

In The Way

August 2019

The St-Onge Family in Mission

charles.stonge@lcms.org

intheway.org

244 21e Avenue

Deux-Montagnes, QC

J7R 4H1 Canada



Work Up North

I had the blessing of assisting our Chinese congregation during her pastor's vacation by preaching (through a translator) for them on August 18. In the fall, Deb will help me expand my Sunday School teaching to the Chinese teens with a program for the growing group of "younger teens" (6 to 11 years old!) that now often join me.

We are looking forward to presenting the plan to our FORO partners in September. It is my fervent prayer that we can increase the work we are doing with immigrants in our English class, and that we might have more manpower to devote to leading the congregation in its Gospel proclamation. Will you join me in that prayer?

Work Down South

In mid-August I participated in our annual regional leadership meeting for the Latin America and the Carribean region. We focused on several areas during our meeting, including: improving the physical and spiritual care for our missionaries, bolstering pro-life and sexuality resources for Latin America, and assessing what countries need more focus in terms of resources and missionaries.

Another issue discussed was bureaucratic: specifically, taxes and visas for foreign missionaries. The immigration issue is front and center in the US and in Canada right now. Just as we are discussing restrictions on who can come into our countries, other countries are increasing the restrictions on who can enter their territories, for what reasons, and for how long.

Americans are also famous for hating to file their taxes. Imagine having to file not only your US and state taxes but also taxes in a foreign language in a foreign country! As we strive to keep "administrative costs" low, more and more of the responsibility for navigating these complexities is falling on missionaries themselves. We are working out, as regional leaders, how we can ensure our missionaries are acting legally towards "kings and governors" of this world, while they proclaim to the world Jesus, the King of Kings.

Mission Moment

"Why Quebec?" Aren't there lots of other places that need to hear the Gospel? Why don't you move your family to the "sunny south" to be closer to the rest of your field of supervision? I've heard all these questions – and more. Maybe you've asked them yourself, if you are recent supporters of the work the Lord has given us to do.

Despite the impression Quebec might give of being a "Catholic nation," it is in fact the least churched region in North America. There are fewer Christians here than almost anywhere else in Latin America (with the possible exception of Uruguay: we can arm-wrestle about that).

Just how unchurched and irreligious is Quebec? A 2017 survey by the Barna Group identified the least churched and most irreligious state in the United States as (Quebec's neighbor) Maine. Only 48% of Mainers believe there is a God "with strong certainty," and little more than half attend a worship service "a few times a year." In Quebec, only 28% believe there is likely a God, and only 10% attend worship services with any frequency during the year.

We know the warnings God proclaims against those who reject Him. Peace and tranquility do not last long. Now is the time to share the Gospel in Canada's French nation.



A Picture's Worth of Words...



Top Left: The missionary children of the Latin America and the Caribbean region singing "en coeur." **Top Right:** Charles preaching on "ministering angels" at the annual missionary conference. Sometimes we sense them, often we don't, but God's messengers are always protecting God's people in Christ. **Bottom:** Visiting a beautiful Quebec regional park together and enjoying the waning days of summer before the busy-ness of autumn.

Prayer Concerns

For Charles' father, who is continuing treatment for kidney cancer and finding it harder to sleep, that the Lord might grant peaceful rest,

For Deb's father, recovering from heart surgery, that the Lord may grant him continued healing and comfort in Christ,

For the upcoming FORO meetings for Montreal, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico, that all attendees may be encouraged in their support of the spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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.

Mission Central
40718 Highway E16
Mapleton, IA 51034

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861