

# In The Way

April 2022

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## An Easter (Almost) Like Old Times

Back in the years BC – "Before COVID" – Easter was a huge deal at Ascension. There was of course a big Easter communion service. We also held a breakfast for the church community, with the fellowship hall filled with folks in their Easter best. For some, "Easter best" meant the best suit, while for others it meant their best sari or other traditional dress.

The last two years have seen two very different Easters. In 2020, it was an online Easter service with recorded music from the "St-Onge family choir." In 2021 it was a more subdued in-person service, with distanced seating, masks, and hymns from a soloist in the balcony. We longed for "regular Easter" and a reminder that the hardest times of the pandemic were behind us. It still felt like Good Friday, two years in a row.

This year wasn't quite 2019. But it was very close. No more distanced seating, a full service of music, and even an Easter fellowship breakfast. Our team, especially Ruth and Lyman Stone, invited English class students and Open House attendees to come - and many did. What a joy to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus with people from all over the earth, including Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus.

Olivia invited a friend from college, who in turn invited his own mother to come. She had just returned from the Christian funeral for her mother in Romania. Her family was Hungarian and settled in Romania, and as a result Olivia's friend speaks English, Romanian and Hungarian, and is now working on French. The mom greatly appreciated the comfort of the resurrection message at her time of grief.

## Outreach Plans for 2022-2025

We presented our 2019-2022 strategic plan at our first Montreal Forum just months before COVID-19 began to spread. Despite all the pandemic has thrown at us, many of our plans and dreams came to fruition. Starting this late summer we will be looking ahead to what the Lord would have us doing in the next three years. If you're interested in being a part of that process, put **September 23-24, 2022** on your calendar for a trip to Ascension and be a participant in our next **Montreal Forum**.

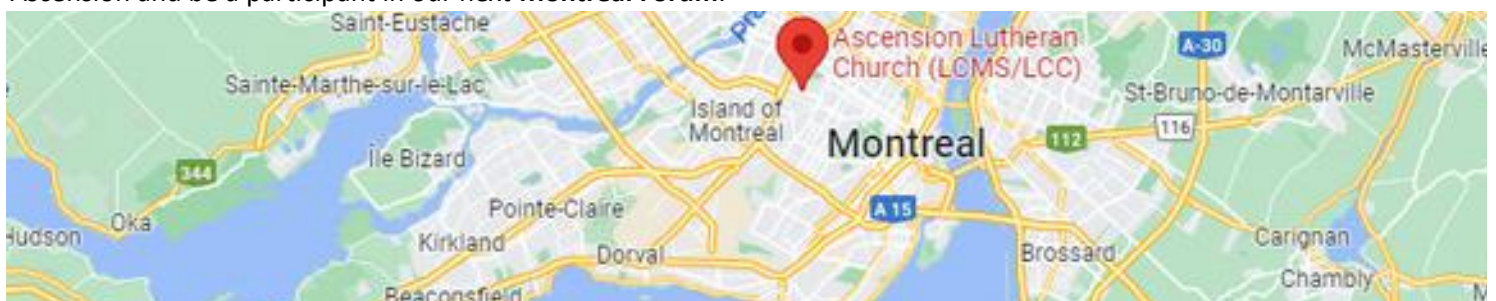
## Mission Moment

I'm participating over the next few weeks in an online continuing education class on mission in the city. The class, co-sponsored by Concordia St. Paul and Concordia Seminary, is looking at the special challenges of outreach in urban environments.

The course has reminded me how US cities differ from Canadian and other international cities. Many US cities have little housing in their central business districts, for example. When 5 PM comes around, many areas close up. In Montreal, however, many people live downtown in some of the more expensive condominiums in the city. There are streets in the city that feel like they never sleep. Two of the residential areas around the core, Westmount and Outremont, have some of the most desirable and expensive houses in the metro area.

There are poorer areas in Montreal that suffer from more crime just like in large American cities. Montréal-Nord would be one example. Even so, the murder rate in Montreal is a fraction of what it is in a similar large US city.

Even with these differences I hope to learn some things from the course to apply to our work here.



## A Picture's Worth of Words



**Top left:** Our April open house on financial matters and tax preparation. Despite the incredible complexity of both Canadian and Quebec tax returns, there are few workshops for new Canadians on how to file properly. We much appreciate the folks from La Capitale for being willing to talk about tax and financial issues. **Bottom left:** Deaconess Emilie and Suzie Stone dancing to Québécois folk music. **Top right:** Lyman, Ruth and Suzie Stone with Olivia St-Onge at the Lalande Cabane à sucre. **Bottom right:** The Singh family celebrate their first Easter with us as new Christians. They were the first to help with clean up and among the last to leave.

## Prayer Concerns

For those who are separated from spouses and the children of separated parents, that they might know that nothing can separate them from the love of Christ,

For Sophia and Olivia that, as they grow up as "third culture kids," they might also find comfort in the culture of the Church of Jesus,

For Ascension as we look ahead to the next three years and what the Lord would have us do to share his Word and live out his mercy in Parc-Extension and Montreal.

## Support this Work

You can donate online at [lcms.org/givenow/stonge](https://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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