



L-R back: Juliette and Aleksander Lawson; Sarah Harms
L-R middle: Patty and Jerry Lawson; Connie and Chuck Cortright; Alyssa Anders
L . front: Cosette Lawson

HERE WE STAND (OR SIT)

Nothing stays the same in the mission field for long it seems, but our whole current LCMS team in St. Petersburg was able to meet together recently at the Cortright *kvartira* for an evening.

Patty and Jerry Lawson and family arrived in September and are becoming established. Pr. Jerry is beginning teaching duties at the seminary; Juliette and Aleksander attend an international high school; Cosette is doing an on-line college semester.

Sarah Harms is working with the Hannah House project to help integrate young women from orphanages into adult society.

Alyssa Anders teaches English at the seminary and in ELCIR congregations.

And I hope you know
Connie and me!

-Pr. Charles Cortright



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charles.cortright@lcms.org

Celebration in St. Petersburg



Deacon Alexander Dyshenov just after his ordination

October 18 was a busy day for the Ev. Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia (ELCIR). The church's pastors and leaders were gathered at St. Mary's Lutheran Cathedral in St. Petersburg to elect a new bishop to succeed retiring bishop, Arre Kugappi. My colleague Rev. Jerrald Lawson and I were invited to attend as guests.

At the opening communion service the four candidates for election as bishop presided, but the highlight of the service for me was being able to witness the ordination of my student Alexander Dyshenov to the diaconate.

As in the LCMS, the formation of pastors takes time in the ELCIR. A vicarage program is not possible here, so students gain practical experience as deacons serving for several years in the field under supervision. Ordination to the pastorate comes later.

"Sasha" is ethnic Chinese and will be serving in his home area in far eastern Russia as a deacon. It was a joyous event for him and for his wife "Faith" and for all the church. It has been my

great privilege to be involved in Sasha's education.

The seminary family was also touched by the choice of the synod to make the seminary's present rector, Rev. Ivan Laptev, the new bishop of the ELCIR. Bishop-elect Laptev will serve (God-willing) for life and is the ELCIR's third bishop since the church was "resurrected" in 1991 after the dissolution of the USSR. His installation will be in early February 2020.

May the Lord bless His servants in their new roles in His Church!



Sasha with Bp-elect Laptev and Bp. Kugappi



*They who wait for the Lord
shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings
like eagles;
they shall run and not be
weary;
they shall walk and not faint.*

-Isa. 40:31

(Our son, Pr. Geoffrey Cortright of Vancouver, BC running the NYC marathon, November 3. Congratulations, Geoff!)

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

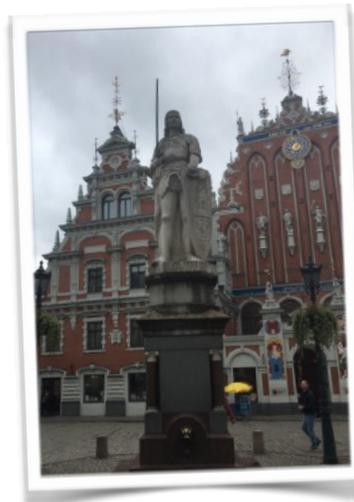
- Dcn. Alexander Dyshenov
- Bp-elect Ivan Laptev
- Our LCMS St. Petersburg team
- Our transition to Riga, Latvia, especially the visa process

GIVE THANKS FOR:

- The recent election in the ELCIR
- A successful semester at the Koltushi seminary



Next move: Riga, Latvia



CONNIE & I ARE HEADED FOR LATVIA...

Connie and I will be saying До свидания! to St. Petersburg after January as we move to Riga, Latvia.

I will be joining Rev. Dr. John Bombaro there as we work with our partner church, the Ev. Lutheran Church of Latvia, at the Luther Academy (seminary) of their church.

The Luther Academy has received EU accreditation and serves the church in training confessional Lutheran workers and pastors.

But, in addition to its own seminary program, the Latvian Lutheran Church is looking to establish an English-language pastoral training program in the EU that will help provide pastors and evangelists from other countries who can learn in English. Dr. Bombaro and I will be working also on this project.

We are sad to leave Russia, but excited to begin this new chapter of service “next-door” in Latvia.

On a more personal note, I turn(ed) 65 on November 23 and can tell things are slowing down as I get older. Both of us are happy to serve where we can while we can. We ask your prayers as we work on this transition!

...AND FOR UKRAINE.

In January I’ll be heading back to Odessa to hold another week-long seminar with the pastors of the Ev. Lutheran Church of Ukraine. This time the seminar will focus on preaching. Tentative plans are to have Michael and Nancy Morizio join us there to assist in aspects of the seminar. Mr. Morizio is our region’s associate business manager, but both of the Morizios are trained in voice and effective speech delivery. More next month!

Please pray for Rev. Ivan Laptev, the newly elected bishop of the ELCIR. Pr. Laptev and his church face many challenges—some perennial such as financial support, personnel, and the like—but also the challenge of remaining faithful as many churches in nearby Finland and Scandinavia are not. Russia’s former Soviet history is also a challenge to this resurrected church. The friendship and fellowship of our LCMS in this part of the Lutheran world is a great blessing. Thank-you in Christ!



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