



Building Bonds

Phil and Sandy Johnson know that living in the shadow of some of the “happiest places on earth” is not all one would expect. People often come to the central Florida city with high expectations. “They move here. They don’t have any support system, so there are no relationships,” says Phil.

The Johnsons estimate there are more than 100,000 people who work at the amusement parks around Orlando, Fla., not including the thousands of workers who wait tables, clean rooms, or attend to cash registers in the many restaurants, hotels and motels, and businesses that cater to the tourist industry.

“They’re not available on Sunday mornings for [traditional] church,” Phil stresses.

At Reedy Creek Community Church, tourism employees find a place to connect with one another and with God. Led by Phil, a Grace Brethren church planter, the group meets at non-traditional times in the Johnson home.

Services are intentionally low key. Often there is a meal. “If [participants] wanted a good show, they’d take their day off and go to one of the parks,” he says. “What they’re looking for is relationships.”

“I don’t see what we’re doing as anything special or spectacular,” he admits. “It’s just discipling one-on-one and bringing people to Christ.”

This story first appeared in GraceConnect eNews. To learn more, see graceconnect.us/one-on-one-church-planting/. Go to graceconnect.us to subscribe to the weekly e-newsletter that includes stories about people and churches in the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches.

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