

In The Way

September 2021

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Work Up North

FORO season started this month with Montreal's second-ever in-person meeting, and our first meeting since the start of the pandemic. The SELC District President Waldemar Vinovskis and Concordia-Chicago's head of deaconess studies, Deaconess Kristin Wassilak, attended in person. Several others joined via Zoom. We discussed what we had managed to accomplish so far, and how the Lord had caused that work to bear fruit:

- With the commissioning and installation of Deaconess Emilie, Ascension now has a full time worker to help direct inreach and outreach efforts
- Our lay mission workers, Ruth and Lyman, are plugging away at campus ministry, organizing open houses, and assisting with English outreach classes
- The digital sign installed earlier this year has already resulted in at least eight new members and several more guests who wanted to know what was happening in this "Good News Place."

Our mission team will now begin thinking and praying about the next three years. How would the Lord have us proclaim his Word and share his mercy? Whatever the specific answers, we know he would have us continue to remain faithful.

Work Down South

For the first time since March of 2020, I was actually "down south" working. I traveled to Puerto Rico August 30 to September 4 to meet with our team and greet the Lehman family, installed on Sunday, August 29 by our associate regional director. We planned out the budget for the last year of our disaster response effort. We also started thinking about what the next years will look like, and what opportunities were opening up. It was good to be with the team in person rather than via Zoom!

September 20-22 I traveled "south" to Emporia, Virginia where I attended the East Circuit pastors' conference and led a study on Mark 10. Immediately afterward I went to Omaha to lead our fall Jamaica FORO meeting. Many partners from across the mid-west attended. Unfortunately neither Pastor Ite nor the Lutheran Hour director Ancella Gregory, were able to travel from Jamaica to join us. We were, however, excited to have three former Jamaica missionaries attend and an LCMS pastor of Jamaica background as well.

Mission Moment

"Vibrant and living churches look after the interests of others. They are concerned for their communities. They open the door for others."

— Thom S. Rainer, *Autopsy of a Deceased Church*

In 2019 the mission team at Ascension worked with me to put together a strategic plan for mission. Our vision was simple – be a place about the Good News of Jesus Christ in our community. But how could we find ways to share that Good News with Sikhs, Muslims, Hindus and atheists who had no interest in walking through the doors of a church building?

One of the ideas was to have open houses on topics of interest to the community, hosted in our building by our Christian members. But we needed help. So we prayed, and the Lord sent us faithful lay people with a heart for showing the mercy of Christ.

In September we had a health clinic hosted by the local health board. This weekend, we will have a pancake supper and hand out winter clothing. In November, it will be a talk with our local police service. We are opening our doors. Within, we hope people meet Jesus for the first time.



A Picture's Worth of Words



Top left: Charles with District President Vinovskis commissioning Deaconess Emilie Stoller-Prozenko. **Top right:** Charles led Bible study for the SELC East Circuit meeting in Emporia, VA. **Bottom left:** Charles and Erin Mackenzie, ready for the Jamaica FORO at Zion West, Omaha, NE. **Bottom right:** Montreal FORO participants, in person and via Zoom, in the fellowship hall at Ascension.

Prayer Concerns

For Deaconess Emilie Stoller-Prozenko, as she begins her full time ministry in Montreal showing the mercy of Christ to our members and to the many immigrants in Parc-Extension,

For lay mission workers who lift up the arms of pastors by teaching Sunday school, organizing fellowship events, and showing hospitality to non-Christians in our fields,

For our FORO mission partners, who support the work of sharing the Gospel in Jamaica, Puerto Rico and Montreal.

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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