

Enjoy these sample pages from:

Dynamic Adventure

A Guide to starting and Shaping Missional Churches



COMMUNITAS
— International —

Christian Associates International, Inc.

dba *Communitas International*

2221 E. Arapahoe Rd #3338

Centennial, CO 80161

www.gocommunitas.org

E-mail: usoffice@gocommunitas.org

© 2017 Christian Associates International, Inc.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form without written permission from Christian Associates International.

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com The “NIV” and “New International Version” are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™

Scripture quotations marked (The Message) are from THE MESSAGE. Copyright © by Eugene H. Peterson 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002. Used by permission of NavPress. All rights reserved. Represented by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.

Cover and Graphics: Robin Renard | www.edustries.com

Design and Layout: Jeremie Malengreaux | www.edustries.com

INTRODUCTION

What you hold in your hands is not a manual full of lessons on how to effectively start and shape a church. Instead, it's a guidebook for an adventure that by nature will not conform itself to any technique or defined pathway to success. Missional church planting is an ever changing, wild, and unpredictable experience, much like the adventure of exploring a thriving city for the first time. A city has a life of its own, the complex product of countless interactions between millions of people on a daily basis. And the landscape can change quickly too. A desolate street can transform overnight into a thriving marketplace. The patrons in a café differ from hour to hour. Art exhibits change regularly. Missional church planting can be like that too, as people and circumstances often change quickly.

This guidebook is a tool designed to equip you as an explorer. To get the most out of visiting a historic city like Amsterdam, for instance, you might pick up a guidebook to read before you get there, to gain background information and know what to expect in your travels. Later you take it with you to make sense out of the sights, historic places, and cultural challenges.

A good city-guide deepens your understanding and

appreciation of what you are experiencing. But it doesn't merely show you the sights; it teaches you the skills you need to thrive in the city. It won't simply tell you where to eat; it will explain to you the city's food culture and how to find a great restaurant on your own. A good city-guide will not only tell you to walk to a specific metro stop, but it will also teach you how to navigate the nuances of the mass transit system.

That's the intention behind this guidebook. As missional church planters, many of us are beginning a journey into strange and unfamiliar territory. We want to give you the tools you need to thrive on the adventure. Toward that end we hope that you will take this guidebook with you on your journey as you explore, imagine, and discover what church could look like for the people you're meeting in your local context! And if your team has already journeyed for years and established a presence in your city as a local church, we also hope you will see this guidebook as an invaluable aid to help you more deeply engage your surroundings, mature as a faith community, and deepen your Kingdom impact.

To get the most out of this adventure, we recommend

you use this book in a specific way. The introductory material below instructs you on how to do that, so we encourage you not to simply skim across the surface but take time to grasp what we're saying. When we explore a new city, our experience is often

richer when we've studied books, websites, and travel shows prior to our arrival. In like manner, we believe your team's church planting journey will be greatly enriched by taking the time to interact with the background material we've included below.

How to use this book

1. **Walk through this guidebook with your team.** Whatever the makeup of your team - whether you're a loosely affiliated group of dreamers hoping to impact your city, a small band of pioneers intending to plant a church, or the leadership core of an established church - we strongly encourage you to walk through this guidebook together. We've specifically designed it to provoke group processing, interaction, and team building.
2. **Leverage the exercises.** We've designed learning exercises throughout the book to help you progress from gaining essential background knowledge to practically applying and evaluating what you have learned. They incorporate your own thoughts, feelings, and actions to deepen learning and provide transformational experiences. In this guidebook, you will learn new information, relate it to your own experience, and then act on that learning.

The learning exercises will be accomplished in various modes or stages: individual work, work with a mentor, partner work, small group work, and finally, through work with your team. The typical flow will go from individual or small group explorations and then flow outward to the larger team.

Symbols for Learning Exercises:



Personal learning exercise



Mentor learning exercise



Partner learning exercise



Small group learning exercise



Team learning exercise

We recognize that team sizes vary. If your team is larger than four people, when the exercises instruct you to work in small groups, break up into groups of four or less. If your team is fewer than four people, do all "small group" activities as a team. Groups need to be smaller than four so everyone gives input. Research shows that size and physical space matter for small group learning. We recommend you sit in circles for small group work.

You will find a list of supplies that you will need to have on hand at the beginning of each learning exercise. We've also included a rough estimate of the time required to complete each exercise. It is, however, only an estimate. Your time will vary depending on a variety of factors such as the number of people on your team and how deeply you engage the exercise.

For each learning exercise you will need a facilitator. This person will take responsibility for creating an atmosphere that is conducive to the learning goals by:

- Ensuring that everyone is respected.
- Allowing everyone to talk and "be heard" by the group.
- Affirming what is said; there are no correct answers to learning exercises.

3. **Start with your unique experience.** After reading the brief introduction in the next chapter, determine where the bulk of your work as a group, team, or church is needed. Plan to spend a significant amount of time digging into and working with the contents in that chapter.

However, because all of the dynamics you'll be exploring are present at each point in a church plant, also plan to work through the other chapters. Pick and choose exercises as they seem relevant to your group.

4. **Complete the Missional Action Plan.** Each chapter concludes with a special debriefing exercise – MAP It! – to guide your team to turn your learning into actionable plans. Follow the instructions to develop your team's Missional Action Plan at the end of the book. This tool is meant to be flexible and to serve you and your team. We recognize that every team is at a different stage of development, so the dynamic that best describes where you are will likely have the most action points. But each dynamic can also have one that is appropriate for your current experience. Try to make these action points as concrete as possible, including deadlines and areas of accountability.
5. **Journal your experience.** At the end of each chapter we've included a few blank pages intended as a space for you to reflect on what you've learned in the chapter. Write down whatever is important to you: notes on key concepts, areas to investigate further, actions you need to take, etc.
6. **Find a coach/mentor.** An experienced coach can be an invaluable asset to you and your team as you work through this material. *Communitas* provides coaching to all of its project teams, as do other church planting organizations. Consult with your network or denomination and see what help is available. Or reach out to *Communitas* - we'd love to talk with you. Coaching and mentoring is often available in person or online.