



LATVIA

NEWS FROM CHUCK & CONNIE CORTRIGHT

May 2020



ANGLIKĀNU IEĻA 3

We live in a quiet part of old Rīga at “3 Anglican Street.” It’s called that because across from our house is the only Anglican church in Latvia.

Our little street is only about 16 feet across and like most of the old city, it is cobbled.

As short as it is, Anglikānu iela is also home to the Royal Danish Embassy, a Russian-language shoe repair shop and a wool goods store.

If we pop around the corner onto Pīls iela (Castle St.), the Rīga castle, the residence of the President of Latvia has his home!



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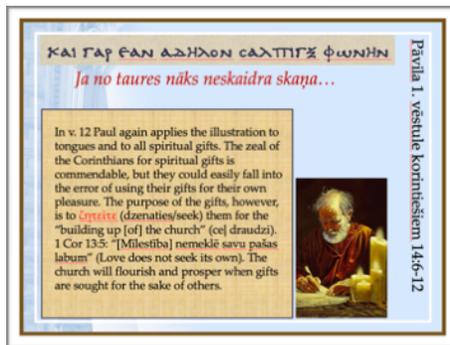
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Keeping Busy...

Dear partners in mission:

Despite the restrictions on movement put on us because of the coronavirus, we have managed to keep very busy throughout April and May.

The majority of my time has been spent creating the powerpoint lessons used in my class on I Corinthians that I teach each Wednesday evening for 3 hours via a Skype connection. Some 26 students are taking the course. It takes me about 60-70 hours to prepare for a lesson! Besides studying the text for myself, creating the 125 slides (on average) takes time. Slides include the English (ESV) and Latvian (Bībele 2012) translations along with key Greek words and explanations.



Slide from I Corinthians course.

Another project is working with Rev. Dr. John Bombaro (LCMS), Rev. Rinalds Grants and Prof. Laila Čārcare (faculty members of the Latvian Luther Academy) on revising the Academy’s curriculum for accreditation purposes while preparing an English-language version for use in the Eurasia mission region. Until recently, all our meetings had to be done via Zoom or Skype, but after May 12 we have been able to gather at the Luther Academy’s offices in Rīga

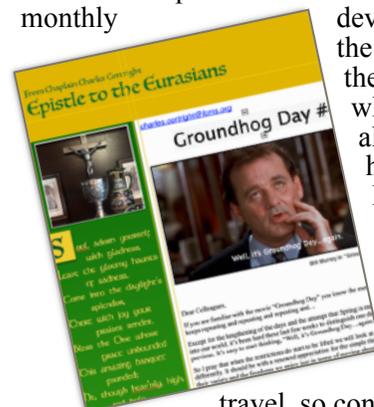
for face-to-face (but socially distant!) meetings—a welcome change.



Luther Academy’s courtyard

As regional chaplain, I am also spending time on Zoom and Skype to contact my colleagues in the region, especially where they serve alone or without any English worship. This may be one of the blessings to come out of COVID: we are more acutely aware of each other and the need to “check in” with each other.

I continue to produce and mail a monthly



devotion to the folks in the region which also helps us keep in contact. What we cannot do

yet is travel, so conferences and seminars that would usually be going on are still on hold.

-Charles Cortright



I was glad when they said to me... -Ps 122:1

We have been blessed over the past weeks to have been able to worship with the Bombaro family in our homes. Pr. Bombaro and I have alternated leading our flock of 8 in worship, but at long last we can return to St. John's Lutheran Church in Rīga. Pr. Gints Graudiņš had led monthly services in English before the shut-down; the Cortrights and Bombaros



will now start worshipping regularly in English and helping to staff the services. As tourism resumes, St. John's hopes to welcome many English speaking guests.

The original church was built ca. 1230 and dedicated as St. John the Baptist Church; it is a landmark in the city and in Lutheranism.

PLEASE PRAY FOR...

- Pray for God's blessing on all who are ill, those who tend and treat them, and all working for a vaccine against the current virus.
- Pray that the church will emerge from this time with a renewed sense of the need for "the assembling of ourselves together" that the Body of Christ may be a reality in lives and not "virtual."
- Pray for those whose employment has been hurt or ended that a return to productive labor and its fruits may be theirs.
- Pray for the ongoing progress of the Gospel via willing workers and the prayers and support needed to sustain them in their callings.
- Pray for students of all levels and ages that they may resume their studies with gratefulness and a renewed sense of desire to learn.
- Pray for all those isolated because of the lockdowns, because of age, or because of distance that they may receive consolation and hope.



Three Years of God's Grace

Three years ago on May 17 we landed in the Czech Republic to begin a new chapter of our lives in Christ and in ministry. We spent the first year in Prague, the next year and a half in St. Petersburg, and now we are in Rīga, Latvia. In one way, this has been nothing new as in the U.S. we served on both coasts and then in the midwest during those 35 years. What continues to be both new yet also constant is the grace of God that has blessed and continues to bless us along the way. This is true especially about the people and places which we have been privileged to serve. But as mission workers in the Eurasia region, we have become acutely aware of the grace of God given through fellow Christians whom we have never met in the main; whom we have never directly served where they live, but who, for Jesus' sake and the sake of the Gospel, pray for us, support us with their offerings, and remember us and others mission workers. St. Paul told the Romans that "Or do you...not know that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?" (2:4 ESV). Indeed. We do not receive God's kindness with the thankfulness we should. Nevertheless we want to say Thank you! to all of our brothers and sisters in Christ for your partnership with us since we began our support network in 2016. We would not be here without you.

-Chuck & Connie Cortright



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