



MEET THE ELCIR

For 70 years, religion was suppressed under Communist rule in Russia, which was the largest republic of the former Soviet Union. Millions of Christians were imprisoned or died for their faith, and 90 percent of church properties were confiscated by the government or destroyed. The Soviet Union collapsed in 1991 and today, religious freedom in Russia is constitutionally guaranteed.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod began working in Russia in 1992 assisting the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia (ELCIR), and other Lutheran churches in this vast country. At the 1998 Synod Convention, the LCMS declared itself to be in altar and pulpit fellowship with the ELCIR, making it a sister/partner church. Our career missionaries working in Russia are involved in theological education and outreach coordination, and work alongside the ELCIR's 80 congregations, pastors, deacons and deaconesses.



To be added to or removed from this mailing list, send an email message to charles.cortright@lcmsintl.org with the word ADD or REMOVE in the subject line.

charles.cortright@lcmsintl.org

Dear friend in Christ,

Connie and I are headed for St. Petersburg this month to begin working with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia (ELCIR) seminary.

We leave Prague after a year of God's grace and blessing—our first year of service here in the Eurasia Region—with lots of memories! Most recently, I was privileged to baptize little Daniel Danish (da-NISH) who was born April 15. Daniel's mother is from Pakistan and lives here with her father and mother; her husband, David, is still in Pakistan working to obtain permission to come to Prague. Dad has only seen Daniel via pictures, but rejoices that his son is now Jesus' little lamb.



Daniel's baptism on Pentecost

This is but one of God's blessings; it leads us to look forward to His continued blessings in Russia.

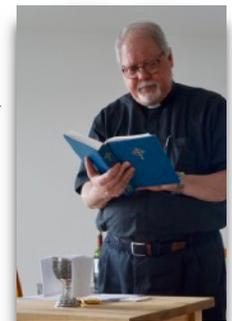
Please know that YOU are also one of those blessings! The mission strategy of the LCMS is that missionaries be "self-funded," that is, that we raise the necessary money to support ourselves and our work through folks like yourself who partner with us in this work.

We are about to begin a new fiscal year on July 1. For us to work in the coming fiscal year in Russia, the Office of International Missions (OIM) in St. Louis estimates our total mission costs as approximately \$150,000. This includes everything: food, travel, visa expenses, foreign taxes, medical insurance, rent...everything.

Without supporters who pray for us and assist us with their gifts, we would not be here and this ministry would disappear. However, with the loving partnership of our supporters in the past year, our international congregation in Prague has heard the Gospel preached and received the Sacraments while awaiting a permanent pastor; our LCMS missionaries in the region have had the support and ministry of a chaplain; and our effort to strengthen Lutheran pastors in our partner and alliance churches here in Europe has been served through my teaching at conferences and retreats. Thank you so much for your help!

Please pray for us as we head to St. Petersburg; and, please consider supporting us in the year ahead either on a monthly basis or with a donation. More information is at the bottom of the next page; our friends at Mission Central (www.missioncentral.us) are also glad to assist.

THANK YOU for your prayers and help, and especially for your love for the Gospel of our Savior! I look forward to sharing with you our work in Russia in the coming year.



—Missionary Charles Cortright



Moving to RUSSIA

Since arriving in the Czech Republic in May 2017, we have been living in a country that is part of the European Union (EU). Travel in the EU is fairly easy; one crosses borders like going between states in the U.S.

arrive in St. Petersburg we will be in temporary quarters while we hire a realtor to help us find and lease a suitable flat. Our American colleague, Alyssa Anders, will be a great help in the transition since she went through the process already.

JOB ONE: THE VISA

OPERATION IKEA!

However, moving to St. Petersburg later this month means leaving the EU and obtaining a visa to stay in Russia. The Ingrian Lutheran Church petitioned the Russian government to issue us the proper visa and, as I reported last month, we received the official letter of invitation allowing us to make application. Since we are Americans, the visa application costs some 13,000 Kč (Czech korunas) or about \$600 USD for us.

Once we find an apartment, we'll visit the mission worker's home-furnisher-away-from-home, IKEA (St. Petersburg has two!). It's kind of amusing in that everywhere we have gone, we see the exact same furniture



from this giant retailer. It's also very handy because we know what we need and can obtain it without too much trouble despite the language barrier. So, prayerfully, by July we should be "home" once again!

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- Our transition to St. Petersburg
- Our Russian language progress
- Our grandson, Christian, who is still facing complex surgery

GIVE THANKS FOR:

- A fruitful first year here in Eurasia
- The baptism of Daniel Danish in Prague
- Our 40th anniversary on June 10

PRAISE GOD FOR:

- The individuals and congregations who pray for and support us and our colleagues
- His blessings on our first year on the field, along with health and safety

PACKING UP

It is not cost-effective to move furniture and "stuff" to Russia, so we are packing up our suitcases with our personal items and clothes, and leaving our furniture and kitchen for the next mission worker.

This means when we



Thank you once again for your interest in the Gospel work we have been doing here in Prague and which we will continue, God willing, in St. Petersburg. Please know that every gift, every prayer is a blessing to us and that we appreciate you and all those who support us.

The Lord bless and keep you!

-Charles and Connie Cortright



To support the LCMS through the work of Charles and Connie Cortright, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

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

OR

Mission Central
Attn: Gary W. Thies, Missionary/Advocate
40718 Highway E 16
Mapleton, IA 51034-7105



Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Write **Cortright-Eurasia Support** on the memo line. Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website, on my online giving page at www.lcms.org/cortright