

# Alpha Fact Sheet



For more information on Alpha in Cayman, email: [alphacayman@gmail.com](mailto:alphacayman@gmail.com) . For general information, visit [www.alpha.org](http://www.alpha.org) .

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## 1. **What is Alpha, why should I attend and why do Churches run it?**

- Alpha is a low-pressure, fun and informative course. It is a place to relax, share your thoughts and explore the meaning of life.
- The Alpha course is an informative look at **basics of the Christian faith**. It involves **15 sessions over a 10 week period** which includes a day away.
- The course was developed by the Holy Trinity Brompton church in London and the material is presented by Nicky Gumbel on DVD. Nicky Gumbel is a very interesting and humorous presenter. Over 16 million people worldwide have now attended an Alpha course, running in tens of thousands of churches of all denominations across the world.
- We still hold that Cayman is a Christian country but many people living in Cayman today have never really explored what the Christianity is all about, who is this man called Jesus and why can we trust the Bible. If these things are true then their relevance is timeless and Alpha provides a setting in which these questions can be examined in a relaxed, informal and rational way.
- The Alpha programme is a helpful tool for evangelism and discipleship. In many places, it has created an opportunity for Christian churches and organizations to pray together, plan together, prepare teams together and invite their community to Alpha. As Christians are mobilized to work together across denominational lines, faith is stirred, churches are unified, more people have a personal invitation to receive Christ and communities are transformed.

## 2. **Is there any cost for doing the course?** No cost

## 3. **What happens on a typical evening of Alpha?**

- Alpha always starts with a meal that helps build friendships and creates a relaxed atmosphere.
- This is followed by a DVD presentation of the topic for the evening.
- Then we have time in small groups to discuss the topic further and ask any questions we might have.
- Alpha provides that space for your questions to be addressed. Questions about the meaning of life, about the significance of Jesus, about what happens when I die, or how do we account for suffering in the world if there is a loving God are all questions that we grapple with and seek answers for on Alpha.

## 4. **What are some of the topics that are covered during the course?**

Who is Jesus?	Why did Jesus die?
Why and how do I pray?	Why and how should I read the Bible?
How does God guide us?	How can I resist evil?
Does God heal today?	



## 5. **Who is putting on Alpha?**

The Alpha course is non-denominational and usually in Cayman several churches within the same denomination or from different denominations work together to offer the course at the same time.

## 6. **Who is Alpha for?**

- The course is for anyone, but especially for persons who are not a part of any church, who are just curious about Christianity. It is also suitable for new Christians or mature Christians seeking to strength their knowledge of the Christian faith.
- People attend from all backgrounds, religions, and viewpoints. Some people want to get beyond religion and find a relationship with God that really changes life. Others come for the close, long-lasting friendships that are built during the Alpha course.
- Sometimes, an Alpha course designed for 'special-interest groups' is run. In Cayman, churches have run Youth Alpha (the regular course but designed for young people) and Marriage Alpha (a special course designed to strengthen marriages).

## 7. **When does the course start and how can interested person get registered or find out more about the course?**

Alpha tends to be offered twice per year through different Churches in Grand Cayman, often at multiple churches simultaneously. Dates, times and venues are posted about a month in advance, along with registration information. The United Church, along with other denominations, will continue to offer various Alpha courses. Keep your eyes and ears open for news of an upcoming Alpha course – and invite a friend come and see!

## 8. **When has Alpha been offered in Cayman in the past and what has been the response?**

JGMC, Savannah United Church and Elmslie Memorial Church first ran the Alpha course as a coordinated effort starting in May 2010. Since then, the course has been run once or twice per year. Most of those who attend join in encouraging others to participate, with some returning as leaders in later sessions. Other United Churches and other denominations have also run the course at various times in the past.

Elmslie Memorial (United) Church has run Marriage Alpha annually since 2011, starting on or near Valentine's Day. The theme is 'Let's Stay Together!' The course is run in conjunction with Margaritaville where couples enjoy a meal at a private table along with meaningful conversation (no group work!). This course has proved very popular with over twenty couples participating.

JGMC (and other congregations) have run the Alpha youth programme as part of the usual Friday evening Youth Group activities. Youth and leaders found it very rewarding.

Under the leadership of the Rev. Graham Singh and Mr. Giancarlo Riveros, Caribbean and South America Representative for Alpha International, the first ever Global Alpha Training (GAT) event was held in Cayman on the 4th – 6th November 2011. Pastors and leaders of a number of local churches took part in the event, which was held at the Savannah United Church. The focus for the Friday and Saturday sessions was the training of leaders to facilitate the Alpha Course, although there were also brief presentations on Alpha for Prisons, Alpha in the Workplace, Marriage Alpha, Parenting Teenagers and Parenting Children courses, etc., all of which have proven to be highly effective tools to help build Christ's Kingdom and provide salvation, as well as building hope and empowerment for families and individuals. The Sunday evening session focused on training for facilitating the Youth Alpha course and that was attended by a number of Youth Leaders and young adults and others who work with young people, as well as some of those who had attended the 'Classic Alpha' training. Also accompanying Mr. Riveros and Rev. Singh and assisting in leading the training were Mr. Gerard Sebastian and Mr. Tim Malcolm, and Mr. and Mrs. Paul Sharp. While on the Island, Rev. Singh and Mr. Sebastian also took part in a service at the Prison as a guest of the prison ministry.