

Alpha South Carolina

September 2018 Newsletter

Volume 1

Issue 9



Fall is just about here (even if the weather doesn't seem like it) and Alpha courses are starting all over the country, including many here in South Carolina. [Click here](#) to see churches offering Alpha, not only in South Carolina, but all over the US. I'm especially happy that we have courses starting on several campuses, including The Citadel, College of Charleston, Coastal Carolina and, for the first time, Clemson!

Previously, I had issued a challenge for alumni to support an Alpha on their campus and Clemson was the winner in terms of support!

We know that a large percentage of college students, even those raised in the church, leave the church when they go off to college. So Alpha is an opportunity to keep them engaged and for those not raised in the faith, it's a way for them to explore the big questions of life. One of the larger expenses with a campus Alpha is providing food. We know that if we can feed them physically, we can then feed them spiritually.



In light of that, I thought you might find the following thoughts to be of interest.

Youth Ministry in the Early 21st Century

Our Challenge

A generation ago it seemed inconceivable that society in the United States would ever be called Post-Christian. But the "label" has become apt as this generation steps into leadership roles. A recent study, "The Great Opportunity: The American Church in 2050,"^[1] concludes that over the next three decades one million young people per decade will leave their faith behind as they go off to college or university. ***The study stresses these are not young people who have been reared without a faith tradition; nor have they been brought up in homes practicing a faith tradition other than Christianity.*** These young people have grown up in our pews but have failed to capture the relevance of Jesus Christ in their lives.

This study by the Pinetops Foundation underscores similar results found by other researchers^[2], some of which suggest that as high as 60 percent of today's youth will leave the Christian church after high school -- begging the question, "Whom then, will stand as Christian witness in the generations that will follow?" In response, nationally acclaimed youth leader Brock Morgan insists that by **acting now**, we can slow the trend and engage this generation in the ever-unfolding Salvation story.^[3]

Alpha is a primary tool through which this engagement is possible.

Our Solution

The Alpha course has kept pace with our changing society with its ever-evolving methods of sharing the age-old Gospel of Jesus Christ. Whereas the message remains unchanged, the method of delivery is continually updated to match the

learning-styles of the current generation. Alpha materials are free to any team that runs it, making the cost of running Alpha minimal. This free offering by Alpha USA allows Alpha teams to focus most of their budget on providing the weekly meal, which is an integral part of the Alpha Recipe; conversations over the breaking of bread being a Tradition established by Jesus Christ, Himself.

Our Progress

To keep South Carolina's youth ministers, leaders, and workers up to date on cutting edge ministry approaches, we provide an annual leadership event featuring one of the foremost subject-matter authorities of this generation. This year's event: *A Morning with Brock Morgan*, will be held on October 25th at the Metro Y Corporate Conference Center in Greenville. For more information or to register please visit: [A Morning with Brock Morgan](#).

In past months we have featured several of our financial partners and have also shown you how churches that offer Alpha regularly perceive its effectiveness. We hope you have enjoyed their testimonies and, through their words, have also been inspired personally to become directly involved with the Alpha Mission: *to make disciples of Jesus Christ from all walks of life and to transform our society one life, one church, and one community at a time.*

Presently, we need funds to subsidize several of our campus Alpha's food costs, as the budgets of our campus chaplains are extremely limited. *Can you help?* We've been running a campus challenge requesting support from the alumni of our various colleges and universities, of which Clemson has proven to be the winner – but to date, we are still about \$3,000 under our goal. Any level of support you can offer would be greatly appreciated. As always, you may donate through our [PayPal link](#), or mail a check to **Alpha South Carolina, 1928 Davant Circle, Mt Pleasant, SC 29464**. Your gifts are tax deductible and provide eternal dividends.

[1] The Great Opportunity: The American Church in 2050 (Rep.). (n.d.). Pinetops Foundation.

[2] Both the Barna Group and Pew Reports have reported similar findings.

[3] Morgan, B. (n.d.). Generation514 Manifesto. Retrieved July 10, 2018, from <http://generation514.com/manifesto/>

Wherever You Work, Alpha Can Too. Pull Up a Chair!

In addition to Alpha running in churches, prisons, homes, on campuses and in prisons, Alpha can easily be run in your workplace. It can be offered over lunch, during a meeting or at the end of the day. We spend an average of forty to fifty hours a week with our business associates. Many of these people might never willingly go to church but are looking for an opportunity to discuss matters of meaning and faith. In fact, the late Billy Graham commented that "the workplace was the next great mission field."

A local Alpha leader said "...lives are being absolutely transformed in ways that are stunning. **Alpha in the Workplace** is a tool that allows me to meet people where they are; there is nothing 'churchy' about the location, the talk or our approach. These people come in to find others just like them, hungry for a conversation that has an eternal consequence."

Another leader commented "Alpha in the Workplace is like evangelism in a box. Sharing my faith has never been easier, and it is amazing to see how faithful God has been both in my life and with the guests who attend the course."

If you are interested in running Alpha at your workplace, please let me know and I will go over everything you need to know. With stimulating topics and time for group discussion, Alpha in the Workplace provides a great opportunity to engage in meaningful conversations with your co-workers and come to better understand their views.

...and Please Don't Forget!

Prayer is one of the key foundational elements of Alpha. On the first Monday of each month at 4:00 PM we hold a prayer conference call, during which we pray for Alpha South Carolina and the courses being held around the state. You are invited to join us.

Our call in number is (515) 739-1034
Access code 656709#