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Connie with Dr. Petkunis translating

LITHUANIAN RHAPSODY

We were back in Palanga, Lithuania this month, where I taught about Baptism at the pastors' conference, October 17-18; a church musicians' conference followed on October 19-20. Connie has served as a parish organist at the churches at which I have served (Advice: Pastors, marry an organist!) and presented a topic to the music conference, "Music: Handmaiden to the Word." Pastor Krikava gave a pastor's and musicologist's perspective on the topic as well.

In addition to demonstrations of hymn accompaniment and service music, each of the attendees was also given a copy of the *Parish Organist* by our region. Connie gave demonstrations on the organ of many of the "heritage hymns" that are used throughout Lutheranism, which are contained in this volume.



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A day in the life of... (Part 2)

Last month I went through a typical day for me. But what does Connie do?

Connie, My Rib

Luther referred to Kathe, his wife, as *mea costa*, "my rib," and that describes Connie too! In a word, she is the one God uses to make my work possible. Now, I asked her to write what she does in a typical day for this month's letter, but her answer did not do justice to the truth. She will just tell you she is "busy." Yes, she is!



On the surface, it sounds like she "just takes care of the house," like so many wives do. But I have to say that

house-keeping and home management here in St. Petersburg is a challenge for an American-in-Russia. For one thing, just getting groceries is a major project. Our small kitchen and refrigerator limit how much can be stored, so trips to our *Perekrestok* grocery store are needed three-to-five times a week. With no car, Connie walks to the store and if it's a "big shopping day," she takes our trusty wheeled cart. (It can be very windy here; once when she was taking the cart, the wind nearly snatched it away from her. But, "neither snow nor rain nor humungous winds can stay her from her appointed rounds"!)



Washing, too, sounds routine. Our washer is typical for Europe—very small. One load takes over an hour to wash. There is

no dryer; they are available, but few people have them. So, Connie usually does washing throughout the week, hanging the clothes on a drying rack and having to iron a whole lot more.



The Machine!

Connie is our financial manager, too. (Like Kathe Luther, her husband is *not* the best to handle the family checkbook!) She pays many of the bills online, but if they are local, she has learned how to do that in Russian and to make herself understood to Russians. Impressive!

Connie is Grandma to our twelve grandkids. She takes particular joy in sending them electronic birthday cards. It is always a special day for her when we get to talk to our far-flung family via Skype or FaceTime.



I could go on, but I think her main day-to-day service is her faith. Connie supports us with her prayers, her unflagging trust in God's grace and help, and in her common sense, good judgment, love and cheerfulness.

Missionary wives are officially called an "accompanying spouse" in our LCMS mission program. I think that's because it would take too much space to write out the words of Proverbs 31:10-31 when referring to them! "Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: 'Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all'" Prov. 31:28-29 (ESV).

-Charles Cortright, grateful husband



8:15 a.m. in Koltushi, late October

PLEASE PRAY FOR

the students at the seminary here in Koltushi. Ask God to give them perseverance in their studies. May God bless our relationships across the divide of language and culture to form them as faithful messengers to the Russian people they will serve.

GIVE THANKS FOR

God's blessings of safe travel and health to us and our colleagues.

PRAISE GOD FOR

this year of His grace coming to a close. How mercifully He bears with our shortcomings and mistakes, forgiving our sins and failures, but blessing us in Christ our Savior. Praise Him for His grace and mercy!

Teach. Preach. Repeat.

Well, it has *not* been “a quiet week in Lake Wobegon”! Or month, for that matter. I started teaching in September at the



Theological Institute (seminary) of the Ev. Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia (ELCIR).

However, because of the students' various situations, few classes meet over a whole semester. Rather, courses tend to be concentrated (“Intensives”) and so only last for a matter of a couple of weeks.

I have taught Hebrew Prophets once already and will start the same course with another group here in November.

Likewise, a course on the Wisdom and Poetry Literature of the Old Testament (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs) has been taught twice, along with a course on Old Testament topics in the past weeks.

Connie and I traveled to Palanga in October, as I describe on the first page—this was our third trip there and we were blessed with very nice weather—and I also attended the North European Luther Academy (NELA) in Helsinki October 25-27. I delivered a brief paper to these confessional Lutheran pastors who come from all over northern Europe.

Rounding out the month was a paper given in English and translated simultaneously at

the ELCIR's own theological conference on Monday, October 29 in Koltushi.

During October, Pastor Leif Camp, who serves the English-speaking congregation at St. Anne's Church

(*Annenkirche*) we attend in St. Petersburg, has been in the U.S., so I have had the pleasure of preaching and celebrating the liturgy on Sundays in his absence. On Sunday afternoons, I am teaching a Bible Class at St. Mary's Church, the mother church of the ELCIR, in central St. Petersburg. The class is on Jeremiah.



Heli translating

All the teaching and preaching means preparation, travel, and working with translators. It was fun to take the high-speed *Allegro* train to Helsinki and back. I remain in awe of my translators, Heli Makarova at

Koltushi, and Tatiana Roumena at St. Mary's. They translate my English into Russian without taking a breath, it seems!

And in November? Repeat: teach, preach...

-Missionary Charles Cortright

I hope you enjoy receiving our news. It is such a blessing for Connie and me to know that fellow Christians in the U.S. keep us in prayer, and support us in our work of helping form faithful pastors of the Gospel here in Russia and in Europe. We are beginning plans to come to the U.S. on “home service” in May and June, 2019. We are excited to be able to visit congregations, Bible classes, LWML chapters and to meet the folks who have been our partners in this work through their support. Please speak with your pastor or group's leadership about a possible visit at which we can tell of this work. We will be setting up our calendar for our visit and would love to include you! If you have questions or need to contact me about our home service plans, please email me at charles.cortright@lcms.org.

GOD'S BLESSINGS TO YOU IN NOVEMBER! WE'D LOVE TO SEE YOU IN 2019!

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

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