

## **Thriving Diversity Conference Equips Churches to be Intentionally Intercultural**

*On May 7<sup>th</sup> Cooperative ESL Ministries will offer a cutting-edge training conference designed to prepare churches to welcome and integrate immigrants into Calgary.*

**Calgary, AB** (April 18, 2011) – On May 7<sup>th</sup> Cooperative ESL Ministries will host Thriving Diversity, a conference designed to prepare churches to be intentionally intercultural and to equip church-based ESL program volunteers with enriched teaching skills.

This annual full day training conference has developed a reputation amongst alumni for offering practical and in-depth training for those reaching newcomers. “More and more churches are recognizing the need to welcome newcomers to Calgary, but often don’t know where to start. We provide hands-on training that churches and individuals can apply immediately in their communities,” says Bev Chambers, the ESL Cooperative’s Intercultural Workshop Co-ordinator.

Two workshop tracks are available: one specifically for ESL program volunteers and another for churches seeking to become more welcoming to immigrants. Workshop presenters include professional ESL teachers, community leaders and pastors from a denominational spectrum.

For those seeking to develop a more welcoming church the workshops will focus on intercultural skills, challenging current perceptions, and helping churches gain a vision for ministry partnership with immigrants.

Church-based ESL program volunteers will be given tools to enrich and enliven their ESL teaching skills including workshops about using music in the classroom, a fresh look at conversation classes and how to help students master suprasegmentals.

The conference starts at 9:00 am (registration 8:45) at Crossroads Community Church and ends at 3:30 pm. The cost is \$45 (\$50 after May 1<sup>st</sup>). To register for Thriving Diversity or find out more visit [www.eslcooperative.ca](http://www.eslcooperative.ca).

The ESL Cooperative believes that ordinary, open-hearted Calgarians, with training in cross-cultural communication and good principles of adult education, can make a difference. Who better to lead the way in providing this warm welcome than Calgary’s churches? In addition to the Thriving Diversity

Conference the Cooperative has been hosting other training events and workshops throughout the year since 2001 to empower churches to reach out in love to newcomers in our community.

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For more information, photos and statistics or to schedule an interview contact:

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