

In The Way

April 2017

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Proclamation in Montreal

It has taken some time, but the new banners for the outside of Ascension are up! I was pleasantly surprised that everyone who walked by while we mounted them glanced up to read what they said. They clearly proclaim that we are a church of the Lutheran Reformation, but also that we preach Christ, and him crucified.

As of this week we have 1,000 doorhanger invitations to our vacation bible school to hand out in Parc-Extension. We also just finished a Facebook ad campaign promoting what we are calling "Summer Children's Week." So far we have a handful of kids signed up, but it is early days. Pray that we will have a good 30-50 kids from the neighborhood this July 17-21.

I've also been tackling the issue of tax-exemption for our church, given that we are an international congregation. We have the first draft of an agreement to be signed by us and the LCMS – SELC District. It will allow donations from Ascension to fund my mission and the work of the District. Canadian law is very restrictive of the use of tax-deductible donations.

It is Holy Thursday as I write this newsletter. We will have a bilingual service tonight with both Pr. Somers and myself presiding. Tomorrow I will lead an English service in the evening, and of course a sunrise Easter service on Sunday. Christ is risen! Alleluia!

Work Down South

This newsletter is coming out a little earlier than usual. I've been working in the south at the end of each month, so I'm going to send out newsletters in the middle of the month rather than the end. This month I will be traveling to Kingston, Jamaica to finalize the sale of our land and the purchase of a new ministry centre and worship space. I'll also be leading our second biannual Foro meeting in Puerto Rico. Lastly, I'll be putting together the request for new missionaries for the Caymans. I've already begun the search for short-term leadership in the meantime, speaking with a couple of possible interim pastors.

Mission Moment

"Everybody wants to go to heaven, but nobody wants to die." So says the old proverb. Sometimes the hardest thing about being a missionary in a formerly Christian place is sharing the Law. We can talk about Jesus, as long as we don't mention sin, and certainly as long as we don't mention sin as the cause of death.

Less than 5% of Quebecers are part of the life of a Christian congregation. But when someone passes away, the family begins thinking about their grandparents or great-grandparents church. Surely there's a religious person there that can lead a service, and proclaim that their irreligious loved one is now in a better place.

The source of our Christian comfort in death is, of course, Jesus' own resurrection from the dead revealed in Scripture. Those who believe in him, even though they die, will live eternally (John 11:25-26). But this same Jesus ties belief in him to listening to his Word, fellowship with other Christians, and taking the Lord's Supper together (Acts 2:42).

I spoke to Sophia's class at her school's career day this month. There were some good questions about how I went from being an engineer to a pastor. But the lone parent in the class only had one question: "Does your church allow women to serve?" I spoke about the role of deaconesses and lay women in our congregations and in the mission field. But the question pointed back again to the Law, and especially to parts of God's Law our culture doesn't want to hear. We all want to believe we're going to have eternal life, but for that to happen God's Son had to die.



April 2017 Pictures - see more at intheway.org



TOP LEFT: Deb, holding up 2 of our 1,000 double-sided doorhangers; TOP RIGHT: Attending services at Faith, Kingston, Jamaica, for whom we would also like to find a permanent church home;; ABOVE: Easter at Ascension Lutheran Church. BOTTOM LEFT: Banners went up the week before Palm Sunday on the Ascension Lutheran bell tower.

Prayer Concerns

For the sale of land and the purchase of a building in Kingston, Jamaica, that all would go smoothly and provide an opportunity for witness,

For our work in the Cayman Islands, that the Lord might guide us as we seek new missionaries to continue the work that is developing there,

For our next Foro meeting in Puerto Rico, that we might raise up the partners needed to expand our work there.

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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