

# Daniel S. Johnson

## - Catechist to Siberia & Baltic Churches

Garbė Dievui aukštybėse

ὁ πιστεύσας καὶ βαπτισθεὶς σωθήσεται

Χριστὸς ἠνέστη!

July /August 2014

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### Lithuanian Church holds her Synod

On June 12, 2014 the 12<sup>th</sup> synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lithuania was held in Taurage. The important matter to come before the Synod was the question on whether Bishop Sabutis

should be retained or a new election should be held. The bishop was elected in 2004 for a 9-year term. Since there was no synod held in 2013, the matter came up at this triennial synod. Rev. Dr.

Charles Evanson writes in his report:

*The question of election or retention was brought before the synod. It could choose to retain the bishop (another 9 year term), or it could call for an election – this would require a search for suitable candidates to stand against Bishop Sabutis in an election to be held in an extraordinary synod, called for that purpose next summer. Only one delegate chose to vote in favor of holding a search and special election – all other delegates voted in favor of retaining Bishop Sabutis. It is clear that the clergy and congregations approve of his conduct of the episcopacy and are solidly behind him.*

The divine service held during the opening of the Synod was presided by the bishop who also preached. A highlight of the liturgy was the



ordination of Deacon Valdas Miliauskas, younger brother of Pastor Liudas Miliauskas. Pastor Liudas Miliauskas is the pastor at St. James Lutheran Church, a church of the Evangelical Lutheran Church

in Lithuania located in Western Springs, Illinois. He was born and raised in Lithuania and returns to Lithuania every summer to host a youth camp.

Every active pastor of the Lithuanian Church was present and participated in the ordination and synod except for one. Pastor Algimantas Žilinskas of Toronto, Canada was unable to attend. Rev. Dr. Charles Evanson also participated in the ordination as an honorary

**continued on the next page**



Church officials from the Lithuanian, Latvian and Siberian Lutheran churches frequently visit the United States. If you wish to invite one of these church officials to visit your congregation, please contact me at: [Daniel.Johnson@lcmsintl.org](mailto:Daniel.Johnson@lcmsintl.org)

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### Prayer Requests, Praises, and Thanks

Many Lithuanian 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.

*We poor sinners implore You... To beat down Satan under our feet; to send faithful laborers into Your harvest; and to accompany Your Word with Your grace and Spirit; We implore You to hear us, good Lord*  
-- The Litany

member of the Lithuanian clergy roster. Miliauskas had been examined and approved for ordination by the consistory on Wednesday, July 3, in Turauge, with the theological assistance of Rev. Dr. Evanson.

Many special guests attended. Greetings were brought to the Synod by Archbishop Andreas Pöder of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Estonia and Archbishop Janis Vanags of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia. Evanson writes in his report: *Archbishop Vanags recalled how he had been asked ten years ago to consecrate Mindaugas Sabutis, who at that time was not well known. Many wondered at that time what was ahead for the Lithuanians, he said. He went on to say that all questions have now been answered, and Sabutis has shown himself to be a bold and forthright defender of the truth of the Scriptures and the faith of the Church. He said that the Lithuanians should never again think of themselves as a "small church," for under the leadership of its bishop it has shown itself to be a church which has held the line against the advance of the liberal theology of the western European churches. He stated that the Lithuanians are an important and salutary influence on his own Latvian Church!*



Rev. Daniel S. Johnson, LCMS OIM catechist to the Baltics and Siberia, brought greetings from the LCMS and read a letter written by President Matthew Harrison. The 2014 Synod proved to be a testimony of the unity and confessional character of a church standing boldly and unwavering in her commitment, to the Holy Scriptures and Lutheran Confessions, in both orthodox confession and practice. ✠DSJ

The text of this newsletter is also available online at: <http://eurasiablog.lcms.org/lithuanian-church-holds-her-synod/>



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