

June 8-11, 2011 Charlotte Mason Education Conference Sessions

A Charlotte Mason Education—A True Alternative

Updated 6/1/11

CM Foundations: A Paradigm Shift

Wednesday 2:30-4:30

Presenters: Nancy Kelly, Tammy Glaser and Sandy Rusby Bell

An Introduction to Charlotte Mason, including her belief in the child as a Person, Education is an Atmosphere, a Discipline, a Life, and the Science of Relations. This session will not only help you begin to make the paradigm shift in the way you look at education, but will also cover practical aspects of how this looks day to day.

Dinner discussion

Wednesday 5:00-6:00

In the Bailey Dining Hall: For newcomers to the conference who want to meet others who are familiar with the conference and the campus, and can answer questions about schedule options, orientation to the campus, how to make the most of the time here, etc. Jeannette Tulis and Rebekah Brown Heirholzer facilitators.

Welcome

Wednesday 6:30-7:00

The Two Towers - Paradigms at War in Middle Earth Wednesday 7:00-8:30 Plenary #1

Presenter: Jack Beckman

Today's No Child Left Behind movement is reminiscent of the old 'payment by results' scheme of 19th century England. Where has American education gone by the wayside and what critical evaluation might Mason give of NCLB? Are there alternative ways of seeing that might have been missed by legislators in their efforts to 'race to the top'? Using Tolkien's metaphor to guide our thinking, this plenary attempts to bridge a gap between Mason's principles and what is happening in our common educational landscape.

Fireside chats

Wednesday 8:45 -10:00

(Although chats involve book discussions, don't stay away because you have not read the book. Key issues that relate to Mason's philosophy and methods are interwoven in chats.)

Chat with Jack Beckman continuing his plenary topic and join a discussion from the book *The Best Schools - How Human Development Research Should Inform Educational Practice* by Thomas Armstrong. Chapter One opens with these words: "These are difficult times for educators who believe that learning is worth pursuing for its own sake and that the chief purpose of school is the nurturing of students as whole human beings."

Chat with Bonnie Buckingham about the ideas in art and culture from artist Makoto Fujimura's book *Refractions: A Journey of Faith, Art, and Culture*. Learn what he said at International Art Movement's Encounters Conference this past March in NYC. Susan Macaulay says his essays are rich in ideas that CM talked about.

Breakfast discussions

Thursday morning 7:00-8:00

Eat and meet in the Bailey dining hall (limit 35) with Melody Poli and Cheri Struble for a Q&A about language arts progression and narration in the Mason homeschool setting. Discussion geared to questions from CM newbies such as: Help! My child isn't narrating. Is he narrating the right way? Why don't I use spelling lists with him?

Matins

Thursday morning 8:00 – 8:15

Morning prayer with Kerri Forney and daughter Kathryn on piano
Announcements

Introduction to CM Immersion Groups

Thursday morning 8:15 – 8:45

Presenter: Carroll Smith, Laurie Bestvater

Multi-age Homeschool Immersion Group

Presenter: Nancy Kelly

Thursday morning 9:00 – 12:00

In this session, Nancy will demonstrate a morning in a multi-age homeschool (K-8 with some high school) using Mason's methods. Despite the large age range in many homeschools, adherence to the principles and practices in every area can make this rich education possible. The focus will be on subjects that can successfully be combined with multiple ages. Subject areas presented will include Bible, dictation, citizenship, Shakespeare, and geography.

Lower Elementary School Immersion Group

Presenter: Nicolle Hutchinson

Thursday morning 9:00 – 12:00

In this session, Nicolle will immerse you in a lower elementary classroom. You will experience one rich and fulfilling day in the life and learning of a very young student in a relational school.

Upper Elementary School Immersion Group

Presenter: Sandy Rusby Bell

Thursday morning 9:00 – 12:00

Sandy will demonstrate a morning in an upper elementary school class. The session will be suitable for homeschoolers and teachers in classroom settings. The focus will be on those subjects that sometimes intimidate Mason educators during the years of transition between early elementary grades and middle school. Our morning will include Bible, Shakespeare, Math, Natural History, Folk Song, History, Picture Study, Dictation, Plutarch, Poetry, and Written Narration.

Middle School Classroom Homeschool Immersion Group

Presenter: Rebekah Brown Heirholzer

Thursday morning 9:00 – 12:00

In this session, Rebekah will demonstrate a morning in a middle school classroom using Mason's methods. History, science, literature, dictation, poetry, and picture study will be among the subjects presented, with narration and copywork methods being demonstrated within the lessons.

High School Homeschool Immersion Group

Presenter: Jen Gagnon

Thursday morning 9:00 – 12:00

In this session, Jen will demonstrate lessons in math, science, narration and more in a high school homeschool using Mason's methods.

Special Needs Homeschool Immersion Group

Presenter: Tammy Glaser

Thursday morning 9:00 – 12:00

In this session, Tammy will demonstrate a morning in a special needs homeschool (a person with autism with very scattered abilities) using Mason's methods. The focus will be on subjects that show how rich a Mason education is (handwork, music, picture study), even those for which a severely language delayed child might find difficulty: language arts, literature, Bible, Shakespeare, second language, etc.

Lunch discussions

Thursday 12:00-1:00

Bailey is open but not scheduled for discussions. Please walk with fellow immersion group attendees to the Caf and share reflections about your experience in your CM immersion groups.

Immersion Regroup Processing Time

Thursday morning 1:15 – 2:30

Return to your morning group to process with the presenter any questions, reflections, and ideas that have come to mind regarding the morning session.

Eve Anderson Tea

Thursday 2:45 – 3:30

Enjoy eating finger sandwiches and fruit while connecting with your new or old conference friends. A special treat will be music shared by a family in a unique intersection of hymns and narrations from their year's study.

Eve Anderson Nature Study Lecture:

Nature Study in the Charlotte Mason Digital Collection

Presenter: Marlene Power

Thursday 3:30 – 4:30 Plenary #2

Learn how you can uncover hidden treasures in the CMDC, with particular reference to Nature Study. Marlene Power will introduce us to the database and provide practical tips on how you can utilize it from home to learn more about Charlotte Mason's ideas regarding Nature Study.

Charlotte Mason Digital Collection (CMCD)

Presenter: Marlene Power

Thursday 5:00 – 6:30

All current CMDC transcribers and all those interested in exploring the possibility of contributing to the transcription work of the collection are invited to join us for an informal time of conversation and planning in Ritch Banquet Hall on the floor below the Caf. Deani Van Pelt will join the meeting via Skype. Please bring your dinner with you! (Please request a To-Go container from the cashier when you enter the Caf.)

Thursday dinner discussions

Eat and meet in the Bailey dining hall with Leslie Laurio and other AO members. (Limit 35) Come and introduce yourself and share your family's favorite book from AO readings this year. If you are new to AO, come, meet, and listen to others sharing.

The Basis for Education

Thursday evening 6:45-8:15 Plenary #3

Presenter: Carroll Smith

Mason said the idea or thought that informs and gives shape to her educational philosophy is that the child is a born person. This session explores beginnings starting in Genesis and how our beginnings have implications for education. Rather than segmenting children into parts such as mind, soul, spirit, heart or body, this discussion will explore what Genesis tells us about what it means to be human and on that foundation, how we should build a basis for educational practice.

Concert with Janet Pressley Barr

Thursday evening 8:15-8:45

Thursday Fireside chats

Thursday evening 9:00-10:00

Chat with the Kellys, the Strubles, and the Forneys (both parent and teen) about growing up with a CM education. Bring your questions for the parents or the teens.

Chat with Ivey Young about the importance of nature in our lives and discuss the book *The Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder* by Richard Louv. Even if you have not read the book, join the discussion about direct exposure to nature being essential for the emotional and physical well being of children and adults.

CM and the Trivium: Towards an Understanding of How Some Distinctives of a Mason Model Compare with Those of the Classical Model

Friday morning 8:15 – 10:00 Plenary #5

Presenters: Andy Smith, Jack Beckman, Lisa Cadora, Kerri Forney, Rebekah Brown Heirholzer, Carroll Smith, Jennifer Spencer, Laurie Bestvater

Andy Smith will present a brief comparison of some of the overlaps and divergences of a Mason education model with those of the classical education model as described by several contemporary authors. Then Kerri will direct preselected questions to the panel of academics and practitioners for a rich discussion that will flesh out some of these divergences and similarities. If you have any questions for the panel, please submit them to info@childlightusa.org or turn them into the registration table before Thursday evening where they will be gathered and selected for the discussion.

Wonder and Admiration...Living Science

Friday morning 10:15 – 12:15 Workshops I

Presenter: Jennifer Gagnon

“Where science does not teach a child to wonder and admire it has perhaps no educational value.” We will explore how to build a science curriculum based solidly on Mason's relational ideas using her principles and methods.

Charlotte's Wisdom for Special Needs

Friday morning 10:15 – 12:15 Workshops I

Presenter: Tammy Glaser

Charlotte Mason addressed a wide variety of special needs students in her six volumes and Parent's Review. She focused on guiding their thinking, providing positive behavior support, habit training, using imagination, learning through play and meaningful activities in real life, and incorporating short lessons, multi-sensory curricula, and narration. Her principles most critical to these children include viewing all children as persons first, feeding the mind with ideas, the science of relations, and allowing time to think and make connections through atmosphere, discipline, and life. The session will include ideas for incorporating technology, issues unique to the setting (classroom versus home), and a sample lesson.

Inspiring Heroism and Claiming Magnanimity: What Charlotte Mason Said About Citizenship

Presenter - Nancy Kelly

Friday morning 10:15 – 12:15 Workshops I

What exactly is citizenship? Charlotte Mason felt it was an important subject that students should study throughout their school days. This workshop will examine the rationale, methods and materials Mason used in her schools and present the curriculum design team's findings. "In unlikely ways and from unlikely sources do children gather that little code of principles which shall guide their lives." -Mason on Citizenship

Creating Respectful Atmosphere with Children Friday morning 10:15 – 12:15 Workshops I

Presenter: Nicolle Hutchinson

How does one who teaches young persons interact, guide and nurture in ways that respect their personhood? Mason calls us to abandon behavioristic "classroom management" methods and to adopt the relational tool of "atmosphere." In this practical workshop, experience a respectful atmosphere, discuss philosophy, compare and contrast behavioristic and relational methods, collect helpful hints, create a list of resources, self-reflect, and leave with new ideas and goals.

Keeping a Book of Centuries

Friday morning 10:15 – 12:15 Workshops I

Presenter: Laurie Bestvater

As one of the "Forms of Vitality," we explore what Mason meant by a "Book of Centuries," and its importance across the curriculum.

Friday lunch discussions

Eat and meet in the Bailey dining hall (limit 35) with some panel members from the morning's plenary discussion on CM and the Trivium.

Nature Study

Friday 2:00-4:00 Workshops II

Presenter: Deborah Dobbins

Deborah will demonstrate a technique used in teaching Enrichment Nature Study classes. This workshop will focus on the first-time Nature Study teacher which includes a devotion, brief nature walk, observation and sharing of nature specimen, writing format, dry brush watercolor instruction and painting. This beginning workshop has allotted extra time for attendee discussion and questions. If available, please bring your own watercolors and sketchbook.

Spiritual Formation - Rich Toward God

Friday 2:00-4:00 Workshops II

Presenter: Laurie Bestvater

"Our Lord...reverenced whatever the learner had in him of his own, and was tender in fostering this native growth...Men, in His eyes, were not mere clay in the hands of the potter, matter to be moulded into shape. They were organic beings, each growing from within, with a life of his own - a personal life which was exceedingly precious in His and His Father's eyes - and He would foster this growth so that it might take after the highest type." (H. Latham quoted in *School Education*, p. 183)

This presentation reviews Mason's ideas on the spiritual formation of children.

History- The Pivot upon Which Our Curriculum Turns

Presenter: Sandy Rusby Bell

Friday 2:00-4:00 Workshops II

“How greatly is the reading of histories to be esteemed, which is able to furnish us with more examples in one day, than the whole course of the longest life of any man is able to do. Insomuch that they which exercise themselves in reading as they ought to do, although they be but young, become such in respect of understanding of the affairs of this world, as if they were old and grayheaded and of long experience. Yea, though they never have removed out of their houses, yet are they advertised, informed and satisfied of all things in the world.”

Amyot

Did you know that in a Charlotte Mason curriculum her students studied several histories at a time? Did you know that when Mason said, “Let him, on the contrary, linger pleasantly over the history of a single man, a short period,” she really meant it, as evidenced by the history programmes from the PNEU? Did you know that the Book of Centuries that Mason students created looked nothing like most of the books by that name you find if you search for such a thing on the internet?

In this session we will discuss Charlotte Mason’s philosophy and methodology for teaching history based on a reading of her 6 volumes, available PNEU programmes and Parents’ Review articles and we’ll read from some of the books Mason used in order to understand the principles she had in mind

Charlotte Mason's Thinking about Math

Friday 2:00 – 4:00 Workshops II

Presenter: Tammy Glaser

Charlotte Mason considered mathematical truth, an important function of reason, invaluable in training mental habits. Unlike other subjects, she believed that success depended more on teachers guiding students in mathematical thinking and on attentive students than on books. She laid the foundation for mathematics in daily life and the out-of-door life for children under six. She recommended keeping mathematics within reach of older children by focusing on understanding, exploring concrete objects and language before transitioning to numbers and symbols, reasoning out real world problems, and learning about the people who made great discoveries. She encouraged keeping mathematics in balance with other subjects, regardless of the child’s ability. This session will include practical ideas and a sample lesson.

CM 102: Education is a Discipline

Friday 2:00 – 4:00 Workshop II

Presenter: Mary Hubbard

Developing good habits in our children is key to contentment in life. This class will focus on Charlotte Mason’s four categories of habits (intellectual, moral, physical, and religious) and how to implement them at home and in the classroom. Recent studies that detail the habits needed to survive in the 21st century are almost identical to Charlotte Mason’s. Habits are the rail lines laid down for the child to run on to his future. Let us learn together how to design and establish these rail lines!

Friday dinner discussions

Eat and meet in the Bailey dining hall (limit 35) with Cheri Struble discussing Nature Study as a way of life. Then join Cheri at Broad River Greenway for a nature walk and study without use of watercolors.

Friday Night at the Greenway

Friday evening 6:30 – 9:00

After many indoor hours of conference lectures, workshops, and discussions, Friday night is the time to be out doors at the Broad River playing, hiking, talking, singing, enjoying the freshness and refreshingness of being with friends among the trees. Broad River Greenway is a few miles south on Main Street and features miles of trails, access to the river, playground equipment, and the old cabin. You can participate in scheduled hikes, hang out at the cabin and sing, visit with old and newly made friends, talk about the conference, watch the children play in the river’s edge or climb the playground equipment.

7:00 Nature walk and study with water colors with Deborah Dobbins. Bring your nature journals. Sign up required at registration. Meet at picnic tables at 7:00.

7:00 – 7:45 Nature walk and study without water colors with Cheri Struble. Cheri will model a 45 minute nature walk she often does with her children at the Greenway when they have only their pencils, nature journals and identification books with them. . Sign up required at conference registration table. Limit 20.

Meet at water fountain in parking lot. Bring your own nature journal for sketching. If there is sufficient interest for another walk, Cheri will repeat it 8:00 -8:45.

Check out

Saturday morning 8:00 – 9:00, 11:00-12:00

Please return keys to registration table in Hamrick Hall lobby. Unreturned keys bring a university charge of \$25.00. After 7:00-8:00 breakfast, registration table is open for anyone wanting to check out before morning workshops and before 12:00-1:00 lunch.

PE...Whatever the Law of Gravitation Permits! Saturday 9:00 – 11:00 Workshops III

Presenter: Kent Kelly

Do competitive sports and Physical Education have a place in a Mason education? This was the question that was put before the CLUSA Design Team in the fall of 2009. Kent will present the CLUSA design team's answer to that question during this presentation. Is Physical Education really necessary in a Mason curriculum? What is the research regarding physical activity and brain development? How do we as educators treat the child as a person in a competitive environment? Can we offer a competitive sports program in today's win-at-all-costs paradigm and yet retain a Mason view of the child? Suggested sports to offer in a Mason education will be discussed and the rationale for those choices.

A Child's Life in Verse

Saturday 9:00 – 11:00 Workshops III

Presenter: Bonnie Buckingham and Jeannette Tulis

But trailing clouds of glory do we come

From God, who is our home:

Heaven lies about us in our infancy!

(from William Wordsworth's Imitation of Immortality of Early Childhood)

"Few things open the doors of the spirit and the thoughtful mind as poetry does, provided it is of the best and the field covered is wide." The PNEU method in Sunday Schools by Helen E. Wix, *Parents' Review*, November 1917

Poetry delights and instructs. How did Charlotte Mason teach poetry within her PNEU Schools? We'll inspire you with the greatest poets and how they can delight both you and your students. Poetry can be easily added to your curriculum in a variety of creative yet practical ways. We will also share favorite resources from Elementary to High School.

Come celebrate with us what Poe called "the rhythmical creation of beauty in words."

Picture Study: The Impressionists

Saturday 9:00 – 11:00 Workshops III

Presenter: Kerri Forney and Susan Carlisle Bell

Kerri will introduce Mason's reason for picture study and then demonstrate one so the audience can see one doesn't need to be an art professor to do CM picture study. Then Susan Bell, art professor at Gardner Webb, discussing the lives and works of Monet, Degas, Renoir and Cassatt, will place Impressionism in the context of influencing events and inventions of the 19th century and its impact on 20th century art.

CM 200: The Historical and Theological Background of Charlotte M. Mason

Presenters: Susan Crist and Art Middlekauff

Saturday 9:00 – 11:00 Workshops III

This workshop is an introduction to the sociological and geographical settings in which Miss Mason lived and developed her philosophy of education. Highlights will include a discussion of the events occurring in Great Britain during the late Victorian and Edwardian era, as well as commentary on and photos of the Charlotte Mason College and the Lake District of England. Understanding Miss Mason's time and place provides for greater context in understanding her educational philosophy both then and now. In this workshop we will also discuss Miss Mason's theology of personhood and personal development and examine how her views relate to traditional Christian theology. Suggested reading to obtain a maximum appreciation for this seminar is *The Story of Charlotte Mason* by Essex Cholmondeley.

CM 301: Charlotte Mason Today

Saturday morning 9:00 – 11:00 Workshops III

Presenter: Lisa Cadora

As we engage life and education in the 21st Century, just how well have CM ideas and methodologies remained relevant for today? Are there current practices and trends that have verified the timelessness of her philosophy? If they knew of her and her views of the child and the teaching and learning process, would any modern educators find in Mason a kindred spirit? These questions will be addressed in an examination of Charlotte Mason for education in the new millennium.

Conference Wrap Up

Saturday 11:15 – 12:00

Join fellow attendees reflecting on this year's conference.

What are some ideas or practices presented at the conference that you want to pursue more?

What have you learned that you will change when you get back to your home or classroom?

What significant connections have you made about education or life at the conference?

Join Kent Kelly and Carroll Smith sharing about ChildlightUSA board discussions.

Be dismissed for your journey home with a piano arrangement by Dr. Cindy Swicegood.