

The Listening Ministry: Sidewalk Talk-KC Metro

“Just as love to God begins with listening to His Word, so the beginning of love for the brethren is learning to listen to them.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer

The Listening Ministry: Sidewalk Talk KC-Metro, is a ministry to represent and demonstrate Jesus’ love through active listening and empathy.

This ministry is about going out to people in the community and creating a safe space as we serve by being still, present, and curious. As Proverbs 18:13 says we will listen to understand, and as in James 1:19, we will be quick to listen well and slow to speak.

The act of listening well in a safe space is evangelism without being the one who speaks all the time but instead listens more. As the author of God Space, Doug Pollock says, it’s “irresistible evangelism that happens when we take the initiative in the power of the Holy Spirit to expose people to God’s kingdom by serving them, listening and learning from them, wondering with them and sharing with them, all the while trusting that God will draw them one step closer to Himself.”

The Listening Ministry runs through a chapter of Sidewalk Talk, a global not-for profit which promotes creating safe listening spaces. As a customizable chapter we have organized as a ministry engaging Believers of diverse backgrounds and ethnicities to serve our communities together. Thus, we bridge the ethnic divides we find in our communities and churches by connecting and learning with one another through the practice of listening to each other. This prepares us to embark on our Sidewalk Talks together by creating safe listening spaces throughout the KC Metro area where we will take time to listen to anyone who desires to share.

This is a multifaceted ministry with numerous benefits for those we reach and the listeners. Here is a summary:

The What: The Listening Ministry is a demonstration of Jesus's love through active listening and empathy.

- People are trained to listen well with empathy and compassion
- Churches of diverse backgrounds & ethnicities partner to train & serve in this ministry together
- We intentionally create safe spaces to listen to others via Sidewalk Talk KC-Metro, in communities across the Metro area.

The Why: There is healing in listening, for the listener and the one sharing

- Active listening leads to conversations to perspective building and engagement on an authentic level and fosters a sense of belonging.
- Active listening leads to acts of compassion; ways to help, advocate, pray and have an impact on a life, on a community.
- Active listening can lead to spiritual conversations; "Good will leads to good deed and opens people to the Good News." Author, Doug Pollock, *God Space*

The Who:

- Active Listeners: Believers from churches of different ethnicities, backgrounds & cultures.

The Where: Sidewalk Talk -KC Metro will set up listening spaces in various neighborhoods across the KC Metro. Examples include:

- Parks
- Schools
- Festivals
- High Traffic shopping areas
- Special event venues
- Coffee Houses

The When:

- The initial training course is Saturday, August 30th 11am-1:30 at Hillcrest Covenant Church 8801 Nall Ave. Prairie Village, KS.
- The first event for Sidewalk Talk-KC Metro is projected for September.

The Ask:

Are you willing to join us for the initial training and launch of Sidewalk Talk -KC Metro?

What's required?

- A willingness to be curious, listen and let the Holy Spirit use you
- A 2.5 interactive training on active listening and compassion with diverse listeners in background, ethnicity, and age
- Commit 1-2 hours a month to serve as a listener during a Sidewalk Talk KC-Metro listening event in the metro area
- Willingness to share a meal and debrief with other listeners post event

If you can say yes, please let me know and I will be in touch as we schedule the initial training!

Let's listen in love, like Jesus.

Resources:

Video Sidewalk Talk examples: A video from the National not-for profit (Sidewalk Talk-KC Metro is a Chapter)

<https://youtu.be/J2EK0fsyjjI>

sidewalk-talk.org