

To: Calvary Baptist Church, St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church, Church of the Ascension, Canadian Martyrs Roman Catholic Church, and c.c. Chris Osler cosler@sandyhillchc.on.ca

Re: English Conversation Group (ECG) Report for September 2016 to June 2017

Dear Church Pastors, Rectors and Elders,

January 15, 2018

Although the English Conversation Group (ECG) has been operating for several years now without your financial support, we feel that, given your many years of assistance in the past, you may be interested to know how we are doing. In a nutshell, we seem to be doing quite well.

A refresher: where we came from Sometime in the Fall of 1994 a small group of people from five Christian churches in the Ottawa East – Sandy Hill area consulted on how they could help the many newcomers from other countries who have come to live in this area. The answer: “Talk to them”. So that's what we do.

We continue with the same purpose and format as when ECG began in 1995: offering newcomers (immigrants, refugees, students, visiting scholars, visitors, etc) the opportunity to strengthen their conversational skills in order to more fully participate in and contribute to the life of the community. Our informal, one-on-one approach builds small, cross-cultural bridges of understanding and friendship between the volunteers and newcomers, and also among the newcomers themselves.

The English Conversation Group, now in its third decade, remains indebted to the original five Christian churches who kept us going for many years with financial support and volunteers. Those churches are St. Joseph's Roman Catholic, the Anglican Church of the Ascension of the Lord, Calvary Baptist, Canadian Martyrs Roman Catholic and Wesley United Church. We also acknowledge with gratitude the help and support of the Sandy Hill Community Health Centre.

Over the years, our volunteer base has shifted to include many volunteers with no church affiliation.

Where we are now You may recall that we vacated our former “home” (at 88 Main Street) because the rent was about to increase substantially. In looking for a new location, one of our ECG volunteers, Ashwin Shingadia, obtained free space for our use at St. Paul's University.

Our new location is a much bigger space which can more easily accommodate our growing numbers. All in all, we are very grateful for St. Paul University's generous support.

On a typical Wednesday evening from September 2016 to June 2017 about **3 new newcomers** showed up every week. In total, we had **a weekly average of 38 attendees: 19 newcomers and 19 volunteers**. Newcomers came from some **34 countries**, ranging from Brazil to Yemen. We continued to see fewer immigrants and refugees and an increase in temporary residents from overseas (students, professors, embassy employees and other workers). Our numbers are up from our last days at 88 Main Street where, for example, from September 2012 to June 2013, we saw on average 10 newcomers and some 12 volunteers every Wednesday.

An invitation We still meet weekly from early September to the end of June. And we encourage anyone from your church, newcomers or would-be volunteers, to drop in; no advance notice is needed. **WHEN:** Wednesday evenings, 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. **WHERE:** St. Paul's University, 233 Main Street, in Laframboise Hall (the white, one-storey building). Look for us in Room L142 (on the ground floor).

Janice Dowling (ECG Volunteer) Email: cd800@ncf.ca

(Please see Page 2 for statistics details.)

Statistics details On a typical Wednesday evening from September 2016 to June 2017 about **3 new newcomers** showed up every week. In total, we had a **weekly average of 38 attendees: 19 newcomers and 19 volunteers.**

	Sept 2016 - June 2017 Newcomers (Total: new & returning)	Sept 2016 - June 2017 Volunteers	Sept 2016 - June 2017 New Newcomers (new only)
Week 1	10	12	6
Week 2	11	12	5
Week 3	19	17	7
Week 4	14	11	5
Week 5	24	18	5
Week 6	22	18	3
Week 7	20	13	5
Week 8	20	21	3
Week 9	18	18	3
Week 10	11	18	6
Week 11	27	18	4
Week 12	21	18	3
Week 13	19	17	1
Week 14	12	18	2
Week 15	19	22	5
Week 16	14	19	1
Week 17	20	16	7
Week 18	18	19	0
Week 19	26	15	3
Week 20	19	22	3
Week 21	12	10	1
Week 22	25	22	2
Week 23	22	22	4
Week 24	19	23	4
Week 25	13	15	1
Week 26	17	21	2
Week 27	16	17	1
Week 28	26	24	3
Week 29	20	22	0
Week 30	22	19	4
Week 31	18	17	3
Week 32	13	22	2
Week 33	26	24	3
Week 34	21	22	2
Week 35	21	20	2
Week 36	27	22	6
Week 37	19	23	0
Week 38	19	24	4
Week 39	12	14	4
Week 40	20	24	1
	752	749	126
	Weekly average: 18.8	Weekly average: 18.7	Weekly average: 3