



In The Way

with the St-Onges

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Grease for the Wheels

If you asked me to describe my present work in one phrase, I would say that I am "grease for the wheels." When Jesus sent out workers to the villages of Israel, he sent them out "two by two" (Luke 10:1). We need to pray harder for workers for the harvest fields, because often we end up sending our missionaries out "one by one." In both the Cayman Islands and in Jamaica, there is only one missionary family supported by the LCMS.

It's lonely work, proclaiming the Gospel, binding up wounds, establishing congregations and identifying future leaders for those congregations. I see a good portion of my work as being an extra set of hands that our missionaries can draw on. In many cases that will mean me being "boots on the ground," knocking on doors, preaching, and teaching. In other cases, it means coordinating between many US individuals, congregations, districts and others who want to help with work in the Caymans, Jamaica or Puerto Rico. In short, I hope to be grease that will help the work go more smoothly for everyone.

In Jamaica, Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM) and the Office of International Mission (OIM) jointly purchased land in Kingston to use for ministry. Currently that land is sitting undeveloped. I'm working with LHM, OIM and workers in Jamaica to see that land is put to use as soon as possible. Pastor Peter Kirby, who oversees LHM work in Jamaica, their local director Ancella Gregory, and our missionary Rev. Obot Ite ask for your prayers as we put some plans into place.

In the Caymans, Pastor Leif Hasskarl has the task of continuing to grow a local, self-supporting Caymanian congregation. Safe Harbour Lutheran Church is currently renting space for worship. There is a need to identify and train local leaders. Lots to do, and I aim to be the grease that will enable Christ to work through Pastor Hasskarl and his people in the Caymans to build his church.

Soon we will have two missionary families in Puerto Rico. So I'm learning Spanish, and preparing to meet them in the Dominican Republic for a week of orientation at the end of the month. Look for more pictures and information in March!

Mission Moment

After meetings with folks in Fort Wayne, I met up with former members of the young adult group at Memorial, Houston, TX. As we pulled out of their driveway, our eyes were drawn to the young woman sitting on the street corner, head in her hands. As we turned the corner, it was obvious she was crying. What could we do but stop the car?

I asked if there was anything we could do to help. Choking back sobs, she told me that her son had been in a car accident with his father. He was in a hospital in North Carolina. I asked if I could pray for her and her son by name, and on that cold street corner we sat together and begged the help of the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I thought about how many hurting people are all around us, needing to know the light of Christ's redemption in the midst of the world's darkness. It made me think of an old *Out of the Grey* song, *All We Need*:

*Oh, the sacrifice of letting others in our lives /
 But when worlds collide, the impact reaches far and wide /
 Words that love has spoken can set our lives in motion /
 All we need is to reach out and touch /
 All these open hands in front of us /
 All we need is to hold out His love /
 Share it with each other for...all we need.*

Sharing Christ. It's that simple, and that needed.



L: presenting John Listi at Memorial, Houston, TX with a scroll from Kunming; **T-C:** teaching at Messiah, Middletown, OH; **R:** Receiving a new painting from our friend, Tom Dubois, to take with us; **T-B:** At home in Cincinnati, Ohio.

The Word from Deborah

As I write this update, I am enjoying the view from my desk area. We are blessed to be able to rent this home from my sister and her husband and the view to which I refer is a corner with two large windows at a 90° angle nestled in the woods. The snow is falling and the girls are enjoying their first “Snow Day” ever. We are having homemade cinnamon bread and hot chocolate and I have just added a sweater to the two layers I was already wearing. It is 13°F and sadly, I am happy. Many of you would be sitting here dreaming of the Caribbean as a way to escape this frigid winter weather, and I am praying for the Lord to change my heart. And I am confident He will!!!! (To wit - I have also been catalogue shopping for swimwear that would protect my vitiligo).

I do believe that if we work on being content in any circumstance we find ourselves (Phillipians 4:11), the Lord will bless our feeble efforts. We can do all things through Christ who gives us strength. He also surprises us with unexpected blessings that we would never experience if we based our decisions solely on our perceived desires or out of fear. We still do not know where the Lord desires us to serve. We remain willing and continue to move forward, although much more slowly than a year ago. Your prayers have sustained us greatly and we would be so lonely on this journey if it were not for your faithful support and concern. Certainly, you never know what news our next update will bring! Stay tuned and see how the Lord uses us all to accomplish His will both here and abroad.

Prayer Concerns

- For Olivia and Sophia, that they may know the support of many people as they prepare to move in the summer,
- For Deb, who is dealing with dry eyes, that she might also be encouraged by the support of the saints everywhere,
- For the Ites in Jamaica, that their new passports would be produced quickly by the Nigerian embassy,
- For Charles, who will be traveling to the Dominican Republic, Jamaica and the Caymans over the coming month and a half, that he might have safe and productive travel.

Support Us

Make checks payable to The LCMS, memo line: St-Onge Family Support, and send to:

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