2019 YEAR IN REVIEW
The Alpha USA team began the process of creating the 2019 annual report in December. Little did we know that at the same time, halfway around the world, a new virus would initiate a massive global shutdown. In this document, we review and celebrate all God did in 2019, but we also now acknowledge that our world is changed in many ways as a result of COVID-19. We remain grateful for his steadfast faithfulness through it all.

2019 was an incredible season of growth for Alpha. Like the story from 2 Kings 4, the story of Elisha and the widow who had only a little bit of oil, God has taken our little and multiplied it. He has filled the empty jars we’ve put out and done what only He can do. He has done, and we believe He will continue to do, exceedingly and abundantly beyond what we could hope or imagine. That is what we claim, and believe, and what we are also witnessing.

Christ Fellowship in Miami is a perfect example of this. Tony Cobb, the youth leader at Christ Fellowship, attended an Alpha Training Lab and was inspired and changed by the story of Alpha. He trained his team to run Alpha Youth at each of their seven locations. Over the summer, 700 students from diverse backgrounds attended these Alphas and 69 students made public declarations of faith in Jesus and were baptized. THIS IS WORTH CELEBRATING!

Tony shared that it was more than just the numbers; the culture of the church was shifting and God is filling them with a new passion for Miami. This is an example of what can happen when one empty jar is set before God in a willing heart. When one person steps out to respond to the prompting of the Spirit to start an Alpha course, God takes our willingness, our offerings, our stepping out in faith and He grows it into more than we could have anticipated. (Eph. 3:20-21)

This is just one story of growth, but we hear stories like this all the time. In 2019, we saw a 14% increase in churches running Alpha nationwide. Alpha Youth grew by 42%, Alpha Catholic courses by 15%, and 16% more prisons are running Alpha in the U.S. today. This last year, the Spirit of God used Alpha to bring the love and grace of Jesus to an estimated 426,000 people across the country. God is using Alpha, and we are honored to be co-collaborators with Him, and with you, in the work of His Kingdom.

We are grateful for the ways you have faithfully supported Alpha. Now, perhaps more than ever, we see how our hurting world needs to fully experience the love and peace of Jesus. We invite you to continue supporting this mission as we equip churches in a new reality.

Together,

Craig Springer
Executive Director
Alpha USA
A COMMITMENT TO PRAYER LEADS US

“What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the Lord our God is near us whenever we pray to him?” -Deuteronomy 4:7

We can faithfully say that prayer is at the center of all that we do; it is our number one strategic growth driver. In 2019, we appointed a National Director of Prayer for Alpha USA, launched a daily prayer call, and appointed intercessors nationwide.

Our largest catalyst effort for prayer is Kingdom Come Prayer—a bi-annual invitation from Alpha to pray for the Church and the world. This is 72 hours of mobilized prayer through churches across the U.S. to pray both individually and corporately.

Our goal for the two 2019 Kingdom Come Prayer initiatives was to mobilize 7,000 people in prayer by September 1. Instead, we saw nearly 10,000 people praying and 170 gatherings hosted by churches nationwide.

“KINGDOM COME PRAYER GATHERINGS ARE POWERFUL. ANY TIME YOU ASK THE HOLY SPIRIT TO SHOW UP, COUNT ON HIM TO MAKE AN APPEARANCE.”

-GATHERING HOST

ROCK HARBOR CHURCH

“Before Alpha, I had a lot of questions and I didn’t know what to believe.” An Alpha participant from Rock Harbor Church shares about her journey with faith, which began with questioning and searching. During her college years she was skeptical about God and about the church. Like many today, she didn’t know what to believe and thought religion was dead. Then she came to Alpha. At first she wasn’t sure if it was the place for her, she thought that everyone around her knew more about the Bible than she did. Soon she discovered that this was a place where her questions were heard and welcomed. She says, “It was really powerful for me to see people who I perceived as being farther along in their journeys of faith who were sitting there telling me ‘I’ve been there too, I’ve asked those same questions.’” At Alpha, she learned that she didn’t have to have all of the answers in order to have a relationship with Jesus.

» Watch the full video on our website at alphausa.org/annualreport.
THE FONT

Most people want to share their faith, but they aren't sure how to do it. Isaac Frere, pastor of The Font, shares how Alpha provides an effective framework for equipping people to share Jesus, realigning the entire church to think evangelistically. What The Font experienced when they started using Alpha was how hospitality-based evangelism enabled people to be heard, loved, accepted, and to meet with Jesus. When people come to Alpha, they’re surprised that they aren’t being preached at, rather they are the ones that are sharing. They’re being listened to. That’s the environment that Alpha creates, an environment that welcomes people in and trusts the Holy Spirit to do the work of conversion. “We’re not here to convince anyone. We don’t bring people to Jesus, the Holy Spirit does.”

» Watch more about the transformation at The Font on our website at alphausa.org/annualreport.
ACTIVE CHURCHES
God’s hand is at work, multiplying your gifts of time, treasure, and talent in all areas of Alpha USA. In 2019, more than 426,000 guests participated in Alpha through more than 7,400 churches and organizations nationwide.

CONTEXTS
Youth:
We continue to see a trend of churches looking for fresh ways to reach Gen Z, and Alpha Youth is leading the way. More than 2,700 churches ran Alpha Youth nationwide in 2019—an increase of 42%. This equates to more than 100,000 youth attending a course in an estimated 4,300 courses run in a 12-month span.

Catholics:
Alpha in the Catholic Context continues to grow, both in partnership with key local dioceses and in the number of parishes offering Alpha as a foundation to their church growth strategy. In 2019, an estimated 125,000 U.S. guests attended an Alpha in a Catholic parish.

Prisons:
As churches become more familiar with Alpha, they are more and more taking Alpha to the “least of these” by running Alpha in Prisons. In 2019, an estimated 38,000 people participated in Alpha at 630 correctional facilities in 42 states; 89 of the facilities were new to Alpha last year.

Reaching Gen Z:
Two Year Snapshot
The amount of growth in the Alpha Youth context in a two-year timespan—from 2017 to 2019—is astounding. Approximately 95% more churches and organizations ran 122% more Alpha Youth courses in 2019 than they did in 2017.

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Thanks to God and our generous donors, Alpha USA remains debt-free & focused on ministry growth in 2020 and beyond.

For more details, review our most recent auditor report at alphausa.org/financials.

KAYLA’S STORY

When we want to see lives changed for God, we don’t try harder, we pray harder. We don’t get louder, we fall on our knees. At Rio Visa Church, they experienced this in action. “Before Alpha, prayer was something I knew was important, but it really took a back seat in my personal life and, to be truthful, in my ministry. Through Alpha, God has just really humbled and convicted me that prayer has to be my focal point, that I have to be on my knees in prayer for my students,” said Drew Brown, co-director of student ministries at Rio Vista. Drew began meeting with her students every Sunday just to pray. One student, Kayla, shares about that time, saying, “Through prayer I understood that God was loving, and caring, and kind, and takes His time to respond back to me and listen to me. It’s not a coincidence that I prayed for more students to come and more students came.” Their youth group saw double the number of Alpha Youth attenders after making the commitment to pray. More students saw the importance of prayer and joined in, which led to a student-led Alpha Youth at their public school the next spring. God continues to move students to come. Through conversation with Jesus, our hearts are changed, doors are opened, and the lost are found.

» Watch the full story on our website at alphausa.org/annualreport.
The Alpha Conference 2019


The Alpha Conference was created to serve as a space for church leaders to gather together, learn, grow, and be equipped in their mission. Attendance at the second annual gathering held in Mesa, Arizona, in January 2019, grew by 30% with nearly 1,100 tickets sold compared to just over 800 sold the year before.

Guests responded that some of their highlights included learning the:

+ Importance of dependence on the Holy Spirit
+ Power of listening
+ Crucial role of prayer in their ministry

They also reported:

+ A greater understanding of unity vs. uniformity
+ Feeling re-energized and more equipped to run their Alpha ministries
+ Being more informed on cultural trends of evangelism and how to reach millennials (from Barna research)

What they said about The Alpha Conference:

“Best conference I’ve ever attended.”
“Refreshing, encouraging, and relevant.”
“Excellent. Surprising.”
“The Alpha Conference was crucial for our team to bond and come back with excitement to see Alpha grow in our city.”

Experience Alpha
Introducing Strategic Churches to Alpha

The best way to understand Alpha is to experience it firsthand, and one of the most effective ways to introduce strategic churches, influential leaders, and key partners to Alpha and the culture behind it is through our Experience Alpha events. In a relational, conversational format, we take leaders behind the scenes at a thriving hub church to watch Alpha in action. Guests also engage with pastors and leaders about best practices and breakthrough moments.

In 2019, we hosted a total of 116 churches and organizations and 214 leaders at Experience Alpha events, and saw the total number of influential Strategic Churches running Alpha in 2019 increase 41% over 2018.

As we move forward, we are intentionally focusing efforts to strengthen our relationships with diverse, multicultural churches and key influential leaders. In 2019, we hosted two pastor gatherings specifically for African American leaders to help us learn, understand, and process the unique challenges and opportunities facing multicultural churches in urban contexts.

Of The Alpha Conference 2019 guests surveyed, 97% said they would definitely return next year & 95% would recommend it to others.
New, In-depth Training Supports Churches Nationwide

As we move toward our goal of doubling the number of churches running Alpha, scalability and training have become a key focus for the Alpha USA team. In 2019, we launched the National Alpha Training Labs, hosting four labs during peak training season from April 27 through August 15.

Designed to train churches and organizations on how to run and grow their Alphas, the labs were also created to encourage and inspire those who attended. In conjunction with these larger events, we hosted a smaller Train the Trainer session for local Hub Churches, coaches, and high capacity Alpha churches to help equip them to lead Run Alpha trainings in their regions.

In all, nearly 200 churches attended a training lab in 2019, surpassing our goal of having at least 100 guests present for each of the four labs.

Response from the training lab attendees was overwhelmingly positive.

92.83% of attendees agreed or strongly agreed that the training lab was worth their time.

86.21% of attendees say that they are likely or highly likely to attend a training lab again in the future.

In 2020, we will host five (5) training labs with a goal of reaching 1,000 guests!

"The Alpha Labs training experience provided all the tools and encouragement I needed to run Alpha. Hearing that ‘perfection’ is an unrealistic goal was liberating and removed my apprehension about wanting to provide a perfect experience for our guests. The prayer ministry closing session was a blessing and perfect jumping off point."

"We have run the Alpha course annually since 2010, the Alpha training lab was just the encouragement and inspiration we needed to refresh our vision for the impact Alpha can have in our community."
There’s a pattern we see often in the Gospels: when God changed a person, they wanted to share that experience with others. The same remains true today.

In the five years that St. Ann’s in Coppell, Texas, has run Alpha, nearly 2,000 guests have attended the course. They’ve seen how God has used Alpha to change lives and their church, and they wanted to help other churches see the same individual and communal transformations.

God’s spirit prompted the St. Ann’s team to reach out to San Juan Diego, a traditional Catholic Church in Dallas that hosts 10,000 people on any given weekend. San Juan Diego offers five Sunday masses, all of which are in Spanish.

“I LIKE TO ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO TRY ALPHA AND BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE SAME WAY I WAS.”

When volunteers from St. Ann’s reached out, they learned that San Juan Diego had never heard of Alpha and had a real need for something like it in their community.

In the summer of 2019, the two churches partnered to run an Alpha pilot at San Juan Diego, with St. Ann providing food and volunteers. As the story unfolded, and lives began to transform through this pilot project, the San Juan Diego team embraced running Alpha as a priority for the parish. They are now committed to running two Alphas a year and hope to grow and expand this ministry in the future.

Victor is just one person whose life was changed through Alpha. Although he grew up in a family of faith, he considered himself an atheist. A friend invited him to Alpha many times and, eventually, he and his wife attended one hosted by St. Ann. After attending Alpha, the couple who considered San Juan Diego their home church, longed to bring Alpha to their community. The time came when they volunteered in the first Alpha at San Juan Diego and eventually became session leaders.

Victor says, "The Mass has a different meaning to me and my desire to serve has been ignited. The relationship with my wife and family is much better. I like to encourage others to try Alpha and be filled with the Holy Spirit in the same way I was."

This is the story of one church having a heart for another. When churches break outside of the boundaries of their church walls and care for all of the local expressions of Christ’s body, this is the Kingdom in action. This is the story of the gospel—one person, one family, one church, telling another what God has done in them.

St. Ann’s experienced God through Alpha and wanted another church to experience that too, so they offered what they had and God multiplied it.

Providing the Gospel in More Languages

One of Alpha’s core values is to provide churches with high-quality resources to support them as they reach their communities for Christ. Recognizing the wide range of languages used in the U.S., we expanded how we served non-English speaking course administrators and guests in 2019 by:

+ Increasing the number of languages offered from four to 56 in MyAlpha (previously called Alpha Builder).
+ Offering four new training sessions in Spanish.
+ Identifying and training six Alpha Coaches to lead Run Alpha training events in Spanish with supporting translated resources.
+ Translating two new guest invitations from English to Spanish.
In 2019, Alpha USA partnered with Alpha International to conceive the Alpha Collective: a unique opportunity for experienced Alpha churches to gather with leaders from global strategic churches from across denominations. The Collective provides an opportunity for both senior church leaders and Alpha leaders to dive deeply into how to improve, grow, and extend Alpha to increase its impact.

The Collective also serves as a primer for leading strategic churches to better understand the global Alpha strategy, and to be invited to participate as an Alpha Hub Church. Both existing and potential Hub Churches are included in the Alpha Collective as an opportunity to learn from Alpha practitioners worldwide.

In a nutshell, my life before Alpha was hell. Complete chaos.”

Nicholas’ Story

Nicholas grew up in a Christian home but walked away from Jesus when his mother was diagnosed with cancer when he was fourteen. His mother’s illness, his father’s distance, and a feeling that he was left to fend for himself led him to make choices that put him on a path that led to addiction, jail, and two failed marriages. Nicholas said, “In a nutshell, my life before Alpha was hell. Complete chaos.” After his first child was born, his marriage dissolved. Given full custody of his son, Nicholas moved back in with his parents. He didn’t know what to do or how to turn his life around. His parents and a family friend invited him to Alpha. At Alpha, Nicholas met people he could relate to, people who had also made mistakes and were tired of what the world offered them. He met people whose lives had been changed by Jesus. He found solace and peace. He found Jesus. Nicholas is now working to become a real estate broker. He’s turned his life around and says, “I have a purpose. I’m no longer in denial of my life and its value. Something much bigger than me has permanently taken hold of my heart and mind.”

The Alpha Collective was a pivotal moment for me personally and for our church. We made new friends and developed new partnerships for furthering the gospel along with fresh insight globally on how the Holy Spirit is using Alpha around the world. I cannot recommend it highly enough.”

Jordan Roe
Mission Community Church
Lead Pastor

“The Alpha Collective for me was a game changer. The conference spoke to me on so many levels, and I came back to my hometown with fresh energy after being poured into by so many so that I could continue to pour out the knowledge and gift of the Holy Spirit to our Alpha team and community. It has changed our Alpha exponentially. I would go back again in a heartbeat!”

Kiersten Telzerow
National Community Church
Small Group Director
PARTNER WITH ALPHA

When more churches run Alpha, more guests meet Jesus. It’s that simple.

Alpha USA comes alongside the Church to train, equip, and provide effective resources to help them in their mission, all completely free of charge. We can do this because of your support in time, prayer, and donations. We are incredibly grateful for your partnership on this journey.

alphauusa.org/give