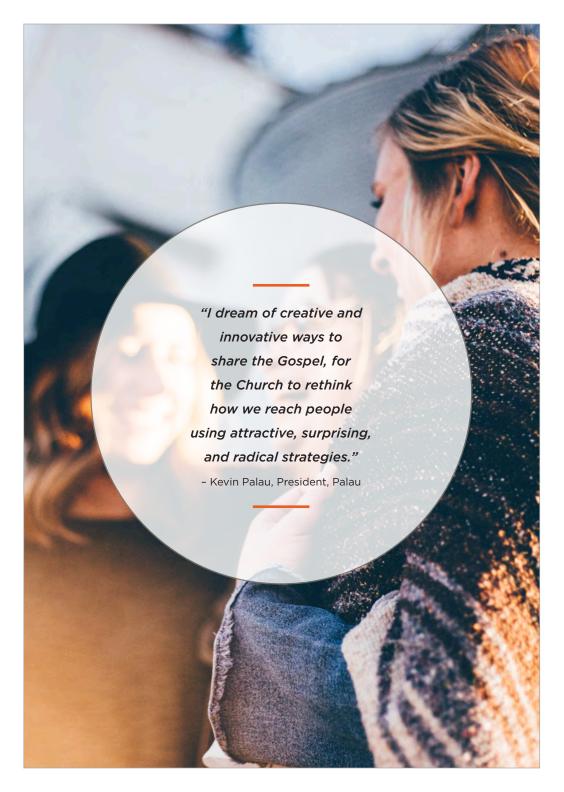


**EVANGELISM TEAMS** 



## WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



At Palau, we are passionate about accelerating evangelism. We exist to proclaim the Good News, unite the Church, and impact cities for Jesus, worldwide.

For more than 60 years, we've had the great privilege of sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ throughout the world in many different ways. By God's grace, we have witnessed millions of people come to Christ.

We believe we are **better together**. We want to support and encourage local churches and leaders as they work in collaboration, and to see evangelism flourish across our cities, towns, and regions as the message of God's hope is spread!

<sup>&</sup>quot;It's through working together as one increasingly unified church — in the village, town or city. That's our Gospel witness and it rings clearer and truer when we're together."

<sup>-</sup> Andrew Palau, Evangelist, Palau



## **EVANGELISM TEAMS**

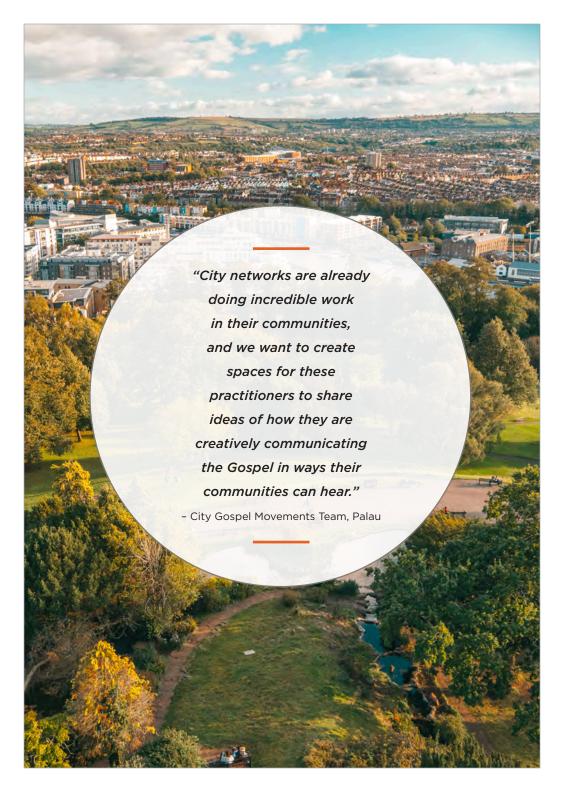
Evangelism Teams (E-Teams) is one of the strategies that we use to help city, town, and regional movements guide their passion for evangelism toward collaborative action. Through this, we are seeking to build a culture of Gospel conversations in every city and region.

#### → What is an E-Team?

An E-Team is a **strategic group of leaders** in a city, town, and region who are **passionate about evangelism** and ready to act as a catalyst to **keep evangelism** a **central part** of the ongoing Gospel Movement. The group is made up of church and non-profit leaders, and other people of influence.

<sup>&</sup>quot;Communicating the message of the Gospel in culturally relevant ways is necessary to the flourishing of our cities. We experience a renewed conviction and enthusiasm for sharing the Gospel in our own city of Portland, Oregon. Through passing on what we have been learning, we hope to elevate the conversation on evangelism in a citywide movement."

<sup>-</sup> Kevin Palau, President, Palau





# A WORD ABOUT EVANGELISM AND CITY GOSPEL MOVEMENTS

E-Teams function as a catalyst, increasing collaboration across the local church so that sharing the Good News is prioritised across cities, towns, and regions. But before telling you more about the history of E-Teams and sharing examples of the positive impact they are having, let's lay down a couple of definitions:

# → What do we mean by evangelism?

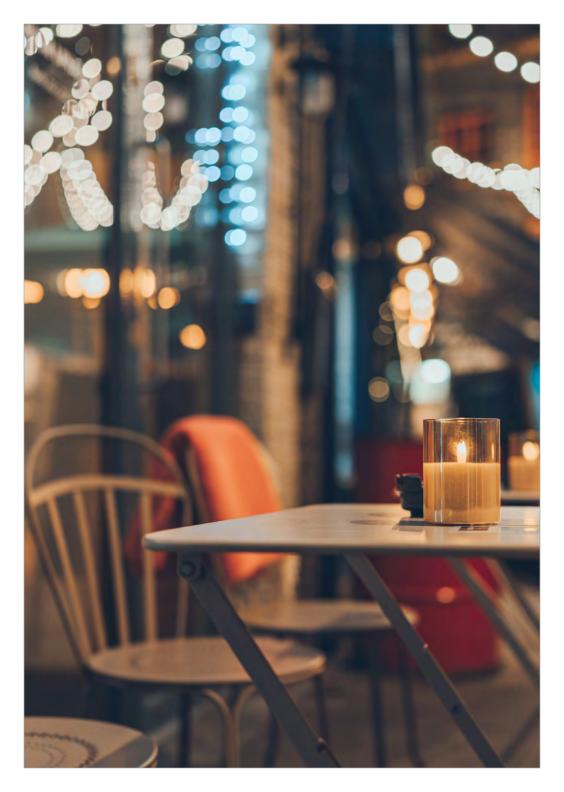
The word **evangelism** can be defined in many ways. In this resource, we define it as **communicating the Gospel message** — the life made possible for all through the death and resurrection of Jesus
Christ — with words and inviting people to respond.

While we celebrate the diversity of what this can look like, for the sake of this discussion about E-Teams, evangelism is fundamentally conversational, by which we mean using words in some form.

# → What is a Gospel Movement?

A City Gospel Movement is a **unified**, **holistic**, **sustainable effort by the citywide Church** to seek the peace and prosperity of their city, town, or region (Jeremiah 29:7).

A Gospel Movement in your city, town or region could be called a Unity Group or Churches Together Group.





## THE BACKGROUND

On a retreat in 2017, Kevin Palau and a handful of senior pastors discussed the health of the City Gospel Movement in Portland, Oregon. The group was reflecting on the last decade of working together and were dreaming about the possibilities for the coming years. The room buzzed with stories about how the Church in Portland was creating welcome boxes for children awaiting placement in foster care, furnishing the homes of refugees who were new to the city, and running clothing closets at local high schools.

But when the conversation shifted to evangelism, there was very little to talk about.

How had the momentum for evangelism slowed down to a crawl, when originally evangelism, coupled with community service had made up the rallying cry of more than 400 churches ten years ago at a Palau festival in Portland, Oregon?<sup>1</sup>

There was no regret over the last 10 years of service work. Showing up and following through on commitments had forged strong, and at times improbable relationships of trust with leaders across the city.

<sup>1</sup> You can read more about our festival model at palau.org.uk/what-we-do



The energy and passion to serve in foster care, refugee care, and school partnerships had not happened by default. Teams were formed, partnerships forged, prayers spoken, Christians mobilised, and funds raised for each of these emphases. But at the 2017 retreat, it was recognised that a city's momentum for evangelism will wane over the years in the absence of sustained persistence. It was now time to prayerfully consider a strategy to keep evangelism a central part of the Portland Gospel Movement, no matter the season.

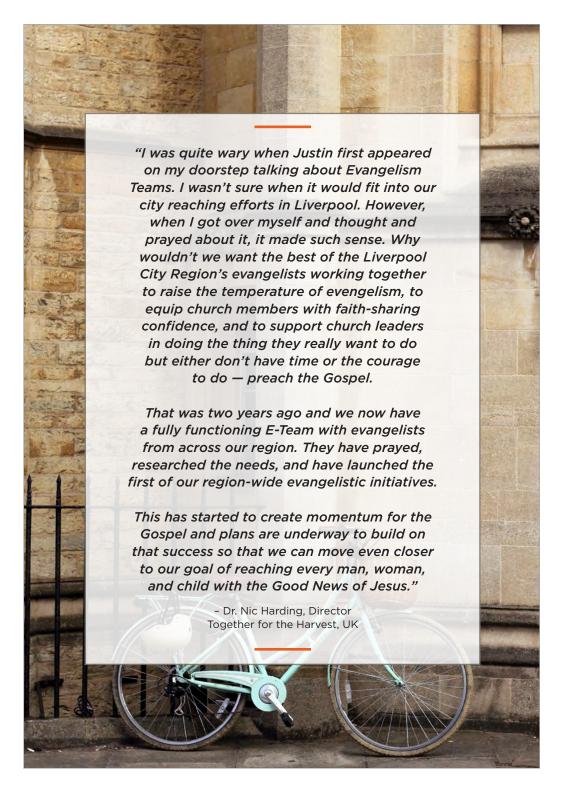
We need to be more intentional about evangelism. Can you relate?

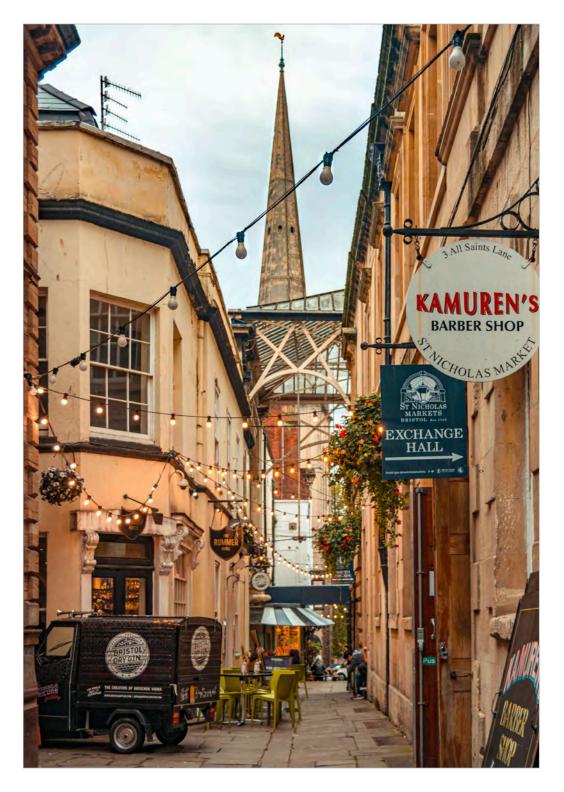
We think a diverse group of local leaders focused on evangelism can do something about this. We call these groups Evangelism Teams.

**Evangelism Teams connect leaders who are already championing evangelism** in their city, town or village. It's a place where ideas are fielded and best practices shared, but above all, God's heart is sort.

"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have."

- 1 Peter 3:15







## A PERSONAL JOURNEY

As a leader at a clearly evangelistic organisation, I'm embarrassed to say that my own passion for and commitment to evangelism waned over the years. My brother Andrew, and late father Luis, both passionate evangelists, gently tried to help me realise this drifting, but I was defensive and brushed off their comments.

I don't believe that this is unique to me, as the Talking Jesus Research revealed in the UK, 75% of believers agree that it is every Christian's responsibility to talk to non-Christians about Jesus whilst 46% also said that they don't know any non-Christians well enough to invite them to an outreach event or service. There is a disconnect between confidence and actual connection.<sup>2</sup>

# This situation may seem discouraging, but I want my personal journey to instill hope.

It took a season of the Holy Spirit working in my life to lead me to repent and come alive again. Once it became clear to me. I was shocked at how far I'd drifted without even realising it. But praise God for the ongoing and continuous work of the Spirit, because He cultivated my personal passion for Jesus and a clear desire to share my own faith. I learned that repentance of my lack of love for the lost, and a renewed passion for the lost go together.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> You can read more in the Talking Jesus Report 2022 at talkingjesus.org



I went from looking for every excuse to dodge sharing my faith, to looking forward to chances to respond to new believers at Palau festivals. Soon I was leading Alpha groups at my home church and seeing open doors everywhere. These doors of opportunity had existed before, but now I was finally seeing them.

# I believe there's a fresh move of the Spirit taking place in relation to evangelism.

Here in our home city of Portland we formed an Evangelism Team united by our desire to inspire and equip the Church toward more faith-sharing than ever before. I see cities all over the country (and the world) coming to the same conclusion: **the Spirit is living** and active, raising up more leaders eager to see evangelism thrive at the citywide, local church, and individual level.

Jesus is always calling His people to faithful, joyful, and enthusiastic witness. He's calling us to be unashamed. I'm eager to see more cities form their own Evangelism Teams, because I want cities, towns, and regions to flourish as local believers share their faith with confidence and love.



- Kevin Palau, President, Palau



#### **EVANGELISM**



#### Evangelism doesn't happen by default . . .

It takes work, perseverance, training, constant encouragement, and regular cultivation.

After decades of hosting festivals in cities around the world, we've learned that the long-term momentum of evangelism is directly in correlation to the sustained and intentional focus on evangelism from local leaders.

That's why we're passionate about encouraging, coaching, guiding, and inspiring cities, towns, and regions to keep the flame of evangelism burning bright.

Learn more about E-Teams by watching our video here.



<sup>&</sup>quot;Evangelism is not what we do, but who we are. We aren't asking [a] city or church to add another programme, but for evangelism to become who we are as a church."

<sup>-</sup> Mark Warren, Manchester, NH



## WHY START AN E-TEAM?

- We want to see lives and regions changed through the Good News of Jesus Christ
- City and regional transformation must include both word and deed if it is to be holistic and truly transformative.
- People rarely share their faith by default.
- When it comes to building a lasting culture of evangelism, local leaders must take the lead.
- A regional vision is too big to go it alone. One church can only do so much, but churches working together can accomplish greater impact in their city, town, and region.
- Local churches and leaders need ongoing equipping and inspiration in order to increase their effectiveness in reaching unchurched people. Prioritising evangelism is not easy!
- Energy rises when evangelistically passionate communities are connected and pool their collective enthusiasm, experience, and obedience to share the Gospel. The opposite is also true: the momentum for evangelism will wane without concerted prayer, strategy, resources, and teamwork.

Find out more about the motivations for starting an E-Team through a short article called 'Elevate the Conversation on Evangelism in Your City.' Access this article here.



## WHAT DOES AN E-TEAM DO?



Once an E-Team is formed, commit to meeting regularly to lay a foundation, and choose a path forward. We recommend spending time to:

- Build strong relationships get to know one another, pray, and encourage one another.
- Share details about the evangelistic efforts that are already working in your city, town, or region.
- Establish your starting point by conducting research into the current state of evangelism in your area (e.g. through in-person interviews, digital surveys, etc.).
- Discuss how your team could ensure evangelism is a central part of your Gospel Movement.
- Inspire, equip, and mobilise local churches in effective evangelism.
- Shape a plan to celebrate and accelerate evangelism in your city, town, or region.

Some of these ideas come from our experience in Portland, but we know each E-Team will develop their own ideas.



## WHAT LEADERS ARE SAYING



"No one church can effectively share the good news of Jesus with a whole city but when churches work collaboratively, they can spur each other on, share best practice and create opportunities for new Christians to join the Church family. E-teams is a fantastic opportunity for churches to build upon what they are already doing and intentionally look for opportunities to share Jesus."

- Andy Frost, Joint CEO, Gather Movement

"The Liverpool Evangelism Team has brought churches together in prayer and evangelism; and given confidence to many 'ordinary' Christians across our region in sharing the Gospel with some incredible results. Impact warning: this could be the cause of Citywide transformation! We pray it may be so."



- Mike Hindley, Liverpool Evangelism Team Leader

"Evangelism Teams are an excellent resource to the chuch collective to remind us to keep mission hot. A team who can listen to the local leaders and pull together a unified focus for local evangelism mission."



- Terry Young, Teeside Evangelism Team Leader



## **E-TEAM PROCESS**

# Forming an E-Team to reach your entire city. town, or region.

If you are a leader who wants to see a culture of evangelism thriving across your region . . .

If you're a leader who spends time investing in relationships with other church and ministry leaders in your area . . .

If you desire to see the Gospel regularly and relevantly proclaimed, and for Christians in your area equipped to share the Gospel in their everyday lives . . .

If you're passionate about working together with other local leaders and churches to see the greatest possible impact . . .

Then we'd love to hear from you!

Outlined on the next page is a general three-stage process in the formation of an E-Team. The goal of Palau is for E-Teams to be locally owned and supported Palau. We will share everything we know, but because each city, town, or region is different, each E-Team will look different.



01 | Identify Potential: Do you believe that an E-Team has the potential to flourish in your area? Is there a strong unity between churches and a widespread desire to see more Gospel collaborative leadership between churches and/or para-church groups, even beyond the subject of evangelism? If the answer is yes to any of the above, we'd love to meet with you, get to know you, and share some more.

**02** | Cast Vision: Palau will connect with a group of key local leaders from your region to share more about the history, purpose, and formation of E-Teams. If following this meeting it is clear that there is interest from these local leaders in forming an E-Team, we'll move on to the next stage.

03 | Form an E-Team: The first E-Team meeting takes place. The E-Team crafts the vision and next steps going forward. If possible, a Palau team member is present to support. We'll help support and encourage you along the way and even connect you with peers in the UK and the USA for peer learning.

# → To start the E-Team journey with us . . .

- We'd love to connect with you and hear more about your city, town, or region.
- Let us share with you more details about E-Teams and what's involved.
- Explore next steps in how to form an E-Team.
- Discuss how we can support you along the way.

Please do get in touch with Justin at: justin.bloomfield@palau.org.



"The Gospel message needs to be heard by everyone! As an evangelist, I am passionate about proclaiming the Gospel to as many people as possible. He rescued me and I want everyone to know! But another of my highest priorities is to encourage churches to work together. It is through working together — as one, unified Church in the city — that our Gospel witness rings clearer than ever.

What gets me excited? Churches uniting around Jesus Christ. Ministry leaders recognising they are better together.
The Gospel impacting more lives through collaborative efforts. You'll learn through this resource that Evangelism Teams is a strategy that weaves these passions together.

We hope this Evangelism Team strategy challenges you to dream bigger. We have seen the Gospel transform lives and whole societies. We believe these teams of local leaders will see great Kingdom fruit in the years to come. I pray that the information in this resource and the resulting relationships will bring great joy to your life and impact this world exponentially.

Together for the Gospel,"

- Andrew Palau, Evangelist, Palau

