

Last days in Washington brought about some rest, but also many new important and useful meetings. I am particularly thankful to Bob Hahne, who faithfully cared about us, to Celeste Scheib Angus and Rev. Bob Driver-Bishop, who rendered us a priceless practical help! Tours around the city, visiting museums, shopping were a diversity and relaxation in this very busy plan of the trip.



However, these days too were full of meetings and communication. The culmination was Sunday morning, when Dietrich and I could participate in several services in different congregations at once. The reception in the Christ-The King congregation was magnificent. I hope, that the seminary found many good friends among its parishioners.

I am very thankful to everybody, who organized this trip! Your work is very significant for the future of our seminary and our church in whole! May the Lord bless you in abundance!



Anton Tikhomirov
President of the Theological Seminary

SEMINARIAN INTERNSHIPS:

Gleb Pivovarov, of Ulyanovsk, central Russia, went to central Siberia to work with his mentors, Michael and Stephanie Fendler, for the congregation of the capital of Siberia, Novosibirsk as well as in Krasnoyarsk.

Alexei Bukhanov, of St. Petersburg, went to Samara, a city with long and deep Lutheran traditions on the Volga. The congregation is served by Pastor Olga Timerbulatova, a graduate of the Seminary's extension program.

Alexei Chizhov and his wife, Natalia, went to southern Ukraine to the "cathedral church" of the German Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ukraine in Odessa, where they recently rededicated the historical church building.

Alexandra Reshetova, of Lvov, Ukraine, went to Kiev, Ukraine and will then head to the eastern city of Kharkov. She hopes to work with social service projects.

Alexander Engel, of Omsk, Siberia, went to Kalinigrad (former E. Prussia) which has the highest concentration of Lutherans in Russia.

Natasha Filimonova, of Ekaterinburg, stayed in St. Petersburg to work with the congregation in the beautiful St. Peter and Paul's.

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LUTHERAN ENDOWMENT FOR NOVOSARATOVKA SEMINARY (LENS)



LENS Foundation is a non-profit corporation organized exclusively for charitable, religious and educational tax-exempt purposes.

LENS, the *Lutheran Endowment for Novosaratovka Seminary*, was formed in April 2002 to provide financial support to the fledging Theological Seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Russian village of Novosaratovka. The Theological Seminary is the official educational institution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Central Asia (ELCROS).

The formation of the non-profit LENS Foundation was inspired by the dedicated work of the late Gerhard Krodel, former Dean and Professor of the Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary, and his wife, Joan, whose many years of fundraising have made the seminary possible. The Krodels raised \$1,432,330 to support the early work of the Holy Spirit throughout Russia and the Newly Independent States.

The Lutheran Church across the vast ELCROS geographic area must have seminary-educated people if it is to survive. Donations through LENS support the inspired work and preparation of local Lutheran pastors, seminarians and congregations, and also support invaluable extension training provided by the Novosaratovka Seminary to lay preachers who participate in theological education through a program of two-week seminars.

Our goals are to provide annual student aid to seminarians and operational support, stipends to graduate pastors, and to establish a long-term endowment fund. This is an opportunity to make a real difference in people's lives and in the life of the Lutheran Church.

LENS NEWSLETTER - FALL 2010

Dear Friends of The Lutherans of Russia--

We enjoyed being with many of you in June of this year. We were glad that all of us could meet Dr. Anton Tikhomirov, the president of the first Lutheran Seminary for the training of pastors in 70 years in Russia. This seminary is located in a suburb of St. Petersburg, Novosaratovka. The suffering that these Lutheran brothers and sisters in Christ have and are enduring is amazing even in a world where we are given daily news reports of suffering in other places.

Many of us were privileged to attend the dedication of this Lutheran Seminary for the teaching of present and future pastors in 1998. This fine building is paid for through the efforts of Dr. Gerhard Krodel and many of his former students and friends in the U.S. and in Europe.

Unfortunately the economy in Russia is in such "shambles" that virtually all of the \$260,000 to \$300,000 that it costs to teach future and present pastors and teachers at this seminary must be raised from the "outside."

We would enjoy getting together with you to discuss some possible ways for you and the people that you know to be involved in this vital ministry.

The following are some possible ways for large and small gifts to help the struggling Lutherans of Russia:

WEEKS OF TEACHING:

1. For 15 full-time students --- 450 weeks of teaching.
2. For 50 two week "seminars" for pastors and teachers ---100.
3. Total "teaching weeks" done by the seminary each year --- 550.
4. \$300,000 ministry needs yearly, divided by 550 = \$545.45 needed per student.

In addition to the above, other possible donations would include the following:

- "Permanently Endow a Chair" in the amount of \$300,000, this gift would enable one seminarian per year of his/her teaching;
- "Sponsor a Seminarian for One-Year" for all of his/her teaching for one year at the rate of \$16,500;
- "Sponsor a Seminarian for a Teaching Week" in the amount of \$550.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION ABOUT HOW WE CAN SUPPORT THE VIBRANT BUT SUFFERING LUTHERANS OF RUSSIA.

Love in Christ,
Pastor Gene H. Hermeier



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ANTON'S "TRIP TO THE USA" REPORT

This trip to the USA was planned beforehand and was the fruit of efforts from a series of sides. It is particularly important to emphasize the contribution of the EKD, which covered travel expenditures, both mine and of Dietrich Brauer, to the USA, including the visa and side expenditures. I am also thankful to the LENS Foundation; its members covered all the expenditures inside America, out of their private funds, all the offerings being sent to the Seminary.

I don't have a possibility to describe all the meetings and events of this trip. However, they will remain for a long time in my memory. I will remember long those interested, friendly, open faces of many people, who I met during these 3 weeks. I always pray for all new and old friends in the USA.

Already the first day in the USA was the day of a joyful and hearty meeting with the LENS President Bob Hahne; we had a long and detailed talk about the situation at the seminary and the LENS news.

On the next day there was a flight to Minneapolis and a possibility to enjoy the hospitality of the family of Raija and Rev. Walter Wietzke from St. Mark's congregation (St. Paul). It is impossible to forget the communication in this family – a simple and happy one, full of humor and the serious depth. An evening spent together with the representatives of some local congregations, from Luther Seminary and the publishing house was a good chance to talk about our seminary, its achievements and problems, to establish closer and more intensive contacts.



A trip with Milt Ost and Gene Hermeier across Minnesota and Iowa became one of the brightest trips in my memory.

Staying in the house of Gene's daughter and his son-in-law, talks with them enriched me seriously. Both are engaged in the socio-political activity and have a huge experience in fundraising. According to the results of our talk Kurt prepared statements with the main principles of work in this sphere, which can be used in the seminary context. I am sure they will be very helpful in our further work.



Home of Rev. Hermeier became one of the friendliest homes, where I have ever stayed. Being an introvert character I felt free and natural in this loving home.

The visit in the Luther College and meeting with Mr. Keith Christensen the Vice President of Development there were quite impressive. During this trip an important discovery for me was a visit to a factory of Sukup, who donated a big sum of money to purchase a car for the seminary. I was very glad to express my special gratitude to Charles Sukup, who is the head of the firm, and I

was greatly impressed by his and his family's vital interest to the seminary. And an excursion around the factory producing wheat stores, made by Eugene was very interesting and instructive.

It was equally interesting to visit a big farm and a factory producing food, the Mrs. Gerry's. The President of the Company Gerry Vogt has been interested in the seminary for a long time and have actively supported its work.

Sermons delivered in two churches of Albert Lea (First Lutheran and Grace Lutheran), and also a live talk with the parishioners of these churches, with pastors Todd Walsh who has been friends of the seminary for a long time and Rev. Andrea J. Myers, became important events for me. It is such a joy to see faces of old and true friends! But it is also a great joy to find new acquaintances, and I had a chance to do that thanks to a well-organized program of my stay in the Middle West.

An attendance of a baseball match became an informal and very bright ending of this program. I cannot say that I understood this game completely, but the very presence at the stadium itself became a special experience of American culture.

The next step was returning back to the East coast, which started with a visit to the Synod of Delaware and Maryland in Gettysburg. Thanks to Franklin Scheib for the transport. Here I met acting bishop Dietrich Brauer, who came to the USA the day before. From this point we continued this trip together. It was exciting to be present at an election of a new bishop of this synod and to talk about our seminary and our church before the synod members.



The most important meeting at this stage was an intensive communication with Joan Krodel, Rev. George Evans and other LENS members.

Our talks, exchange of opinions, meetings (especially a meeting at Joan's home – in the house, which I remember since my first visit to America, meeting Gerhard Krodel) became unforgettable and touching experience for us. I will always remember this part of our trip.

A talk in St. James' church was a wonderful opportunity to thank our old friends for their help to the seminary and to inspire them to continue supporting us.

A new meeting and intensive communication with Rev. Dan Biles was very pleasant. A wonderful reception, care about us are the reason for our sincere gratitude. Thanks to him we had a chance to attend a very interesting and important conference on the modern questions of theology and church practice of Baltimore.

A short meeting with my good friend Robert Smith, who is responsible for relationship of the ELCA with Europe and Middle East, was very fruitful.

