inviting friends to Sunday worship?
- What is our strategy to enable new Christians to become part of the church and grow spiritually?

*From a series, 'Principles of Growing Churches for All'.  
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**The Son came out from the Father  
to help us to come out from the world;  
He descended to us to enable us to ascend to him.**

Anthony of Padua