

In The Way

June 2019

The St-Onge Family in Mission

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intheway.org

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Work Up North

After several meetings and months of work and discussion, we have a strategic plan for our work in Montreal from 2019-2022. One of the main conditions is getting some extra help: a full-time pastor / missionary and perhaps a deaconess intern. Having me here 20% of my time will only get us so far. To help that become a reality, I met in Hamilton, Ontario on June 13 with leaders of The Lutheran Church – Canada to discuss how LCMS might partner with them in the mission to the people of Montreal and Quebec. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for July 5 in Ottawa. I pray that these meetings will bear fruit and lead to a more serious partnership in the Gospel!

Our first-ever Montreal FORO meeting is coming up soon: September 12-13 at Ascension. We expect partners from the SELC and English Districts, as well as Memorial Lutheran in Houston, TX. On the 14th we will be celebrating the congregation's 90th anniversary: a great opportunity to present the plans that could bring us to 100 years of Gospel proclamation in Montreal.

Work Down South

June 17-19 I travelled to Ponce, Puerto Rico to help complete our search for a disaster response / church facility in the city. Rev. Dr. Ross Johnson of LCMS Disaster Response, Pastor Ted Krey our regional director, and Blake Warren our business manager met with me and the Neuendorfs to drive by or visit close to 36 properties (yes, 36). We narrowed our search down to three that met our chief criteria: the right location, right price, and right condition to be used (at least in part) right away. We hope to place an offer on our first choice of facility in the coming days.

I continue to work on the plans for the Caymans, which include teaching an Every One His Witness workshop in late July. I will be meeting with our current interim and the next interim in early July to plan for their future work with Safe Harbour Lutheran Church.

As I write this letter, I am in Kingston, Jamaica helping with the renovation of our ministry centre. Erin Mackenzie and a team from Our Redeemer, Wichita Falls, TX are doing a fantastic job here. This afternoon I'll be meeting with the leaders of what will be our first Jamaican Lutheran School!

Mission Moment

Confirmations, weddings and funerals are not always the best mission moments. Even in the case of young people affirming the faith of the Church in Christ, attention can be more on family and fellowship than the serious vows being made at the altar. Weddings are about the couple; and funerals are about grieving. How can they also be moments of sharing the Gospel?

This month our own Sophia and another member, Emily, confirmed their faith. In place of questioning, I took the time to take the mixed group assembled before the service through the basics of the catechism: why God's law still matters in our secular world; that the creed is not an explanation of God but a worship of the Lord's triune work on our behalf; that prayer is about God's promises and the sacraments are about his gifts.

I will be doing a funeral in two days for a long time member of the Ascension. One of the questions he often asked me (sometimes as his son quickly passed through the room) was why his kids weren't in church. I'll get to ask them that question (tactfully) during the sermon!

And in July, I'll be doing a wedding of two new members, one from Indonesia who is a fairly new Christian, and one from Quebec who is a new Protestant. They've opted to exchange vows during our Sunday service: affirming that the family of Christ is their true and eternal family.



A Picture's Worth of Words...



Top Left: A promising set of properties in Ponce, PR. **Middle Left:** The new ministry centre roof in Kingston. **Bottom Left:** The new sanctuary space at the centre. **Top Right:** At Bible study with Goodness Ite at Faith, Kingston. **Bottom Right:** Sophia receives the award for Ethics, Religion and Culture at her 6th grade graduation.

Prayer Concerns

For children who have abandoned the Church, that the Lord might call them back to receive his gifts with joy,

For the Lutherans working to create a basic school in downtown Kingston, that we would find the funding to do so,

In thanksgiving for my uncle, who continues to recover at home from fluid in his abdomen,

For the many teams across our region helping us repair buildings, show mercy and share the Gospel.

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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