

# In The Way

March 2024

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I write this newsletter on the afternoon of Good Friday, after our morning service and before our first ever in-person Easter Vigil (we have only done virtual ones before). Good Friday is still a statutory holiday across Canada. Many congregations hold their services in the morning rather than in the afternoon or evening as happens in the United States.

A Saturday snowfall and cold front made us huddle inside for our Palm Sunday procession. One of our new members read the part of Jesus as we responsively read through the Passion according to Mark. Yesterday we had our annual bilingual Holy Thursday service with Pastor Somers and the Lutheran Church – Canada congregation that meets in our building. Almost thirty attended, hearing the Word of God and receiving the Lord's Supper in both English and French. Our deaconess intern Anna helped with the stripping of the altar, and Kayla and Deb worked to provide beautiful special music.

You'll have to wait for the next newsletter to hear about our Easter Vigil service and fellowship, and our Easter Sunday service and brunch!

## English Classes

We celebrated the end of our winter advanced English class with a pre-worship breakfast on March 10<sup>th</sup>. One of our Muslim students had some great questions to ask me about our faith in Jesus. A new beginners' English class started on March 12<sup>th</sup>. For the first time we had to turn away over a dozen students because of a lack of capacity. What a blessed problem to have! My own "beginning" beginners' class has outgrown the small backroom we were using, and is now being taught in the sanctuary.

## Mission Worker News

Anna will be returning to the US at the end of April for classwork and training, as well as to prepare for her wedding to Noah in early June. To expand our living accommodations we signed a lease on a nearby apartment. Kayla and I had a delightful conversation with her building superintendent who is an immigrant from France. We also upheld our Ascension tradition of a mission team field trip to a Sugar Shack this month, introducing our new workers to the wonders of everything "maple."

## Mission Moment

We often have students from our English classes, most of whom are not Christians, attending our worship services. Rather than giving a more typical "closed communion" announcement, I have for a few years offered a "call to baptism" instead.

I offer it standing between the altar and the font, and it usually goes something like this: "The path to this meal starts at this font with Baptism, where Jesus marks us as his own. If you have not yet been baptized, I will be standing here at the end of worship to talk about what that means. If you have been baptized, but have not yet publicly confessed the faith before this group of Christians, I'd be happy to prepare you to join us at the Lord's Table as well."

On March 17, almost a dozen people came forward to ask me about becoming members of Ascension. That has led to some great discussions about who Jesus is and what he offers to us. Please join me in praying for these seekers and the many others who are considering Jesus' invitation to receive his gift of washing and regeneration in the Holy Spirit!



## A Picture's Worth of Words



**Top:** Our winter advanced English graduating class. **Middle Left:** "Sir, we desire to see Jesus!" Some of the people who stayed to learn more about Christ after worship on March 17<sup>th</sup>. **Middle Right:** Young adults decorating Easter eggs. **Bottom Left:** Our spring beginners' English class. The "beginning" beginners' class is only slightly smaller and held upstairs in our sanctuary. More pictures on the web!

### Prayer Concerns

For Soma, a new Christian from India who is attending our classes and services, as she searches for housing, and for Baldev who attends regularly but is not yet baptized;

For Vikram, Jaskarandeep, Sonu, Mohammed, Sanjeev, Devi, and Surinder, that they might come to know Jesus through the Word, and for Soma, Raj, and Mona who helped bring them the Word in their own languages by way of translation;

For Anna and Kayla as their first year in Montreal draws to a close, and for Grace, who is preparing to come this fall.

### Support this Work

Support can be sent care of "ST-ONGE FAMILY" at Mission Central or "MONTREAL MISSION" at the LCMS:

Mission Central  
40718 Highway E16  
Mapleton, IA 51034

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod  
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