

March 12, 2021

Last night was our 6th online Alpha session

Dear Varsity Bible Church,

Zoom fatigue is a real phenomenon among post-secondary students these days. A number of students I know speak of frequent headaches, eye fatigue, and low motivation levels as campus instruction continues virtually amid the pandemic.

So when the idea was floated of launching an **online Alpha course** among the Christian community and friends at the **University of Calgary**, I had my doubts.

But I'm surprised with the success of this outreach initiative so far. Last night was our 6th session. Here are highlights:

- the idea of an Alpha course soon morphed into a joint effort by our **Navigator** ministry and our friends at **Inter-Varsity** and **Power to Change** campus ministries, along with some local churches. Working together permitted a more effective planning and recruitment strategy, and a sharper rollout. And it was more fun.
- I personally led our entire Navigator student ministry through Alpha Canada's excellent training course called **Life Shared**.
- three Navigator students stepped up to help spearhead planning and recruitment and to act as virtual table hosts: **Sandra** (4th year Education), **Savannah** (1st year Education), and **Cotter** (1st year Business). With these keen leaders in place, I suddenly realized this idea might just work after all.
- the first Alpha evening on February 4th welcomed 106 participants mostly from **UofC**, but also from **Mount Royal University** and the **University of Alberta**. Since then, attendance has remained strong with only a 10% drop. That's a remarkably consistent track record.



PRAYER REQUEST

Pray for these three friends invited by our Navigator students who are checking out Alpha for the first time: **Stuart*** (Phd student at UofC's School of Medicine), **Irene*** (Psychology student at MRU), and **Kevin*** (UofC Computer Science student) that they would grow in an understanding of the gospel ([Matthew 13:19](#)). (*not real name)

The **Alpha Online Day Together** (a.k.a. Holy Spirit Weekend) is Saturday, March 20th from 1:00-5:30pm. It's a special time that gives space for participants to encounter God, and an opportunity to receive prayer - all virtually using Zoom. Pray for the Lord's gracious movement in students' hearts that afternoon.

Please consider joining me at the upcoming Navigators **Discipleship Lab** session entitled "*Spiritual Practices that Help Us Stay Close*" scheduled for **Tuesday, March 16th** from 6:30-7:30 PM Mountain Time. More information on this free event [here!](#)

In Him,

Rick
