

In The Way

July 2022

The St-Onge Family
charles.stonge@lcms.org
intheway.org
244 21e Avenue
Deux-Montagnes, QC
J7R 4H1 Canada

Why Building Bridges Matters

One of the cornerstones of our mission work at Ascension has been "building bridges" into our community of Parc-Extension. Our virtual outreach through the web goes out to our whole Greater Montreal region. It's our open houses and English classes, however, that have allowed us to build bridges with the myriad of tribes, nations and languages immediately around our church building.

The Stone family, who are central to the Lord's bridge building work through us, have been on their own reconnect in the US this month. But that did not stop us from having our highest ever English class attendance in seven years, with around 30 students and volunteers in our July beginners' course. Deaconess Emilie led the larger "beginners" group while I worked with a small group of four "beginning beginners." My fantastic four have been faithful every week, and are almost always the first four to show up on Tuesday evenings. One is Urdu, one is Punjabi, and two are a married couple who are Persian speaking. Only one is a member of the congregation while the three others are Muslim and Sikh. We don't just learn English together: we build relationships, pray together, and expose new Canadians to Christianity: some of the first time.

One of my class members, who is also a new member of Ascension, invited us to his home for a meal. He had to flee an overseas country because of his conversion, but his wife and two sons remain Muslim. After a fantastic meal the family's questions began: What is the Trinity? Do Christians believe all Muslims go to hell? What do we believe about life after death? With the help of the father of the family, and the youngest son who did an admirable translation job, and with thanks to the Spirit who brought to mind Christ's words, Deb and I were able to share the Gospel with them. The father and mother are currently in Turkey, awaiting renewal of their Canadian visa and, we pray, a swift return to Montreal.

Bridges are two ways streets. On Saturday July 23, Ascension had a yard work morning. Around a dozen people from Parc-Extension – non-members! - showed up to help. We are become part of each other's lives, that Christ may bind all our lives together in him.

Mission Moment

"I've never heard anything like this before." That's one of the phrases I've heard most frequently in mission conversations over the last seven years.

I heard it again the other week as I sat down with the friend of a new member. The three of us were meeting in a suburban apartment and discussing what Christianity was all about. I described Christ's work as the Gospel – the Good News - of the burden of sin being lifted onto Jesus' shoulders at the cross, to free us to love one another in joy rather than out of guilt. He said he'd never heard anything like that before. We are praying that he would find in our fellowship more things new and would himself become a "new creation" in Jesus (2 Cor. 5:17).

Those of us who have been lifelong Christians can take the miracle of the free forgiveness of sins in Jesus for granted. But those who have never heard it can find it too good to be true, a truly miraculous and saving word. The grace of God really is amazing – what a privilege to share it with people who have never heard it!



A Picture's Worth of Words



Top left: Pastor St-Onge's "Beginning Beginners" English class. Here we are working on "It is" and "They are." **Bottom left:** The Bakshi Ram Pal family, who joined Ascension several years ago, finally received their permanent residency. They surprised everyone with an "Ascension Logo" themed cake. **Top right:** Celebrating with the Pal family on Canada Day long weekend. **Middle Right:** "Ask and you shall receive." Many from the neighbourhood that showed up for cleaning day returned to help us weed and otherwise clean up our front lawn. **Bottom Right:** The St-Onges made a quick trip to Ottawa for Canada Day on July 1. Deb was surprised how close we got to the Prime Minister. Big land, few people!



Prayer Concerns

For the Fetanats as they await a return visa to Canada in Turkey, that the Lord would keep them safe and give them patience,

For those with whom the Gospel was shared this month, that it might take root in their hearts and that in it people may find their salvation,

For the many churches who have opened their doors to us for our October reconnect, as we look forward to sharing with all of you the work the Lord has been doing through us.

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