

# Your Alpha Australia Annual Report

2019



# 500,000 guests... with your support we can double it



## Melinda Dwight

Alpha Australia National Director

@melindadwight

What an amazing year! **We've loved celebrating with you that through local churches running Alpha 500,000 Australians have heard about the good news of Jesus. Great work everyone!**

Together there's been much prayer for people to explore faith, and many conversations that have lead to invitations, and in some cases, acceptances. Remember the invitation is the win as we move them

## Thousands of Australians continue to answer the call of the Great Commission

around the clock face of faith. Hasn't it been great to see banners across Australia drawing the attention of passers-by? All glory and thanks to God who has prompted by the Holy Spirit 500,000 to be Alpha guests.

All of us still know friends that haven't come to faith. God cares about each of them and so do we. Every person matters. Every story is important. Together let's facilitate another 500,000 to participate in Alpha.

### **Thank you for your powerful partnership in the Gospel.**

As you can see in this report there are many wonderful stories, across

every part of the Church, sharing around tables and exploring faith together.

**We are so grateful for the generosity of all who give, serve, pray, volunteer and invite, so that each of these stories is made possible. Together we are seeking to make Jesus' great commission our first priority.**

**Thank you for being hope bearers and facilitating change in the faith climate in Australia.** Please keep praying that we can serve many more people through Alpha and together see His kingdom come.

Much love and thanks,

Melinda

“Alpha was a watershed moment in my life — a journey from absolute emptiness in my relationship with God, to making Him the primary focus of my life.”

Alpha Guest at Mary Immaculate, Eagle Vale

# Our Vision



The  
Evangelisation  
of the Nations

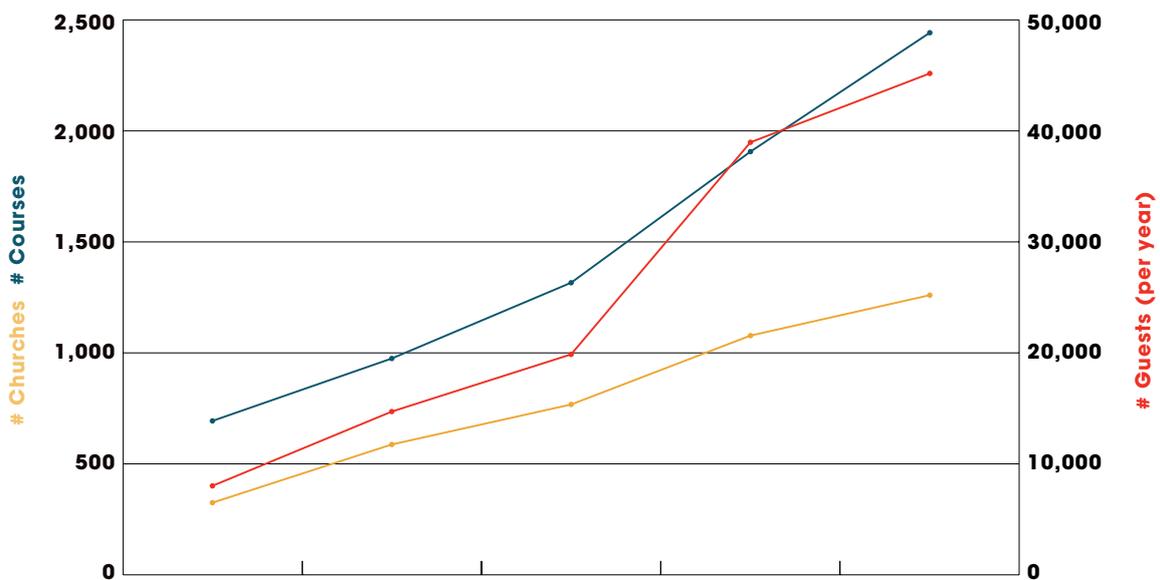


The  
Revitalisation  
of the Church



The  
Transformation  
of Society

# Our Growth



	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
#Churches	326	588	768	1078	1260
#Courses	694	975	1316	1906	2441
#Guests	8034	14723	19871	38960	45158

# More churches, more volunteers, more guests



## Dan Daniels

CEO & Founder,  
Daniels Health

Alpha Australia Board  
Chairperson

While Alpha globally can trace its history back to beyond the early 1990s from Holy Trinity Brompton in London, this year marks the twentieth year of operation here in Australia. Alpha was established to help Australian churches in their mission to invite people to explore and develop a relationship with Jesus.

**Twenty years on, we are celebrating 500,000 Aussies who have taken that faith journey.** These are significant milestones and worth pausing to praise our God and King who deserves all the glory. **We praise Him for raising up donors like you who have made this story happen.**

We have so much to be grateful for, and even more to look forward to

Christianity in Australia is facing some significant challenges. However, in the face of these **Alpha continues to grow and strive toward its goal to see 1 million Australians take part.**

In 2018, we saw a 16.8% increase in the number of churches running Alpha from the previous year. Those 1,260 churches who took part represented almost every Christian denomination, with Baptists, Australian Christian Churches, Catholics and Anglicans making up nearly 50%. A pleasing trend is seeing local churches run Alpha more often, now averaging 2 or more courses per year. **This is resulting in ever more guests attending and exploring faith in Jesus.**

The significant uptake of Alpha in Australia is thanks to our many volunteers and leaders serving in local

churches. They faithfully and tirelessly prepare their teams, invite their guests, organise meals and fervently pray, creating an environment of welcome and grace. **We estimate over 6,300 volunteers helped serve in some way in 2018 - to each of you, we are so grateful and want to extend our thanks. You are the hands and feet in this move of God.**

Next year will be an exciting time as we release new courses (Marriage and Marriage Preparation), reveal a new and improved online Alpha Digital Platform (hosting all our Alpha and training videos), as well as Australian-specific Invitation and Promotion Materials.

**We hope and pray you will continue to benefit from these resources as well as the training support Melinda and her team are more than willing to provide.**

# Our Board & Leadership



**Chris Sadler**

Consultant & Alpha  
International Board  
Member



**Mark Hutchinson**

Former President &  
CEO, GE Europe



**Angel Hutchinson**

Senior VP,  
Amber Chloe



**Josephine Marshall**

Director &  
Decorator,  
One Rundle Trading Co



**Kevin Bailey**

Philanthropy &  
Development



**Melinda Dwight**

Pastor & Alpha  
Australia National  
Director

“The changes God has brought me through Alpha are: confidence in self, a renewed love for my partner, a greater awareness of my surroundings; I find myself communicating more freely with people, a sense of hope has returned and the peace has not left me.

Alpha Guest at Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Orange



# A Strategic Solution

“

The release of the **Alpha Film Series** in 2016 has been pivotal in growing Alpha's impact in Australia. The series covers all the familiar Alpha topics, but has two new presenters; Gemma Hunt, a CBBC TV presenter, and Toby Flint, an Anglican clergyman. Alpha pioneer Nicky Gumbel features, along with a number of other people, sharing inspiring stories and interviews from all around the world.

Other than the vibrant new format taking guests on a spiritual journey, it is also FREE to download the talks, the Guest and Team Guides, training, promotional and planning resources from Alpha's website. We've also seen an increase in the number of resources translated to languages other than English being accessed. The most popular being Mandarin, Farsi, and Spanish. **Thanks to your generosity, these resources are FREE and are accessible to more churches, and people of all ages and all nations.**

Our team continues to connect with and support more churches to run Alpha. We are encouraging those who already run it to do so more regularly, 2 or more times a year. **Over 80% of leaders say they found live training beneficial.** It not only gives them an opportunity to connect with the Alpha team, but also with other church and Alpha leaders in their region.

Having run the Alpha Film Series at Gateway four times in the last 12 months, we have seen new momentum in some key areas. Firstly in **evangelism**, as we are now reaching the unchurched through a culture of invitation.

Secondly, Alpha provides a tool of **discipleship** as we journey with people who have made faith decisions. Thirdly, Alpha has created a **leadership pipeline** for raising leaders, and finally, Alpha has grown the **relational** strength of our church, as people have found a sense of belonging. We have been thrilled to see Alpha's impact to our congregation, our church strategy and our local community.

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**Craig Guntrip**

Gateway Church  
Devonport, Tasmania

# Mobilising Local Parishes

The Catholic Church in Australia is increasingly aware of the need to intentionally evangelise and grow missionary disciples, and by many parishes **Alpha is viewed as an excellent tool for this task**. Over the last three years, 12,000 people have participated in an Alpha run by over 200 Catholic parishes and schools.

Alpha has helped reinvigorate a passion for people without faith, and has been effective and fruitful in bringing people closer to Christ. This enthusiasm has been propelled further by Ron Huntley and Fr James Mallon from Divine Renovation Ministries. They have communicated to over 1,100 Catholic bishops, clergy, diocesan staff and lay people, laying out a vision of a growing, engaged Church supported by the disciple-making process of Alpha. **Live training events have equipped parish and school teams across 13 Catholic dioceses nationally.**



L-R Back: Fr Mauro Conte, Brett Larsson, Victoria Laban. Front: Vanessa Comminos, Jessica Thompson, and Judy Fakaosi Siaki with her daughter at Springfield Parish.

Lives are being changed through Alpha at Springfield Parish, Brisbane. The four parishioners pictured above said they were originally apprehensive, skeptical and reluctant to join Alpha. After Alpha, Judy Fakaosi Siaki said “We went to Alpha with the intention that we were only going so we could baptise our baby. But now we’ve come away with so much more – **an ultimate unwavering knowing in my heart in being a Christian, and who Jesus and God are, and that I am His daughter.**”

Jessica Thompson said the weekend away during the Alpha program changed her life. “After all the bad decisions from my past, **I had been filled with the Holy Spirit.**” Brett Larsson stated that “**I started reading the Bible, something I had never done before.**” Mrs Laban felt that Alpha helped her marriage, “**The events that unfolded during the weekend changed me as a wife, a mother, and as a disciple of Christ.**”

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## Vanessa Comminos

Our Lady of the Southern Cross  
Springfield, Queensland



Bayside Church



North Brisbane Salvos



Urban Life



Hillsong Hills



Encounter Church



Epping Baptist



City Edge Church



St. James Anglican



Sydney Baptist

# Celebrating 500,000 Aussie Guests



Lifepointe Baptist



Glen Waverley Anglican



Winepress Church



C3 Kawana



Our Lady of the Sacred Heart



Brighton Baptist



Hillsong Brisbane



Our Lady of the Southern Cross



Cross Culture Church of Christ



Catalyst Church



Hilltop Church



Riverlife Baptist



Lightpoint Church



NewHope Baptist



Flinders Christian College



Keilor City Church



Hope Church



Clovercrest Baptist

After reaching 500,000 Alpha guests in Australia this May, the Alpha team have been celebrating by delivering cake and certificates to some of the churches and parishes who have significantly contributed to this milestone. Here are just a few! Your prayers, your time, your money and God's grace have allowed half a million people try Alpha in Australia.



York St Church of Christ



Turning Point Family



St Paul's Lutheran



C3 Kewana



Kookong Blackburn



Peninsula City Church



Christian Family Centre



Kardinia Church



Gateway Church



#ALPHAYOUTHSERIES

“

The Alpha Youth Series has been the most engaging and fruitful evangelistic resource we've used in our youth ministry. It explains the gospel clearly, is culturally engaging, and our young people feel confident to invite their friends along!

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**Mitch Everingham**

St Faith's Anglican  
Narrabeen

**The generosity of supporters means more guests are attending Alpha's across the country and many lives are being transformed by Jesus.**

Across Australia, young people have a genuine hunger to do something meaningful, make a difference and to ask the big questions. This is why the **Alpha Youth Series** is so important. It helps young Australians open up and have meaningful discussions around life, faith and meaning. Over 1,100 Alpha Youth Series ran in 2018 with over 20,000 young people taking part.

In order to have a greater impact across the country, Alpha has partnered with ministries such as Youth Alive, the Bible Society and Soul Survivor, to help more youth ministries access Alpha's resources. In 2019, Alpha co-hosted the 'Young and Free' lounge at Hillsong Conference, which was attended by up to 200 youth leaders who were resourced and encouraged in their leadership of young people, especially those who don't yet know Jesus.

Earlier this year Alpha Youth Global Lead, Ben Woodman, inspired Youth Leaders in Sydney and Brisbane. This provided a great opportunity to learn how to run better Alpha's in both churches and schools, and how to create a culture of invitation amongst youth networks.

# What Church Leaders Think



## Wayne Alcorn

ACC National President  
Senior Pastor, Hope Centre  
Brisbane

Alpha gets the conversation started, **helping people to connect to a living and loving God.** So I would say: Have a go! It really is worth it.



## Daniel Ang

Director of Parish 2020, a process of parish renewal and revitalisation in the Archdiocese of Sydney

Alpha for the Catholic Church is more than just a program. **It is a catalyst for church renewal.**



## John Robertson

Senior Pastor, Riverlife Baptist Church Brisbane

Alpha is a relaxed environment where people can invite their friends, and **we have loved seeing how our people have latched onto this opportunity to share their faith in this way.**



## Peter Toganivanlu

Youth Pastor, Hillsong Church

Alpha has absolutely blessed our entire youth ministry, **helping us disciple young people and build biblical foundations.** I couldn't encourage people enough when it comes to this content.



## Kaye Reid

Senior Minister, Ringwood Church of Christ

Faith and life are explored in an open and caring environment, **where no question is off-limits.** Our Alpha this year was a huge success with many attending multiple sessions and making genuine connections with God and others.



## Nick Scott

Senior Pastor, Mount Pleasant Baptist Church

Alpha is a significant and effective way the Lord is using to draw people to himself. **Many people have been added to the kingdom, or grown in their faith as a direct result of attending one of our Alpha's.**

# Marie's Alpha Story



Marie was a dyed-in-the-wool atheist. She would tease her Christian mother about her 'imaginary friend up in the sky', and had decided to have nothing to do with church.

One night, one of Marie's friend's, Sarah, sent her a text inviting her to Alpha at Newlife Church, saying the course was for people like Marie who don't believe in God but have lots of questions, and that no question would be off-limits. "She added: 'There's also free coffee and muffins.' I love my coffee! And I love my muffins! I thought, 'Darling Sarah, my friend for 13 years, who has always stood by me. She never gives up. I'm going to give her the surprise of her life and say 'Yes, I'll go.'"

Marie began her first night at Alpha by sitting right up the back of the church. Newlife Pastor Scott Rigley, who was running the course, was the first to breach Marie's defences. Having grown up at the beach with surfer brothers, she immediately related to his "surfer dude" look. "The amazing film, the Alpha presentation, which was just incredible – the scenery was so captivating, and the questions that they were

asking people all around the world. I loved it, absolutely loved it," Marie recalls.

It was a dramatic and sudden turnaround for Marie. She talked about the seven "amazing women" in her discussion group who "just embraced me."

**It was the love of Jesus that enthralled and captivated Marie, cutting through her shell of hostility. She found it amazing that Jesus loved her, even though he knew everything about her. "I learnt about this loving God, who would have died for me, if I was the only one that sinned.**

When I took that step of saying 'Yes, I give myself to you Jesus, my life is for you to do what you wish, and just please forgive me for my sins and help me forgive those who've done things against me'; when we had this beautiful prayer, the only way I could describe the feeling was like this helium-filled balloon, just floating."

Anyone who knew Marie before she went to Alpha is amazed at her transformation

and how she tells everyone she meets about Jesus. "I just can't wait to tell everybody! I'm standing in the line at the grocery store and start up a conversation! I didn't realise that I would feel that way, it's so exciting!"

There are two wonderful ripples that have rolled through Marie's life through doing Alpha. "My dad wasn't a Christian, but once I went to Alpha, and I was blown away by what Jesus did, I went to my dad after and said, 'Dad, you won't believe it, I've just been learning about the most amazing God.' I told him all about it." **Marie's father attended the next Alpha and, at age 80, gave his life to Jesus. "His faith is so strong – and it's from my friend bringing me, and then me talking to my Dad.** It's that ripple effect. I never thought I would be a Christian, but look at us both, up the front: singing, hands up, praising God every Sunday."

Marie's story has been shared with permission from *Eternity News*, with thanks to Newlife Church, Gold Coast and Rev Stu Cameron.

# Join Us

Together,  
we can  
help serve  
the church,  
to provide  
a space for  
people to  
explore life,  
faith and  
God.



## **PRAY**

Our desire and prayer is that God will continue to use Alpha to introduce people to himself - a personal and loving God. Please join us in praying that women and men across the globe, young and old, will come to know Jesus. We send out a prayer diary each month with daily prayer requests for Alpha in Australia. If you would like to receive this list, contact us at [info@alpha.org.au](mailto:info@alpha.org.au).

## **GIVE**

We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to explore life and faith wherever they are in the world, for free. You can help make that happen by considering a gift to Alpha, so that more churches will be equipped to create the space for people to be transformed by the Good News of Jesus.

## **LEAVE A LEGACY**

Leaving a legacy gift to Alpha is a simple way of blessing future generations with the gospel, for many years to come. You could help provide opportunities for people to discover a personal relationship with Jesus by leaving a gift in your Will.

**For any further information,  
please contact us at  
[info@alpha.org.au](mailto:info@alpha.org.au)**

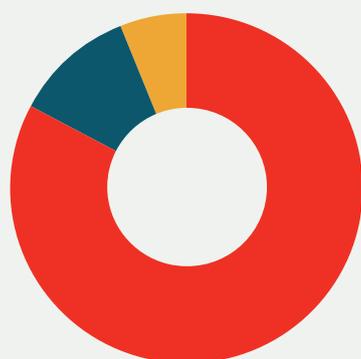


**Sharing  
the Gospel  
through Alpha  
is free and  
always will  
be, thanks to  
friends like  
you.**

# 2018/19

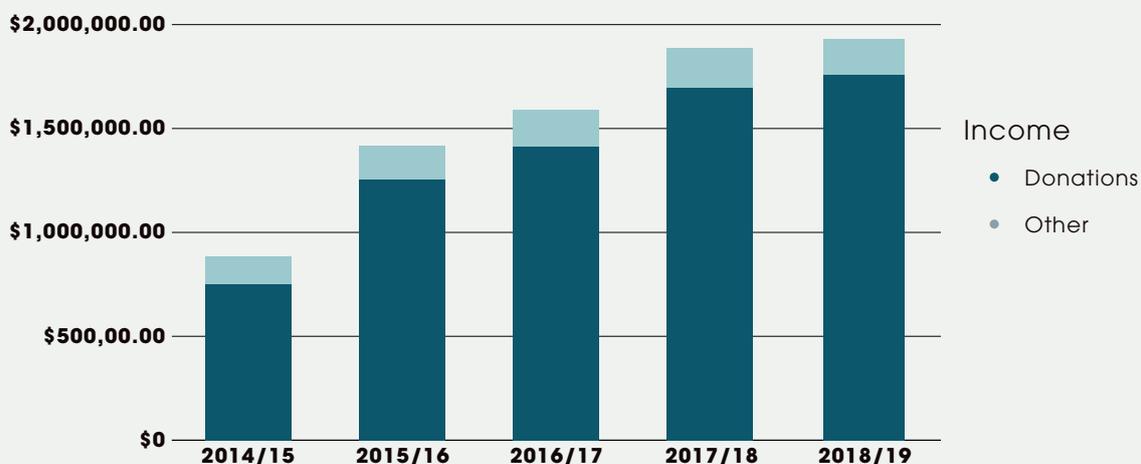
## Financials

	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>\$1,927,636.00</b>	\$1,887,919.00	\$1,588,563.00	\$1,413,771.00
<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,994,558.00</b>	\$1,740,765.00	\$1,507,580.00	\$1,328,899.00
<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>\$332,821.00</b>	\$386,613.00	\$357,482.00	\$159,201.00
<b>LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$142,934.00</b>	\$129,804.00	\$247,827.00	\$130,529.00
<b>EQUITY</b>	<b>\$189,887.00</b>	\$256,809.00	\$109,655.00	\$28,672.00



Expenses: **\$1,994,558.00**

- Programs & Staffing 83% (2018: 80%)
- Marketing & Fundraising 11% (2018: 12%)
- Administration 6% (2018: 9%)



For more details our audited financial reports are available at [alpha.org.au](http://alpha.org.au)

# Get in touch!

**To find an Alpha near you:**

[alpha.org.au/try](http://alpha.org.au/try)

**To register an Alpha:**

[alpha.org.au/run](http://alpha.org.au/run)

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**For Alpha in a Catholic Context, email:**

[catholics@alpha.org.au](mailto:catholics@alpha.org.au)

**For Youth Alpha, email:**

[youth@alpha.org.au](mailto:youth@alpha.org.au)

**For your local Regional Office, email:**

[nsw@alpha.org.au](mailto:nsw@alpha.org.au) (for NSW & ACT)

[nt@alpha.org.au](mailto:nt@alpha.org.au)

[qld@alpha.org.au](mailto:qld@alpha.org.au)

[sa@alpha.org.au](mailto:sa@alpha.org.au)

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