

CESLM Annual Spring Training 2022

Opening Session Presenter

Reaching Newcomers in Your Community—Mary Thomas

Understand the biblical reasons and basis of welcoming newcomers, learn the ways and means to engage with them and be equipped with insights to practically meet their needs and share the love of Jesus.



Bio: Mary was born in Kerala, India and holds a master’s degree in chemistry, Educational Administration and Christian Studies. She has taught high school for over two decades in India and Canada. Mary is currently involved in ministering to immigrants in Regina. She has enjoyed speaking at retreats, conferences and churches in Canada and overseas. She has served as a board member with the Canadian Food Grains Bank, Regina Rainbow Youth Centre, AMAKON, the Women’s Forum and various other organizations.

Mary came to personal faith in Christ during her undergraduate studies through Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. Her passion is to reach women and build them up in their walk with the Lord. Mary is married to evangelist Dr. T.V. Thomas. They have three adult children: Victor, Molly and Melanie. Mary enjoys reading, pickleball, badminton and following national and international news.

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Session 1 Workshop Options—9:55 a.m. (Choose One)

Option 1: Informality—the Social and Relational Aspects of Language Learning—Jennifer Tong



Informal English classes, often called conversational classes or conversation circles, make up a significant portion of church-based ESL programs. *Have you considered the rationale or principles behind such programs? What would be the benefits and challenges of being ‘informal’?* We will consider some case studies, connect them to language learning principles, and see how these approaches impact students and teachers relationally and emotionally.

Bio: Jennifer Tong has been the coordinator and a teacher of a small ESL program at Parkway Forest Community Church in Toronto since 2004. She is a TESL Ontario certified teacher and has taught LINC at a private language school and a factory in the past. Her interests include non-western learning styles, reflective practice in ESL and mental health for immigrants. Jennifer is also an active editor and musician. As well, she serves with the Southern Ontario Cooperative of ESL Ministries (SOCEM).

Option 2: Let's Talk About Culture—Miriam Charter



An essential part of language learning is culture. Newcomers to Canada confront cultural differences every day in life.

It is important to help newcomers understand the concept of culture and the process of transition from their birth culture to Canadian culture.

Transition is more than change—it is the inner process through which people come to terms with change as they let go of how things once were and reorient themselves to the way things are now.

Using the Transition Curve of William Bridges, students are encouraged to think about where they are on the curve that takes them from leaving one culture, navigating the messy process of change, to fully embracing and thriving in the new culture.

Discussions of culture lead naturally to dealing with worldview assumption, culture shock and the losses involved in transition. Each topic presents an opportunity for conversation in English about things they are experiencing, regardless of language level.

Bio: Miriam Charter (Ph.D.) is a mission practitioner, speaker and mobilizer living in Calgary, Alberta. She has a pronounced calling to the nations, which in retirement she lives out among newcomers to Canada. Born in China, Miriam immigrated to Canada as a child. She began her cross-cultural experience with culture and language learning in France. Then, for 15 years, she invested her time working with the underground church in communist Europe and in the early post-Communist era church in Russia. Miriam is fascinated by the process of transition from one culture to another. She is committed to helping newcomers to Canada think about culture, while coming to understand Canadian culture—and in the process, better understand their own culture.

Session 2 Workshop—11:15 a.m.

Practical Help for Online ESL Ministry—Allan Pole, Del Herman, Mary-Jane Davison

The purpose of this interactive session is to share practical tips and ideas with each other so participants will be able to start or improve an online ESL ministry.



Allan Pole serves as president of **Cooperative ESL Ministries** and pastor of [New Beginnings Church](#). He and his wife Brenda have two married children and two grandchildren. Al started and continues to lead North Calgary ESL Conversation Group using Meetup and Zoom.



Del Herman has been an ESL instructor for over 20 years, including many years of participation in church-based ESL ministry. Currently, he is a volunteer in the online ESL ministry outreach of Bethany Baptist Church in Richmond, BC. Del also does online tutoring with secondary and post-secondary students. Del and his wife, Carina, a health care executive, have two adult sons.



Mary-Jane Davison has been volunteering in ESL ministry in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario, for 12 years. She leads English conversation circles and ESL Bible studies on Zoom with [Learn English Make Friends](#), an outreach of WMB Church. Mary-Jane values the support of her husband and two teens as she serves people from around the world who have settled in the Waterloo Region.