

In The Way

January 2017

The St-Onge Family
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Giving Thanks for YOU!

We can do no better than Paul, who told the Thessalonians "we give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers" (1 Thess. 1:2). Thanks to the generosity of so many of you, we should be able to continue working in Montreal and in the Caribbean. **But we still need your continued support.** Perhaps you know of a friend in the congregation who has never supported a missionary before, but would like to. Would you consider encouraging them to give a supporting gift of \$10 or \$20 a month? It's easy to do: just type the address into your browser:

lcms.org/givenow/stonge

Work Up North

Plans are underway for a major evangelism push in Ascension's immediate community this summer. We will have a summer vicar from Concordia Theological Seminary joining us in our work. David Keating comes from St. John in Sayville, New York on Long Island. We will also have a team coming from the Lutheran Church of Vestavia Hills in Birmingham, Alabama (vestavialutheran.org). A big part of this outreach will be a Reformation-themed VBS to be held July 17-21. We will also be hosting a youth event for kids from Quebec City, Montreal and Ottawa in early February. Deb has taken a lead roll in helping with this new outreach!

Work Down South

I was in the Dominican Republic the third week of January for our annual regional team meeting. We spent a fruitful four days looking back over the last five years and preparing for the next five. One of my major tasks over the next few weeks is to gather partners from across the Synod to **support our work in Jamaica**. It is our hope to have a first `FORO` gathering for Jamaica in the early fall of 2017. The FORO is needed to support a second missionary in the lower mainland, and to help us complete the work of securing a permanent worship facility for the St. Andrew congregation. I will also be making **my first trip to Haiti** in mid-February to meet with President Eliona Bernard of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Haiti.

Mission Moment

In mid-January we celebrated the 10th birthday of our youngest, Sophia. Being our "social butterfly," she really wanted a real birthday party. So mommy went out of her way to plan, bake, cook, and generally put together a great event for Sophia and a small group of her friends.

The time came for her to say goodnight to her guests. The mom of one of her friends struck up a conversation with Deb and me before leaving for the night. As often happens when someone finds out we're new (and in Deb's case definitely English-speaking) she asked where we came from. We mentioned living in Texas, and as also often happens in "the north" the mom expressed astonishment that we would leave the beautiful climate of the south for the harsh (and French and high-tax) north. Which allowed us to talk about being missionaries.

We have been told by some that Quebecers are reluctant to talk about religion. We have found that to not be the case, generally. This mom admitted that she would love to have some religious instruction. She knew that there were other "non-Catholic" churches – and non-Christian religions – but didn't know where to start learning about them. Deb jumped in, took her number, and hopes to take that conversation further.

There is a spiritual thirst in Quebec. Please pray with us that it would be filled with the Gospel of Jesus Christ!



Be Reconciled in Christ

Two days of our regional team meeting in the Dominican Republic were spent with Dwight Schettler of *Ambassadors of Reconciliation*. He gave us some preliminary training in coaching conflict *reconciliation* (as opposed to *resolution*). We had the opportunity to try out our skills on each other, and talk about the role we can play as regional staff in making Paul's desire a reality, that we "Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32, ESV). The last full week of January I received a week of conflict *resolution* training through the *Canadian Institute of Conflict Resolution* in Ottawa, Canada. As an area facilitator, I deal occasionally with conflict between missionaries as well as conflict between individuals on mission fields. This training will help expand my skills in bringing both resolution (an end to the reasons for conflict) and reconciliation (forgiveness between people).



TOP LEFT: Checking out construction of our new Latin American seminary in Santiago, the Dominican Republic; BOTTOM LEFT: How Messiah Lutheran Church in Middletown, OH remembers the missionaries she supports; TOP RIGHT: Presenting on our work at St. Peter Lutheran Church in Shaker Heights, OH; BOTTOM RIGHT: Causing a little "bedlam" in the Dominican Republic: helping prepare housing for Professor Sergio Fritzler and his family, serving as missionaries in Santiago from Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Prayer Concerns

For the health of Abasifreke Ite, who continues to have problems related to kidney function, in Kingston, Jamaica,

For safe travel to Haiti, which remains a very conflicted country, and that we might find a common hope in the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ, and

For our work with the youth and young adults of Quebec, that it might bear fruit.

Support this Work

You can donate online at lcms.org/givenow/stonge. Or you may send a cheque, payable to **The LCMS**, to the addresses below. Include **St-Onge – LAC** in the memo line.

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