



Spotlight

ST THOMAS' ANGLICAN CHURCH

Alpha attracts younger guests



WE re-introduced the Alpha course in our church four years ago. At first the majority of the attendees were our own parishioners, whose faith was discovered and strengthened.

But more recently, we've been noticing many younger faces at Alpha. Over 65% of a recent course was made up of young people in the 20-40 age group, and that youthful presence is reflected directly in the make-up of our newest Alpha team, which we believe the Lord will use effectively to bring many of their

Pastor Peter Young

St. Thomas' Anglican Church
St. John's, NL

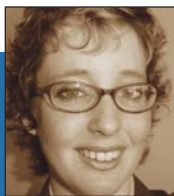
peers to faith in Him.

The Alpha course has had a significant impact on St. Thomas', first on our congregation, and now on our community. About 450 people have taken the Alpha course at our church. We continue to welcome new and enthusiastic Alpha graduates into the ranks of the congregation and the growing network of small home groups.

St. Thomas' is advancing into its second year as an Alpha Resource Church for Newfoundland. Essentially, this means St. Thomas' partners with AlphaCanada by modeling to the local and extended community a church intentionally reaching out to the unchurched, running the course on an ongoing basis according to the "recipe" (training small group leaders and helpers each course, using all the videos, providing a meal and running the Weekend or Day Away).

Alpha jump-started my faith

It's amazing to watch God change people's lives right before your eyes.



By Kathleen Shapter

IFELT like my life was stagnant, like I was stumbling around in a dark and depressing world. Then something began to change. I began to want to go to church, and tagged along with my mother once or twice a month.

My longing for something more grew stronger each time I went to church. I continued to have questions about God, so I began to talk to my mother and others who had attended the Alpha

See Alpha Jump-Started overleaf



Alpha

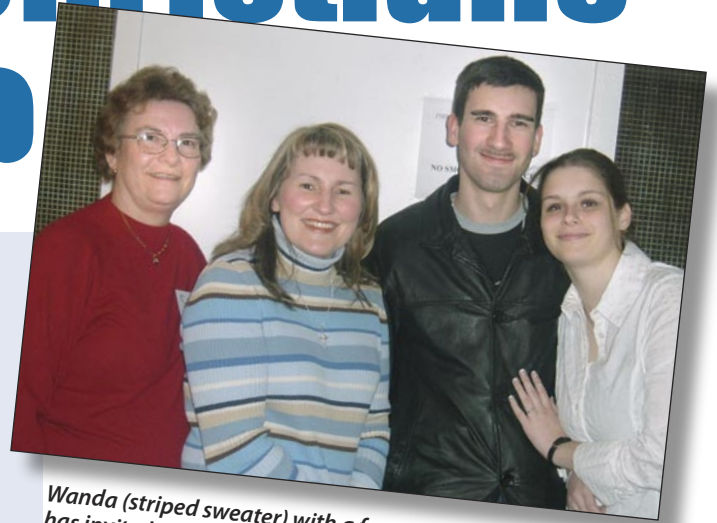
Spotlight on Churches
is produced by
Alpha Ministries Canada

230-11331 Coppersmith Way
Richmond BC V7A 5J9

www.alphacanada.org

Who says Christians are boring?

Wanda was not a Christian before the Alpha course. God was just not a part of her daily life. She thought that people who were Christians were very boring people who had no fun! Now she's leading an Alpha course at St. Thomas' Anglican!



Wanda (striped sweater) with a few of the many she has invited to Alpha - L. to R., babysitter Sophie Stagg, nephew Stephen Chafe, and friend Kim Whitten.

by **Wanda Fitzpatrick**

I WAS surprised that there was a course called Alpha designed to answer people's questions. I decided to go and see what it was all about.

I completed the Alpha course at St. Thomas' and, besides finding answers to my questions, made an interesting discovery. I was the one who had been boring. HAH! I wonder now how I got through things without having any faith. Now there are times when I feel so much love in my heart that it feels like it's going to explode.

My new enthusiasm for Jesus was so great that I began to invite family and friends to Alpha. My nephew Steve and

his girlfriend Kim decided to come. Kim admits that their reason for coming at first was to spend time together, but they came to faith in Christ, began growing and developing, and now they help on the Alpha team!

Others followed. My Mom and Dad, sister, brother-in-law, babysitter, and others. My goal is to invite as many people as I can to Alpha. It is an amazing course for those searching for God.

What a difference God has made in my life. I am so thankful I could just scream from the mountaintops how great He is! I am so thankful that St. Thomas' runs the Alpha course. It has helped me start

my journey and has given me answers without pressuring me in any way.

Now my personal relationship with God makes Him part of my daily life. I love to be in His mighty presence. He has taught me to trust Him more, and I have learned to surrender to Him.

I was asked to be the administrator for our Alpha course in January 2006 and I have enjoyed the opportunity. I now realize how much work, effort and prayer go into an Alpha course. I appreciate the importance of having a team, and value the contribution of each person, whether helper, leader, intercessor or kitchen help.

Alpha jump-started my faith

From front page
course. I decided to sign up for Alpha at St. Thomas'.

Right from the introduction night I knew that this was what I was looking for. I remember that first night. I went by myself and spoke to a bunch of people who had the same questions, pre-conceptions, and even concerns about Christianity.

During the Holy Spirit weekend I

experienced the healing power of God's Spirit. It was definitely something I will never forget. I had absolutely no doubt in my mind that this was not a fairytale.

Alpha changed my life, plain and simple. Without taking the course, I don't think I would have understood how to take things further with God. I know now that Jesus saved my life when I let Him into my heart. Going to Alpha was the best thing I could have done to jump

start my faith.

I am now on the team helping to lead Alpha, and I can see that the Alpha course is having the same effect on many of the guests as it did on me. There is an air of excitement and some of the guests are just about to burst with joy. They remind me so much of me when I was doing the course. It's amazing to watch God change people's lives right before your eyes.