

THE ESL LINK

ESL Ministries Conference Gathering VI

Date: October 24, 2009 (Saturday)

Time: 8:15 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Venue: Don Valley Bible Chapel (near Don Mills and Van Horne)

Workshops:

This year, you can attend **3** workshops out of the nine being offered. Options focus on beginning, intermediate & advanced students, using videos for Bible-based ESL, and the full day "Getting Started in ESL Ministry" track, featuring a demonstration with real students!

Keynote:

Our good friend Rev. Darcy McCallum, Provincial Coordinator for the federally funded Settlement Workers in Schools Program (SWIS), will present the keynote address this year. You will benefit from his first hand knowledge of immigration trends and the specific needs of newcomers, as well as be challenged by his heart for God!

You can register online by visiting our website: <http://sites.google.com/site/eslministries/gathering-vi-4>

The cost of the conference is \$12 and \$15 for those taking the "Getting Started in ESL Ministry" track.

CHURCH-BASED ESL MINISTRY

ESL ministry represents an astonishing opportunity for the church to meaningfully engage the mission field in which God has placed us. With over 250,000 people moving to Canada each year—many from nations where missionaries have difficulty working—it's hard to not get excited at the possibilities!

But for the church to make the most of the opportunity before it a number of issues need to be considered.

First, the church must understand the broader context within which it is offering its ministry. Both the federal and provincial governments provide funding for a variety of language acquisition programs—ESL and LINC being the most widely known—many of which also offer child care during class.

Government funded HOST programs also offer English conversation circles in a number of locations including local libraries.

The effective ESL ministry will therefore map its neighbourhood and have a strong understanding of what programs are available, where the gaps in service are, and strategically design its program to address those needs. Engaging these other programs

may, in fact, expand the number of people who are exposed to your ministry.

Second, the church needs to wrestle with the nature of its ESL ministry: is it only seeking to overtly weave the gospel and Bible into the content of its ESL classes or does it also seek

to embody the gospel witness individually, relationally and as a ministry team?

It is important to consider not only the present but also possibilities in the future for the needed verbal witness.

Third, what is the pathway for someone who attends your ESL classes and wishes to get connected to your church? Regardless of your approach to the content of your ESL pro-

gram, consider the larger church context as well.

Explore the biblical theme of hospitality (see Newsletter #1.1) and strategize with your church leadership about the different pathways the newcomer can take, including the way in which the church needs to be prepared to welcome the newcomer who comes from a different culture.



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BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR ESL MINISTRY

At the start of another busy year of teaching and ministry, let's remind ourselves of the Biblical foundations for our ESL ministries.

(1) Is worship at the heart of your life and that of your team? "Missions [and your ESL ministry is a mission] exists because worship doesn't. Worship...is the fuel and goal in missions." (Piper)

(2) Are you keeping your own personal spiritual vitality in tip-top shape? Expect challenges – relationally, spiritually, personally. Much prayer is needed; be ready

to confess your sins; walk in the light; have pastoral oversight in place.

(3) Is your Church Leadership actively supportive? Lip service or simply letting the ministry happen is inviting frustration.

(4) Is your team characterized by "Unity of Spirit and the Bond of Peace"? Is the fruit of the Spirit evident? Remember the team includes those serving with hospitality, refreshments, administration, and follow-up support. Our love for one another is a very strong witness (John 13:35).

(5) Is your program characterized by Integrity? Have you done your homework in preparation? Are your standards high? Are you delivering what you promised?

(6) Above all, as 1 Corinthians 13 says, it is all 'nothing' without Love. Is your program a testimony to compassion, cultural and pedagogical sensitivity, and hospitality? Many of the SOCEM programs are exemplary. Please send in your testimonies, lessons learned, and thoughts to eslministries@gmail.com.

- Tom McCormick, for SOCEM board

CHURCH-BASED ESL MINISTRY

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Think through how the newcomer will flavour your church—beyond adding new dishes to the annual potluck.

Finally, for ESL ministry to reach its full potential it must be embraced by the whole church (especially its leadership) as integral to its overall mission. That is, rather than being the exclusive ministry of a few passionate souls, the church that embraces ESL ministry recognizes that this too is a part of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

- Darcy MacCallum

HAVE YOU WONDERED...

What makes a language learner progress more quickly and steadily than another? Is it age, aptitude, or memory power?

While these all play a part, researchers have identified traits and habits of successful language learners that we as teachers can help foster. For example, these learners are good at guesswork. They focus on communicating the message despite gaps in their language. They are constantly looking for patterns in the language and opportunities for practice. They are relaxed and positive about learning language, and are not afraid to make mistakes. These and many more traits can become 'strategies' we can help our learners acquire.

For a more complete list of characteristics, see <http://www.22local.com/2009/08/10/14-characteristics-of-a-good-language-learner/> (accessed September 22, 2009).

We will consider how teachers can help foster these traits in the next issue.

- Jennifer Tong

ESL AT BAYVIEW GLEN

In November 2002, ESL (English as a Second Language) was just a fledgling ministry operating only on Friday evening for 1-½ hours. We started with approximately 20 students but the numbers and enthusiasm grew tremendously. Many came to faith during that first year. In January 2004, in response to the demand, we opened up a Daytime ESL on Monday and Thursday morning from 10 to 12. Since then we have seen literally hundreds of newcomers to Canada pass through both ministries, learning English while making new friends and learning about Jesus and the Bible. Both programs are Bible-based and offer English at all levels, from Low Basic to High Advanced. We have studied books of the Bible, biblical characters such as Abraham and Peter and topical studies on Christian themes.

Approximately 25 workers from the church are involved in the ministry. We have a team of workers to take care of the registration and assessment process in addition to a roster of teachers/facilitators.

This year, our Friday night program was replaced with Alpha ESOL, an Alpha program in English specifically designed for Speakers of Other Languages. Guests listen to live speakers in small segments followed by discussion. We pray many will

come to faith through it.

Being involved in the ESL ministry has taught me five things.

First, there is always room for improvement. **Second**, we have learned to welcome problems and view them as opportunities to better the program. **Third**, many people are searching for meaning in life. We all had to learn to throw away our assumptions about people's disinterest in God and the Bible. Many are eager to study English with Bible-based materials and have come to faith as a result. **Fourth**, God is a gracious Provider. We have learned that when God starts a ministry, He provides in every way, down to the finest detail. **Finally**, we have learned that prayer is essential and when it is lacking, the ministry suffers.

ESL has been a great blessing not only to those wishing to improve their English but also to those teaching each week. In fact, the whole church has been blessed as newcomers to Canada start attending the services and become part of other church ministries.

- Mary Hogan

We're on the WEB:
www.eslministries.org

The Southern Ontario
Cooperative of ESL
Ministries

Contact Us:

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www.eslministries.org

FREE BIBLES FOR ESL PROGRAMS

See <http://southern-ontario-esl-ministries.blogspot.com/2009/03/free-bibles-for-christian-esl-programs.html> for details.

"Love is patient and kind;
love is not jealous or boastful;
it is not arrogant or rude.
Love does not insist on its own way;
it is not irritable or resentful;
it does not rejoice at wrong,
but rejoices in the right.
Love bears all things,
believes all things,
hopes all things,
endures all things."

(1 Corinthians 13)

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED CHINA?

China wants foreign English teachers, particularly for their universities. Fully furnished housing is provided, along with a modest salary. Live on or near a university campus, interact with the students in class and hang out with them, or hold Bible studies in your home. Be an ambassador for Christ.

The Bethune Institute offers a 5-day training course in Canada that leads to the Bethune TESOL certificate which is recognized and highly respected in China. The next Bethune TESOL course in Toronto will be held on November 18-22, 2009.

Contact Elmer Warkentin at elmer.warkentin@gmail.com or 647-349-2830 for more information or to register.