



St. Peter's Rooster

## ROOSTERS OF RIGA

From the Daugava River, Riga's skyline is dominated by church towers. The tallest of these is St. Peter's Lutheran Church whose spire is 404 feet tall (it was even taller in the medieval period).

In my experience, church spires have almost always been tipped with a cross, but here in Riga, many of the churches are topped by...a rooster!

It's not particularly a weather vane (although it does show wind direction). The main symbolism is to convey being ready for Jesus' return. Some Rigans say that it also wards off evil.

This is one big bird! The rooster is gilded and weighs some 330 pounds. It is also over 10 feet tall.

St. Peter's has had seven roosters in its history. #6 was knocked off its perch when the tower was hit by a bomb in WWII.



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## Online on Mondays



### *Introduction to Theology launches*

On September 21, the Livonian Lutheran Project's first online class was launched. We have forty-seven people attending our Zoom "classroom" for Introduction to Theology. These people are taking time out of their busy schedules to learn about Lutheran confessional theology.

I teach from my office in Riga, Latvia with Rev. Dr. John Bombaro sitting in on the class from his home in Idaho. The students come from fourteen different countries and range across twelve time zones, from Islamabad, Pakistan to San Diego, California. Most of them are from European countries: Italy, Bulgaria, Ireland, Switzerland, Romania, Czech Republic, the Russian Federation, and of course, Latvia.

The eleven students from Pakistan are altogether in one location. The reason is that they all don't own their own computers, so they gather in one room around three computers to learn all they can about God's Word and the way of salvation.

As an introductory course, this is not "rocket science," but one of the students is

actually a rocket scientist. Another one is a member of the Latvian Parliament. Many of the students are intending to study for the pastoral ministry. Others are interested in learning theology and practicing their English along with it.

The class is from 6:30-9:30 every Monday evening (Riga time). However, when you figure out the difference in time zones, the Pakistani students attend from 8:30-11:30 PM in their time zone and the student from San Diego attends from 8:30-11:30 AM in hers.

After holding class for four weeks now, we are grateful for God's blessing. Everyone is able to join the online class with few technological hitches. The class members look like a large "Hollywood Squares" set on screen. While I'm lecturing to the newest Christians, Dr. Bombaro interacts via chat with answers to deeper questions from the more experienced Lutherans.

We have been studying the introduction to the books of the Bible along with theological terminology. In the upcoming weeks, we'll start to focus on a brief study of Church history.

-Charles Cortright



The cathedral's old rooster

## PLEASE PRAY FOR...

...the students who are taking our on-line courses. In particular pray for their sense of vocation to the Holy Ministry and for the success of the Bachelor's program under development here in Riga.

...our health and safety as the COVID-19 virus is resurgent again in Europe.

...our missionaries here in Eurasia and throughout the world. Please give thanks for our colleagues who have recently completed their active service and have returned to the USA.

...those who support us and all our missionaries. We give thanks for the many individuals and churches who have given in our support. Your sacrificial gifts and prayers are what keep us in the field and sustain us in our service.

O give thanks to the Lord for He is good!

WITNESS ALWAYS



## REACHING OUT TO INTERNATIONAL WOMEN

What do I do while Chuck is busy with his work?

Beyond the regular routines of maintaining our home, I am reaching out to women I meet here in Riga.



As I did in St. Petersburg, Russia when we lived there, I have joined the International Women's Club here in Riga. The IWCR is a social group of Expat women whose husbands work in Latvia. Since English is the common language for the group, I use various opportunities with the IWCR to tell the women about Jesus.

Currently, I am working at spreading the word about the English services that are being held twice a month at *Sv. Jāņa Ev. luteriskā baznīca*—St. John's Lutheran Church. We've had people from Sweden and Canada come to this service and, hopefully, some Americans will also come in the near future.

Meanwhile, at the end of October, the whole IWC is invited to St. John's for a tour of the facility.

St. John's pastor, Gints Graudiņš, is the Latvian pastor who started the English services. He also offers tours of this historic church (the oldest portions date back to 1234!) to

tourists in Riga. On October 28—just before Reformation Day—he will connect with the IWCR women with a tour. And as part of the tour? They will all receive an invitation to come to the English service.

-Connie Cortright

## COVID UPDATE

We know that all of you in the US have been dealing with Covid-19 on a daily basis for too many months now – masks, limitations in restaurants, etc. Latvia is starting to catch up with you.

Back in March, everything was shut down in Riga as it was around the world. However, in June Latvia opened up to normal life again. We did not have to wear masks from July until now. But the virus has finally made its way into the Latvian countryside. Several cities outside of Riga have had "hot spots" in them. The number of cases has risen to around 100 every day – that's high for here! So, we're starting to see some limitations. Last week we found out that masks were required on public transportation. As of October 14, masks are required indoors everywhere. Restaurant seating is limited to four to a table. Indoor activities have a limit of 30 people.

We are not locked down—for now at least—but we will finally feel the limitations the US has been experiencing all along.

**"Yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation."**

-Habakkuk 3:18



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