

# In The Way

March 2022

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

## Back to work (sort of!)

It has been a long three months, but I am now slowly returning to work. I'll be presiding at worship on Sunday, with Rev. Mark Kloha of Kentucky preaching and baptizing his granddaughter Josephine Stone (daughter of Lyman and Ruth and sister to Suzie). I'll be installing our new council, including a new president and vice-president. We'll also be dedicating our new pouring chalice. Next Sunday we may have one or two confirmations and the dedication of two beautiful new Lenten banners.

My health leave, which officially started at the beginning of December, seems to have been the result of overwork coupled with the stress of leading during the pandemic. In short, I was trying to do two full-time mission vocations (mission developer and area facilitator) under the constantly evolving stresses of COVID and COVID regulations. These were especially challenging in Quebec.

We are all very grateful to Rev. James Douthwaite, Ascension's circuit visitor, for his pastoral care to both our family and our congregation during this time. Thanks also go to Rev. David Fleming, the Executive Director of Doxology, who has helped with my re-entry preparations. Rev. Tom Park, while getting ready for his deployment to Korea and Taiwan, stayed six weeks in Montreal leading worship, doing home visits, and caring for our family in person. We pray all the best for him in his ministry in Asia.

I can't thank enough our Deaconess Emilie Prozenko-Stoller, our lay workers Ruth and Lyman Stone, our council and the members of Ascension, for keeping things going during my absence. The Body of Christ was in full display, and the Spirit was at work in keeping the focus on Jesus.

Last but NOT LEAST we thank all of you, our supporters, for your prayers during this time. We've had so many thoughtful emails, cards and letters that meant the world to us. The Lord has answered so many prayers that we can only echo the words of the psalmist: "What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits to me?"

Finding where and how to cut back on work will be a challenge. But I have learned (again) that God is God and I am not. In the words of Rev. Dr. Carl Fickenscher, I can only do the work of one faithful missionary, not two!

## Mission Moment

A lot of the non-Biblical wisdom I carry around in my brain I learned from the sayings on my grandparents' cottage walls. Insights like, "All fishermen are liars except you and me, and sometimes I'm not sure about you."

The one I'm thinking of right now goes like this: "Be careful of the words you say to keep them soft and sweet / You never know from day to day which ones you'll have to eat."

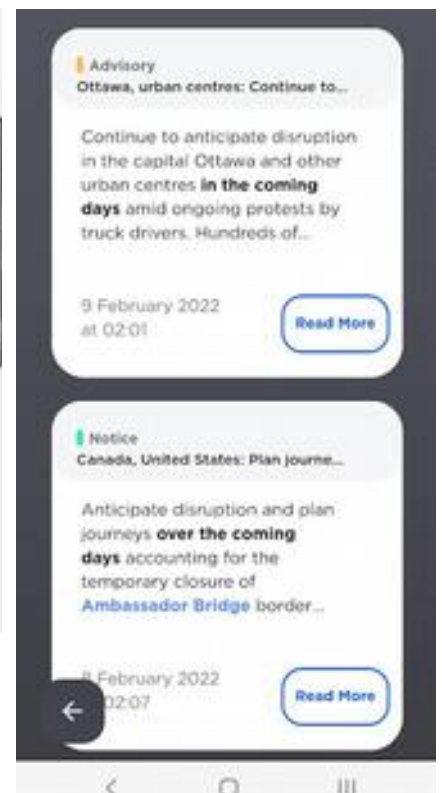
This idea is quite biblical, of course. Hear the Word of the Lord from 1 Peter 3:15 (ESV): "In your hearts honour Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; **yet do it with gentleness and respect.**"

We are people of the Word. We love to share it and speak it – and hold others accountable for keeping it. Most of us are "prepared to make a defense." But too often we stumble on the "gentleness and respect" part.

Our world is desperately in need of the Gospel truth to help guide us through times of deep natural and moral evil. Lord, teach us to speak your Word with the same gentleness and respect with which You speak it to us, his children. Amen.



## A Picture's Worth of Words



**Top left:** Contemplative libations. The "Don de Dieu" was the boat that brought Samuel de Champlain from St-Onge, France to Quebec; "La fin du monde" means "the end of the world," geographically speaking. **Bottom left:** Laughter can really be the best medicine (Psalm 126:2). **Top right:** Deb and I visited St. John's, Ludington, MI on February 27. **Bottom right:** The notices that came through on our missionary "SOS" app in early February.

## Prayer Concerns

For Carol Follstaedt, Deborah's mom, who lost two brothers, a brother-in-law, and her husband in the fall of 2021,

For Deb, who is recovering from shingles and continues to suffer from eye challenges,

For one of our members (we're careful with his name), who was baptized into the Faith last year and is now recovering at home from a stroke,

For Deepika and all the newly baptized at Ascension.

## 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.

Mission Central  
40718 Highway E16  
Mapleton, IA 51034

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod  
P.O. Box 66861  
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861