



## TALKING POINTS – FRIDAY FRIENDS FESTIVAL

“Trust is something we earn one person at a time”

Joe Martin



Mecklenburg  
Ministries

- Friday Friends first launched on March 30, 2007 with the goal to bridge the gap between races and cultures by building relationships across racial/ethnic and faith differences.
- Over the past five years, over 1,400 people throughout the Charlotte community have committed to partner across racial/ethnic and faith differences
- Friday Friends is Mecklenburg Ministries’ Crossroads Charlotte initiative. Crossroads Charlotte did a follow up to the 2001 Putnam study and while the Charlotte region is still working toward the goal of improved interracial trust, our community did show a 28% increase in interracial/diverse friendships, the mission of Friday Friends.
- The concept: participants agree to eat lunch (or get coffee) on the last Friday (or any day) of the month for four months, intentionally getting to know someone different as a person – not a “category”.
- Mecklenburg Ministries provides questions to take the conversation deeper and empower pairs to explore building greater interracial/interfaith trust, one friendship at a time.
- Attendees will be challenged to meet and dialogue with someone of a different racial/ethnic and faith groups....or even political party or life experience.
- Past Corporate Sponsors: Piedmont Natural Gas, Wachovia, Compass Group, Reinhardt Architecture, Hospice and Merrill Lynch.
- Mecklenburg Ministries has held Friday Friends Festivals to launch each season of Friday Friends for breaking boundaries, correcting wrong assumptions, and connecting people across our community.

We still have too many divisions in our community. Friday Friends is a way to bridge the gap between races and cultures, to get outside of comfort zones and make new friends with someone across differences.

### What are participants saying?

*“Helping [my friend] with his organization and his being able to help me with mine has provided great networking and learning.”*

*“I have corrected some wrong assumptions.”*

*“I honestly cannot imagine a time when (my Friday Friend) and I would not be able to learn from each other, to grow from our relationship, or to reap the benefits of a blessed friendship. I shall be forever grateful to Meck Min and Friday Friends for making this connection.”*

***“Building bridges across differences one friendship at a time”***

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