

ON MISSION. EVERYONE. EVERYWHERE. ALL THE TIME.

I can honestly say that Alliance churches of the St Lawrence District are closer to these words reflecting our reality than we were two years ago, and it makes my heart glad. Let me share with you some of the beautiful ways that churches and individuals across Quebec have responded to God's invitation to mission.

GLOBAL MINISTRIES OF THE C&MA

International Workers

We have had the privilege of receiving more International Workers of the C&MA here in Quebec in the last six months than we have in the previous 2-3 years, and I am grateful for the way in which our churches have warmly welcomed them - ministry opportunities, including Sunday morning, meals with leadership, time in homes and home groups and many one-on-one meetings. Your hospitality and interest have been exceptional, and a true blessing to our IW's. Time and again they comment to me about the privilege of serving our churches.

These visits contribute to the on-going education of our churches to the realities of the least reached, strengthen already existing partnership and have also sparked interest for the development of new Seamless Links partnerships. I believe we will be seeing new partnerships developed in the coming year as churches and leaders look for concrete ways to support and connect with what God is doing around the world.

Global Advance Fund

Many of you have given sacrificially to the Global Advance Fund. What an encouragement to see the response of our pastors to the special Jaffray offering of last fall. I know of several whom, despite financial difficulties in their churches, encouraged congregations to give over and above to see new initiatives begun with unreached people groups in Senegal and Iraq. Thank you.

Praying for the least reached

I am grateful for the many in our churches committed to regular prayer for missions, but I would like to tell one exceptional story. Brenda McDonald of Noyan joins with me and a number of others on-line each Tuesday morning to pray for the least reached across the Desert Sands. Brenda has been battling cancer for the past months, and with the exception of when she was in surgery, has hardly missed a prayer meeting even when it has required her to connect in the waiting room of the hospital. I believe such sacrificial and passionate

prayer is what is going to lead to many coming to the Lord across the Desert Sands. Thank you Brenda for being such an encouragement to persevere in prayer.

Short-term missions

I am also grateful to churches supporting short-term missions in the context of Seamless Link partnership. In January, ACM de Levis sent our family to work with Colette Beaudais of Guinea. This is the second time that Levis has sent people from their local congregation to their SL worker. Michael Gagnon was also able to join Don and Betty Orr, Seamless Link Partner of Matane in February 2016 to help bring Kairos to Poland. I believe these are just the beginning of more short-term missions to come.

KAIROS

When this tool for mobilizing the church towards the unreached was developed for French almost three years ago now, it was our Alliance churches and people such as Michael Gagnon, Désiré Mounanga, and Al Hack that were some to champion it first. It has gone through several revisions and is now being used in various places across the francophone world including Europe and Africa, to help people catch the heart of God to reach all tribes and nations. I praise God for the obedience of these early adopters with the vision to see how Kairos could be used not only here in Quebec, but around the globe.

In the last two years, four Kairos courses have been offered in Quebec, all in French. Of these four, two have taken place in Alliance churches and an additional 30 members of our churches have completed the course.

For those who have taken the course, it has impacted the way we pray, give and think about mission, prioritizing the need to take the gospel to the least reached. Thank you to people such a Muriel Neider, Michelle Mercier, Vetsy Bran, Karoline Bouchard, Esther Savard, Al and Judith Hack and many others who faithfully champion the least reached in their local congregations in matters of prayer, giving and education, including acting as part of the facilitation team in Kairos courses across the province.

THE 5TH S

Besides engaging with mission to the "ends of the earth", there are 5th S stories emerging from our churches - involvement within our province and across Canada to see Christ glorified, churches strengthened and people on mission in their own communities.

Fairview Alliance and Oasis have both hosted youth teams from Alliance churches in Ontario and Quebec in the context of SOAR for the past two years. I am grateful for the organisation that they have done in order to give teens and young adults an opportunity to roll up their

sleeves and engage with God's mission in Montreal. Other churches such as the those in the Quebec City region, and Montreal Grace have sent and supported teams of teens to participate in SOAR and Montreal Haitian and Bethel have sent teams to serve in the important ministry of preparing food for 200+ people for ten days. What a joy to see these young people transformed through such discipleship and service.

Our churches have welcomed people from Ontario and elsewhere, as they have desired to engage with their Samaria. Two years in a row, churches from Ontario have sent a prayer team to intercede during the ONE youth conference, as well as prayer walk with our local churches, which have warmly received them. Other churches such as Rimouski and Oasis have on-going partnerships with churches in British Columbia and Alberta that continue to grow and bless one another.

In March of this year, Église Évangélique Haitienne de l'ACM de Montréal sent a prayer team to Rimouski. This was a wonderful time of cultural exchange, discovering the spiritual needs right here "at home", and interceding for the spiritual needs of the Bas du Fleuve. Both churches hope to build on this budding partnership to bring an infusion of life and joy in their ongoing mission to reach their communities.

Being on mission extends far beyond what I have the privilege to influence, and even know about. Many individuals and even whole churches are involved in the important ministry of welcoming the least reached who have arrived in Canada as refugees and immigrants, such as the story of the Syrian family helped by Oasis in their settlement in Cloverdale. Thank you.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Even as I celebrate and thank you for your involvement with God's mission to the least reached, may I encourage you with this challenge? When in Guinea recently, my heart broke for the Fulani who have yet to see a viable indigenous church growing there. I came home burdened to issue the challenge that we still need people to go to tell others about the good news of Jesus Christ in places where people will live and die without ever having the chance to respond to the gospel unless we do so. The job isn't done yet.

I believe with my whole heart that God has a special place for Quebec in this endeavour. Are we ready to go? Are we ready to send, with all that this means in sacrificial prayer and giving? It is my dearest desire to see an army of International Workers from our churches here in the St. Lawrence District, taking the gospel to the least reached.

My personal challenge comes from Jesus. "To him whom much has been given, much will be required." I - we - have been given much, dear brothers and sisters; may we each be found faithful.

Thanks from Mike Linnen, Director of Seamless Link at the National Ministry Center of the C&MA in Canada

Personally, I am grateful for the input of St Lawrence District pastors helping us with shaping a stronger vision for mobilization - of joining mission involvement back to discipleship. Those two belong together! Also, in the SLD I have seen lay people and official workers dive into Kairos, and come out from that ready to serve the broader frontiers of the kingdom, without forgetting their own mission in their community. It's been wonderful to witness. I know that many churches have opened their doors and their hearts to our C&MA IW's, have become world-changing intercessors, and have given sacrificially to the Global Advance Fund. Finally, I see God raising up some phenomenal leaders in your region, who will carry the torch for Christ in Quebec, but also some Quebecers will be joining the force among Least Reached Peoples in other challenging places. They won't be afraid, because they will have been disciplined deep into Christ at home in your churches, full of the Spirit and already well-tested for the ministry challenges that come when the culture has not yet turned to Christ. What an amazing sending community you are becoming!