

FPC Oak Ridge to offer

Alpha Course this fall

Why is there suffering in the world? What is the meaning of life? What is the Holy Spirit?

These questions are addressed by the 37-year-old Alpha Course that millions of Christians and people curious about Christianity have taken worldwide.

The free Alpha Course will be offered on Sunday evenings from Sept. 14 through Nov. 16 at First Presbyterian Church of Oak Ridge, 1051 Oak Ridge Turnpike. Supper and childcare will be provided. The classes will run from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. in Room 102, Activities building.

A one-day retreat will be held on Saturday, Oct. 25, at another place.

The ten-week course will be devoted to the basics of Christianity. Each evening will include supper, music, a brief lecture on video and small group discussion.

The Alpha Course is appropriate for seekers, people who are curious about Christianity, those who wish to “brush up” on the basics of Christianity, long-time Christians who could use a recharge, those who have fallen away from church and those who do not attend a church.

The lecture topics include: (1) Who is Jesus? (2) Why did Jesus die? (3) How can we have faith? (4) Why and how do I pray? (5) Why and how should I read the Bible? (6) How does God guide us? (7) How can I resist evil? (8) Why and how should I tell others? (9) Does God heal today? (10) What about the church?

A retreat will be held in the middle of the 10 weeks. Retreat topics include: (1) Who is the Holy Spirit? (2) What does the Holy Spirit do? (3) How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit? (4) How can I make the most of the rest of my life?

The lecturer is Nicky Gumbel. Prior to becoming a vicar in the Church of England, he was both an atheist and lawyer. Because he was not always a Christian, Gumbel has considerable insight into the doubts of nonbelievers and the process of becoming a Christian.

He uses numerous stories from his own life, the life of his friends and participants in Alpha Courses to illustrate concepts and major points of his lecture. Frequently, he quotes famous authors from psychologists to poets. He has a gentle sense of humor and spirit of goodwill that pervade his talks.

Alpha Courses have been offered in more than 160 countries by Anglican, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal, Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches. More than 19 million people have taken the course.

If you are interested in registering for the course, please visit the website www.fpcor.org and click on “Register for the Alpha Course” or call the FPCOR office at 483-1318.