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Teaching English as a Ministry of the Church : Diakonia to Our Neighbors in the United States

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TEACHING ENGLISH AS A MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH:
DIAKONIA TO OUR NEIGHBORS IN THE UNITED STATES

by

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>AC</i>	<i>Augsburg Confession</i>
<i>BC</i>	<i>Book of Concord</i>
ELCA	Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
ELL	English as a Learned Language
FLC	First Lutheran Church
FLCS	First Lutheran Church and School
FLS	First Lutheran School
<i>LC</i>	<i>Large Catechism</i>
<i>LW</i>	<i>Luther's Works</i>
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
<i>SC</i>	<i>Small Catechism</i>
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language

DEDICATION

To the English Language Learners who have helped me learn how to teach and how to learn. Thank you for sharing your stories with me!

INTRODUCTION

According to the U.S. Census Bureau in the year 2000, 18 percent of Americans aged five and over did not speak English in their own homes.¹ In Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Iowa, states where Lutheranism plays a significant role, over 838,000 people claim to not speak English well.² With over 10,500 congregations in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA),³ the Lutheran Church has tremendous potential to minister to people who do not speak English. In ELCA urban settings and even extremely rural ones, adult immigrants, refugees, visitors, new Americans, etc., are present. In these settings, a ministry of teaching English can take root.

It certainly is the case today that there are many English as a Learned Language (ELL)⁴ programs offered through community and state governmental support. In fact, in

¹ Hyon B. Shin, "Language Use and English-Speaking Ability: 2000," *US Census Bureau*, <http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/c2kbr-29.pdf/> (accessed October 3, 2007). This is an increase of over 10% from 1990-2000, and the numbers are rising. Of the 262.4 million language speakers in the United States over the age of five in 2000, approximately 11 million of them spoke English either not well or not at all, by their own discerning.

² Ibid.

³ "ELCA Quick Facts," *ELCA*, December 31, 2005, <http://www.elca.org/communication/quick.html/> (accessed October 5, 2007).

⁴ A clarification of abbreviations regarding English instruction is helpful. English as a Second Language (ESL) has been the predominant term to refer to people (children and adults) who do not have English as their native language. However, many of these people are not learning English as their second language. Rather, they are learning English as their third, fourth or even eighth language! In order to honor this, other terms are appropriate in place of ESL such as: English as a Foreign Language (EFL),

2004-05, over 2.5 million adults were enrolled in an adult English education program that received funding through the U.S. Department of Education.⁵ Many other English programs are privately run, often by a non-profit organization. What is striking is how many of these English programs are housed in church buildings. Churches are usually located in a central area of their community and have the physical space to offer. Surprisingly, though, not many of these ELL programs or churches are intentional about forming the English program into a ministry of the church. Yet, the opportunity for such an outreach is apparent. The English language need is rising; programs are growing. Churches not only have the location, but they have, I will argue, the people to teach. Churches are serving their neighbors in need when they provide English classes. But, what about actually considering these classes a ministry of the church?

This paper seeks to give frameworks of thought for why teaching English is a ministry that the church can offer in the United States. Although many Christian organizations send people abroad to teach English and evangelize (not always in that order of importance, however), this paper focuses on English-teaching as a stateside ministry. The first chapter outlines the Lutheran church's understanding of our Christian

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), English as an Additional Language (EAL), and English as a Learned Language (ELL); ELL is also sometimes used to mean English Language Learners. All of these terms refer to the same teaching process of what is typically an English immersion experience in the classroom for the students. Most of these classes are comprised of people from a variety of language backgrounds; hence the teacher speaks only English to communicate with them all. These terms also assume that the students are learning practical English through listening, speaking, reading and writing instruction.

⁵ "ESL Resources: FAQs," *CAELA: Center for Adult English Language Acquisition*, August 23, 2007, http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/faqs.html#Two/ (accessed October 6, 2007).

call to serve the needs of the community. Through a theological point of view on service, the opportunity to teach English becomes clearly an avenue through which the church can live out its mission. The second chapter considers cross-cultural frameworks for teaching a classroom of adults from various ethnic backgrounds. With a Christian lens of hospitality, better cross-cultural communication in such a setting is possible. The third chapter moves toward educational frameworks for teaching English. The church understands itself as a community of learners and teachers, and has a trustworthy environment in which to teach cross-culturally.

Finally, this paper includes an outline of the ELL ministry that I created in a congregation as part of my Diaconal Ministry preparation in the ELCA. A description of this program is provided here as an example of what this type of English ministry looks like. The goals for this program are assumed throughout this paper: to teach English, to evangelize, to equip laity, and to provide fellowship. My hope is that this Ministry Project paper will be used by others to aid in their visioning and implementation of similar programs.

CHAPTER 1

A THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE MINISTRY OF TEACHING ENGLISH

Teaching English is a ministry of the church. The word ministry means service, as both words (ministry and service) come from the same Greek word *Diakonia*, and of which teaching English can be one form. The definition of church is where the Gospel is preached and the sacraments are administered in a gathered assembly of believers.⁶ Service is not solely the work of individuals; it is also the work of this assembled body. Service and church go hand in hand. This chapter provides an overview of the church's call to service. It outlines Biblical, Vocational, Missional and Confessional, as well as Diaconal aspects of the church, all of which call for Christians to serve their neighbors in need. As each of these enlightens the others, *Diakonia* of the church is highlighted and the purpose of an ELL ministry is grounded.

The main identifying feature of church is that the community gathers regularly for worship to hear God's Word and to experience the consolation of God's love through the

⁶ *AC*, Ger. 7:1, in *BC*, 42.

cross of Jesus Christ. In this corporate worship, the Holy Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies believers, gifting them with the means to be in community and ministry together.⁷ Such worship forms the heart of the church's ministry, yet, the church's worship is much more than this. Worship is characterized by liturgy. This typically includes participating in Scripture, songs, and prayers, among other practices. However, the word "liturgy" indicates more than the order and elements of worship. Liturgy actually means "work of the people."⁸ It is the work of the people that permeates the worship service and, moreover, extends beyond the worship service itself.

When it is announced "Go in Peace; Serve the Lord," the worship has ended, but it has also just begun. The decree has then been given to the assembly to continue the work of the people outside of the church walls and into the daily life of the community. Thus, the liturgy is not reserved only for the worship service solely, but for service itself. In fact, the difference between worship and service is rightly unclear as they are not mutually exclusive. "When a congregation prays for the world in worship, that is a form of Christian service, and when a congregation feeds the hungry or cares of the sick or works for justice [or teaches English!], these are also worshipful acts of praise."⁹ The church, worship, service to others – they all embody the liturgy of "work of the people."

⁷ *SC*, 6, in *BC*, 355.

⁸ Foster R. McCurley, *Go in Peace Serve the Lord: The Social Ministry of the Church* (Chicago: ELCA Division for Church in Society, 2000), 12.

⁹ Thomas G. Long, *Beyond the Worship Wars: Building Vital and Faithful Worship* (The Alban Institute, 2001), 81.

Certainly, the church and world are always together, and Christians participate in both simultaneously. Because the church is always at work in the world and because worship and service are tied together, this chapter seeks to reflect on core theological beliefs that form the church and give it its mission to “Serve the Lord.”

The Biblical Call to Serve

Service to others is central to the Biblical understanding of the church as the body of Christ in the world. Jesus Christ’s ministry was not confined to public worship spaces; it was also lived out among the people’s communities and everyday lives. Christ’s teachings on service and the example of servanthood he provided his followers are rich throughout the New Testament accounts of his ministry. To examine all the Biblical mentions of service would take more pages than this paper allows. However, a look at a few Biblical passages that particularly inform the goals of a ministry that teaches English will confirm that the Word of God calls for service.

On the night in which Jesus was betrayed, he told his disciples, “I am among you as one who serves” (Luke 22:27 NRSV). In this same night, Jesus gave the mandate to his disciples to serve one another. “For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you,” Jesus says (John 13:15 NRSV). Recognizing a need among his community, Jesus does not hesitate to be the one to fulfill it. When he sees that his friends’ feet have not been washed on this night, he bends his knees, takes the towel and basin, and begins to serve. Moreover, Jesus tells us to do likewise, setting for us the

example to which he calls Christians to follow. Teaching English is one way the church follows this mandate. Recognizing the need of English in its community, the church does not hesitate to provide the *Diakonia* of teaching this language to its neighbors.

The church serves the needs it recognizes in its community, and in so doing, it cultivates discipleship in Christ. The Biblical commission given by Jesus to “go therefore and make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you” enlightens ELL ministry (Matthew 28:19-20a NRSV). As servants following the servant Christ, the church *goes* into the world; teaching English is one avenue through which the church can *go*. Disciples are made as Christians *go*, as faith grows through following Jesus’ example and command to serve. Making disciples occurs in English classes through their intentional teaching about the Christian faith and the fellowship they offer. Evangelism, another goal of these classes, introduces discipleship to the students and, just as significantly, continues the discipleship growth of the congregation members who volunteer as English tutors. Through the students’ willingness to be exposed to the Christian faith during their English instruction and the tutors’ openness to using their gifts in service to others, disciples are strengthened. This commission to “go and make disciples” is a strong source of the Christian call to service.

One final Biblical passage that is especially formative for Christian belief in Jesus Christ is from the Apostle Paul’s understanding of Christ’s perfect example of

servanthood. Martin Luther describes this servanthood as he references Philippians 2:5-8:

Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death.¹⁰

Christ took on servanthood (other translations use the word “slave”), doing our work for us, so that we could be freed to participate in Christ’s life – his death and resurrection – and receive his inheritance of eternal life. What an exchange! Luther explains that, “since the Christian is free from all works, he also ought to empty himself and take the form of a servant to serve, help and in every way deal with his neighbor.”¹¹ Such servanthood is fundamental to the Christian life for God himself became a servant. As we dwell in the Word of God, as given to us in the Bible, we take servanthood to heart and learn its central function in the life of the gathered assembly of believers.

The Lutheran Tradition’s Theological Understanding of Vocation

As the Biblical call to serve sends Christians into service, so too, baptism into the life of Christ calls Christians to follow Christ’s example of meeting the world’s needs.

¹⁰ *Freedom of a Christian* (1520), LW 31: 366.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

The journey of discipleship begins in baptism. Through the Lutheran understanding of baptism, those baptized are not only forgiven of their sins, delivered from death and the devil, and are given everlasting salvation¹² (as if that wasn't enough!), but also, in baptism, the baptized are personally commissioned by Christ to live out their baptism in a vocation of *Diakonia* to others. Through baptism, God “liberates us from sin and death by joining us to the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.”¹³ Now liberated, the Christian is free to no longer think of his/her self, but to think of others. The Christian is free to serve others in God's world. Luther describes the twofold understanding of this freedom: “the Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. The Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant, subject to all.”¹⁴ As baptized believers, we have been given a vocation, in freedom and duty, to carry out our discipleship of Christ through serving others in their deep need.

For the baptized, free to serve others yet responsible to care for others, vocation is the call to use one's gifts in the very real ways present in each person's own context, which the world needs. Frederick Buechner, a Presbyterian minister and author, defined vocation as “the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.”¹⁵ Vocation is, therefore, not only a calling for people to ordained ministry or a holy order.

¹² *SC*, 5-6, in *BC*, 359.

¹³ Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship, *Lutheran Book of Worship* (Minneapolis: Augsburg; Philadelphia: Board of Publication, Lutheran Church in America, 1978), 121.

¹⁴ *Freedom of a Christian*, 344.

¹⁵ Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking: A Seeker's ABC* (San Francisco: Harper, 1993), 119.

Rather, as Luther stressed, vocation is for all believers, in all their “ordinary” roles of life. Our vocation is to do those ordinary roles in love for our neighbor because of the love we receive in Christ. “Vocation is ordained by God to benefit, not him who fulfills the vocation, but the neighbor, who, standing alongside, bears his own cross for the sake of others.”¹⁶ Lutheran theology is credited with the vocational phrase “priesthood of all believers,” the idea that all people are “priests” (ministers) because of their Christian call in the world. The world itself, as God’s own creation, is good, and Luther valued and encouraged human work in it, finding that God is present in the world and in its relationships.¹⁷ “God does not come to man in thoughts and feelings which well up in him when he isolates himself from the world, but rather in what happens to man in the external and tangible events which take place about him.”¹⁸ It is the baptized’s vocational work to live in this external world, seeking out the needs of others and offering each one’s gifts to assist one another. Luther writes, “a man does not live for himself alone...but he lives also for all men on earth; rather he lives only for others and not for himself. To this end he brings his body into subjection that he may the more sincerely and freely serve others.”¹⁹ Although we are freed in baptism, our Christian vocation is to serve others. This call to serve takes many forms; certainly, teaching

¹⁶ Gustaf Wingren, *Luther on Vocation*, trans. Carl C. Rasmussen (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1957), 29.

¹⁷ AC, Ger. 16:1, in BC, 48.

¹⁸ Wingren, *Luther on Vocation*, 117.

¹⁹ *Freedom of a Christian*, 301.

English to those who do not speak this language is one way a Christian can live out their baptismal vocation.

One assumption in an explanation of vocation is that Christians live in community. Through baptism, Christians “are reborn children of God and made members of the church, the body of Christ.”²⁰ Church members, the body of Christ, the family of God, and the communion of saints – these are all terms for the community in which Christians partake. As Luther explains it in the *Large Catechism*, “creation is now behind us and redemption has also taken place, but the Holy Spirit continues his work without ceasing until the Last Day, and for this purpose he has appointed a community on earth, through which he speaks and does all his work.”²¹ Such participation in this community is core to the Christian identity. Without community, vocation is unnecessary; serving our neighbor would be pointless. However, God’s very own creation is intended for community, relationships and purpose. God created the world to be in relationship with God and to be in relationship with itself. God’s own self is a relationship, as expressed in the persons of the Trinity! God asks creation to sustain a trustworthy world, and God provides for us, giving us the Holy Spirit, in order to strive for that type of community. “Created in the image of God, as well as from the dust of the

²⁰ Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006), 227.

²¹ *LC*, 2, 61 in *BC*, 439.

ground, [human beings] are given work to do in God's world."²² Such a world intended for community cares that there are troubles in the world that need attending. Such a world given a purpose for relationality sees the need to teach English as a service that Christians can offer – and is ready to work.

The Missional and Confessional Responsibility to Outreach

Service to the neighbor is both a missional and confessional idea. It is missional in that it sends Christians out into the world for the sake of Christ. It is confessional in that it holds to the reformers' understandings of what it means to be a Christian and to be the church. These two terms, mission and confession, are meant to be held together. Seeing them as partners allows mission and confession to inform each other because "our Lutheran confessional tradition finds its fruition in its missional engagement."²³ Throughout this chapter, already, mission and confession have been addressed. Mission is to be contextual; service is mission as it attends to the context of a community. Confession includes fundamental belief in the understanding of church, baptism, vocation and community, all of which relate to service. However, one area that has not yet been addressed in this paper is the chief Lutheran belief in how Christians are justified to God. This topic, both confessional and missional, will also shed some light on the significance

²² Terence Fretheim, *The Pentateuch* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), 51.

²³ David L. Tiede, *The Evangelizing Church: A Lutheran Contribution*, ed. Richard H. Bliese and Craig VanGelder (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2005), xi.

of service to the world in the Christian life for “Lutherans are a church family united by a common Gospel confession that is centered on justification.”²⁴

Article IV of the *Augsburg Confession* states that “we receive forgiveness of sin and become righteous before God out of grace for Christ’s sake through faith.”²⁵ In other, more familiar words, “we are justified by grace through faith.” Such justification is done without our merit or works. Our own doing and ability cannot justify us to God; only grace through faith can do that. This is God’s gift to us. However, justification does not stand alone. The reformers follow this article with explanations in the subsequent articles concerning how our justification is then lived out by us – in our works and in the church. While we are justified apart from our own ability, the gift of justification flows into a call. This happens through the Sacraments, in the church assembly, and in our works, which stem from faith. Jesus Christ is the gift to us, in justification, and this gift is a call.²⁶ This call has been discussed already – it is our call to serve. Christ “calls us out of the hollow emptiness of our sleepy lives and sets us free for a life that means something, a life of witness and service and self-giving love, a life that gives itself away for the sake of the world.”²⁷

²⁴ Craig Van Gelder, *The Evangelizing Church: A Lutheran Contribution* ed. Richard H. Bliese and Craig VanGelder (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2005), 3.

²⁵ AC, Ger. 4:1, in BC, 38 and 40.

²⁶ Van Gelder, *The Evangelizing Church*, ed. Bliese and Van Gelder, 28.

²⁷ Ibid., 13.

The Lutheran Confessions teach that the only thing necessary for all that faith offers is the Word of God. As the cradle of our faith, the Word of God reveals to us God's mission for the world. Not only does the Word of God instruct us regarding God's mission, but the Word of God brings new life. The Word of God changes us, frees us, and calls us in such a way that we cannot help but actively share the news in service to others. Luther "was committed to the idea that the Gospel would transform each and every life it touched, forming a priesthood of all believers in which each person would have his or her own faith, understand service and witness to be part of his or her vocation, and be educated and equipped for ministry."²⁸ Christians are transformed by the Gospel, and set on God's mission to serve those in need. Rooted, therefore, in both mission and confession, teaching English becomes a ministry of the church.

The Diaconal Ministry Role to Serve and Equip

Diakonia is a word rich with history, and this history impacts a ministry of teaching English as its purpose is grounded securely in service to those in need, to the poor. The Diaconate, in its Biblical understandings, was created as a form of ministry to focus on service.²⁹ The ecclesiastical history of the Diaconate, as a leadership role in the church, has been an evolving expression of the church's varied servant ministries. Martin Luther confirmed the role of the Diaconate in church life when he wrote, "The Diaconate

²⁸ Ibid., 14.

²⁹ See Acts 6.

is the ministry, not of reading the Gospel or the Epistle ...but of distributing the church's aid to the poor."³⁰ The Lutheran church has continued this expression of the Diaconate throughout its years, as have other denominations, with the Diaconate expressed in many different forms to serve the poor. Through leaders appointed to this specialized ministry, primarily Deacons, Deaconesses and Diaconal Ministers, the church ensures that it is alerted to the needs of the world and brought to the service of the poor so that any gap between the church and the world is bridged.³¹ Diaconal Ministry, it should be well noted, is not the work solely of rostered Diaconal Ministers in the ELCA; it is every Christian's work. As professional church leaders, though, "Diaconal Ministers are called to interpret and carry the needs and cries of the world to the church so that the church might heed its call to Diakonia by serving the world with the Gospel of Christ Jesus. When we respond to those in need, we reveal the will and heart of God."³²

The role of a Diaconal Minister, in the ELCA particularly, is primarily to carry out a public service for the church, but in so doing, it is to involve others in that leadership. It is a characteristic of the Diaconate that it equips people for ministry. The ELCA is, in fact, dedicated to this as their constitution states that the church will

³⁰ *Babylonian Captivity of the Church* (1520), LW 36: 116.

³¹ "The Diaconal Ministry Community," *ELCA*, <http://www.elca.org/diaconalministry/about/index.html#continued/> (accessed October 5, 2007).

³² *Ibid.*

“encourage and equip all members... to fulfill their calling to serve God in the world.”³³

Such equipping includes aiding the laity (non-ordained ministers) in their discernment of their spiritual gifts for use in their vocations, and inviting them into active outlets for using their gifts. Equipping also includes the teaching of a skill or training for a certain responsibility. The church uses these phrases “equip the laity,” “equip the baptized,” or “equip the saints” often in its modern lingo exactly because the liturgy is not the work of the pastor, but the work of the people. Therefore, the use of the people’s gifts, skills, abilities and interests is necessary to the Christian community for ministry. Teaching English is not a ministry solely because it provides a service through the church. It is more strongly a ministry because it also equips the laity to use their gifts to participate in it (already, the laity possess the most important ability possible for English ministry—their command of the English language). The Diaconate not only provides care for those in need, but it also trains lay people to be the ones to provide that care. In so doing, teaching English as a ministry of the church becomes more solidly able to make deep effects in the lives of the teachers, learners, and the faith community.

³³ ELCA Constitution Section 4.02.

CHAPTER 2
A CROSS-CULTURAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE
MINISTRY OF TEACHING ENGLISH

Teaching English is a ministry of the church. In the United States, the church is comprised of people from every country, language and culture. Thus, cross-cultural communication and awareness are necessary for church ministry, especially when teaching English. Offering English classes in such a context assumes that cultures are coming into contact with one another, and it invites that interaction. This chapter seeks to touch on a handful of cross-cultural communication aspects pertinent to teaching English. Such aspects include an understanding of culture and how cultures can meet, what prejudice and race are and how they influence cross-cultural interactions, the significance of language and evangelism as used in multi-cultural settings, and finally it includes an understanding of hospitality and how welcoming the stranger undergirds ELL ministry. My intent with these topics is to raise cross-cultural awareness so that the teaching and the learning of English as a ministry will be most effective. “Whether one teaches adults or children, whether the subject matter is the Bible, English or community development, the cultural issues and obstacles that affect teaching and learning are common to all.”⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Judith E. Lingenfelter and Sherwood G. Lingenfelter, *Teaching Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Learning and Teaching*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 9.

Crossing Cultures

Culture is defined as “the shared patterns of behaviors and interactions, cognitive constructs, and affective understanding that are learned through a process of socialization. These shared patterns identify the members of a culture group while also distinguishing those of another group.”⁶⁸ Culture has to do with the values, habits and assumptions a group of people are taught and share in regard to their environment. The function of culture is to give meaning to life through the expression of belief and in relationships. Culture includes facets of life that are both visible and hidden, otherwise called objective and subjective culture.⁶⁹ Visible cultural pieces include food, dance, music, clothing, shelter, family structure, employment, etc. These are what we typically identify first when we picture another culture or even when we consider ourselves being “cultural.” Hidden culture includes gender roles, worldview, values, family systems, etc. These aspects are so hidden that the culture itself is not even aware that they exist because they are well engrained into the beliefs of the group; they are done unconsciously. This hidden culture is what makes culture often difficult to understand. It is not surprising, therefore, that in a multi-cultural setting, people can experience frustration in their cross-cultural encounters – the differences are hard to see! Yet, these same marks of culture, hidden and visible, also makes cross-cultural encounters exciting and joyful as new ways of living are learned.

⁶⁸ “What is Culture?” *University of MN, CARLA: Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition*, <http://www.carla.umn.edu/culture/definitions.html/> (accesses October 10, 2007).

⁶⁹ Milton J. Bennett, ed., *Basic Concepts: of Intercultural Communication* (Yarmouth, MA: Intercultural Press, 1998), 3.

People's sensitivity to cultures varies. It is important that teachers/tutors in an English language learning setting are attentive to their own sensitivity to encountering people from other cultures. Responses to cultural interactions range from denial that any cultures are actually different from one another to healthy integration of those existing differences.⁷⁰ People can become more culturally sensitive and learn to integrate the differences between cultures. Such a process leads one from ethnocentrism (assuming that one's own worldview is the worldview of all people) toward ethnorelativism (assuming that cultures can only be understood in relation to one another).⁷¹ To become culturally sensitive, people must first acknowledge that they have a culture that has shaped their own self personally and communally. Then, people must accept that cross-cultural differences exist, and finally be open to raising their own awareness of them. "Because cultures embody such variety in patterns of perception and behavior, approaches to communication in cross-cultural situations...encourage the consideration of difference."⁷² As sensitivity to difference grows, a wonderful new model for cross-cultural interaction will appear – one that is filled with hope as we learn to appreciate one another through cultural understanding.

⁷⁰ Mitch Hammer and Milton Bennett, "Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)," Handout reproduced from the Intercultural Development Inventory Manual, 1998.

⁷¹ Bennett, *Basic Concepts*, 26.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 3.

Culture and Race

“Culture means voiced and unvoiced, conscious and unconscious ways of doing things as influenced by racial and ethnic makeup.”⁷³ This definition of culture brings up an important conversation between culture and race. While culture and race are both social constructs,⁷⁴ culture refers to a group’s processes for meaning-making, and race refers to categories based on skin color for social identification. It is important that we recognize culture and race as distinct. One should not assume that because the skin color of a group of people is the same, their culture must be the same, especially in an English learning environment. For example, there are plenty of people who label themselves Caucasian but experience very different cultures. Recognizing one’s own assumptions based on race is important in order to treat one another with respect. Americans have liked to use the descriptor of “melting pot” for our multi-cultural society, but such a term is not respectful of our differences. “Melting pot” assumes each culture (and each race for that matter) will melt itself away into something new. This is not being culturally sensitive or respectful to each culture’s identity. Instead, it is suggested that the image should be like a tossed salad with each member keeping its own traits as it contributes to a greater whole.⁷⁵ Race and culture are also not be melted together. People from the same race do not all share the same culture. As the definition of culture indicates, race can influence culture.

⁷³ Nancy E. Maeker, *Cross-Cultural Evangelism: Helping Congregations Reach Out* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1993), 4.

⁷⁴ Ian F. Haney Lopez, *White by Law: The Legal Construction of Race* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 9.

⁷⁵ Joseph Barndt, *Dismantling Racism: The Continuing Challenge to White America* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1991), 106.

Crossing Cultures through Language

The meanings of words are important for any culture's language. Language is, in fact, more than a communication tool. Language is an expression of values and beliefs. Therefore, language has cross-cultural dimensions to it. In teaching English, one teaches more than the grammatical rules for using words; one also tries to teach the cultural aspects of meaning, function and usage. A well-known theory for understanding the power of language is known as the Whorf/Sapir hypothesis. These two men researched and concluded that "language, thought and perception are interrelated."⁷⁶ Anyone who studies another language realizes that translation is not simply taking one's own language and substituting the new, foreign words for it. The other language is full of new meanings, new modes of comprehension, new nonverbal communication norms, new addresses for respect - not to mention an entirely new vocabulary - that likely have no parallel in one's own language. The undertones of language are just as important as the words themselves. Those teaching English will find that their sensitivities to another culture must include sensitivity to that culture's language as well. And, they must realize that as a person learns English as a new language, they are not only learning the words, but they are learning an entirely new cultural communication style for expressing reality.

Cross-Cultural Evangelism

Communication is not only necessary for teaching English, but it is also necessary for the evangelism that teaching English as a ministry intends to share. "Too often the church has failed [to evangelize] because we are simply not speaking the same language,

⁷⁶ Bennett, *Basic Concepts*, 13.

even among ourselves. [We] play to stereotypes, unaware of the images they conjure in the minds of the very people [we] have been called to evangelize.”⁷⁷ Evangelism means communicating the Christian faith, “telling the story of Jesus in a way that is good news to people and invites them to respond to the invitation to be a part of God’s big mission in the world.”⁷⁸ Cross-cultural evangelism is the sharing of Jesus Christ’s narrative from one culture to another. This can be done through words, but also through attitudes and actions. It is particularly essential across cultures that the message of the Christian faith be communicated as stereotype-free and language-appropriate as possible so that the story is told and understood.

An appealing approach to evangelism that seeks to speak the same language is that of story-telling. Story-telling allows both the teacher and students to share about themselves as deeply as they determine as trust builds between them. Story-telling is an asset for cross-cultural communication. It opens people to learning about each other’s culture and life experience because narratives must begin with relationships, which is where evangelism should begin as well. Stories that share about faith are placed within the broader story of God. Story-telling is, therefore, “the most natural, universal and effective means of evangelism.”⁷⁹ It gels well with a ministry of teaching English also because it provides a way of evangelism that does not disturb the English learning in the classroom. Students actually get to practice English to tell a story! Story-telling also

⁷⁷ Robert G. Tuttle, Jr., *Global Good News: Mission in a New Context* ed. Howard A. Snyder, (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001), 187.

⁷⁸ Richard Bliese, *A Story Worth Sharing: Engaging Evangelism*, ed. Kelly A. Fryer (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2004), 28.

⁷⁹ Tom A. Steffen, *Cross-Cultural Storytelling* (Waynesboro, GA: Authentic Media, 2005), 2.

permits evangelism to take place without expecting church membership from the English students. Most students, in fact, already may have Christian worshipping communities that share their common culture and unite them in their cultural religious practices. Respecting this, yet still emphasizing the ministry of teaching ELL, evangelism through narrative is a form of cross-cultural communication very fitting for speaking the language of the English learners. “Engaging evangelism means getting to know people and learning to speak their language.”⁸⁰

Prejudice and Racism

As people of different cultures come together, through any sort of encounter including English teaching, some difficulties between them can arise. Particularly active in cross-cultural settings is the presence of prejudice and racism. In the ELL program I created in California, a Japanese student talked to me after class about his frustration with the Korean students who, he tried to convince me, are not good at making commitments. Such issues of prejudice and race will likely come up in the ministry of teaching English. Although, that is not to say these challenges of prejudice and racism will absolutely be problems for an English program. However, “any attempt at cross-cultural evangelism, especially if the crossing of cultures is from European American culture to any other culture, needs to include an understanding of racism.”⁸¹ While the descriptions of these two cultural aspects of prejudice and racism are brief here, their intent is to raise awareness and highlight their importance to teaching English as a ministry.

⁸⁰ Kelly A. Fryer, *A Story Worth Sharing: Engaging Evangelism*, ed. Kelly A. Fryer (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2004), 83.

⁸¹ Maeker, *Cross-Cultural Evangelism*, 4.

“Everyone is prejudiced.”⁸² We all have prejudiced thoughts and feelings, which can be both positive and negative, toward others. “To be prejudiced means to have opinions without knowing the facts.”⁸³ Moreover, being prejudiced means that even when we are given the facts, we reject them in order to hold to our original assumptions. Likewise, racism “has entwined and entrapped us all.”⁸⁴ Yet, unlike prejudice, not everyone is a racist. Racism takes prejudice a step further because it puts power behind the prejudice. Racism is “the power to enforce one’s prejudice.”⁸⁵ Therefore, a person must have power in order to be racist, and not everyone has power at all times. These two cultural challenges have the potential to arise in both students and teachers, and can affect the relationships between the two.

To be careful of both prejudice and racism is itself a challenge. Our culture in the United States is predominantly quiet about the issue and resistant to publicly addressing it. This can be especially true in our churches. However, what better place to acknowledge the impact of prejudice and racism than in the church, where the truth is proclaimed? Since teaching English is a ministry of the church, the teacher should create a culture within the classroom that welcomes all people regardless of race and be aware of prejudices yet not cater to them. Such welcoming should encourage the expression of cultures and the students’ respect of them. In regards to racism, it is especially imperative for the teacher (and any lay tutors) to be aware of the power they possess and

⁸² Barndt, *Dismantling Racism*, 28.

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 28.

to be thoughtful in exercising it. As a ministry, it is also crucial that teaching English to people from various cultures holds to the call of the community of baptized believers:

“the baptized Christian who has entered into the community of ‘unconditional inclusiveness’ is committed to a lifelong battle against all attempts by the world to build or maintain walls that divide or separate us from one another. If nowhere else, in the church should the existing walls be exposed so that together we can tear them down.”⁸⁶

It can be a hope of a ministry that teaches English that it contributes to the Christian responsibility of tearing down these walls of prejudice and racism.

Hospitality to the Stranger

Prejudice and racism connect to the theme of Christian hospitality through a shared analysis of power and its use. To explain this, though, an understanding of hospitality is necessary. One particularly fitting definition of hospitality for the church is “to welcome with kindness those who do not belong, those who are not at home in our country, including those who have come from other cultures and do not speak our language.”⁸⁷

Such hospitality to the stranger is a value of the Christian life as it is expressed in its Scriptural roots. Welcoming the stranger and offering them hospitality gives reverence to God (Deut. 10:19 NRSV) and extends treatment like that of Jesus’ greatest commandment (Mark 12:31; Matthew 25:43 NRSV). For English language learners in America, the idea of being a stranger is very real. For most of them, they are not at home in America – no matter how many years they have lived here. The Christian witness

⁸⁶ Ibid., 144.

⁸⁷ David I. Smith and Barbara Carvill, *Gift of the Stranger: Faith, Hospitality, and Foreign Language Learning* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2000), 85.

creates a friendly, open and affirming community for these students to learn and be accepted. Teaching ELL is a specific act of providing hospitality to the stranger through the church.

“Hospitality creates a place where differences meet and where power relationships are transformed.”⁸⁸ Power relationships cannot be ignored in teaching English as a ministry. The primary power that concerns the ministry of teaching English is that of the teacher over the student. We can examine this power, in need of transformation, through the lens of hospitality. Hospitality assumes a host and a guest – host as known, guest as stranger; host as belonging, guest as other. In teaching English as a ministry, the teacher is the host and the student is the guest. The teacher is the leader, is familiar with the space, is welcoming the students, and is fluent in English. The student, even more concretely speaking, really is a guest to the English program, the country, culture, language and is a stranger to it. The student, therefore, is vulnerable to the teacher. In this relationship of host and guest, power by the host can be exercised. This power can be misused, or it can be transformed into something welcoming.

Power is most often misused when the person with power expects the stranger to become like they are. A person is a stranger not when they are simply unknown to us, but “when they enter our world and our group.”⁸⁹ When the ‘other’ enters our world as ‘other’ or as ‘stranger in midst,’ we tend to use our relative power to control, to dominate, to overwhelm, to absorb, to marginalize or to assimilate the other into our perspective.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Ibid., 88.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 58.

⁹⁰ Susanne Johnson, “Reshaping Religious and Theological Education in the 90’s: Toward a Critical Pluralism,” *Religious Education* 88 no.3 (1993): 343.

It is seeing the other as “me” that exercises harmful power. Seeing the other as “me” assumes that the other will assimilate to how I work. This disrespects the other, and is not hospitality to the stranger. A ministry of teaching English seeks to avoid this tendency. To honor the students and not exercise this abusive power over them, the teacher must actually recognize them as a stranger, as “the other.” This is not to minimize the students; it is actually to respect them. Seeing the other as “other” is good because it acknowledges who they are.

Genuine hospitality transforms the power dynamic in relationships. As the host seeks to respect the other as “other,” the role of the host changes as well. “The host gives up dominance as such and becomes the stranger, on the eventual path to giving up the guest/host, superior/subordinate roles altogether, when true hospitality and justice permeate the community.”⁹¹ We cannot begin to be a hospitable host without having experienced for ourselves the life of one on the margin.⁹² This is true for the English teacher as well. In this relationship, the teacher becomes vulnerable to the stranger, even to the extent of role reversal. Teachers of English, especially in ministry settings, need such an experience of vulnerability, at least through shared stories and shared power. Their role of host is vital to a valuable ELL ministry because the students truly are appreciative of friendly and trustworthy help from the host, and are vulnerable to any native English-speaker’s leading. As hosts, teachers must realize “to practice hospitality is not only to give but more importantly to receive from the stranger.”⁹³ Power is shared

⁹¹ Ibid., 346.

⁹² Ibid., 347.

⁹³ Ibid., 346.

through it being given and received.⁹⁴ Such relationships of shared power between host and guest, teacher and student, live out true hospitality to the stranger in need.

⁹⁴ Eric H.F. Law, *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb: A Spirituality for Leadership in a Multicultural Community* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1993), 76.

CHAPTER 3
AN EDUCATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE
MINISTRY OF TEACHING ENGLISH

Teaching English is a ministry of the church. The church is a community made up of people who are both (and simultaneously) teachers and learners.¹²¹ In teaching English, this educational community seeks to reach out beyond the church walls to invite those who need English instruction and practice into the church's learning environment. This invitational teaching and learning crosses cultures of many kinds. Learning to teach with people from a variety of countries, languages and cultures – all in one setting! – is paramount to this ministry. The teacher must not only be aware of cross-cultural frameworks for an ELL setting, as described in the previous chapter, but the teacher must also know how to provide effective teaching within those frameworks. This chapter seeks to draw attention to educational practices that are most beneficial to a ministry of teaching English. This includes not only practical steps to providing successful English acquisition for students, such as creating an optimal learning context and using appropriate teaching strategies in lesson planning, but also understandings of the unique learning community that the church makes available. It is the intent of English ministry that it teaches English in a way that is not only true to the Christian call to service and

¹²¹ Norma Cook Everist, *The Church as Learning Community: A Comprehensive Guide to Christian Education*, (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), 23.

respectful of cultural differences, but also appropriate in its instruction. Therefore, the teacher needs educational frameworks that provide “creative ways for bridging cultural differences and bringing [students] together to learn.”¹²²

Teaching English as a ministry assumes two types of teaching are occurring. The first is that of the English language. The second is that of the Christian faith, as evangelism is carried out. In this chapter, both of these teaching goals will be assumed under the word “teaching.” Teaching also refers not only to the main facilitator of the English classes, but also to any volunteer tutors who help the students in one-to-one settings, as is likely the case for a ministry of English teaching. The act of teaching, therefore, is done by all the English class leaders, and they are referred to under “teaching” as well.

Teaching in a Cross-Cultural Context

“The contexts within which we educate are always shaped by the culture within which they are rooted.”¹²³ Culture affects context; context affects culture. The context for ELL ministry is a multi-cultural one. In it, the teacher engages with a variety of people who each have cultural influences that make their way of learning different from that of the (Western) teacher’s. The teacher cannot fully know all of these cultural issues for each student, but the teacher can be respectful of them and be aware of their own. “The teacher’s role is to create the most appropriate context within which students can learn.”¹²⁴ The teacher’s focus, therefore, need not lie in adapting each lesson to the

¹²² Lingenfelter, *Teaching Cross-Culturally*, 23.

¹²³ Karen B. Tye, *Basics of Christian Education*, (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000), 40-41.

¹²⁴ Lingenfelter, *Teaching Cross-Culturally*, 17.

students' many cultures. That could never be authentic because the teacher is not a native educator in the students' cultures. Furthermore, there are potentially so many students in the classroom that to truly cater to each student's learning habits would take years. On the other hand, the teacher should never ignore the reality that the students have been shaped by their own particular culture's way of learning and teaching. The teacher cannot expect the students easily to like the teacher's own cultural modes of instruction either. To find a balance between these two extremes, the teacher's energy needs to be applied to making the English classroom one where students are motivated to learn. All students, regardless of culture, are impacted by their environment, their relationships, and their experiences.¹²⁵ The teacher's role, therefore, is to nurture the environment, relationships and experiences to assist the learning process for the students. The focus of the teacher is to ultimately create a multi-cultural classroom that has as its goal the embodiment of a system of beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that recognizes and respects the presence of individuals from diverse groups, acknowledges and values their differences, and provides an inclusive context that empowers all members.¹²⁶

Setting this climate in the classroom is the responsibility of the teacher.¹²⁷

Although students play a large part in fixing that atmosphere, it is encouraged and stimulated by the teacher. The classroom environment of a cross-cultural group affects relationships, specifically between the teacher and the student, and the student to another

¹²⁵ James C. Willhoit and John M. Dettoni, eds., *Nurture that is Christian: Developmental Perspectives on Christian Education*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995), 33.

¹²⁶ Lillian Breckenridge, *Introducing Christian Education: Foundations for the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Michael J. Anthony (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 49.

¹²⁷ Willhoit, *Nurture That is Christian*, 33.

student. At least for Western cultures, the teacher, as explained earlier, has power in classroom relationships because he/she has authority as the leader. That power can be exercised positively from the first day of class in order to set a classroom context that expects respect between all participants. The teacher should be explicit with the classroom standards for the learning environment that he/she will presume between students and the teacher. Teachers are helping their students feel more comfortable when they communicate a clear sense of the boundaries of behavior.¹²⁸ Students have their own cultural expectations for boundaries with the teacher and fellow classmates, as does the teacher. Therefore, the teacher must be direct in outlining for the students what a safe and healthy environment for the classroom will be. Because the students are learning English in the American culture, part of their learning can even be that of our cultural norm concerning respect for others in the classroom. Certainly, though, the teacher must model this in order to expect it. The teacher should be appropriately authoritative to create a mutually respectful setting for learning English.¹²⁹

The teacher is the facilitator of the group, but the teacher best models respect when he/she becomes a learner. A teacher who does not become a learner gives the impression to the students that the teacher's own culture is superior to that of the students, as if the teacher has no need to learn about the students. "To know the [students] is to empower them."¹³⁰ The teacher is the learner of the student's lives and experiences, and this learning contributes to the growth of better relationships in the

¹²⁸ Everist, *The Church as Learning Community*, 84.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 64.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 38.

classroom.¹³¹ The teacher can cultivate relationships with the students that maintain authority, but embody that authority through the sharing of experiences. Authority comes through clearly defined expectations and roles; it does not come in the possession of control. The best teachers, in fact, are those that give more than their subject matter; they give themselves: their language, their culture, their education; and their faith.¹³² Seen as learners together – students and teachers – the teacher creates a classroom open to the students bringing their whole selves to the classroom. The learning environment needs to be a safe place for this whole person, and a safe environment generates mutual respect.¹³³

Strategies for Teaching English

Creating a context in the classroom that helps students learn is of the utmost importance for English teachers. Accompanying the context, however, is the actual teaching approach utilized by the teacher to instruct the students while in the context. Exactly what the teacher is teaching will not have a bearing if the means through which it is taught are not sound. The strategies for teaching are, then, vital. Furthermore, there are many approaches to the most effective teaching method. To some degree, their success depends on the environment of the classroom and demographics of the students. Still, there are preferred, “tried and true” strategies for teaching English to adults.

Experiential learning is a teaching style that is an exceptionally valuable means of acquiring new language skills. Experiential learning requires the active involvement of

¹³¹ Don Snow, “On English Teaching as Christian Service,” *Church and Society* 88 (January/February 1998): 47.

¹³² Henry Rowold, “Teaching English as Ministry,” *Missio Apostolica* 5 no.2 (November 1997): 105.

¹³³ Everist, *The Church as Learning Community*, 63.

students in the learning process.¹³⁴ Teachers provide students with a range of educational experiences in which they can actively take part while using the new language. Students then are encouraged to reflect on those experiences, draw conclusions, and apply them in a new situation. This method of teaching is closely related to the Communicative Approach of language learning.¹³⁵ It focuses on language used always in relation to a context. Therefore, it teaches English for real-life situations. As opposed to learning grammar rules outside of a fathomable context, communicative teaching ties those rules into a circumstance through techniques such as role plays and discussions.

The Communicative Approach's use of experiential learning is so effective because it challenges students with language that is an increment higher than the student's current level. Thus, the student is always moving forward in their language learning, using language at a more advanced point than they thought possible and, later, learning the rules for it. The learning emphasis is on the communication that occurs. This gives students the ability of knowing what "sounds right" before needing rules to check if it is accurate. Communicative language teaching, therefore, is a creative, flexible means to get students using their new English. This method is appropriate for all language learners, but is especially so for adult learners who are immersed in an English-speaking country because their goal for learning English is centered on English usage in their daily life. For example, they need to buy meat from the butcher, ask directions at

¹³⁴ Tye, *Basics of Christian Education*, 93.

¹³⁵ The Communicative Approach is one specifically used for language learning. See: Sandra J. Savignon. "Communicative Language Teaching," *Theory into Practice* 26, no. 4 (Autumn 1987): 235-242.

the bus stop, and understand their child's homework. For them, their English learning should be very practical, and very experiential.

Teaching English as a ministry instructs through immersion. The students are able to learn through the Communicative Approach because they are only using English in the classroom, not their native languages. Language-learning consists, then, first of oral practice.¹³⁶ Oral practice involves both listening and speaking, and imitating what one has heard. Imitating English is where all learners begin, even babies learning English as their native language. Immersion is, of course, experiential learning. It keeps the learner constantly experiencing the language. Although listening and speaking are prioritized first in immersion, the students are also exposed to reading and writing, since that is a part of their real-life experience as well. Students read billboards, maps, applications; they need to write checks, fill out forms, and address letters. Immersion instruction does seek to give students experience and competence in all four language areas of their life: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Lesson Planning

Lesson planning is the process of setting learning goals and identifying the process of teaching to reach those goals. It takes the teaching methodology and puts it into a teachable format. It lays out the teaching concepts so that the instructor can ensure that all context, methodology, goals and objectives are life-giving for the students.¹³⁷ This is helpful for the teacher's organization style, to ensure progress with the students,

¹³⁶ Earl Stevick, *Helping People Learn English*, (Nashville: Abingdon, 1957), 24.

¹³⁷ Everist, *The Church as Learning Community*, 48.

and to keep accountable to one's teaching approach. However, it is also necessary to lesson plan because, in teaching English as a ministry, the teacher needs to provide lessons for the volunteer tutors who work one-to-one with the students as well. For lesson planning, there are a variety of processes in the educational realm. Teachers have personalized styles for how they lay out their lessons, and many allow for veering off the planned track too. Via Lingua, an institution that trains teachers for Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), has a suggested lesson planning process that is very simple and helpful. Through their schools across the globe, they offer intensive courses in learning to instruct through the communicative approach to teaching.

The TEFL method of lesson planning consists of three basic stages: Presentation, Practice, and Production (the 3 P's). Each of these stages is necessary for effective language acquisition. In Presentation, English vocabulary or grammar items are presented in a meaningful context. Students use the new language without knowing the rules behind the usage. They are "trying out" the language without any formal explanation of what is happening. The teacher invites the students to use the language through repetition and dialogue. From then on, the teacher surveys the new language with the students, drawing their attention to both the form and function. The next stage is Practice. Now, the teacher provides activities for the students to apply their new language understanding in controlled class work. Controlled work is an assignment that can be completed during class time and asks of the students only questions that the student will be able to answer based on the Presentation stage. Such activities could include: matching exercises, fill-in-the-blank worksheets, and repetition with flashcards. Finally, during the Production stage, students are encouraged to use their newly acquired

language skills in communication activities such as role plays, games, written work or discussions. This final stage requires uncontrolled activities that take the new language into situations the teacher might not have expected. This is a wonderful stage in which to witness the students creating new contexts for their language ability. In Production, the students are free to determine where and when the use of their new language skills is appropriate. These three stages help the teacher instruct through the Communicative Approach to teaching so that language acquisition is experiential.

The Church as a Place of Teaching and Learning

Education is the heart and core of the whole life of a church.¹³⁸ It is a natural step, then, that the church would be a source for education in English. The church itself is a learning community that offers teaching not just in explicitly religious subjects, but also in ways of living in daily life. The church ministers to the whole person, therefore no aspect of learning is beyond the church's touch. As has been pointed out in the previous chapters for ELL ministry, the church can provide what ELL classes need, particularly a respectful learning context, the equipping of laity to be involved with English instruction, and a community of people who understand teaching and learning as the mission of the church. This section expands on those factors of the church as an excellent and fitting place of education. No church is an island unto itself; it is always serving those in and outside of its walls.¹³⁹ As a community of teachers and learners, the church is always ministering in relation to its neighborhood; its context determines its

¹³⁸ Ibid., 261.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 21.

work. For those churches that find themselves in a context of people who do not have basic English skills to function well in their American society, the church can teach to that need.

The church values respect and the creation of safe environments. It is an ideal context, therefore, for cross-cultural education. The learners and teachers in the church cherish life and understand that the students who come to learn English are children of God. Gathered together with all of their cultural differences and varied life experiences, such a learning community offered by the church is in itself a gift of God. The task for the group is to receive one another with thanksgiving even while experiencing the expected divisiveness and frustration of cross-cultural communication.¹⁴⁰ Because all are welcome in the church, difference should be accepted and vulnerability shared. Teachers, tutors, students – all contribute to making a learning context that is unique to the church because of its emphasis on Christian care and hospitality.

The church community equips people to participate in its education. An English ministry is one that supports these people in active participation in the call they have already received in baptism for service. Encouraged by the opportunity, those who feel so called can help others learn English. The ELL teacher equips those called to English ministry by building on their native English capabilities as well as their spiritual gifts, which might be for teaching, hospitality or evangelism. “To equip people is to listen to them, to respect and be interested in them and their ideas, and to engage them more fully in their own emerging gifts.”¹⁴¹ The lay tutors are not molds of clay that the teacher will

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 22.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 223.

form into something new. The tutors, themselves, receive the same respect needed of the students, the same interest in their lives, and the same understanding that they bring unique experiences that will contribute to the English ministry. Equipping them, then, is not solely for the programmatic needs of the English classes, but for mutual relationships that will enhance the English ministry, and also strengthen one another in the process of growing in faith through service toward others.

The church is a community of people on a mission. Learning and mission are connected. Learning is necessary for mission because it teaches people how to reach out. Mission is necessary for learning because it calls people to use what they know. Teaching English through the church is, therefore, both learning and mission as well. As the church continues to be a part of increasingly multi-cultural neighborhoods, both learning about these cultures, and actively participating in their context is necessary. For the community of the church to be in mission with the diversity around and in it, the church's mission must be to create relationships of acceptance and appreciation for individual differences and to help change attitudes toward Christ's own model of diversity where all are welcome.¹⁴²

¹⁴² Breckenridge, *Introducing Christian Education*, ed. Anthony, 51.

CHAPTER 4
A MODEL FOR THE MINISTRY OF TEACHING ENGLISH
IN A CONGREGATIONAL CONTEXT

Diaconal Ministry candidates in the ELCA are required to complete an internship (Field Experience), which includes the implementation of a Ministry Project. The project I chose to create was an ELL program for a congregation. I use this ELL program, here, as a model for the ministry of teaching English in a congregation. Upon completion of the project, the Diaconal Ministry candidate is to write a Ministry Project Paper that describes the project's realization. The sections for the paper are provided to the candidate. They include:

- A description of the context
- A description of the project's purpose and goals
- A detailed description of the project and plans for implementation
- A description of the project's development and congregational participation
- An evaluation of the project and its implementation

This chapter meets the requirements for the Ministry Project Paper as required by the Diaconal Ministry roster. It lays out the context in which the ELL classes were implemented, as well as explanations of their goals, development, affects in the congregation and evaluation. I hope that this account of this ELL program will be helpful to others in similar ministries.

A Description of the Context

Community Description

First Lutheran Church and School (FLCS) is an ELCA congregation of the Southern California synod, located in Torrance, CA. FLCS's community of Torrance has approximately 147,000 people situated in Los Angeles County at the heart of the South Bay.¹⁶⁵ Surrounded by the areas of Redondo Beach, the Palos Verdes Peninsula, and the Pacific Ocean, Torrance is a highly sought after place to reside for its ideal access to many of southern California's attractions. Its outdoor recreation and temperate weather are two of the main reasons residents, including First Lutheran Church and School members, enjoy living in the 21 square miles of Torrance.¹⁶⁶



The city of Torrance claims strengths in its thriving industry, diverse citizens, and healthy neighborhoods. In terms of its strength in industry, Torrance's city limits include the U.S. headquarters for two of the three largest Japanese automobile companies: Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A. and American Honda Motor Company. An Exxon Mobile oil refinery, in Northern Torrance, is the leading producer of southern California's gasoline. Other industries such as Honeywell Aerospace, Robinson Helicopter, Dowe, Panasonic

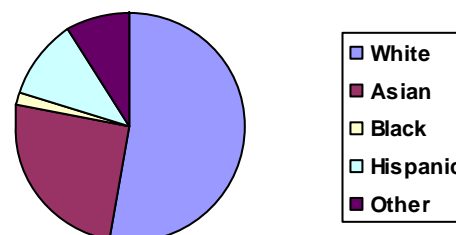
¹⁶⁵ "Torrance, California - FAQs" *City of Torrance*, 2004, <http://www.tornet.com/2579.htm/> (accessed March 10, 2007).

¹⁶⁶ "Miscellaneous Statistical Data," *The City of Torrance Comprehensive Annual Financial Report*, June 30, 2005, Fax from the City Clerk's office March 27, 2007.

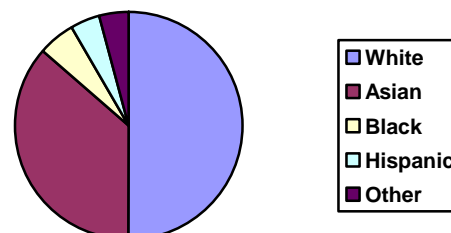
and King's Hawaiian all have facilities in Torrance and employ many First Lutheran Church and School members.

The diversity of its people is another strong quality of Torrance. With so much Japanese industry, the city is known nation-wide for its high percentages of Japanese residents. The racial makeup of the city, according to the 2000 census, was predominantly white with a significant Asian minority.⁸⁴ This range of races within the citizens of Torrance is reflected in First Lutheran Church and School as well. The school, particularly, is a diverse group of families, many of whom are from Asian countries.⁸⁵ The church also has a significant percentage of non-white members.⁸⁶ The

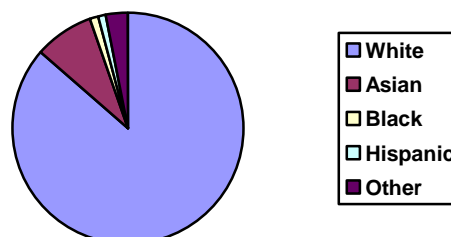
Racial Makeup of Torrance, CA



Racial Makeup of School



Racial Makeup of Church



¹⁶⁷ "Torrance, CA," *Wikipedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Torrance,_California (accessed March 16, 2007). Torrance was 59.16% White, 28.61% Asian, 4.72% from two or more races, 4.57% from other races, 2.19% Black or African American, 0.41% Native American and 0.35% Pacific Islander. 12.79% of the population was Hispanic or Latino of any race. These numbers add up to greater than 100% because Latino/Hispanic may respond to more than one category.

¹⁶⁸ Statistical records kept by First Lutheran School. As of March 2006, out of the 391 students enrolled in the day school, 48% are White, 35% are Asian/Pacific Islander, 5% are African American/Black, 4% are Hispanic and another 4% are French/Greek/Other.

¹⁶⁹ *First Lutheran Church Parochial Report*, March 28, 2007. The church's membership was 83% White, 8% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1% African American/Black, 1% Hispanic and 3% multiracial.

diversity of its surroundings is brought in to the life of First Lutheran Church and School.

Residential life in Torrance reflects a culture that is prevalent in most of southern California. Like its region, Torrance has many jobs and lots of people, which makes it no surprise that it also has heavy traffic. People tend to enjoy the privacy of their time in the car, which often is reflected in the privacy of their own lives. As can be surmised, affording to live in the residential areas of Torrance is also part of the culture here. It is undoubtedly an expensive place for its residents not only for the commuting lifestyle, but also with the average house price being \$600,000.¹⁷⁰ The median household effective buying income is \$49,800 and the median age of a resident in Torrance is 38 years.¹⁷¹ In order to afford to live in such an area, many people, including First Lutheran Church and School families, rely on two incomes and, very often, children live with their parents until their mid to late twenties before they are able to afford their own living space. Managing to live in this popular area can be a struggle for many, and the adjacent communities of Carson and Harbor Gateway influence some Torrance neighborhoods toward lower-income living. Of the various neighborhoods of Torrance, FLCS is located in a neighborhood that is mainly residential and only a few blocks away from a major crossroads of commerce.

Congregation Description

The First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Torrance, which is today commonly called First Lutheran Church (FLC), was founded in 1927 through the call of faithful

¹⁷⁰ Paul Penzella, "Median Home Prices" Source: California Association of Realtors, Transamerica Intellitech MetroScan, *Daily Breeze*, April 20, 2007.

¹⁷¹ "Miscellaneous Statistical Data," *City of Torrance*, June 30, 2005.

Christians. The church moved locations during its 80 years of ministry from the “old town”, now historic, part of Torrance to its present location near one of the largest malls in the country, the Del Amo Fashion Center, still in the heart of the city. As the church grew, the members recognized the need for quality education in a Christian environment. They built First Lutheran School (FLS) in 1957. Its growth has led FLS to now enroll approximately 400 students and provide an Early Education Center (EEC), first opening in 1973, enrolling another 100 preschoolers. Although First Lutheran built these two entities of church and school at different times, they are most seriously considered one body. Reflected in the name of the corporation, First Lutheran Church and School is today a leader in modeling church and school relationships.

First Lutheran Church and School ministers through the mission they have discerned for their community:

*We seek and make disciples in the saving way of Jesus,
called and sent to serve and speak God’s love in daily life.*

In addition, the Schools of First Lutheran state:

The mission of the Schools of First Lutheran is to provide, for the children of the South Bay community, a superior quality education grounded in the Christian faith and nurtured by Christian love.

Through the 900 or so members of the congregation in addition to the 100+ staff of First Lutheran Church and School, this ministry’s mission reaches well past its 8.6-acre campus and into the community. FLCS is home to a Japanese-Language congregation, begun in 1998, which is led by a full-time Japanese pastor. As a partner in the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church and located in a heavily Japanese city, FLC considers it

vital to be in mission with the church of Japan and to be a place of hospitality for all Japanese visitors, immigrants and descendants. FLCS seeks to be a place of welcome for the community through inviting people to its church, school, summer programs, day care and special events. With a budget of approximately 3.5 million dollars, FLCS is blessed with resources to daily work toward their mission in God's world.

To live out its mission, First Lutheran relies on the organized leadership of staff and volunteers. The executive staff is comprised of the senior pastor/mission director, the pastor for visitation and service, the pastor for Japanese outreach, the business director, the facilities manager, the executive assistant, the school principles and EEC director as well as the day care director. The church council is composed of trustees who each serve a board that carries out a component of the mission of the church. Such boards include: learning ministries, congregational life, mission, outreach, stewardship, finance and youth. The school has a school board consisting of a few church members and council representatives in addition to many committees and support teams that work to carry out their ministry. As one ministry of church and school, FLCS leaders are active throughout the year to keep all of its programs growing and healthy. More information about First Lutheran Church and School can be found online at www.fath-first.org or by calling 310-320-9920.

A Description of the Project's Purpose and Goals

The purpose of this ministry project is to offer ELL classes as a Christian outreach to the adults of the South Bay community.

The goals to accomplish this cross-cultural enrichment are fourfold:

Teach English

Evangelize

Equip laity

Provide fellowship

The first goal of this project is to teach non-native English speakers the English language. First Lutheran has recognized a need in its community to teach adults English. Located in a heavily immigrant Asian area and with a Japanese language ministry, First Lutheran's campus includes many people who cannot communicate well in English. By creating classes that provide instruction in the English language, those who otherwise feel outside of the English-speaking community due to the language barrier, particularly at FLCS, now have the opportunity to be empowered to participate more fully in it. Classes will be held weekly and will focus on study in English grammar, reading, speaking and writing. These classes will be instructed by the project facilitator, a certified TEFL instructor. In addition to the large-group classes, tutoring times will be available for individual conversation practice. The tutors who lead these conversation sessions are volunteer members of the congregation who arrange, through the project facilitator, to meet with a student weekly for informal conversation. Class time that allows students quality English instruction coupled with personalized conversation practice will assist in breaking down the barrier that currently separates much of the community from one another.

The teaching of English is not the only teaching that occurs in these classes. As an outreach to spread the Gospel and share faith, these classes intentionally share aspects of the Christian message and beliefs in the classroom. This is evangelism. Evangelism is a goal of these classes because they are intended to be an extension of the mission of First

Lutheran Church and School. To nurture students in this Christ-centered learning philosophy, regular faith practices will be a part of the class time. Prayer will mark the beginning of each class. The Catechism, as a tool for reading English and teaching faith, will be used in class throughout the year. Church and School newsletters will be read both for English practice and for content offering opportunities for student involvement with the ministry at FLCS. Worship attendance will be an open invitation, Christian holidays will be celebrated, and devotional readings will be distributed. The classes, while fundamentally providing English instruction, must do so in a way that makes them not simply classes housed at FLCS, but classes that contribute to the mission outreach of the church.

The third goal of this ministry project is to equip the laity of First Lutheran Church and School for serving the students. As a ministry of the church, it is vital to include and equip the congregation in their baptismal call to be an active part of this outreach. Volunteers from the congregation, who feel so called to this form of language ministry, will assist the classes and lead tutoring times. They will be equipped primarily through the language they already know; as native English speakers, they possess the greatest gift they can give their students – knowledge of the use of English! To further their comfort with this ministry, the tutors will be equipped through the leadership of the project facilitator who will provide them with tutoring guidance, English lesson plans and coordination of their time with the students' schedules. Because this ELL program is a ministry of the church, the congregation members will recognize that sharing their gifts of time, English, and friendship with the English students is also for the purpose of bringing the non-native English speakers and the native English speakers together in

Christian love. Through the involvement of the congregational volunteers, these English classes will become a ministry well supported by the church.

Finally, the English classes are to provide fellowship for all the ELL attendees. As non-English speakers come together for classes, friendships are formed between them. Their common experience of being relatively new to the U.S. brings them together in supportive relationships with each other. Students who may share a common language meet for the first time in ELL class and discover comfort in knowing they are not alone. Furthermore, the tutors will be introduced to other members of the congregation who are also volunteering as well as to the ELL students from all over the world. These meetings have the potential to bring people together in a new way for the community. It is important that the English classes incorporate fellowship into their structure because, as a ministry, a focus on community is necessary for people to share stories and care for one another. It is the hope of these classes that people are brought together in Christ for mutual upbuilding, learning and growth.

A Description of the Project and Plans for Implementation

This ministry project to create an outreach of teaching English as a Learned Language began with a recognized need in the FLCS community. It was identified, previous to this ministry project's inception, that the FLCS community was too often separated from each other by language since many who are part of the church and school do not speak English as their first language. These classes were created in response to this increasing need to bridge the language barrier and help people communicate with each other better. This identification step in the process, occurring before the ministry project began, was truly the beginning of the program.

Advertise Classes

The first step to implement the ministry project was advertising, sharing the news that English classes are coming to FLCS. Under supervisory advice that, “if you build it, they will come,” the classes were initially advertised before a core group of interested attendees was formed. This risk could be taken because it was apparent that the need for such classes existed. The targeted students for ELL classes were parents whose children attend First Lutheran School and members of the Japanese language ministry of the church. The classes first simply advertised through church and school newsletters and postcards sent to school parents announcing two dates to “Meet the Teacher.” At this initial gathering, information was gathered such as good times to offer classes and the learning interests of the students. It was clear that an ideal time for these classes was immediately after the parents dropped off their children at school (8:30-10am). However, it was decided to offer some evening times for those adults who are working during the day too. After reserving space on campus during the desired class times, a schedule of classes, with times and locations, was advertised. In addition to notices in the newsletters, members of the Japanese ministry later translated the advertisements into Japanese and distributed them to various apartment complexes and businesses in the neighborhood. The advertising announced to the FLCS community that this new program had begun and was welcoming all who were interested to attend.

Assess Students

Managing the students and their needs became the next step in implementing this project. In order to understand and track the learning of the students, a class registration form was created for each student to complete on their first day of class. The form asked

for information such as name, address, birthday, native country and language, length of stay in the USA, and class time preference. The project facilitator assessed the English needs of each student through visiting with him/her and assisting the student as necessary as he/she filled out this form. The project facilitator was, therefore, able to meet the new student personally, and identify their English speaking abilities as beginning, intermediate and advanced. The teacher could also communicate to the student the structure of the classes as well as answer any questions of the student's through this one-on-one time. The case was often that a new student came to their first class without advance notice for the project facilitator. Having these forms readily available for such cases helped in keeping track of the new students and in their needs assessment. With their learning needs determined, the project facilitator could create small groups around levels within the class times and pair appropriate tutors with the students as well. This management was crucial to implementing these classes.

Involve Tutors

Finding and training volunteer tutors was a necessary step in implementing this project. To find tutors, a notice was put in the church bulletin. The first time this notice ran, six people volunteered to help with the classes! After just a few weeks, there were more tutors than the classes needed. It was a wonderful response to the request for ELL help. The tutors initially met individually with the project facilitator for a personal introduction and to learn more about the ELL program and their responsibilities. It was important that the tutors understand how the English classes are more than teaching English, and that they understand the goals of this ministry project as a ministry. The project facilitator provided each tutor with a folder full of tutoring tips, grammar reviews

and lesson ideas for the tutors to use as they felt comfortable. At this initial meeting, the project facilitator and the tutor decided the best times the tutor could help. Once the tutor was explained the purpose and logistics of the ELL program and their role in it, they were asked to commit weekly to their tutoring time. Some tutors helped during the morning class times. Others met individually with a student once a week for conversation practice. Advertising for tutors, equipping them to tutor, and arranging their schedules with the students was an ongoing part of the implementation of this ministry project and certainly one of high importance.

Lesson Plan and Teach

Lesson planning was, of course, a crucial part of implementing these ELL classes. The project facilitator was in charge of creating the lesson plans for each class. In addition, the project facilitator provided resources for the tutors to use in their one-to-one conversation times. The resources available for teaching English came mostly from the project facilitator's own materials. The internet was also a vast source of lesson plans and ELL activities as well as the public library in Torrance. In February, the ELL classes requested and were granted fifty dollars through the church's new non-profit organization, FirstServe, for ELL curriculum. This allowed the program to purchase a few teaching books that will remain at FLCS for future ELL coordinators to use. An ESL teacher in the congregation also generously donated some books from her place of employment. Lessons were created over seasonal topics, especially for holidays. At Christmas time, for instance, we marked each class in Advent by singing a Christmas hymn. Lessons were also created around the lives of the student. For example, when a student shared with the class that she had been in a car accident, the next week we

learned the English words for the anatomy of a car and the steps to take when an accident occurs. Lesson plans were also created around grammar points and provided focused attention on reading and pronunciation as well as some listening and writing skills. Creating plans to actually teach the students of varied levels was a major portion of the implementation of this project.

A Description of the Project's Development and Congregational Participation

Development

The English as a Learned Language classes at First Lutheran Church and School developed over the course of an academic year. Beginning with their "Meet the Teacher" in early October, the classes were held throughout the school year, following First Lutheran School's academic calendar. By the end of October 2006, there were approximately twelve students registered for ELL class and eight active tutors. As of May 2007, there were twenty-seven students registered and twelve active tutors from the congregation. When the classes came to an end in June, there were eight English meetings a week: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday class from 8:30-10am, tutoring on Thursday night from 6-7pm and an additional four other tutoring times. The twenty-seven students registered came from countries such as Japan, Korea, China, Thailand, Taiwan, and Nigeria. Most of the students were women. Some students were only a part of our English classes for a few months upon a visit to the United States. The English classes ended in June 2007 for a summer break. Over this year, the classes developed into a substantial part of the ministry of FLCS.

Congregational Participation

The English classes were implemented into the congregation (both church and school) in a process that continued through this academic year. The tutors were the most significant part of implementing the classes into the life of the congregation. The direct congregational support and involvement made these classes a part of the church from the beginning. Awareness was also necessary to inform the congregation of this growing ministry. The project facilitator kept the congregation current on the development of the classes through a regular update in the church bulletin. Advertising continued through the church and school newsletters monthly. The executive staff and church council were updated on the growth of the classes at meetings. The classes were made visible as often as possible including a poster hung on the classroom door during each class to announce that English classes are here and all are welcome to join. The project facilitator reserved a week to design the school bulletin board with ELL information, which allowed for more exposure of the classes through pictures and messages. The project facilitator also tried to join the ELL classes with other groups on campus as much as possible. For instance, the ELL classes hosted a Christmas party open to the entire staff of FLCS, and the ELL classes celebrated the Chinese New Year with the EEC preschool children. Such forms of exposure and collaboration implemented these classes into the culture of the FLCS family.

The Development of Teaching English

Creating lessons that addressed the students' needs became a chief focus of the project development. As the ELL participants learned more about one another, shared questions and topics of discussion would arise. Paying attention to these topics so that

lessons could be created around them was key to a successful lesson. Balancing lesson plans between more conversational topics such as cultural practices and reading activities with grammar points and language usage demanded attention. Attending to these needs of the ELL classes was crucial to its development because fundamentally, this program must teach English well to the students who attend.

The Development of Evangelism

The goal to make these classes an outreach of evangelism developed throughout the year. Using the seasons to naturally prompt lessons, much discussion of Christianity surrounded the holidays of Christmas and Easter. Other holidays such as Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day opened windows to faith discussions of martyrs and saints. Marking class times with prayer, especially surrounding a concern or joy of a student, helped to ensure that Christ was welcomed into our classes. Most of the students who attended the classes were Christian, although not all. However, this resulted in more teaching and questions about the Lutheran church, rather than Christianity in general. These students were eager to receive printed Christian devotionals or pamphlets in English that they could use for their spiritual growth as well as English practice. The few who were new to Christianity expressed a delight in learning more about it. Pastor Itoh, the Japanese-speaking pastor at the church, offered his pastoral services to those who spoke Japanese and met with them outside of class to give them further information about Christianity in Japanese as they desired. Not many of the students took the offer to worship at First Lutheran Church, but many had other churches they attended. The tutors' help in teaching what they themselves believe developed into a wonderful form of discipleship for them and a blessing to the class' exposure to faith.

The Development of Equipping Laity

Developing the tutors' role throughout the year was crucial to offering a truly unique English program. Students were thrilled to have this one-on-one interaction. Tutors were not asked to prepare for classes on their own, nor was it necessary that they do so. At the same time, they were not discouraged from sharing their ideas, using their own resources, or aiding their student as they were able. The project facilitator needed to ensure that the tutors were teaching appropriate material and information too. More importantly even, the teacher needed to check that the students were doing more of the talking, not the tutors. Whether helping a small group or an individual, the tutors were asked to seek the guidance of the project facilitator when questions arose for them about English points or tutoring techniques. It is important to this ministry that the tutors not feel as though they must be educated teachers of English. Rather, they should feel supported and equipped by the project facilitator to assist in the learning process of the students. Leading this development of the tutors' involvement with the ELL program continued throughout the year of this project.

The Development of Providing Fellowship

Fellowship also developed during the duration of this ELL project. Friendships of many kinds were formed over the months the classes met – friendships between students, friendships between tutors and friendships between students and tutors. Tutors from the congregation learned first-hand the stories and lives of their students. Students, many for the first time, found an American friend willing to help them with much more than just English class. Classes provided the opportunities for sharing stories, food, music,

photographs, jokes, etc. Soon, get-togethers such as lunch dates, driving lessons, and golf games were being arranged between the new friends formed through the classes.

The classes created such fellowship by their nature, but also by some intention. Class celebrations and parties were regularly arranged to encourage fellowship and mingling. These purposefully social times allowed the students not only to practice their English, but also to meet new friends as well. Celebrations were created around birthdays, holidays, goodbyes and major accomplishments (such as passing a driving test!). Prayer requests are also a form of community building that the English classes encourage. As stories are shared and lives overlapped, bearing one another's burdens becomes a natural movement in the class's fellowship. Rejoicing with each other and crying together are forms of sharing life in community that these classes embraced.

An Evaluation of the Project and its Implementation

As part of this ministry project's evaluation, the students were asked to give their feedback to the program. Knowing that student input is necessary for an effective class, each student and tutor was given an evaluation form to complete. The results are summarized here:

Concerning the amount of instruction in grammar, writing, reading and speaking the vast majority of students signified that they are happy with the teaching they are receiving. The majority of students also indicated they liked the opportunity for fellowship in the classes through making friends with other students and other tutors, and found this important. All felt comfortable approaching the teacher for help, and all found their one-to-one tutoring practice very helpful. In addition, the amount of classes offered during a week was considered reasonable and convenient for most. Finally, half of the

students indicated that it is important to them that the classes are held in a Christian environment. The other half signified that this does not matter to them. This last piece of feedback speaks to the necessity of the English classes as a tool of evangelism. Half of the students would not be a part of this faith community if it were not for the English classes! These evaluations from the students were very helpful in critiquing the program and making changes for the students' benefit.

In addition to the students' evaluations, I add my own evaluation of the program based on the course goals of teaching English, evangelizing, equipping laity and providing fellowship.

Teaching English Evaluation

In regard to the goal to teach English, I feel that the classes creatively and carefully offered solid instruction in the English language. Along with the tutors' insights, I thoughtfully planned lessons that met the students' English learning needs, and their receptivity to this applicable help was great. However, I found that without a formal curriculum from which to teach and learn, following a more organized system for progressing language instruction was difficult, and the product of the lessons may have suffered. Although many students seemed to enjoy that the classes were not instructed in the same "by the book" manner that they found at community adult education centers, a curriculum to follow would have assisted in more organization to cover the necessary learning needs of the students with quality lesson plans. It is good news, though, that as the program grows, more funding and donations will be available to create a curriculum library to aide in the effectiveness of the lesson planning and teaching.

Evangelism and Providing Fellowship Evaluation

Considering the goal to evangelize through these classes, I confess that keeping the classes centered in the Christian faith was difficult because I did not want to make the classes into something like a Bible study. Finding ways to mention and use Christianity in their English learning took time and resourcefulness, and it was easy to not intentionally incorporate into the class time. I do feel the classes were successful in being explicitly Christian and in teaching about the Christian faith, specifically through songs, holiday explanations and prayer. What I discovered, however, was that much of the evangelism happened through the fellowship that the classes provided. Friendships built in the classes that led to conversation and invitation were the most effective way of sharing the love of Christ through the program participants. Fellowship was a very successful aspect of the classes since students and tutors were eager to form relationships. These two goals of the class, evangelism and fellowship, became much entwined as the program progressed, and I think the fellowship of the classes was an excellent part of the classes' evangelism success.

Equipping Laity Evaluation

I also add that equipping laity was a success in these classes. Pairing people from the congregation with English learners caught on as a ministry of the congregation very quickly. Tutors took great care in learning about their student(s) and helping them in as many ways as they could. I found that the difficulty of equipping was in trying to guide those who did not want guidance, as some were very confident in their teaching abilities. Even simply keeping up with all the tutors meeting throughout the week was difficult and needed to happen very purposely. I also wish I could have done more as the leader of

this program to recognize and thank the tutors throughout the year and keep them connected to each other, rather than only at the end of the year. I learned that creating a system to check-in with the tutors regularly other than via e-mail led to a greater sense of being a team. Thankfully, using tutors from the congregation has ensured that these classes will continue and the gap between the native and non-native English speakers was bridged because of the tutors' involvement.

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