

MEŽAPARKS LUTHERAN CHURCH

This little church in the Mežaparks region of Rīga was originally built as a power station in the early 1900s. It was converted into a church in 1919.

During the post-war communist era the little church survived as an overlooked outpost of Lutheranism. The Rev. Dr. Robert Feldman, a professor of church history, served the congregation as its pastor and secretly trained a whole generation of Lutheran pastors at the little church.

Although a fire of “mysterious origin” nearly burned the church down in 1970, the building was saved. Today a congregation continues to worship in the historic little church.

Verbum Dei Manet in Aeternum



Pr. Robert Feldman



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charles.cortright@lcms.org

Stay the course!

Staying the course in America

We are, of course, watching the events which are unfolding in the United States with great sadness and concern. Here in Rīga, we are limited to what we can see on the internet which—no matter what “news” outlet one chooses—are plainly the most sensational and dire aspects of the current crisis, and “analysis” by persons—again, no matter what source one chooses—that represent in their points of view the deep divide in the political realm. We are watching and praying for our country.

During all this we are grateful for your consistent support through the



COVID-19 lockdown and now during the current unrest. It emphasizes to us all how desperately the Gospel of Christ is needed everywhere. Laws cannot change hearts, and sinful natures are not changed by political correctness, power politics, or force.

In the meantime, we are blessed to have you, our brothers and sisters in Christ, praying for us and supporting us. Please know that we are earnestly in prayer for you that God will guide and guard you with His grace. May we be His salt and light in these days! Lord, in Your mercy: hear our prayer.

-Charles and Connie

Staying the course in Rīga

Work is continuing on building an on-line English-language bachelors program in theology with the Luther Academy of the Latvian Ev. Lutheran Church [LELC]. The Latvian version is accredited in the European Union; our English version will also be under this accreditation.

As the use of English grows in Latvia, the LELC hopes to attract more students via the online format and the use of English. Beyond Latvia, this English curriculum may serve as a pathway to ordination in situations and Lutheran churches where seminary training is not available or is lacking in confessional character.

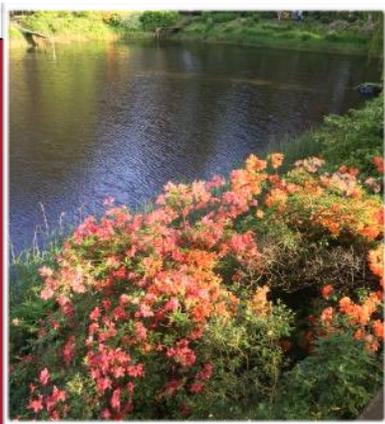
The curriculum will be a true bachelors program and will involve some 40 courses including practicums



Pr. Rinalds Grants, Dr. John Bombaro meet at the Luther Academy office

and face-to-face intensive weeks. An online recruitment course introducing students to theology and assessing English ability is being planned for fall 2020.

-Charles



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

Worship at St. John's, Rīga

Last month I reported that we would start worshipping at historic St. John's Church. This month I can report that we have!



The site of St. John's has been occupied since the 12th century; the present church dates back in its oldest parts to the 14th century. (Pr. Gints took us into the "basement" of St. John's where we stood next to the original walls of Rīga now some 2 meters (ca. 6') below ground level.)

Both Pr. Bombaro and I have had the privilege of leading the Divine Service and of preaching in this landmark Lutheran church. We have had Jesus' quorum of "two or three gathered" in His name with 10 worshipers present. Pr. Gints is hopeful that once the effects of the COVID-19 quarantines and restrictions wear off English-speaking visitors to Rīga will augment the numbers at the service.



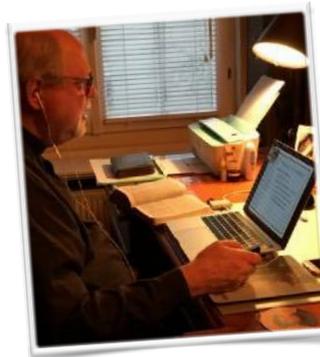
Pentecost Sunday at St. John's

Online Chaplaincy Service

The COVID-19 restrictions are being lifted around our region, but in their aftermath a positive outcome is the increased use of programs like Zoom and Skype for regular meetings and contacts.

The desire of a couple of our region's mission workers for hearing the Word during the lockdowns has led to the establishment of a regular online service of Prayer and Preaching for the time being.

As the region's chaplain, I am "zooming" the *Lutheran Service Book* service of Prayer and Preaching (LSB 260ff.) each Tuesday morning at 11:00 a.m. eastern European daylight time.



The service is conducted from my study in my home. We don't try to use music

because of the technology's limitations, plus we need to keep the service under 40 minutes to use Zoom's free (non-premium) program. But it allows for us to hear the readings from Sunday and a sermon. We encourage folks to attend services in our partner churches; the online service allows them to hear an English sermon in those situations where there is no English service available otherwise.

-Charles (er,) chaplain

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Thanks to God for our 42nd wedding anniversary on June 10.
- Pray for God's mercy and guidance for the US, its government leaders, public service workers and protectors, and all who have been harmed in the recent crisis.
- Pray for those whose employment has been hurt or ended by the COVID virus or violence.
- Pray for the success of the Gospel in outreach, and for the training of Gospel workers in our partner churches.
- Pray that visa situations for our region's mission workers may be resolved quickly.
- Pray for all those isolated because of the lockdowns, because of age, or because of distance that they may receive consolation and hope.
- Pray for the reopening of churches everywhere and for the return of God's people to regular use of the Means of Grace.



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

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P.O. Box 66861
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OR

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