

Questions about Alpha

What is Alpha?

Alpha is a series of dinner conversations exploring the basics of the Christian faith. Typically run over eleven weeks, each session looks at a different question around faith, and the talks are designed to create conversation in small groups afterwards. It's totally free, it's run all over the globe, and everyone's welcome. We are doing ALPHA at the Buffalo Creek Brewing at 330 Historical Lane in Downtown Long Grove each Tuesday night.

What happens at Alpha?

Every Alpha is different, but generally they have three things in common: food, a talk and conversation.

Food – Most sessions start with food, because it's a great way to connect and get to know everyone there.

Talk – The talks include personal stories and conversations-- they explore the basics of the Christian faith and are designed to inspire conversation. Usually around 25 minutes long, they can be given as a live talk or played as an episode. At Buffalo Creek Brewing we will be playing episodes on the large screen.

Conversation – There is a discussion after the talk where you can share your thoughts and ideas on the session's topic. You can say anything. You can believe anything. Everyone takes time to process topics for themselves.

How long does it last each Tuesday night?

Our Alpha at Buffalo Creek Brewing is scheduled from 6:30pm to 8:30pm but you can stay longer and chat each night or leave early or come late if you need to.

How much does it Cost?

Alpha is completely free – and there's no follow-up if you don't want to come back after the first session. There will be a donation basket each week to help cover the cost of the dinner but it is totally optional. Long Grove Community Church is helping to pay for the meals each week but we do appreciate contributions towards that.

Can I attend if I am already a Christian?

Of course you can. Alpha is for everyone who wants to explore their faith in a non-judgmental, relational and conversational manner. We do ask Christians to hold back from preaching to others and allow each person to ask questions and make their own faith declarations without being corrected or judged. If you are a Christian who is young in the faith or has many questions –Alpha is definitely for

you. It will help you internalize and discover what you really believe about life's most important questions.

Can I attend if I am not a Christian and may not wish to be one?

Yes, of course. Alpha is for anyone from any religious or secular background. We only ask that you are respectful of others' perspectives and seek to have an open mind when it comes to answering the big questions of life. Please refrain from being argumentative or feeling the need to be proven right in your perspective alone. You will learn so much about yourself and your beliefs and why it may be that you believe what you believe. And hopefully you will learn to understand Christianity and others in a fresh way.

What if I cannot make it every week?

You are welcome to come to as many weeks as you can. Obviously you will get more out of it the more you attend. You will also develop some really cool friendships with others at Alpha and so you will feel more connected if you are able to come more often. But we all know life happens and so come as often as you can. We do have a one day retreat on a weekend that happens half way through the course.

Do I need to Bring Someone with me in order to attend?

No you do not. You can come alone or you can bring friends. Just come as you are. But we do encourage you to bring someone who may have questions or who might benefit from this experience. You can bring someone new up to the first 4 or 6 weeks of Alpha. Some people like to experience it before they invite others and that is totally fine.

Can I bring my Child or Youth with me?

Yes you can. However, if they are a distraction to you or to others it might not be the best choice. At Buffalo Creek Brewing the room that we will be in will be upstairs away from the bar. BCB seeks to be family friendly. Children are more than welcome to attend. But the talks and conversation are more at the adult level. I would recommend that students who come be at least in High school and they must be coming on their own motivation. There is a really cool Alpha Youth Series and our church may do this at some time in the near future. If you have a student who is interested let us know. But in the meantime yes you can bring your child and especially babies!

Can I come to the Kickoff on Jan. 29th only?

Yes, definitely. If you cannot make other dates or would prefer not to continue that is totally fine. However, it is worth noting that Jan. 29th is the kickoff dinner and there is not as much table discussion and conversation after the talk as there is on other nights on the first night.

Can I come to this ALPHA if I miss the kickoff on Tuesday, Jan.29th?

Yes, definitely. Even if you miss the first two weeks you can still come. I would recommend you watch the talks online before coming so you can catch up but you are more than welcome to attend whenever you can.

I work late---can I come late?

Yes, definitely. We usually start the video at 7:20pm—7:30pm so even if you are working until 7pm-ish you can still make it and we will always save you some food.

What is the RETREAT? And when is that?

The retreat is usually a one-day or two-day experience about halfway through the course and will take place off site at either a resort, hotel or conference/retreat center. I believe we are looking at the weekends in Mid-March (3/16) for the retreat. We will make that decision based on the availability of those attending. Those attending will hopefully be those who have been doing the course on Tuesdays with us. The retreat focuses on prayer and the Holy Spirit and is a great opportunity to connect with others and cultivate the life of the soul. It includes a few sessions, some great food and discussions as well as some personal time to connect with God. More info will be forthcoming on this.

THE ALPHA COURSE TOPICS – SYNOPSIS (Dates Subject to Change)

Intro Dinner: Is There More To Life Than This? Jan.29

Week 1: Who is Jesus? Feb.5

Week 2: Why Did Jesus Die? Feb.12

Week 3: How Can We Have Faith? Feb.19

Week 4: Why and How Do I Pray? Feb.26

Week 5: Why and How Should I Read The Bible? March 5

Week 6: How Does God Guide Us? March 12

Weekend/Day Away: March TBD (March 15-16)

Who Is The Holy Spirit? What does He do? How Can I Be Filled? How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?

Week 7: How Can I Resist Evil? March 19

Week 8: Why And How Should I Tell Others? March 26

Week 9: Does God Heal Today? April 2

Week 10: What about the Church? April 9