

Daniel S. Johnson

– Catechist to Siberia & Baltics

Garbė Dievui aukštybėse

ὁ πιστεύσας καὶ βαπτισθεὶς σωθήσεται

Χριστὸς ὠκρесе!

February 2015

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Siberian Bishop visits American Congregations



....I was so touched by the faces of the children and the way things are there [in Siberia]. So I have talked with our head elder... then I spoke to Bishop Lytkin and after that spoke with our Pastors...I would like to put together shoe boxes for the children of the Siberian congregation ...I need information... I may be ahead of myself but my heart was absolutely touched by those tender faces...



Bishop Vsevolod Lytkin of the Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church visited LCMS congregations.

This is the response of an individual who attended a January presentation of Bishop Vsevolod Lytkin at a Kansas City, Missouri, LCMS congregation. However, these particular congregational visitations were unique. Bishop Vsevolod Lytkin of the Siberian Evangelical Lutheran Church (SELC) accompanied Rev. Daniel S. Johnson, LCMS OIM Catechist to Eurasia, on visits to congregations throughout the Midwest USA. Bishop Vsevolod spoke about life in Siberia and the status of the Lutheran Church, during a presentation of slides from his personal collection.

Ordained as a pastor in 1993, and consecrated as bishop on May 6, 2007 in Tallinn, Estonia, Lytkin serves as the bishop of the SELC and as pastor of St. Andrew Lutheran Church in Novosibirsk, Russia, in central Siberia. He first became interested in the Lutheran Church while visiting the Soviet Republic of Latvia on a vacation with his mother at age 16. Lytkin was interested in the many churches he saw. When he returned to Novosibirsk, where his parents were research mathematicians, he began to study about Lutheranism.



In 1987, when Lytkin began looking for a Lutheran congregation where he could receive Holy Baptism, he tried to return to Latvia. Since no train tickets were available from Leningrad (today, St. Petersburg) to Riga, Latvia, he headed to Tallinn, Estonia, instead. The pastor (who later became the Archbishop of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church) gave Lytkin his first Small

Catechism—which was a binder of photographed pages from a Russian language catechism. After studying and memorizing it for two days at the train station, Lytkin was baptized.

After his baptism, he returned to Novosibirsk and began a Bible study among the students at the university. Soon, these students began to question how they could receive a pastor and investigated what it meant to be a church. They sent Lytkin back to Estonia to request a pastor be sent to them. The bishop of Estonia said that they had no pastor they could send. The Estonian bishop's solution to their request for a pastor was to train and ordain Vsevolod Lytkin. In 1993 he received

Holy Ordination and the small group of Lutherans in Novosibirsk became a mission province of the Estonian Lutheran Church. Later, in 2005, the "West Siberian Mission" (this was their official name in their registration) would be granted autonomy, change their registration to "Siberian Ev. Lutheran Church" and elect their own bishop, in 2007.

To be added to or removed from this mailing list, send an email message to Daniel.Johnson@lcmsintl.org with the word ADD or REMOVE in the subject line.





Prayer Requests, Praises, and Thanks

Many Siberian pastors serve multiple congregation parishes. Pray for safe travel as these dedicated clergy travel to provide care for their parishioners.

Also, pray for the laity as they travel to attend liturgy.

Pray for the Lutheran catechumens throughout the world as they learn the Christian vocation.

*To direct and defend our president and all in authority; to bless and protect our magistrates and all our people;
We implore You to hear us, good Lord.*

-- The Litany

The church in Siberia currently numbers 24 congregations and 26 clergy and a seminary. Many of the clergy received their theological education from the LCMS seminary in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. However, since 1999 most of the clergy have graduated from the SELC seminary in Novosibirsk, Lutheran Theological Seminary.

The congregations and individual donors Rev. Daniel Johnson had scheduled to visit during their January 2015 visitations were very excited to meet the bishop and renew their support for the Lutheran church in Siberia. The crowds were large, and interest in Siberian Lutheranism was evident.

Johnson had scheduled a series of 12 visits to congregations and individuals throughout the Midwest states of Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado and Illinois, including the Siberian Lutheran Mission Society (SLMS) board of directors meeting and theological symposium held on the Concordia Theological Seminary campus in Fort Wayne, Indiana; an itinerary covering 18 days, while traveling just under 4,000 miles.

On behalf of the bishop, Rev. Johnson thanks everyone who helped organize the receptions and provided publicity for the events and logistical

planning for their meals and lodging. The bishop was impressed by the warm hospitality and generosity of the people he met. Bishop Lytkin was not hesitant to remind those present at his presentations that the SELC is indebted to the efforts of many within the LCMS and the financial support of the Siberian Lutheran Mission Society (SLMS). Currently there is one LCMS Office of International Mission (LCMS OIM) missionary living in Russia. Reverend Alan Ludwig currently lives in Novosibirsk (Siberia) and teaches at Lutheran Theological Seminary—



The catechism class at Immanuel - Grinnell, Iowa did research and posted interesting facts about the churches in each of the countries where Rev. Johnson works.

Novosibirsk. (His newsletters may be read at: <http://siberiamissionary.org>)

The SELC was welcomed into full altar and pulpit fellowship with the LCMS in 2010. Since 1995, many pastors and professors from the LCMS have traveled to Siberia to teach at Lutheran Theological Seminary and lecture at the seminary symposium or summer seminars. This summer, the SELC will celebrate 20 years of summer seminars.

As the OIM Catechist to Eurasia, Daniel Johnson currently lives in Gelnhausen, Germany with his wife, Amy, and frequently travels to Siberia to assist in catechetical education in the parishes under the direction of Bishop Lytkin. ✂ DSJ [Editor's note: For more information on the SELC, see: <http://siberianlutheranmissions.com/>]



To support Rev. Johnson's work financially, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

**The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
P.O. Box 790089
St. Louis, MO 63179-0089.**

Make checks payable to "The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod." Write "Support of Rev. Daniel S. Johnson" on the memo line.

Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website, on his online giving page at www.lcms.org/Johnson.