



RAVENNA MOSAIC, 6th c. A.D.

## BEAUTIFUL RAVENNA

I admit it: one of the wonderful “perks” of being a mission worker in Eurasia is the chance to see some amazing things. While in northern Italy we stopped in Ravenna, an ancient Roman city that became a Christian center in the 5th century. The Byzantine Christian mosaics that remain to this day are simply stunning.

We visited several major churches and mausoleums to stare up at figures centuries old depicting the Savior and the saints and the martyrs all in colors that time has not dimmed.

It is a thrilling part of our faith that we confess each Sunday in the Creed: “I believe in one, holy Christian and Apostolic Church...” and you look up, and there it looks down on you.

### *Soli Deo Gloria*



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## A Chaplaincy Christmas



Worship in Padua, Italy

Although my main work in our Eurasia region is theological education, this past Christmas my service as regional chaplain took center stage.

Connie and I were privileged to travel from St. Petersburg to Prague where we joined our mission colleague Cynthia Wrucke. From there we three flew to Rome. Our first destination was Padua in the region of Veneto (Venice) in northeastern Italy. Why? We came for worship.

Lutherans in Italy? Indeed!

Arturo is one of our Italian Lutheran brothers who lives and works in Padova (Padua). I first met Arturo back in 2016 in the company of our alliance missionary from Romania. Arturo witnesses to his faith in Padova and dreams of establishing a truly confessional Lutheran congregation there. He has secured the use of Methodist chapel when there is the opportunity for worship, and it was there that we celebrated the Fourth Sunday in Advent.

From Padova, we went south along the Adriatic coast to the region of Abruzzo to meet up with Michael and Nancy Morizio in little San Tommaso.

Michael and Nancy used to live in Boston, but moved to Italy to Michael’s family’s home town where the Morizios now live. Why?



The Morizios

Michael serves our Eurasia region as our Associate Business Manager. The internet allows him to do his work for the region there in the mountains of Abruzzo, but like Arturo, the Morizios also witness to their faith and dream of establishing a Lutheran congregation in Italy.



The Morizio kitchen table became our altar. We celebrated Christmas Day, the First Sunday after



## A Chaplaincy Christmas

Christmas and the Name of Jesus around it.

In 1943 Bing Crosby recorded *"I'll Be Home for Christmas"* as a tribute to US soldiers serving overseas at Christmas during WWII. The song has become a standard holiday song. I get the sentiment of the song, but I have to say, we *were* home this past Christmas:



Caramonico Terme, Abruzzo, Italy

"For where two or three are gathered in My name, there am I among them" (Matt 18:20 ESV). These were special celebrations for all of us gathered in His name in His "house."

THANK YOU to you, our supporters and pray-ers, for helping us serve our Eurasia family in Christ this past Christmas!

-Pr. Charles Cortright

### PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- Our transition to Latvia
- Approval of our Latvian visa application
- Ingria's new bishop, Rev. Ivan Laptev

### GIVE THANKS FOR:

- The joy of worship and fellowship together
- Faithful congregations, pastors and supporters who have sustained us in our work in Jesus' name in the Eurasia region
- Safe travels over the busy past four weeks

### ASK THE LORD FOR:

- His blessing on Charles' new courses being created for Latvia
- His blessing on helping us continue to be funded for this work as we move to a more costly place to live and work

## Our Move to Rīga, Latvia

Our move to Rīga, Latvia from St. Petersburg, Russia will be at the end of January. I will make a short teaching trip to Moscow January 23-28 and return to St. Petersburg. We will travel by overnight train to Rīga where we have already found an apartment. I will begin teaching at the Luther Academy in Rīga on February 10.

We will miss the friendships and fellowship of the Ev. Lutheran Church of Ingria and our LCMS colleagues in



At the Latvian visa office!

St. Petersburg. Please keep them and us in your prayers as we make this transition.



We hope as you read our letters to you each month that you will find satisfaction and joy in your partnership with us in teaching and preaching the good news of our Savior. Our work together is helping our partner churches in Eurasia form faithful pastors who will keep the light of Christ shining in this darkening world. Please know how much your gifts of love and your prayers on behalf of this work mean to us and to the people we serve as LCMS mission workers.

THANK YOU!

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  
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