

In The Way

August 2020

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Work Up North

"It's been a quiet month in Montreal, our home town" to paraphrase the famous opening of Garrison Keillor's *Prairie Home Companion* monologues. It was our first month of the new, hopefully temporary, normal of alternating in-person, spoken communion services and Zoom-only services of the Word with singing. Our attendance remains strong, usually over 50. We actually have lapsed members now returning; some online, but some in-person. More blessings.

Our weekly Zoom Bible studies is another of those unexpected blessings. Our attendance is between 18 and 25 – numbers we would never have achieved in person because of the difficulty of weekday travel in Montreal. One of our shut-ins joins every week; members are inviting friends to come. "We know that for those who love God all things work together for good" (Romans 8:28).

On August 1, I performed a wedding at Ascension. Our deaconess intern, Emilie, married Avery Prozenko in a small but cheerful (and socially distanced) wedding. Emilie's American family was unable to attend due to quarantine restrictions, so I hooked up a monitor and speaker which enabled Emilie's parents to give their "virtual assent" to her marriage. You can watch the wedding online on our new YouTube channel, "Ascension Montreal."

August 15 we held a very successful online FORO for Montreal, with 22 people in attendance from the LCC, SELC District, English District, and Office of International Mission. We are ready to move forward in our mission for 2020-2021!

Emilie is hard at work preparing for our online English outreach, starting September 1. She also helped me produce a video for McGill University, introducing our campus ministry team. Avery is hard at work around the building while he looks for work in the city. And that brings us to the end of the summer!

Work Down South

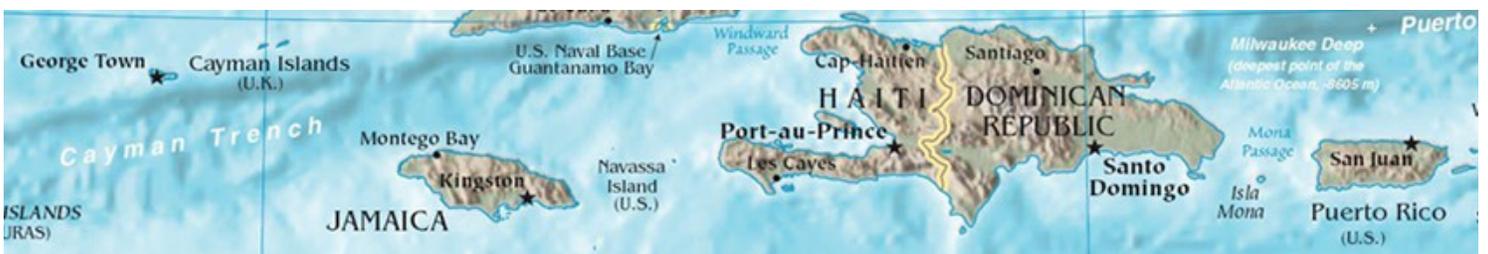
The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away. Pastor Anthony DiLiberto took a call to Henderson, Nevada, and will be leaving Puerto Rico at the end of September. Pastor Gerald Paul of Great Falls, Montana accepted a call to serve in the Cayman Islands, and will be installed September 1 to begin his support-building. Most of my work down south this month has revolved around those two big changes.

Reconnect

Another two years gone since I last hit the road to visit you and your congregations! But this is most definitely a "not normal" year. A Derecho storm through Iowa; a hurricane through Louisiana, COVID on the loose, and a major election in the US (and quite possibly one in Canada as well, but we won't know until late September. Email me to find out why.)

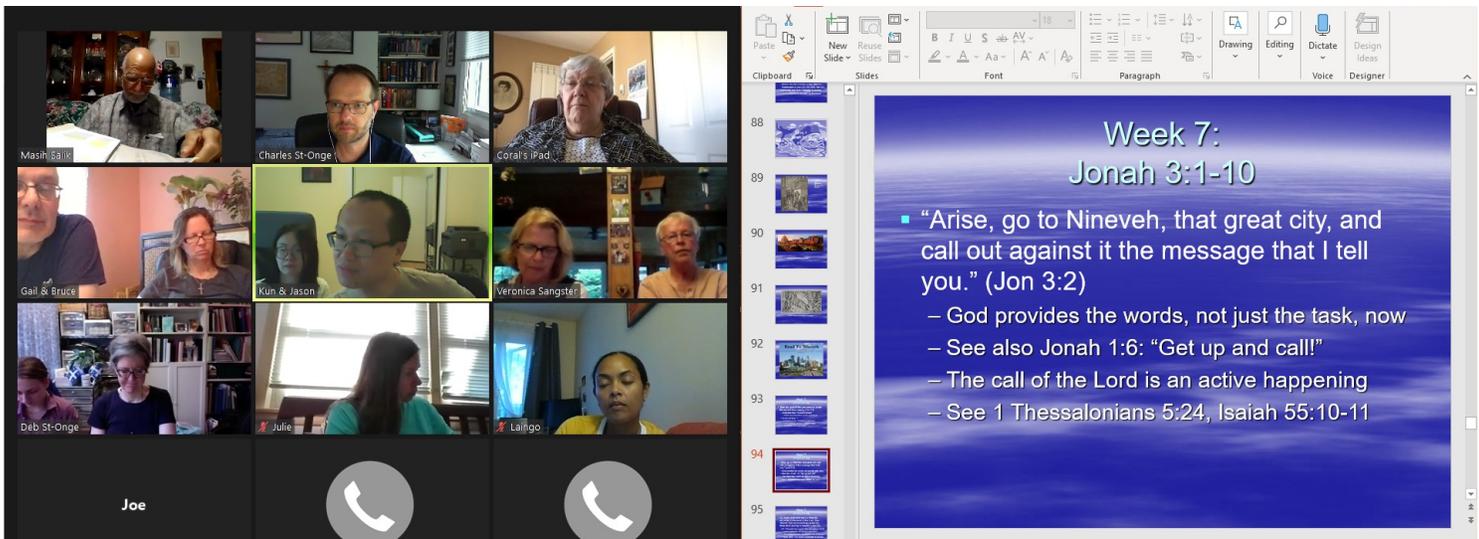
This reconnect will not be normal either, as I take increased precautions, am careful where I stop, and focus more on visits to individuals. I'll be driving from Montreal (no flights) and coming by myself. Starting October 20 I'll pass through Ohio, Indiana, Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Tennessee, and then home.

I will be reaching out to many of you over the coming two weeks to see about saying hi – even if it's just a visit on the front porch. I'll also be publishing my "official" stops, including Sunday services. You can put Mission Central on your calendar for October 31!



A Picture's Worth of Words

Top Left: A very COVID wedding of Avery Prozenko and Emilie Stoller. **Top Right:** Pastor Ted Krey speaking at our virtual Montreal FORO on August 15. **Bottom:** Studying the Book of Jonah, the Gospel for the Gentiles.



Prayer Concerns

For those mourning the loss of loved ones during this time of pandemic;

For peace in and among the nations of the earth, that the Lord would cause the grace and peace of Jesus Christ to dwell richly among us and that the way of the Evil One may be thwarted;

For the mission of the Church in these challenging times, that we might boldly preach Christ and him crucified.

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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