



The "Boat Cemetery" in Mazirbe

"GHOST BOATS"

On p. 2 I tell of my trip out to Mazirbe at the tip of Latvia's Baltic Sea coast and the Gulf of Riga. On my way to the church there were signs for the *Laivu kapsēta*, the Mazirbe "boat cemetery."

My hosts explained that the Mazirbe boat cemetery is located in a forest near the seaside of Mazirbe. Years ago, many of these boat cemeteries were made along the coast of the Baltic Sea. But nowadays, this graveyard is the only one of its kind in the area.

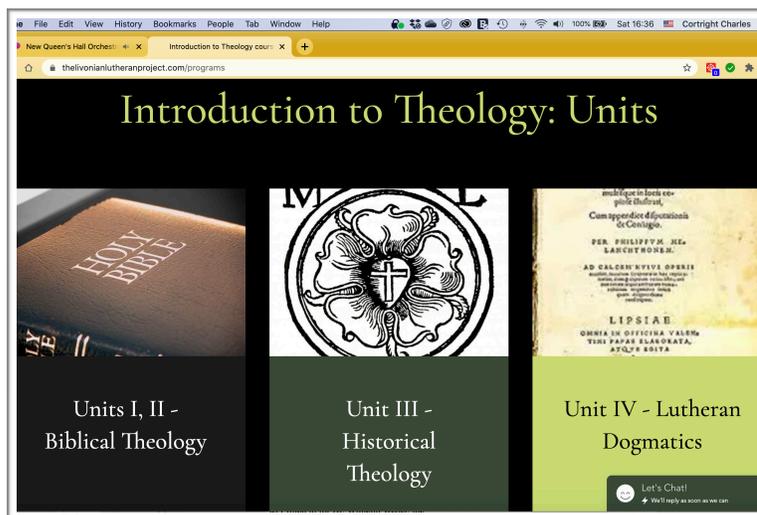
The boats have been there since the 1960s and '70s, when the discarded vessels were abandoned in the woods. Sadly, their time here appears to be running short as the wooded graveyard is expected to be lost in about 10 years as nature continues reclaiming the site.

On a trail to the cemetery are wooden poles with barbed wire still attached. These are markers of the time when the area was closed by the Soviets and civilian movement was restricted.



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Here we go!



www.thelivonianlutheranproject.com

Introduction to Theology launches

I guess it's the deep breath before the plunge! On September 21 the online course *Introduction to Theology* [IT] will meet for the first time bringing together interested individuals from Switzerland, Romania, Bulgaria, Italy, the Czech Republic, even Turkey and Pakistan—all to explore Lutheran theology with an eye to training for pastoral ministry. With God's blessing these men will serve throughout the EU and beyond. We have been working toward this start up since last April.

To you, our supporters...

St. Paul always began his letters with thanks for the faith of the Christians to whom he wrote. Like St. Paul, Connie and I give thanks for you because of God's grace shown to us by you through your support and prayers. You are our partners in mission; under God, we are here because of you.

I am writing this just to let you know that our funding has declined substantially. As is the case with all our international

"IT" itself is not part of a curriculum. It is a free, online course I will teach in English to recruit theology students for the Bachelor of Theology English-language program of the Luther Academy of Rīga, Latvia. That 4-year online program is being launched God-willing in Spring 2021. IT is a way for these men to find out about theological studies and to discern their own gifts and desire to present themselves for pastoral ministry.

Pray for us. We are beginning a journey!

Charles Cortright

missionaries, we are supported not by synodical budgets, but by individuals, congregations, and groups like LWML.

This is why I am making an appeal to you who have been so kind and helpful to again consider us in your offerings and to continue to keep us in your prayers. I am happy to answer any questions you may have: charles.cortright@lcms.org.

Our friends at Mission Central know of our situation; please feel free to contact them as well. Their address and contact information in on the bottom of p. 2.



Mazirbe Lutheran Church

Almighty God,
our heavenly Father,
because of Your tender love
toward us sinners You have given
us Your Son that, believing in
Him, we might have everlasting
life. Continue to grant us Your
Holy Spirit that we may remain
steadfast in this faith to the end
and finally come to everlasting
life; through Jesus Christ, our
Lord.

Lord God, heavenly Father,
from Your hand we receive
all good gifts and by Your grace
we are guarded from all evil.
Grant us Your Holy Spirit that,
acknowledging Your boundless
goodness, we may evermore
thank and praise You for Your
lovingkindness; through Jesus
Christ, our Lord.

LORD, in Your mercy:
Hear our prayer.



MEETING AT THE MANOR

During the Soviet occupation of Latvia, the Latvian western coast north from Lithuania to Cape Kolka was a military security zone. Most of the population was moved off the land. Few people remained. As a result, the western coast



is sparsely populated even today, thirty years later.

Mazirbe is a small crossroads not far from Cape Kolka where there remains a stone church of the Ev. Lutheran Church of Latvia. The church property also has “The Manor” on it, an old stone building that has been turned into a retreat center.

In early September I was asked to make the 2.5 hour trip from Rīga out through the western forests and farm country—lots of apple trees!—to Mazirbe manor to spend

the day with the eight or so pastors of the Jūrmala “deanery” (circuit). It was a wet and misty day which prevented us from walking down to the sea or seeing Cape Kolka where “two seas meet,” the Baltic and the Gulf of Riga.

The weather just meant we could spend more time for the purpose I had come: to present Romans 1-3 to the pastors and discuss the application of Law and Gospel in view of this central presentation of Law and Gospel in Scripture.

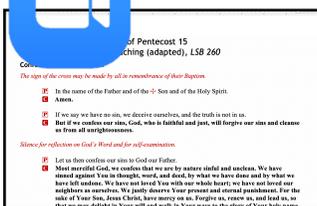
Our conversation took us late into the afternoon until 6:30. Because I had to be



The Manor at Mazirbe

back in Rīga the next day to teach, we had to stop to give me time for the drive back.

Just “a day in the life,” I suppose, but a day of *blessing* in God’s good creation and in His Word.
—Charles Cortright



TUESDAY PRAYER & PREACHING SERVICE

With all the upheavals connected with the COVID virus, I have been holding a Tuesday morning online service for our Eurasia missionaries via Zoom. Tuesday was chosen by the group; we meet at 11:00 Riga-time.

Our service follows the Service of Prayer & Preaching in the *Lutheran Service Book* (LSB 260) and lasts about 40 minutes—the time allotted by “Zoom” for free meetings.

The service gives us a chance, too, to see each other briefly, to exchange news and prayer requests, but especially to share the Word of God and prayer with and for each other. Because the technology doesn’t lend itself well to responsive or group speaking, we cannot sing together so during the service everyone mutes their microphone and speaks the parts of the service as I lead. COVID has created a lot of disruption; here is one of the blessings God has given in spite of them.



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
40718 Highway E 16
Mapleton, IA 51034-7105

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Write **Cortright-Eurasia Support** on the memo line.