

I admit it is already September 1st, but at least I am getting this written not too late. Saturday is not usually a good time for me to do this, since services tomorrow are early and I am usually too busy rewriting my sermon. But since I actually finished tomorrow's sermon and it isn't even midnight, well, I thought I might get this out to you all. Several important prayer requests this month and even for the next. I thank you all for your prayers, and remember that we pray here, too, so I welcome your prayer requests. As the time is short, I will keep this short.

Blessings,
Leif



Pastor Yaroslav Boychenko preparing his recital material for our October visit.



БОТРЕНА ВСТРЕТОЧКА meeting

1 Thessalonians 4:17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

This month saw a lot of meetings. Yaroslav came to town



English Language Worship
Romans 14:11 For it is written: "As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God."

When we first began English

Because he was called to attend the meeting of the Synodical steering committee to continue preparation for the general Synod which meets in October (Slava's coming gave us a chance to discuss face to face our October trip to the USA). The pictures above are of the St. Petersburg district pastors' meeting which also had things to discuss and debate in preparation for the general Synod. As I am officially a pastor of the St. Petersburg area, this is one of those meetings I am more or less required to be at, although my working for the Ingrian Missionary committee often has me attending pastoral meetings in other districts. Below are pictures of the mission board meeting where we first had to approve our annual report for the Synod, strategize for the next year and then approve both the proposed calendar and budget for next year. As usual, at that meeting we usually present those attending with a book from Lutheran Heritage Foundation--this meeting we gave out Dr. Robert Kolb's *Martin Luther: Prophet, Teacher, Hero* (the English title might be a bit different since I am translating how the book is titled in Russian). Another meeting we had

Language worship services 14 years ago, after the first two years we realized that most of the Native English speakers went home or to mission conferences all summer and the Russian English speakers left for their dachas or on vacation. As a result when the last group and missionaries left, we had a hiatus until the end of August. This Summer because of the "demand" we held services all Summer, even when the usual chapel was being repainted and we had to create a temporary chapel in the attic of the cupola of St. Anne's. One minor change, since it was hot and humid, I did not wear my alb all the time.



You Know You have been in Russia too long when...

1 Corinthians 13:11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

OK, I don't really think I have been in Russia too long--but long enough that

planted the earthly tent and celebrated the calling home of one of our pastors, Alexander Soittu--who is survived by his father and mother, as well as his wife and children. I am pictured here with pastor Fedor Tulinin who led services at the Mortuary and grave side. Alexander was buried next to his brother who died in the winter of 1995-6. I was at that funeral as well.



children I have seen baptized I am now seeing confirmed, especially those to whom I am baptizmal sponsor. One of the ways confirmation happens in the Church of Ingria is through the annual Confirmation camp held at Koltushe just outside of St. Peterburg (sometimes there are two or three in different parts of the country). This year Ilya Boychenko, the younger son of Yaroslav and Larissa Boychenko came all by himself from Nizhniy Novgorod --with his parents blessing and approval, of course--to attend the camp--and spend some time with his "godfather". He diligently attended all the classes, participated in all the activities, passed all the exams, and was confirmed. He is not too hard to find in the picture--he is the one with the glasses.



I've never done this--but this is a teaser: God willing I explain this next month....

Prayers:

Pray especially for the Soittu family, Alexander's wife Olga and his three children, Sasha, Yuri and Elina. In the middle of this month I will travel to the Ural district to lead several seminars--on stewardship, outreach and whatever else may come up. Pray not only for my safe travel, but also that the seminars will bear fruit., my teaching will be understood and useful for the Church there. Pray also for the upcoming Synod--one of the questions involves the mandatory retirement age of our bishop (which would be in two years). Extending the retirement age is one option, but also we understand the need to prepare candidates for his eventual retirement in any case. Pray for the Charles and Connie Cortright as Charles begins teaching this month (pray for me as well in that regard). Pray for Yaroslav's and my upcoming trip to the USA. Pray for the projects at St. Anne's, and that God provide me with more wisdom, faith and strength discern, trust and follow His will.

Upcoming Trip to the USA

Due to some popular demand--well, at least we thought so at the time-- Pastor/Pianist Yaroslav Boychenko and I will again be hitting the road to the USA this October to talk about Lutheranism in Russia, the need to build a sanctuary for his congregation in Nizhniy Novgorod, the capitol of the Volga Valley region of Russia, and most importantly so that he might perform piano recitals of classical music, heavy on the Bach, and tell his story about how Bach helped lead him to faith. The idea is to allow interested parishes to use this as an event to which to invite the surrounding community as a way of outreach. Yes, we are in some ways trying to raise funds for the building project (info below), but we both laugh at our selves since we are more interested in spreading the Gospel. Our schedule is fairly full, but we actually have two Sundays open, Oct 7 and Nov 4. Since Slava arrives on the 6th and we leave on the 5th, for those two Sundays we are sort of limited to places not too far from the Northern Illinois area.

For those of you who desire to partner with the Nizhniy Novgorod Lutherans to help spread the Gospel in this way, you may donate funds to the Volga Valley Lutheran Fund set up by the Northern Illinois District of the LCMS.

Checks should be made payable to **Northern Illinois District LCMS** with designation to: **Volga Valley Lutheran Fund**. Checks would be sent to:

Northern Illinois District / LCMS

**2301 South Wolf Road
Hillside, Illinois 60162**

Their website also has a way to donate electronically.

Russian Humor

September 1st is always officially the first day of school in Russia, even if it is a Saturday (bummer!). So the teacher is talking to her new first grade class:

"Class, you are now in school, and in school you are expected to behave appropriately, quietly and with respect to each other and especially your teachers and other adults here. You are not simply to yell out things, but if you have a question you are to raise your hand and wait until I call on you."

At that moment little Ivan raises his hand.

The teacher then says, "yes, Ivan, you wanted to ask a question." to which Ivan replies, "no, mam, I was just running a check on the system to see that it worked properly."

Hymn verse:

Lord, dismiss us with Thy blessing,
fill our hearts with joy and peace

Let us each, Thy love possessing triumph in redeeming grace
oh, refresh us, oh refresh us, trav'ling through this wilderness

TLH #50 verse 1

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feel free to share this prayerletter with your Church, friends, or enemies if it will help.

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