

Montreal—the effects of Covid-19

Only 5 % of the work force is going into Montreal to the offices and businesses. Added to this blow, is the information that the metropolis expects to receive barely **1 million** tourists this year—instead of the **11 million** that normally come here. The sports and cultural events, among which are numerous week-end or week-long festivals, have been cancelled. Back in the second week of October, Montreal and the surrounding suburbs (including Boucherville) had a spike in Covid-19 cases and deaths. The evaluation of danger was moved to red (the highest). The border is still closed and we are advised to do self-isolation, to leave the house only for essentials, and to not go outside of our “bubble” (our neighborhood—our town) -- not even for get-togethers with the family. Now we also have a curfew from 8 pm to 5 am.

We believe the Lord is leading us to begin a ministry in Lacolle, Quebec. We can make this change and do this

ministry with the good support that we have. We are NOT seeking support.

Please allow me to give you a “brief” history of our wish to minister in Lacolle:

From 1990 to 1998, we worked in Brossard, Quebec while living in Boucherville. Brossard is about 1½ hour from Boucherville.

My wife was teaching French to missionaries—5 hours a day, 5 days a week (plus correcting homework and exams) and I was doing the work of a pastor and preacher and missionary.

In 1998, we decided to ask the Lord to send us someone to take the ministry at Brossard. I believed the Lord wanted me to start another church. For several years I had been thinking about Lacolle, a town right at the border of New York State and Quebec. (1 hour from Boucherville.) We put our Boucherville house on the market (it was paid for) and found a good house on the main street in Lacolle, with room on the ground floor for services and a basement for Sunday School. Expecting our house in Boucherville to sell quickly, we took a mortgage on the house in Lacolle.

In the summer of 1999, we turned the Brossard church over to Jay and Lynn Abisch, missionaries who had learned French from my wife.

In 2000, we were established in Lacolle. We were planning distribution of literature and invitations to the church that would begin in our home. In July, my heart started to fail and I was admitted to the Institute of Cardiology on the brink of a heart attack. Immediate open heart surgery was done—a quadruple by-pass. I was hospitalized for a month.

After two years of frequent hospitalizations, and 9 stents added to the by-passes, I was able to function well intellectually, but I was considerably weakened physically. During those two years, I took preaching engagements and did pulpit supply.

In all that time we were living in Lacolle and making mortgage payments. Our house in Boucherville did not sell. We were very busy but found ourselves being called into service everywhere but Lacolle. Finally, we came to the conclusion that the Lord was giving us a new ministry and that it was to be done from Boucherville. We moved back to Boucherville and put the house in Lacolle on the market. It sold within two weeks. From Boucherville we started a ministry of helping the churches with preaching, pulpit supply, music, tracts and pamphlets, and translation of literature. We extended the pulpit supply to other provinces for a year (in English).

In 2002, we visited churches in Florida with Maxime and Jocelyne Rioux, Quebecers who had joined BIMI. I had set up a schedule with meetings in 12 churches to raise support for them. With our help and some help from another missionary, the Riouxs raised their full support and returned to the church where they had been working in Rivière-du-Loup. *The church thrived and has been going well even after the death of Maxime.*

We were very busy and happy in pulpit supply and preaching in the churches in Quebec. However, one evening, without warning, I had a stroke. In the hospital I had two other strokes within 8 days. The recovery has been long and not complete; I am still paralyzed on my left side. With the support of my wife, I was able to preach—even while hospitalized! Every week-end, she hauled me to the car, stuffed me in and drove me to meetings. We have been able to work. By the grace of the Lord we are a team. We work well together.

Now, we believe the Lord is asking us to take a big step of faith and even courage to start a new work.

We have started down-sizing from the Boucherville house—a very difficult task. We have had this house—a gift from the Lord—for 44 years—and several of our ministries were started and housed in the basement. We are not down-sizing because we need to do it financially or physically; the house is paid for and completely suits our life. We believe the Lord is asking us to concentrate our attention—our money, and our life—on opening up a ministry in Lacolle, Quebec. Except for a minimum salary, all our funds are designated for this effort. Since we have not been allowed to go anywhere except for groceries and the pharmacy, money has accumulated in our “work fund” because, of course, we have not had the normal travel expenses, etc.

The work fund is for travel in Quebec to meetings—gas, motels, meals, etc.; for printing (tracts and booklets) and printing equipment (ink), and other business and office needs.

Finding the small property and purchasing it was very time consuming. We have put all the money we have (including from the sale of a car), to purchase a property in Lacolle, Quebec. The property is small but will give us an address and an office plus storage there. In the spring, we will be doing tract distribution by the Post Office. We are asking the Lord for a French-speaking missionary to come to Lacolle to work. We will work with or under the missionary that the Lord sends and use our support to develop the work.

In the meantime, we will do what we can. We are starting to down-size and have moved a lot of things to Lacolle. In the spring, we will put the Boucherville house on the market and buy something big in Lacolle—big enough to house a church. The Lord willing! We have good contact with real estate agents. Who knows? We may live long enough to get something started by ourselves.

Right now, we are waiting impatiently for spring. Winter and Covid-19 are holding us back. All of us in Quebec who work for the Lord are feeling the effect on soul-winning. It is good to be able to keep in touch and have meetings by Zoom, live streaming, etc., but we don't have many contacts for giving the Gospel personally.

Gerald Pauley



Pauley
February, 2021
QUÉBEC



Gerald &
Marguerite

This is a follow-up on the letter we sent two weeks ago.

The Lord has helped us have access to a large amount of money—enough for a good down payment on a property without having to wait until we sell our house here in Boucherville.

Here is the long story

You might remember the story of our friend and co-worker, Lorraine. In the fall of 2003 she was told she had possibly 4 years to live. She earned her living as a piano teacher and we paid her an assistant's salary. She had put aside savings to buy her first house.

She decided that she wanted to live her last years in a warm climate, by the ocean. We helped her find a place and she put all her saving in the purchase. She was only able to live there for 4 months. In 2005, at 45 years of age, she died. The property had been signed over to us—there was a mortgage.

Then Marguerite had cancer—2 years of medical care. We had to stay in Quebec. We have no insurance in the States. Then came all of my illnesses (that I enumerated) which kept us in Quebec. During this time, we realized that we did not want to retire right away. We were active in spite of everything and enjoying the work.

We contacted a supporting church and found a young couple (Christians in good standing), just married, and rented the property to them for \$500 a month to cover the taxes and the upkeep. As part of a rent arrangement they were to be caretakers. This arrangement worked very well. It worked so well for them that after 5 years they were able to buy their own property and they moved out.

We found another newly-wed couple and gave them the same arrangement. This time, there were problems.

We were still wanting to hold on to it for retirement, but were faced with long-distance problem-solving. To make the situation worse, the pandemic hit and we have not been able to travel. We had no idea what to do. We told the Lord that we would sell it if He wanted us to, but we would really like to sell it to a Christian. We had that in mind as a sign that the Lord wanted us to sell.

Then one day last week we had a call from a Baptist pastor. He identified himself and went straight to the point. "Do you want to sell your house?"

Now for the short story. A member of his church bought the house in a matter of 5 days!

We had gathered everything we had here in Quebec to be able to buy property to start a church in Lacolle, Quebec. We needed a lot more for a down-payment and were saving as hard as we could. So, now we have a good down-payment for anytime a property comes available! We will not have to wait for the sale of the Boucherville house.

I must say, my head is still spinning.

I want to repeat that we are not asking for monetary help for this project. We have such faithful and generous supporting churches that we will be able to do this.

Thank you for our years together. We are always and ever grateful and astonished at the Lord's supply through you.