

## Serving the Lord in Riga, Latvia

News from the Bobby Family



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I wish to begin by apologizing for the long interval since my last newsletter. I offer no excuses; only my pledge to get back on track now that school is back in session.

And speaking of school, students and faculty at Luther Academy (me included) are off and running! This year we have 10 new students which means we have a total of 26 students from 16 countries. This is very, very exciting. These future pastors are bright, thoughtful, and faithful. They love Jesus and whole heartedly desire to proclaim Christ to their people.

I am continually amazed at our Lord's gracious provision in allowing this mission to continue to flourish. I say that because I know the devil has much to fear from this endeavor. Every potential pastor in a congregation will be a shepherd who will draw others around God's grace and forgiveness (given us in Word and Sacrament). Every potential pastor in a congregation will result in, by God's grace, a community of believers who pray for one another, who share the gospel with their neighbors and family, and who grow and mature together. The devil would like nothing more than to stop Luther Academy and the work God is doing here, yet we know Christ's promise that He will be with us to the end of the age. Nevertheless, Erica, the boys, and I, along with all our teachers and students, are so grateful for your prayers and support. Challenges abound as we missionaries try to navigate issues ranging from visas to finding adequate medical care. Our students are continually beset with obstacles arising from their competing obligations as fathers, husbands, workers, and students. The devil loves to exploit these challenges to sow seeds of doubt, worry, and fear. Thus, we constantly rely on God's grace. So, please know your prayers for us are not in vain! They make all the difference!



This is Luther Academy in the Fall



This is St. John Lutheran Church  
where we have English services  
every Sunday starting in October.

At a more "nuts and bolts" level, we had our intensive summer classes in June before our students went back to their home churches for summer vicarage. Our program is mostly on-line with two in-person intensive weeks per year. So, virtually all our students are connected to a Lutheran church where they live. This is where they are mentored by a supervising pastor as they make their way through our program. Unlike the United States, we cannot have these students do a full, one year vicarage. Instead, we have them do three summer vicarages, and each year they grow in their participation and responsibilities. Besides teaching the systematics courses, I am currently also the director of vicarage, so I get the privilege of meeting with students and vicarage supervisor. I see how things are going and what we can do to help or be in service in making vicarages as effective as possible. Also, like our seminaries in the US, we at Luther Academy do not ordain men into the pastoral office. This is done by their church bodies of whom they are members. We just certify them as candidates who have been adequately trained for pastoral office.

Once again, thank you for all you do, and may the Lord bless you for your continued support!

In Christ,  
Pastor Bobby

### Bobby Family News

Our family is plugging away. Judah remains in Nashville. He's playing music and working as the church secretary for his congregation (Concordia Lutheran Church). August and Benjamin have been at Saint Paul Lutheran High School in Concordia, Missouri since mid-August, and they have been thriving there. The teachers and administration do such a fine job. They've made friends from all over the world and country. They are growing in learning and faith. Simon is doing good. He spends most of his time collecting historical artifacts from the surrounding flea markets and shops here in Riga. Pax broke his arm the first week of school. He and I went to the hospital for an overnighter. The doctors set his arm that night, and the next morning, all the kids and parents from our floor in the hospital went to get our X-rays at the same time. I had to laugh. There were five other boys there with broken arms getting their X-rays too! Apparently, a lot of kids were playing hard that first week of school! Erica has been sewing and crocheting. She's currently working on a big blanket for our den, so we have something to snuggle up in since the autumn is in full swing here in Riga. They all say hello!

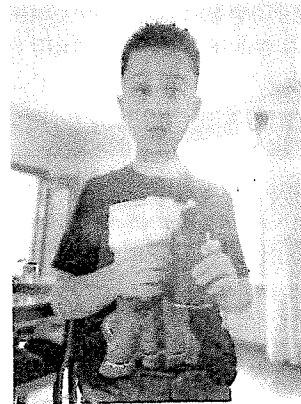
Judah playing guitar in Nashville with his Uncle Matthew.

Michael Leapley met us in Concordia, MO to help transition the boys to their new school. It was good to see him, and it was a tremendous blessing to August and Benjamin to have him there. This picture is Michael with Simon and Pax at the city park in Concordia.

Simon with a Soviet smoke grenade (diffused!).

Pax and I in the Children's Hospital emergency room.

Below: Dropping August and Ben off at St. Paul Lutheran High School



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Mission Central

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lcms.org