

# In The Way

May 2017

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## Work Down South...

For the first time in my service as area facilitator and pastor, I was on all four of my islands in one week! I helped chair the second Foro for Puerto Rico April 25-26. We have an agreement between partners in Minnesota North and Principe de Paz, as well as national and international missions in St. Louis, to continue moving forward with the new church plant in Ponce and an after school program in Mayaguez. This was a good end to the Ruesch's first two years of service there. They are now back in the United States for three months of network reconnect. During that time Rev. Richard Schuller will be leading worship at Principe de Paz.

After a couple of days back in Montreal, I was in Kingston chairing the annual general membership meeting of Lutheran Ministries in Jamaica. On Monday morning I signed the papers for the sale of our land in Kingston and the purchase of a ministry centre. We are also investigating the possibility of purchasing a second ministry centre in downtown Kingston with the remainder of the proceeds from the sale of the land.

On Tuesday I then flew to the Cayman Islands, where I met with the council of Safe Harbour Lutheran Church and with Rev. Leif and Nancy Hasskarl. I have been hard at work identifying interim pastors for the Caymans, as the Hasskarls prepare to return to the United States after June 4.

**Did you know...**that tickets for flights from Montreal to the Caribbean are often **half the price** of tickets between Caribbean islands? As odd as it sounds, it actually saves a lot of money for the area facilitator to be in North America!

## ... and in Montreal

It was a wonderful Easter season at Ascension, with some long time attenders moving on but new ones being brought to us by the Lord. We are especially excited about our "Brazilian contingent" as well as new students moving to Montreal for studies in the fall. There may be an opportunity for campus ministry come September, to add to our Wednesday night bible study crowd.

## Mission Moment

Sophia and I made the trip to Ottawa on Thursday, May 11, to join in the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual "March for Life." We joined up with a small group of Lutherans from across Quebec and Ontario for a devotion at St. Luke's in New Edinburgh, and an hour-long walk past the Governor-General's residence, the Prime Minister's residence, and the French, Saudi Arabian and US Embassies to Parliament. From there we and thousands of other Canadians, most Christian, marched through the streets of the capital. Canada is one of only four nations in the world without any restrictions on abortions (the others are North Korea, Vietnam and China).

Protestors were present, of course. Many shouted slogans at us, like "If you don't like abortions, don't have one." One commentator suggested that makes as much sense as saying "If you don't like murder, don't kill anyone!" For a brief period of time, by God's grace (I can't think of another reason) the "March for Life" flag flew from an official flagpole in front of Ottawa City Hall. That was before the calls, emails and tweets came to the mayor's office, after which it was quickly taken down. The mayor, Jim Watson, said he had not approved the flag and that he did not condone the kind of "divisive behaviour" promoted by the pro-life movement.



## A Picture's Worth of Words...



*TOP: French, English and Chinese planting at Ascension; MIDDLE: With Revs. Ite and Lawrence in front of our future new ministry centre in Jamaica; BOTTOM: Foro in Puerto Rico.*

## The Word from Deb

Some of you may remember reading about our first Christmas shopping experience here in Quebec. We were completely unprepared to have all the stores still closing at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday even the weekend before Christmas. Our American minds couldn't believe it! Well, just recently I had the opportunity to engage with a young salesclerk. Sophia's rainhat from PEI prompted the discussion and we shared that we were looking forward to visiting this summer. His response: "It is crazy out there. The stores stay open until 10 every night. 10 o'clock! At night!!!" When we explained that this was what we had been used to, he simply couldn't believe that people would be shopping or that he would have to be working that "late". I didn't bother to tell him about all the 24 hr. places in the US. It just goes to show that what is "normal" for some is not for others! Take a minute to think of all the things you take for granted because you are familiar with them and then pray for all our missionaries in the field, some of whom have far greater differences from "home" than what time their stores are open. I was grateful that this young man was bilingual and was patient with the little French I contributed to the conversation. There is still much to learn and we must work while it is day!

## Prayer Concerns

For help reducing our current "red ink" of \$30,000, that we might be able to focus less on finances and more on evangelism and mission,

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 the mission of the Gospel in Montreal, as we share Christ with those estranged from His church.

## Support this Work

You can donate online at [lcms.org/givenow/stonge](https://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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