

In The Way

May 2021

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Work Up North

It's spring in Montreal – which means that we've gone from over 90°F to a freeze warning in two days. Such is the climate in "la belle province." The political climate, after over a year of pandemic restrictions, is also going through swings. Buoyed by good poll numbers, Quebec's governing CAQ party has introduced massive revisions to the province's "Bill 101" French-language charter. The changes include:

- restrictions on non-English-speaking students at English colleges,
- requirements that even smaller businesses than before work in French only,
- unilaterally changing the Canadian constitution to acknowledge that "Quebecers form a nation" and "French... is the common language of the Quebec nation," and
- a six-month window for immigrants to the province to acquire a basic working knowledge of French.

These changes may have impacts on our mission. They may limit the use of English on our new sign. They may impact our English outreach, especially if immigrants do not stay as long in Quebec or choose not to come at all. The changes have certainly inflamed anti-Quebec sentiment outside of Canada, although none of the five federal parties has opposed the proposed constitutional changes.

One thing is certain: as we baptize a new member this Sunday and prepare to confirm another, and continue to receive new visitors each Sunday, our Lord Jesus, Lord of all nations, will continue to work through us to expand his kingdom.

Work Down South

I was able to smooth the way for the Caymans mission to rent a temporary space for the next few months while their regular worship space is being used for COVID testing. I have also been working closely with our Puerto Rican team as they, once again, see major worker changes: the loss of two missionaries, the planned summer arrival of a missionary family, and the transition of two missionaries from short term to career.

I am anticipating a slow return to "pre-pandemic-like" work starting in September, with travel to two FOROs for Jamaica and Puerto Rico, and attendance at an SELC conference in Virginia. I'm also looking into a pre-COVID project of expanding to the US Virgin Islands. One family there has been attending our online services and studies for over a year.

Mission Moment

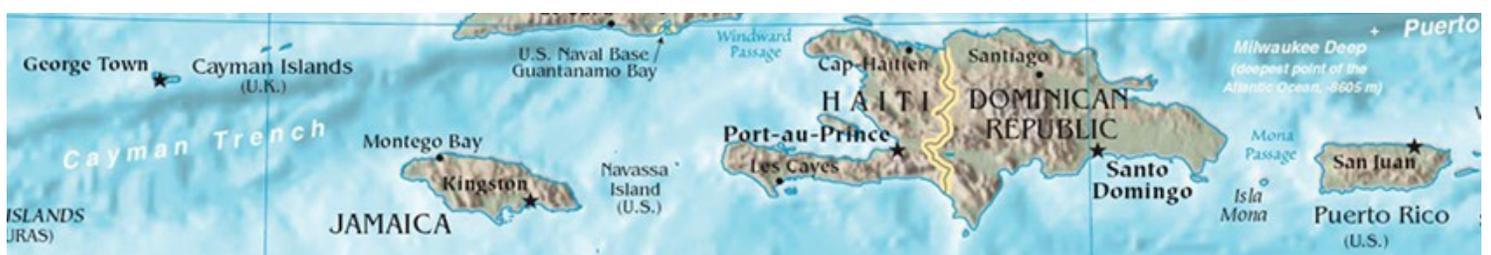
Ascension dedicated our new digital sign on Pentecost Sunday. We've been able to work with our local health organization to help share some of their news, and to build more relationships with community organizations.

The first week the sign was active we had four Hindu-speaking visitors come into the church and stay for one of our services.

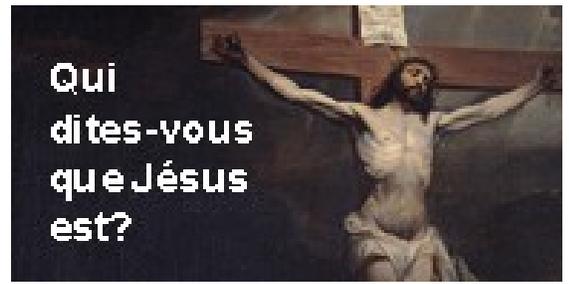
Emilie, our intern and soon-to-be deaconess, continues to share the Gospel through email each week. One of these emails resulted in a long conversation with a woman in the city who has not been able to attend worship since 2020.

Our English outreach classes have been averaging around 15 students consistently through the spring, even as the warmer weather has made attending yet another indoor video conference less appealing.

This Sunday Guorong, friend of another Chinese member, was born anew in the Kingdom of God through Holy Baptism. Instruction for the Lord's Supper begins next!



A Picture's Worth of Words



Top left: Dedicating our new sign (it works, but the camera resolution makes it look like it doesn't!) **Middle left:** Broadcasting our Pentecost service live. We average 30 in person, 25 online each week. **Bottom left:** Beginners' English class with tutors. **Top right:** Baptizing Guorong on Holy Trinity Sunday. **Middle and bottom right:** Two of the messages running on our sign in French. "With Jesus, it will be alright," a play on the Quebec COVID slogan of "everything will be alright," and "Who do you say that Jesus is?"

Prayer Concerns

For our new sign, that the Lord might use it to proclaim his glory and show his mercy in our community,

For Gorong, Larry, and Valerie as we engage them with the Gospel, and Philippe and Nathan as they integrate into our community,

For Emilie as she shares the Gospel through mercy and brings joy to many, young and old, in our congregation.

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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