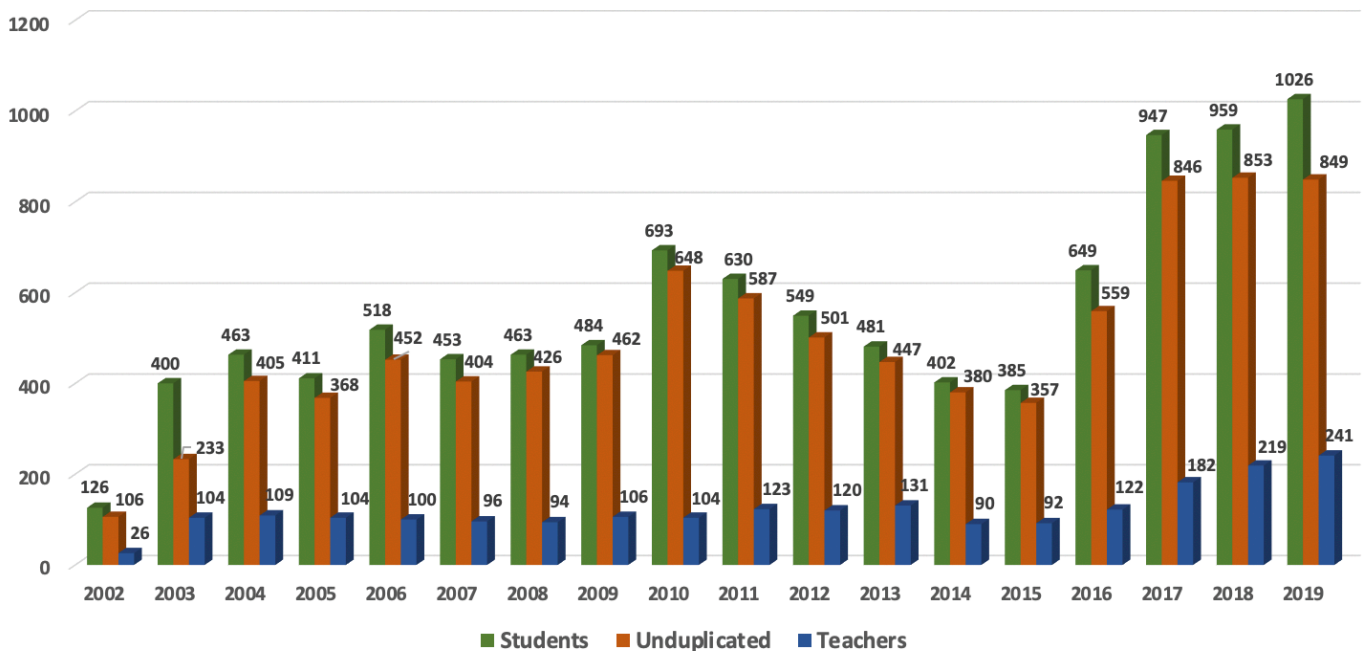


20 Years of Welcoming the Stranger

In 1999, our founder, Rev. Sturgis Poorman, began an ESL class to support immigrants in Lower Bucks County. He felt a calling to help welcome the stranger in a new land. The one class quickly grew into several classes that encompassed ESL (English as a Second Language), Computer Skills, and Citizenship Preparation. What began as a program of academic classes quickly developed into much more than that: they became a global community of people who supported and learned from one another. Sturgis passed away in 2018, but his words live on. In 2009, he wrote, "Classes have become places where helpers and students help each other and learn from each other but also where friendships develop. Not just native born Americans helping immigrants but immigrants helping each other, too. We are all givers and all receivers."

Today, twenty years later, over 4,500 different people from more than 100 different countries have been served by Welcoming the Stranger. Fifteen to twenty classes are offered each term, in about ten different neighborhoods throughout Bucks, Montgomery, and Hunterdon Counties. People have learned the skills they need to survive in a new land, to become self sufficient, and to become productive members of their communities. Beyond teaching academic and survival English skills, Welcoming the Stranger has created a family that lives up to its namesake, the Biblical passage Matthew 25:35, "I was a stranger and you welcomed me." Our student Elda from Albania says, "I like to come at ESL class, because is a positive environment, with good people, wealthy with human dignity, who help others with kindness and generosity. The other reason is that it helps practice English."

WTS Enrollment Figures 2002 - 2019



*WTS began in 1999 but earliest term records were not kept or were lost.

Welcoming the Stranger

PO Box 1156
Langhorne, PA 19047
(215) 702-3445

[Click here to donate online: www.welcomingthestranger.org](http://www.welcomingthestranger.org)

