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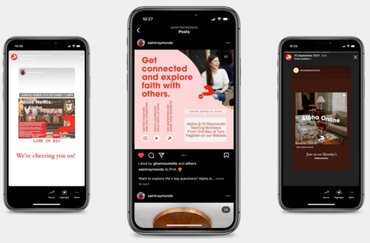
Alpha Australia: a Year in Review



In 2021...

78,870
ALPHA PARTICIPANTS

3,518
ALPHAS WERE RUN

1,455
CHURCHES / ORGS RAN ALPHA

an estimate of
15,774
HOSTS, HELPERS & LEADERS

Alpha runs in every major Christian denomination & tradition in Australia

A2A · ACC · ACTS GLOBAL · ANGLICAN · BAPTIST · C3 · CATHOLIC · CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES AUSTRALIA · CHURCH OF CHRIST · CRC · HILLSONG · INC · LUTHERAN · PENTECOSTAL · PRESBYTERIAN · REFORMED · SALVATION ARMY · SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST · UNITING · VINEYARD · WESLEYAN METHODIST · INDEPENDENT

Alpha Australia National Director, Melinda Dwight

Even though life is full, and there are so many things that compete for our time and attention, across our nation in churches, schools, youth ministries, communities, prisons and online, people are being welcomed into safe, non-judgemental spaces to explore the Christian faith through Alpha. This happens because of faithful and generous people who first make space in their lives, their time, and their finances.

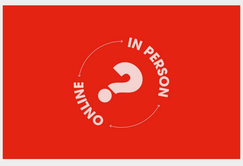
Four out of five Australians are open to a spiritual conversation according to McCrindle Research. Young or old, free or imprisoned, everyone deserves a space to explore faith and an opportunity to encounter the love and truth of Jesus.

In 2021, space was made for over 78,000 people to have open and honest conversations about faith at Alpha. In the midst of uncertainty, Alpha moved with people, allowing them to continue building community in person or online, no matter the circumstance. We are encouraged to see many churches from different traditions unified in their mission of evangelisation in Australia.

The Holy Spirit is at work, engaging and conversing with people. Are we making spaces for those conversations?

God is advancing his kingdom in our nation and we are so thankful for generous partners, like you, who are participating in the harvest. We are believing we will see the evangelisation of our nation, the revitalisation of the church and the transformation of society through one million Australians trying Alpha. Thank you for your generosity and your partnership. Your prayers and support have made us through another year, and we are looking forward to continuing this journey with you.

Highlights



ALPHA MOVES WITH YOU

Regardless of lockdowns or restrictions, churches continued to run Alpha and adapted by moving from online to in-person.

ONLINE = OUR NEW MISSION FIELD

29,414 people tried Alpha online in 2021. This 'new normal' allows more people to explore faith, life and meaning and Jesus at Alpha.

EQUIPPING ALPHA LEADERS

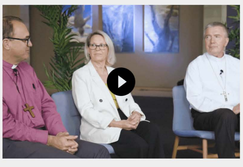
Our team has conducted over 45 Alpha training events, both in-person and online, equipping leaders to run their best Alpha yet.

ALPHA AS A FOLLOW-UP TOOL

Combined church events like the Will Graham Tour (TAS), and Easter United (Gold Coast) used Alpha as an effective follow-up tool.

BUILDING CONNECTION ACROSS TRADITIONS

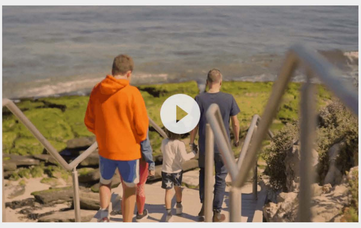
Our team hosted 15 regional network gatherings, connecting leaders across traditions and denominations for prayer and encouragement.



THE CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA UNIFIED IN MISSION

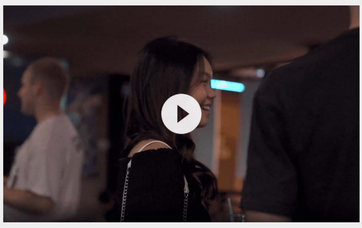
Religious leaders across Canberra came together for a video series, 'Our First Priority', discussing evangelisation, mission and Alpha.

Watch



BARRYS STORY | TRUE NORTH CHURCH

"We would have categorised ourselves as atheists and Alpha changed all that for us. From the very beginning, we were just really surprised... we signed up for Alpha and it changed our lives."



WHY ALPHA WORKS | PHIL GREENBURY, LIFEPOINTE BAPTIST CHURCH

"Alpha works. People's lives are being changed, and people are being transformed by the power of the Spirit of God, just because they have done Alpha."

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Alpha in a Catholic Context

'Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love of God in Christ Jesus.' (Evangelii Gaudium, 120)

Alpha is a proven, effective tool to introduce to people searching for the initial proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ, typically known as the Kerygma. Alpha is a culture shifter that helps parishes develop into 'communities of missionary disciples', fostering a renewal for the Christian community that desires to be transformed by evangelisation.

Alpha in a Catholic Context exists through the overarching mission of the Church. Using Alpha as a tool helps the mission of the Catholic Church become reality by simply inviting people to ask the big questions. With this being said, Alpha is just the beginning. Once guests experience Alpha, they understand who Jesus is and can start to explore their relationship with him.

9,397 people tried Alpha in a Catholic Context

IN 2021

What people are saying about Alpha...

"It's so lovely to join with the community of people that I now call friends. The Holy Spirit day had such an atmosphere of fellowship, love and acceptance. Thank you to all the organisers and fellow pilgrims!"

Cathedral Parish

"Alpha Online has been such an amazing experience for me. The more that we tackled, the more excitement that I encountered. It's a 'no pressure' discussion about Jesus; it changed me, it healed me, it gave me hope, and most especially it saved me."

St. Paul Bridgewater Parish Church

"The Holy Spirit Day away was incredible. Our three Alpha's; Daytime, Evening and Youth gathered together to receive prayer, sing, laugh and grow closer to Jesus. There were 49 of us who were led by our Alpha team to develop a stronger connection to the Holy Spirit. Amazing!"

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Parish

"We launched our first Alpha after a pilot term. We are thrilled to have the opportunity as a group of 20 to journey together with new friends and old, building relationships, asking questions and sharing stories."

St John The Baptist Catholic Parish

"We are running two Alphas consecutively, one in person and the other hybrid, hosting the majority of the sessions at home via Zoom to cater for the increasing number of young parents that want to join Alpha. The two Alphas will come together on Pentecost Sunday to share the Retreat together. Looking forward to a fabulous day filled with the Holy Spirit!"

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

"God showed me through the gift of witnessing these stories that He would go to the cross again for just one. Seeing such transformation in the lives of individuals has helped me to know a little more of who the shepherd who leaves the 99 really is."

St Raymond's Maronite

"Alpha is a wonderful journey of faith that brings joy and love. One-by-one the guests came to Alpha every Thursday evening with a big smile as if saying: 'here I am' – (this) created such an atmosphere of joy. The joy that radiates human love only God can give."

St Patrick's Church Hill

"I have found it makes people feel it's ok to be coming along with lots of doubts and questions and helps people discuss important topics that are not brought up in day-to-day life."

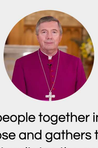
St Charles Catholic Primary School

"Alpha has been a breath of fresh air for myself and members in my community. So often we rush around doing 'important' things when the most important job we have is to reflect on our lives and remind ourselves that God has a plan for us all. Alpha has added sense and meaning to so many of life's big questions. The Holy Spirit works in all of us and Alpha allows us to embrace the Spirit at a much deeper level."

Sacred Heart Mosman

"Alpha has transformed my life, and my faith journey. Through Alpha I have been able to become so close to Jesus, and it only has made me want to tell everyone about Jesus because it has made such a difference in my life. I would love to encourage you to try out Alpha. It has changed my life, and I'm sure it will change yours."

St Francis Assisi, Mill Park



"Alpha is great. It gathers people together in a nice way that proposes something, it doesn't impose and gathers them for a meal with some inspirational testimonies. It radiates the gospel - the fragrance of the gospel - to a world that is desperately in need of a spiritual dimension."

ARCHBISHOP CHRISTOPHER PROWSE
The Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn

"You see a group that looks like they've known each other their whole life, radiating joy, totally alive in their faith and hungry for more of God. Many guests experience God's deep love and mercy and often that healing has a flow-on effect into their families, communities and workplaces. Alpha shifts the wider parish into mission and builds leaders."

ALINA GEAGEA
St Raymond's Maronite Catholic Parish

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Alpha Youth

We believe in telling young people that they can change their world, and giving them the tools to do so.

In 2021, we witnessed record growth in Alpha Youth participants and Alphas! Alpha Youth has continued to equip and empower young people and youth leaders, with hundreds of leaders from across various Christian traditions gathering together in person and online, united in prayer and mission.

We have continued to strengthen relationships with organisations such as Youth Alive, Scripture Union, Red Frogs, Alphacrucis and more. The Alpha Youth team have contributed to national youth ministry curriculum via Alphacrucis College, as well as being featured at Youth Alive Academy nationally, training students to run Alpha Youth.

As part of our strategy to equip young people with the tools to share their faith with their friends, we have worked to produce relevant content for this purpose. The Alpha Youth Series has been updated with Australia Street Talks, filmed with young people around the nation. Life Essentials is a series of short videos that spark conversation around life and faith, designed for students to use with their friends, and short enough to fit into a lunchtime program.

In 2021 we also launched a national 6-week digital marketing campaign, where we engaged with over 700 young people .

Imagine ❓ a space ✨ where young people can host OPEN & HONEST faith ✝️ conversations 💬 without the pressure of having all the answers 🤷

36,115 young people tried Alpha Youth

IN 2021

a 33% increase from 2020

"Our Junior High students have all been raving about how impactful the Alpha Youth Series has been for them, and we're only four weeks in! I am blown away by how powerful our conversations have been."

St. John Vianney's Parish

"Connect Church Youth have really engaged with the Alpha content. We have 17 young people attending and growing each week, and as a new youth group we are feeling very thankful for this resource."

Connect Church

"Some of our AYS highlights include seeing one of the girls with virtually no faith background bring 7 new people along. We have also seen a transformation in our year 10 boys who over the weeks became more engaged in the content."

Seeds Uniting Church

NEW RELEASE NEW RELEASE NEW RELEASE NEW RELEASE NEW RELEASE NEW RELEASE

AYS x AUS

Alpha Youth Series with Australian Street Talks

In 2021 we took to the streets of Australia and asked young people big and small questions about life and faith. This is now available as part of the Alpha Youth Series.

WATCH THE TRAILER

We exist to serve the youth & youth leaders of Australia

Building connection across traditions

Our team hosted 15 regional network gatherings, connecting leaders across traditions and denominations for prayer and encouragement, unified in our shared mission of evangelisation.

Alpha Youth CoLab with Ben Woodman & Jason Ballard

Talking 'Peace in the Pandemic', a time to gather, encourage and pray together.

Youth Workshops

Alpha Youth hosted multiple workshops to equip and upskill youth leaders on topics such as; Youth Design & Marketing, Building Resilience in Young People and Alpha Youth 101.

Alpha Youth @ Urs

Live Stream events designed to engage and equip young people who want to use Alpha Youth to share their faith with their friends

Resources for Youth Leaders

We make it easy to invite young people to Alpha Youth by providing new promotional resources; posters, graphics, videos, invitations, etc.

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Alpha in Schools

Alpha in schools continues to grow from strength to strength with a specific focus on student-led and student-assisted Alphas in schools.

Alpha in schools exists to serve the church and champion evangelisation, through connecting with stakeholders in schools throughout Australia to initiate Alphas in schools. The past 12 months have included the work of pioneering student leadership workshops in schools as well as speaking at chapel services in schools to build faith and fuel evangelism through personal testimony and encouragement of student-led alphas. The student leadership workshop aims to model Alpha, build relational connections within the schools and encourage students in their potential to make a difference.

These workshops aim to create further understanding of servant leadership and being a light in this world by sharing their faith through Alpha. The partnership with Veta, an accredited Christian learning pathway for students from Years 7 -12, was strengthened, as Alpha is offered to their cohorts of students working towards a Cert III in Christian Ministry and Theology. A partnership with Mustard began, whereby the Alpha Youth Series is offered to students already engaged in running lunchtime programs in their schools.

18,096 students tried Alpha in their school

IN 2021

271
SCHOOLS
used Alpha

464
ALPHAS
were run

18
STUDENT-LED
Alphas

"In my role as Executive Director for Associated Christian Schools, I have seen the role that the Alpha Youth Series can play to help develop a culture of evangelism and leadership in schools. I am anticipating even greater impact as more students are empowered to be involved with running alpha youth in their schools."

Lynne Doneley
Executive Director & Principal Research Officer, Associated Christian Schools

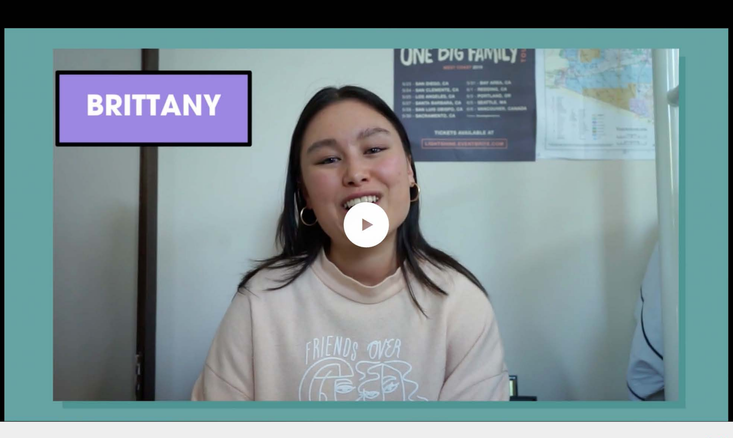
"Alpha Youth has a special gift at creating spaces for faith-filled conversation, that empowers youth to learn about and share their faith with their friends. It provides the resources, knowledge, and courage for students to learn about and share their faith with others."

Sam Cogger
Youth Pastor, Abundant Life Church Tasmania

"Alpha is such an engaging experience for students and as a teacher and Youth Ministry Coordinator, I am also learning and growing in my own faith. The resources, training videos and support that is on offer is extensive but it also allows for groups to tailor it to their specific needs. I feel so blessed to be able to share the Alpha experience with my students and would recommend this series to everyone."

Youth Ministry, MacKillop Catholic College (YMCC) has been running Alpha Youth in their college since mid-2020. They have run Alpha Youth online, in person, and hybrid, moving as they needed to. Read about their creative initiatives and the impact of Alpha Youth below.

READ MORE



Emerging Leaders

Empowering emerging church leaders for evangelisation and preparing the next generation of Australian leaders for the future, through connection, prayer and encouragement.

In 2021 & 2022, Alpha Australia hosted multiple open events with the purpose of facilitating the connection of emerging leaders across both the Australian Church and marketplace contexts.

We established six 12-month cohorts that foster respect, peer to peer learning and champion Spirit-led leadership and evangelisation.

Aims & Objectives of Alpha Australia Emerging Leaders

1

To champion evangelisation and equip emerging leaders to "do the work of an evangelist", as well as highlight Alpha as a tool for evangelisation across various contexts.

2

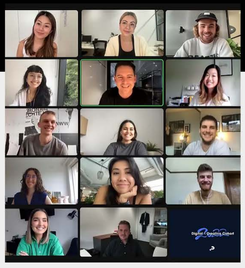
To facilitate connection and learning, learning from experienced Christian leaders in both the church and marketplace, and to listen and learn from each other.

3

To promote and foster unity, with respect for diversity among emerging church leaders, with the desire to strengthen relationships across Australia.

4

To fan to flame the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of emerging leaders and the Australian Church.



"Alpha's Emerging Leaders program has been a highlight of my ministry. Seeing young church leaders from across the nation come together in unity, vulnerability and in prayer has been such an encouragement. Alpha continues to remain relevant and on the pulse for the needs of the church and is leading the way in raising the next generation of church leaders across Australia. "

Scott McKinnon
Youth Pastor, Riverlife Baptist

"It has been refreshing and encouraging to step out of my usual circle of influence into a cross-denominational, national network of Christian leaders who are resolute in their passion for making Jesus known. I have been challenged and encouraged and I truly appreciate this network as a trusted space to work through the more complex realities of leadership within the church."

Justine Cumbo
Youth Minister, Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne

"I am absolutely loving being part of the Emerging Leaders Cohort. Over the past 9 years in church ministry, this is exactly what I've been looking for. It's helped connect me to leaders beyond me and leaders alongside me. I'm loving it and very thankful to be included."

Alex Tan
Associate Pastor, HistoryMaker Church

In 2021, 🗓️ 310 Emerging Leaders 💪 from 8 STATES & TERRITORIES and 15 DENOMINATIONS & TRADITIONS gathered together regularly to connect, 🤝 upskill 📈, and encourage each other in evangelism ✝️

We achieve our mission by connecting Australian Emerging Leaders with mentors, each other, and some of the top theological, leadership, creative and cultural thinkers on the globe, such as:

NT WRIGHT

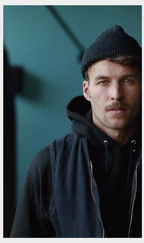
N.T. Wright is a leading biblical scholar. Wright has written over fifty books, including the multi-volume work Christian Origins and the Question of God.

SHALIA VISSER

Shaila Visser is the National Director of Alpha Canada and the Global Senior Vice-President for Alpha International. She is a gifted communicator who is known for her strategic leadership.

MARK SAYERS

Mark is the senior leader of Red Church in Melbourne. He is the author of several books, including Strange Days and Reappearing Church and co-host of the podcast 'This Cultural Moment'.



SALOMON LIGT

Salomon is a filmmc international backg childhood spent in Jo Dubai, and Sydney – fig his distinctive, visceral work.