



A NEW ADDITION IN RIGA!

It's always a joy to announce the birth of a child to a Christian family!

The wider "family" of the English Studies Program rejoiced with its Director, Mr. Jēkabs Jurdžs and his wife Laura at the birth of their first baby, Marija Abigeila.

Marija was born on Saturday, 30 April—both Laura and Marija are doing well. Jēkabs communicated to us all:

"On Saturday our first daughter Marija Abigail was born! Throughout this time, the greatest comfort has been the encouragement...that Jesus is with us always, until the end of this world. ...Truly, what a wonderful thing it is to be so loved, to have such a Saviour!"

We look forward to God's welcoming of Marija into His family by Holy Baptism.



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Many Meetings

In the last couple of letters I told about *upcoming* mission projects on which I was working. This month, I am glad to report on them!



I left after Easter Sunday worship (April 17) to fly back to the Baltics to present at the pastoral conference of the Lithuanian

Lutheran Church. My trip took me from Chicago to Helsinki to Rīga, Latvia where I was reunited with the old city and with friends and colleagues while waiting to travel on to Palanga, Lithuania.

Rev. Dr. Cory Rajek, who was recently



deployed to Rīga to teach at the Luther Academy, met me along with Rev. Jerry Lawson. Connie and I were in St. Petersburg with Pr. Lawson and his family before moving to Rīga in January 2020. The Lawsons are now in Rīga after having to leave Russia in the wake of the invasion of Ukraine. He continues to do what he can online with the Ingrian Lutheran Church in Russia. Being in Rīga, he is also teaching for the English Studies



program. We met together for a brief noon prayer service at Svētā Jāņa (St. John's) along with Jēkabs Jurdžs, the English Studies program's director.



It was great to be back in Rīga (it was actually warmer there than at home!) and especially great to have

face-to-face discussions with colleagues.

My 11:40 PM flight from Rīga brought me to Palanga, Lithuania to another reunion of sorts. It has been my privilege to teach at the Lithuanian



pastors' conference several times over the last few years, so familiar faces greeted me as we discussed *Job* together. I was also reunited with Mr. Michael Morizio, our regional associate business manager, but also a

Many Meetings (cont.)



Giant Easter egg in Ukrainian colors on Palanga's boardwalk

PLEASE PRAY FOR...

- Those affected by the current conflict in Ukraine, especially those of the ELCU in Ukraine, the ELCIR in Russia, and our missionaries and friends.
- The students of the English Studies program of the Rīga Luther Academy as they complete their academic year.
- Safe travel for Charles and the group traveling to India at the end of May.

GIVE THANKS FOR:

- God's grace in the midst of earthly turmoil that brings peace and assurance.
- God's blessings to His missionaries through the care, prayers, and support of churches, the LWML, and individual brothers and sisters in Christ.

talented singer of classical and religious music. He was in Palanga to lead a workshop on Lutheran hymnody for the Lithuanian Church Musicians conference that always follows the pastoral conference. We also had time to meet together as colleagues.

These conferences are appreciated much by our partner churches. The Lithuanian church does not have a seminary; these conferences assist in providing continuing education and in strengthening the bonds of fellowship between us. Michael and I were able to speak with the pastors about the Luther Academy's programs for pastors and church workers—a potential source for future workers for Lithuania.



Michael Morizio in Palanga



Lithuanian and Ukrainian flags at the Baltic

in the IC's chapel. We were there to meet with Rev. James Krikava, our region's director who is currently serving as the interim executive director of the Office of International Missions (OIM), but also with Rev. Dr. Quintin and Lindsay Cundiff who are being deployed to Rīga. Dr. Cundiff will be a regional theological educator as I am, and will probably be taking up the Lithuanian conferences in the future.

It seems that one meeting frequently leads to another! While at the IC I also met with Rev. Dr. Ross Johnson who is leading our group later this month to India to visit Concordia Seminary, Nagercoil. That trip is now coming up soon. I am busy working on a paper to present there and in preparing for a whole new set of meetings.

Just a note before closing, our spring semester of the English Studies program is coming to its end. The dedication of the students and the instructors is something for which we thank God. While our many meetings help facilitate the work, our focus continues to be on the formation of future heralds of the Word bit-by-bit. As ever, your prayers on their behalf and your support of our mission to teach and preach to them is very much appreciated!



Listening to the missionaries at the IC

-Charles Cortright +
Eurasia Theological Education

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