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Serving the Lord in Riga, Lativa

News from the Bobby Family

Dear Friends in Christ,

State officials infiltrating the church. The thought had never crossed my mind before speaking with one of my students from Luther Academy. He was writing a paper on the topic. This student had read books and conducted interviews, and indeed state officials in his former Soviet occupied country, rather than shutting the church down, sent their own people into this (non-Lutheran) church to influence how it worshipped and what doctrines it emphasized. This was unbeknownst to other members of the church, but the result had a lasting impact. Compromise replaced bold confession.

What a lesson. The world, the devil, and our own sinful flesh never want the Gospel to prevail (Gal. 5:17). To do so is an open admission of our weakness, sinfulness, and our need for a Savior. Yet, God in His mercy allows His Spirit to work through faithful preaching and witness to bring people to repentance and faith in Jesus.

Congregations throughout Eurasia need faithful pastors who will preach Christ

centered, law and Gospel sermons and administer the Sacraments according to Christ's command. In this way, individual Christians, congregations, and entire regions are assured compromise will not replace bold proclamation of Jesus.



Over the Christmas break, I have been preparing three classes. One is a writing class. It is meant to help our students better organize and communicate the truths of Scripture in their studies and in their future parishes. The next class is on Christian doctrine. It is more advanced and will go through all the different teachings presented in Scripture to help these future pastors and deaconesses know and teach "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). The last class is what we call a formation class. It is meant to form these future pastors and deaconesses into servants of the church. It covers topics like developing good habits of daily prayer and Scripture readings and being good theologians of the cross. Classes will begin in the middle of January and will be online, although we will all meet in June for in-person intensive classes before the students go out on their summer vicarages.

Luther would say that when you pray, "Never think that you are kneeling or standing alone, rather think that the whole of Christendom, all devout Christians, are standing there beside you." [1] I know when I pray that you are all there with me and my family. We thank God daily for your prayers and support. Please continue to

In Christ,

Pastor Samuel Bobby and Family

[1] *Treasury of Daily Prayer*, 1087.



Bobby Family News

Everyone in the Bobby household is doing well and says hello. School is good. The kids are on break until the middle of January. Benjamin and August are taking Latvian and Spanish. Simon and Pax are taking French. They have made some good friends from all over the world at their international school. In the top picture, we went on a night walk in what is called in Latvian Mezaparks. The boys in this picture were pretending to be on hunting expedition. Erica and I thought it looked like a photograph from the 1800s (serious with nobody smiling!), so we put it in black and white. The second picture is Simon and I at a wooden church from the mid-1700s that was moved to an outdoor museum outside Riga. The museum is like some



standing, and you can pretend you are walking around an old West town from 100 years ago. It was the same thing, except it was much older and larger. Erica has been busy keeping us all going. With a husband and four boys to take care of, her job never ends!

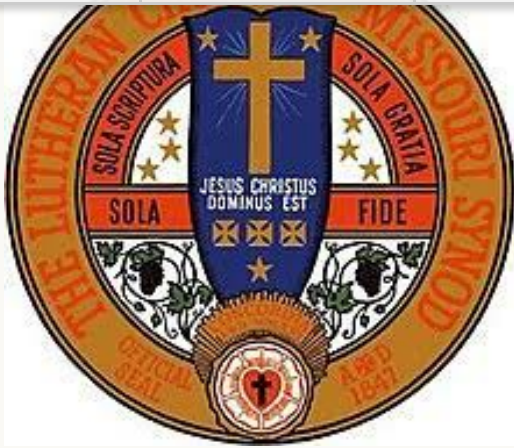


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