



## SUPPERS GUIDE

# Hosting a Comment Supper

We created Comment Suppers because we believe that a magazine is, at its heart, an aspirational community, and we want to help bridge the gap between reading and action. But we get it: hosting a Comment Supper can feel intimidating, especially if you're not used to facilitating these kinds of conversations. We understand that it takes courage to bring people together and create space for meaningful dialogue. That's why we created a step-by-step guide to provide you with the tools to host a memorable Comment Supper that enriches your community. Whether you're an experienced host or new to the concept of a one-table conversation, we're here to help make it easier for you to bring these life-giving discussions to your dinner table.

- 1. Choose your theme and structure:** You can select a specific essay from *Comment* with the accompanying questions we've provided, or keep it simple by using the bookmark, which offers prompts that anyone can engage, whether or not they've read the latest issue.
- 2. Decide on the guest list:** Be thoughtful about the guests you'd like to invite. A good range is four to eight people. Consider inviting a diverse group with different backgrounds and perspectives from your neighbourhood, church, workplace, or a mix.
- 3. Send invitations:** Send out invitations at least two weeks in advance. You can use a free online invitation service like Evite or Paperless Post or send an email. (Or, if you're as old-fashioned as we are, dial them up!) Make sure to include the overarching theme, date and time, location, and any pre-reading materials.
- 4. Plan the menu:** Consider asking guests to bring a dish to share or prepare a meal yourself. If you're feeling uninspired, check out the recipe we've recommended on each bookmark!



5. **Prepare for the day of your Comment Supper:** This may include setting the table, preparing the food or drinks, and reviewing your conversation prompts and questions.
6. **Set the scene:** Create a relaxed atmosphere for your guests. Have enough seating, lighting, and space for everyone to feel comfortable. We tend to love a musical background—hence our [Spotify playlist](#) curated by theme—but not everyone appreciates discussion when there’s more than one aesthetic element. Follow the lead of your guests! If the conversation really takes off, ask yourself: Is the music helping or hindering the evening’s magic?
7. **Introduce your guests:** If you’re bringing new folks together, make sure everyone knows each other’s names and a little bit about them. This can help break the ice and encourage conversation.
8. **Start the conversation by encouraging participation:** You can ask for initial thoughts from guests who have read a specific piece, or you can begin with open-ended questions. Remember to be a good listener and encourage others to participate in the conversation. Avoid interrupting or dominating the conversation, and ensure that everyone has a chance to share their thoughts and ideas. While our questions can help get the conversation started, don’t worry if the discussion takes a new direction. The goal is to foster an engaging and thoughtful dialogue.
9. **Follow up:** After the event, consider sharing any additional materials with your guests.
10. **Tell us about it!** We would love to hear about your Comment Supper experience. Email us at [team@comment.org](mailto:team@comment.org) with insights, pictures, questions, stories, or feedback about how we can better equip our hosts.

P.S. This guide is primarily intended to help individual hosts. However, if you're interested in hosting a Comment Supper at an institutional level or with a larger group, we would love to support you with tips and resources. Please don't hesitate to contact us at [team@comment.org](mailto:team@comment.org) for more information!