

May 2018

Vol. 43



ASCENSION'S NEWSLETTER

NEWSLETTERS ARE ISSUED TWICE A YEAR

MAY & NOVEMBER

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

865 Jarry Street West, Montreal, Quebec H3N 1G8
Pastor Charles St-Onge: (514) 272-8570
E-mail (church): pastor@ascensionlutheran.ca
Our Web Page: www.ascensionlutheran.ca

SUNDAY

9:30 a.m. Sunday School / Bible Study
10:30 a.m. Divine Service
11:45 a.m. Fellowship (Coffee & Cake)
1:00 p.m. Chinese Service/Sunday School

PARISH DIRECTOR: Pastor Charles St-Onge

PRESIDENT: Mark Blaauw

VICE-PRESIDENT: Linda Sitar-Aloisio

SECRETARY: Bruce Bell

TREASURER: Xin Xian Li

FINANCIAL SECRETARY: Kathryn Kollar

ASSISTED BY: Masih Salik, Linda Sitar-Aloisio, Spencer Potten

MEMBERS: Masih Salik, Benjamin Blaauw, Bruce Bell, Yanson Frimpong

BUILDINGS & GROUNDS: Mark Blaauw

ASSISTED BY: Linda Sitar-Aloisio, Benjamin Blaauw

ALTAR GUILD: Gail Spence-Bell, Veronica Sangster-Potten

ELDERS: Spencer Potten, Masih Salik, Mark Blaauw

LADIES' AID COMMITTEE: Victoria Misata, Linda Sitar-Aloisio, Kathryn Kollar

NEWSLETTER PUBLISHER: Linda Sitar-Aloisio

CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND ATTENDANCE

Schedules & Events

Saturdays: Pastor St-Onge's day off at this time

Friday: 6:30-8:30 pm Council meetings – 3rd Friday of each month

Wednesday: 10:30 am – 1:00 pm Ladies Aid meetings – to be announced

NOTE 1:

If you are in need of a pastoral visit, please do not hesitate to call Pastor St-Onge. Every effort will be made to meet your needs and those of your loved ones. If you know of someone in hospital or who wants pastoral care, speak to the pastor .

NOTE 2:

If there are any errors or omissions, please accept my apologies. If there are any changes to your email address or to the Information Form, contact Linda Sitar-Aloisio at (450) 662-0561 or laloisio@sympatico.ca

Remember to take the Good News magazines and distribute them to friends after you have read them.

ATTENDANCE

		<u>2017</u>				<u>2018</u>		
		<u>English</u>	<u>Chinese</u>			<u>English</u>	<u>Chinese</u>	
Nov	5	39	62	Feb	4	43	60	
	12	44	50		11	44		
	19	32	56		18	49	53	
	26	51	52		25	32	58	
Dec	3	35	48	Mar	4	42	60	
	10	52	55		11	32	58	
	17	28	53		17	45* (P. Jacobsen's Installation)		
	24	40	60		18	43	51	
	24	44	- (Christmas Eve)		25	52	56 (Palm Sunday)	
	25	17	- (Christmas Day)		29	40**	- (Maundy Thursday)	
	31	22	56 (New Year's Eve)		30	36	- (Good Friday)	
		<u>2018</u>						
Jan	7	26	58	Apr	1	59	46 (Easter Sunday)	
	14	28	56		8	40	58	
	21	48	53		15	40	55	
	28	41	52		22	46	54	
				29	43	58		

* Tri-lingual Service

** Bi-lingual Service

PASTOR'S PEN



By Pastor Charles St-Onge

Living as Exiles

“Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.” (1 Peter 2:11-12)

In both the United States and in Canada foreigners and immigrants have been much in the news. President Trump wants to build a wall to keep illegal immigrants from Central America out of the United States. La Meute – the Wolfcry – here in Quebec have been protesting immigrants much more vocally than any time in recent memory.

The reality is that all of us are immigrants or descended from them. Even secular historians agree with the Bible that the native peoples of North America came from somewhere else. Either we or our ancestors found themselves, at one time, living as strangers in a strange land. But the longer we live in a place, the longer it starts to feel like home. We forget that we were once exiles and strangers.

In the same way, there was a time when either we or our ancestors were not Christian. Some of our ancestors worshipped the nature gods from which the days of the week get their names: Odin, Thor and Fria (Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday). Some of our ancestors worshipped the dead, paying them off to ensure they blessed the family instead of coming back with curses. But at some point, even if our relatives were Jewish, the Spirit of God converted us to faith in the man Jesus as God’s only Son.

Sometimes a whole community converted to Christianity. Sometimes it was only one or two people in a village. Either way, those new Christians suddenly went from being native to being strangers and exiles. Many in the Roman Empire accused the first Christians of being “atheists” for ignoring the Roman gods. In Europe, Christians were suspected of angering the gods and bringing curses down on the land. To be a Christian was to a “spiritual immigrant.” That’s why Peter, in his first letter, called his Christian listeners “sojourners” and “exiles” even if they still lived in their original homelands.

Over time, in Europe and in North America, Christianity became the religion of the land. At the turn of the last century it was the people who weren’t Christian who were exiles and strangers in Canada and Quebec. Churches were filled with people just like us. People from Sweden looked for a Lutheran pastor when they died, because being Swedish was synonymous with being Lutheran. Churches were started by gathering together people with the same kinds of last name as our own.

That has all changed. Once again to be Christian is to be a stranger and in exile. Our Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod is sending missionaries to Slovakia. We have four part-time missionary pastors at Ascension, in the heart of once-Roman Catholic-dominated Montreal! Like the first Christians, we are having to learn what it means to be saved by Christ when so few around us are Christian.

Ascension remains a community of immigrants. On any given Sunday, I estimate more than a third of our attendees are people who were born outside of Canada (and that would include three members of my own family!). But even if we were not physical immigrants, we would still be spiritual immigrants. We will always be sojourners and exiles because our King, the Lord Jesus Christ, is also a King-in-Exile. Together, we announce that one day Jesus will visibly rule all people, no matter what land they call home, or what gods they serve. All will know Jesus as their Lord, for their good or for their ill.

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

SICK & SHUT-INS

We ask for your prayerful intercession for our sick and shut-ins:

Helen Chomay	Vlasta Slavik	Agnes Hillier
Anna Hancar	John Sabo	Carrie Neil
Amitha Katta	Stephen Misata	Michel Yalenti
John Sitar	Emily Kmec	George Benjamin
Angelo Matthis	Denis & Betty St-Onge	
Ann Cornelow		

Please keep in your prayers:

Denis St-Onge (Pastor St-Onge's father) is going through treatment for advanced renal cancer.

Ann Cornelow suffered a cardiac arrest in February. She is slowly recovering and has returned home.

John Sitar was in hospital in February & April and made it to be home for his 92nd birthday. He is slowly recovering.

Betty St-Onge (Pastor St-Onge's mother) had emergency surgery due to a broken femur on the hip replaced just last yr.

Our sick and shut-ins encourage your visits, correspondence and telephone calls

SENIOR MEMBERS

Are you older, with no family or close friends in the congregation? If you were to end up in hospital, would we ever know? We encourage everyone to keep the church phone number (front of the Sunday bulletin or Church directory or Newsletter) handy. Consider having a 'worship buddy' in the church. For those of you who do have family or a good friend, perhaps you can give a contact name and number to the pastor or ask the relative to contact pastor.

SYMPATHY

BELL, Dean passed away in December at the age of 58 in Manitoba. Our heartfelt sympathy to his brother Bruce (Gail) and family.

HARRISON, Bruce passed away in December at the age of 79 in Calgary, Alberta. Our deepest condolences to his wife Marilyn, son & daughter Joan, granddaughters Linnea & Emily and family.

ALTON, Les passed away in December in Ontario. Our heartfelt sympathy to nephew Pastor St-Onge (Debbi) and their family.

BURNE, William (Bill) passed away on 23 December at the age of 93. Bill was a long time friend of ALC and helped many in dealing with the passings of family & friends through Blythe Bernier Funeral Home in Park Ext.

BELL, David James passed away peacefully on 10 April 2018 after a brief illness at the age of 87 in Surrey, British Columbia. He is survived by wife Coral, sons James, Bruce (Gail), Allan (Marlene) & Ian (Sandra) and 3 grandchildren. He was predeceased by son Dean this past December.

Our deepest sympathy to Bruce & Gail and their families.

REV MARCO ANTONIO JACOBSEN

On Sunday, 28 January 2018, Ascension approved the call to Pastor Marco Jacobsen to serve as an associate pastor with us. Pastor Jacobsen, his wife Lilian and their daughter, Nicole, are from Brazil, where he served as a chaplain at the largest Lutheran university in Latin America. He is studying for his doctorate at UQAM.

This will be a tremendous help as Pastor St-Onge continues his work "down south". Pastor Jacobsen is fluent in Portuguese, Spanish, French and English and we believe the Lord has sent him to Montreal at just the right time. Between him and Pastor St-Onge, we will have 50% of a missionary at Ascension! Pastor Jacobsen will be assisting once a month with Sunday Services and teaching duties such as ESL, the Young Adult Bible Study, Bible Study, Sunday Teen Time as well as with the LCC's work in French.

INSTALLATION OF REV MARCO ANTONIO JACOBSEN

Pastor Jacobsen was installed as an associate pastor of Ascension Lutheran Church (LCMS) in Montreal on 17 March 2018.

There were 7 participating pastors from out-of-town: President Andrew Dzurovcik (SELC); Rev James Douthwaite (SELC East Circuit Visitor); Rev Waldemar Vinoskis (SELC); President Paul Zabel (LCC East District); Rev Ron Mohr (LCC East Mission Executive); Rev David Milette (LCC East District); as well as ALC's Rev Chun Lin Hu & Rev Charles St-Onge.

The Ladies Aid hosted & prepared a light lunch reception. Many thanks to Gail Spence, Debbi St-Onge, Rhoda Blaauw & Linda Sitar-Aloisio for each making a pot of soup.

SELC PRESIDENT, REV ANDREW DZUROVCIK

On Sunday, 18 March 2018, our District President, Rev Andrew Dzurovcik, lead worship and bible study as Pr St-Onge had to leave to be in Puerto Rico meeting with the disaster response team.

Ascension Lutheran Church does not stand alone: it is one part of the 6,000 congregations of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, which in turn is part of the International Lutheran Council binding churches together from all over the world. Our congregation is part of a grouping of formerly Slovak Lutheran churches in the LCMS, located in Canada and the United States, called the SELC District.

SUNDAY SCHOOL / BIBLE STUDY

Children and adults alike join together at 9:30 AM in the parsonage for an opening devotion and hymn. Pastor St-Onge leads the adults with a discussion on the epistle lesson for the day. Deborah St-Onge teaches children ages 5-11, going through a similar age appropriate lesson prepared by the pastor.

Pastor St-Onge has also added a memory verse, catechism lesson and discussion questions on the back of the bulletin. These are for families to take home and discuss during the

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

week. The bulletins are also posted on the website under "Learn".

The way in which we are taught the faith is always changing. But the need to be taught has not gone away. Take these opportunities to learn about YOUR faith!

CHRISTMAS PARTY

In spite of the snow, Ascension celebrated an Advent Christmas party with the French congregation. It was held on a Saturday afternoon which turned out to be a success! There was no rushing!! Everyone enjoyed a potluck & heavy-laden table of great ethnic food & desserts, followed by the Sunday School children citing verses & song which led into all joining in singing Christmas carols.

YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Pastor St-Onge leads a coffee fellowship and bible study meeting on Wednesday nights at Gare Centrale. This is a great chance to grow in your faith, and to invite others to come and learn about Jesus in an informal setting. Pastor Somers assists on days when Pastor St-Onge is away. More info will be posted on the church website. You can also contact pastor at pastor@ascensionlutheran.ca.

SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP

On the **first Sunday of each month**, we honor the people of that month for their birthdays and wedding anniversaries with a 'special' cake.

Please write your name beside the month of your choice which is located on the Komora door.

IF you wish to bring in a special cake on any other Sunday OR wish to provide an 'extended' fellowship for a special occasion, please contact Linda Sitar-Aloisio or Vicki Misata.

ENGLISH SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)

On 4 February 2018 Susia Lim Wanatabe was installed as the ESL teacher at Ascension. The classes are held every Monday from 6:30-8:00 pm and started on 5 February. They will continue until the end of June.

Volunteers helping Susia are: Gail & Bruce Bell; Veronica & Spencer Potten, Laingo Rako, Kathryn Kollar, Linda Sitar-Aloisio, Pastor St-Onge & Pastor Jacobsen.

DISTRICT CONVENTION

Pastor St-Onge attended the joint east and south circuit meeting in January 2018 where they endorsed our congregation's motion to the District Convention to partner more intentionally with the Lutheran Church – Canada on mission work in Quebec.

In April 2018, Pastor St-Onge and Mark Blaauw (President & Lay Delegate) attended the SELC convention in Cleveland, Ohio advancing the cause of missions in Quebec.

WEEKLY DEVOTIONALS

Pastor St-Onge started a new weekly devotional email to use with the many visitors who come to our Facebook page and website looking for truth and knowledge about God. You will also be able to sign up and he will send the information. Please contact Pastor on how to sign up.

COMMUNION LINENS & VESSELS

Gail Spence-Bell has continued sewing new altar linens and has completed the four chalice veils & white burse and is now working on the red burse. Gail has taken the old white altar cloths and will be doing necessary repairs and has made new anti-tarnish bags for the Communion vessels. Also, Gail had our Communion vessels repaired and plated. Many thanks and appreciation for such a big undertaking!



With appreciation and gratefulness, many thanks to the following people who have volunteered their time, effort and hard work in and around our Lord's House:

We would like to take this opportunity to thank those of you who have been bringing in baked goods, cookies, coffee, other goodies as well as monetary donations for our Sunday fellowships;

Hong Sun, Ying Zhou, Hao Ran Sun, Yi Chen Sun, Yu Ping Lin, Yu Jing Zhang, Rong Yan Cui and Xin Xian Li of the Chinese congregation and Theophile & Ingrid Nde, Rena & Pierre Couture, Mireille Rakotonjanahary, Vallieres and Sylvain Primeau of the French congregation for volunteering and taking on the weekly church cleaning as well as Claude Lafrienerie for cleaning the parsonage on a bi-weekly basis;

Debbi St-Onge for playing the organ at Sunday worship services for the English congregation when Joselin was away;

Rhoda Blaauw for maintaining the care of the sanctuary/hall plants;

Yansen Frimpong for dealing with the weekly trash and the snow shovelling of church grounds;

Please accept our apology if we left off anyone as there are so many projects and tasks that go on throughout the year, we may have lost track of some. To make things easier and to keep track, please contact Linda Sitar-Aloisio if you were involved in one of the many jobs done in and around the church. Thank you.

BOOKINGS – Church and/or Hall

Please contact Linda Sitar-Aloisio regarding church and/or hall usage. Church premises is strictly for the use of the church members. It is important to advise Linda as soon as possible with your date. There are fees for church usage.

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

PROJECTS

There are continuous projects planned throughout the year.

Please do not ‘assume’ that work will be attended to by someone else....

BE that someone else!

NEW & IMPROVED SACRISTY

The sacristy had a complete renovation in December! There are no longer any electrical wires exposed, walls were repaired and new shelving & storage cupboards were purchased and installed.

With many thanks to Mark Blaauw and Gail Spence-Bell who undertook this huge project and assisted by Benjamin Blaauw!

SPRING CLEANING

On 12 May a ‘Church Work Day’ was held. Many thanks to Mark Blaauw for organizing the spring cleaning event.

Many thanks and appreciation to the people from the English & Chinese congregations who came to help with cleaning the church grounds and interior as well as some of the repairs.

Thanks to Kathryn Kollar & Veronica Sangster-Potten for preparing and serving snacks & drinks on behalf of the Ladies Aid.

Thanks to Gail Spence-Bell and assisted by Veronica Sangster-Potten for ‘cleaning & scrubbing’ the altar from many years of wear & tear & tape. Gail continues to repair and sew the altar paraments.

Count your blessings instead of your crosses.

Count your gains instead of your losses.

Count your joys instead of your woes.

Count your friends instead of your foes.

Count your smiles instead of your tears.

Count your courage instead of your fears.

Count your full years instead of your lean.

Count your kind deeds instead of your mean.

Count your health instead of your wealth.

Count on God instead of yourself.

Ascension Lutheran Church Annual Voters' Assembly

Sunday, 28 January 2018

Minutes of the Meeting

Pre-Meeting Presentation by Pastor

Pastor reviewed the circumstances of his call as a missionary, discussing the responsibilities and constraints involved. He reviewed his other mission assignments in the Caribbean and outlined his support for the other pastors at Ascension.

(1) Devotion:

Pastor opened the meeting with a prayer and then noted that while budgets and buildings are important, the mission of the church is to focus on the cross. He also noted the importance of the concept of authority in Mark, quoting the Roman centurion from Mark 15:39: ³⁹And when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was the Son of God!"

Pastor discussed the "unchurched" nature of Quebec, which is not unusual in this world, but noting that at least we are free in Quebec to talk about Jesus and the cross. Therefore, "while it is day, let us labour", recognizing the authority of the Lord in Quebec and the world and inviting people to come to Ascension to hear the word of the Lord.

(2) Opening Remarks/Overview

President of Church Council, Mark Blaauw then made his opening remarks. He noted that it had been a busy year and our congregation had worked with the French and Chinese congregations. The Reformation service demonstrated the size of our combined congregations and was well received. The cooperation of the congregations is also demonstrated by the work done on cleaning the church and the turnout for the Church work days. This unity continues to be a priority.

Mark noted a number of events from 2017: the Easter Breakfast; the spring and fall clean-up days; our remembrance of the sick and shut-ins throughout the year; the church cleaning teams; the successful summer Vicarage of David Keating; the confirmation service for Yaw Frimpong and Olivia St-Onge; our welcoming of Susia Lim and Ataah Osei to our congregation; the Vacation Bible School and the support we received for this; the two 90th birthdays in our congregation (Allen Milette and Anna Krivak); the wedding of Sahar Bahrami and Gareth Melin; the sacristy remodeling; our Christmas party; and the 8th Blaauw grandchild!

(3) Minutes of previous voters' assembly

Kathryn Kollar moved for the acceptance of last year's minutes. This was seconded by Joseph Zipay. The motion was carried.

4) Pastor's Report

A written report was provided by Pastor – see report.

(5) Approval of Agenda for 28 January 2018

Under D) Additional items for discussion: 1) the call of Pastor Marco Antonio Jacobsen as Assistant Pastor; 2) Special repairs/maintenance; 3) the reinstallation of the painting of Jesus in the nave. Benjamin Blaauw motioned the acceptance of the amended agenda. This was seconded by Joseph Zipay. Motion carried.

Reports

(6a) Financial Review – Treasurer's 2017 report

See report. Xin Xian reviewed the report for the congregation. The report was seconded by Victoria Misata and approved by the congregation.

(6b) Proposed Budget for 2018

Xin Xian reviewed the 2018 budget. Highlights include:

For services in God’s house – Pastor:	17,850
For services in God’s house:	7,080
Utilities:	10,600
Christian Education (including ESL):	2,400
Missions/Programs:	10,500
Church supplies:	1,550
Building improvements:	9,000
Maintenance and insurance:	4,700
Other expenses:	1,320
TOTAL:	65,000

The budget was seconded by Joseph Zipay and accepted by the congregation.

(6c) Proposed Church Council Nominees for 2018

See Nominee summary. A motion to accept the nominees was put forward by John Mikulec and seconded by Glenda Davis. The nominees were accepted by the congregation.

(6d1) The call of Pastor Marco Antonio Jacobsen as Assistant Pastor

Pastor outlined the issues that we face when he is away from Ascension. While Pastor Somers can provide one Sunday a month, this does not cover all the time that Pastor is away. Pastor Jacobsen is well recommended by the Lutheran Church in Brazil and could provide back-up for Pastor and lessen the work involved for finding replacements. The specific call would involve a secondment from the Lutheran Church of Brazil as associate Pastor, providing up to 12 services, 12 bible studies and 6 teen bible studies. Remuneration would be based actual work provided. A motion to call Pastor Jacobsen as associate Pastor was made by Victoria Misata and seconded by Masih Salik. The motion was accepted by the congregation.

(6d2) Special repairs/maintenance

Mark Blaauw warned the congregation that supplemental congregational meetings may be required if repairs beyond what is expected in the 2018 budget become necessary.

(6d3) The reinstallation of the painting of Jesus in the nave

Joseph Zipay motioned the above and it was seconded by John Mikulec. The motion was accepted by the congregation.

(7) Closing Prayer