

FRIENDS OF LATVIA

Volume 2; Issue 1

March 2010

FRIENDS OF LATVIA IN COVENANT RELATIONSHIP SINCE 1991

WE AGREE TO ADVANCE TO EVERY RESIDENT OF LATVIA, THE JOYFUL WITNESS OF JESUS CHRIST AS THE RISEN SAVIOR.

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

APRIL 23-24, 2010

**LATVIA-LITHUANIA
MISSION INITIATIVE**

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST
LANCASTER OH
AND
WORSHIP
SUNDAY, APRIL 25**

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Friends of Latvia 2009-2011 Officers

Chair: Jim Hayes
Co-Chair: Randy Tolleson
Secretary: Dana & Jim Nance
Treasurer: Julie Payne

First United Methodist Church Lancaster, Ohio to Host 2010 Latvia/Lithuania Mission Initiative

Lancaster is an average mid-western town of about 35,000 people located about 40 miles southeast of Columbus, Ohio. Nestled in the foothills of southeastern Ohio, Lancaster is mostly a farming community with a small town feel but the conveniences of a major metropolis. Nearby is the beautiful Hocking Hills region with many beautiful



examples of God's handiwork in sandstone and thick forests. Lancaster First United Methodist has approximately 1500 members and is blessed with two facilities. The main building with

roots to Francis Asbury is located at 163 East Wheeling Street close to downtown Lancaster. Near downtown is the Lancaster Glass museum showcasing the wonder of glass making that is an important part of our history. We invite you to worship with us at one of our three worship services on Sunday morning.

The Latvia-Lithuania meetings will be at the Crossroads facility, a family oriented ministry building completed in 2007. At Crossroads you will find prepared meals, wireless internet access, modern audio-visual equipment and two wide-screen TV's all available to enable you to enjoy a fantastic weekend of meetings.



April 23-24, 2010 in Lancaster, Ohio

Registration and hotel information can be found and made online at www.lancasterfumc.org or www.crossroads.events.com.

Questions?

Contact Tim Binkley 740-681-1614 or tbink1@columbus.rr.com or Kathy Halverson 740-653-3556 or katinthehat@columbus.rr.com.

The time of our annual Friends of Latvia and Lithuania Initiative is rapidly approaching and I hope you are making plans to attend. As you can see from the Initiative Agenda, we have some very important items to discuss as we work to further God's Kingdom in Latvia.

Please pray with me for safe travels for all participants and for the discussion at the Initiative.

Paldies,
Jim Hayes



Proposed Agenda
Friends of Latvia and Lithuania Initiative
First United Methodist Church, Lancaster, Ohio

Friday, April 23, 2010

- 3:00-5:00 p.m. Registration
- 6:00 p.m. Dinner
- 7:00 p.m. The Methodist Church in Latvia (Rev. Gita Mednis)

Saturday, April 24, 2010

- 8:00-9:30 a.m. Registration
- 9:30- 9:45 a.m. Opening Prayer and Devotion
- 9:45-10:15 a.m. Welcome and Introductions (Jim Hayes)
- 10:15-10:30 a.m. On to Glory, Clint Rabb and Sam Dixon (Randy Tolleson)
- 10:30-12:00 p.m. Connecting Congregation Updates (Reporting Representatives)

12:00 Noon

Lunch

- 1:00-4:30 p.m. Breakout Sessions – Friends of Latvia and Friends of Lithuania

Friends of Latvia Session

- 1:00-2:00 p.m. Hope Center (Rev. Gita Mednis)
- 2:00-3:00 p.m. Pastor's Salary (Rev. Gita Mednis, Danny Lindsey)

3:00 p.m.

Break

- 3:15-4:00 p.m. Wesley Camp (Joe Acker)
- 4:00-5:00 p.m. Open Discussion (led by Jim Hayes and Randy Tolleson)
- 5:00-6:00 p.m. Leading VIM Teams to Latvia (Kristine Vainovska, Gary Fowler)
- 6:00 p.m. Dinner
- 7:00 p.m. Closing thoughts and Prayer (Rev. Gita Mednis)

Remembering the Lives of Sam Dixon and Clint Rabb



The cab driver was certain that he had dropped off UMC Global Ministries and UMCOR leaders Clint Rabb and Sam Dixon at the Montana Hotel in Port au Prince, Haiti. As they disappeared into the hotel the ground began to shake and the cab driver watched the building collapse. Each with both their legs trapped beneath a fallen wall, for fifty-five hours Clint rearranged pieces of debris in an attempt to make Sam more comfortable. Sam left this life there in Port au Prince while Clint was rescued and airlifted to Miami for medical attention. As strong as Clint was, his injuries were too much for his mortal body to survive and he joined Sam on his journey.

At friends of Latvia meetings in 2007 it was quickly apparent that creating the pastor pay financial transparency and simplification needed would be a bureaucratic nightmare. When Sam Dixon took the problem forward, a simplified funds transfer process with full transparency was in use within 90 days as a direct result of his ownership of this concern. Our Advance gifts to the Pastor Salary Fund, Hope Center and others are simple and transparent because of Sam's work on this problem. Rev. Clint Rabb was one of the original designers of the UMC Global Ministries Partner Church program and his Latvia connecting congregations were some of the first. He specifically wanted Latvia to rebuild the UMC with indigenous clergy: a foundational approach in use to this day. His bigger-than-life presence and gentle influence conveyed a love for all people of all ages and in all nations while maintaining a joyful, common sense attitude that would get things done.

Clint's trips to and mentoring at W.C. Martin UMC offered years of Spirit-guided experience that remains the glue helping hold the Riga 1st and W.C. Martin partnership in place today. Both Clint and Sam would, and did, move mountains for the people of Latvia.

What Clint Rabb taught us as he mentored our church on the Global Ministries Partner Church covenant with 1st Riga UMC, Latvia:

1. Start every planning meeting with a prayer and a brief devotional. It's important to remember why we're planning.
2. Give the Spirit room to move as you make plans.

3. It's essential to visit your partner church at least twice every four years: ideally during each of the first two years. Your presence is extremely important.
4. The team should perform some local projects together before traveling to the partner church. It helps to learn each other's gifts and how to work together.
5. Advance directly to the destination together as a group, if possible.
6. Stay in pairs in the homes of the church members, rather than hotels, at the destination if you can. It's a completely different experience of understanding that changes everything.
8. Remember that your hosts are giving all that they have, and probably then some, to make you feel welcome. Find a gracious way to restock their pantries.
9. Avoid before & after photos. Take photos of their beautiful smiles: up close.
10. The sights and smells that may make us uncomfortable look and smell like life.
11. There are three phases in the covenant in sequence:
 - a) Everyone's overjoyed,
 - b) Americans are crazy and
 - c) a healthy covenant relationship.

Be aware when you are in #1 and #2 so you can get to #3 quickly.

Get some well-deserved rest Sam and Clint. We'll see you soon.

-- Randy Tolleson

Who's going to Latvia? Send your Mission Trip dates/plans to djnance@sbcglobal.net for publication in the next newsletter.

Jim Hayes will lead a team to the Kuldiga United Methodist Church, June 11 - 21. We will do a work project at the church, sponsor a Vacation Bible School, and an adult Bible study. For more information contact Jim at jrhayes46@bellsouth.net.

September/October - Faithful Men
Fairview, Tennessee

**When You Return Home
Tell us about your trip**

If you are leading a team to Latvia in 2010, please send us an email with the dates of your trip, where you are going, and your trip objectives. We would like to provide a list of teams going to Latvia in the Spring Friends of Latvia Newsletter.

Also, upon returning from Latvia, please provide us with a report of the trip. Send trip dates and follow-up reports to: djnance@sbcglobal.net

**A Time With Friends
Saturday, April 17th, 2010**

3:00-7:00 p.m.

Smithfield UMC, North Richland Hills, Texas
Rev. Lisa Neslony, Pastor

Smithfield UMC in North Richland Hills, Texas will host the first official meeting to charter the Texas Friends of Latvia chapter.

The meeting objectives will include

- 1) establishment of the Texas Chapter of the Friends of Latvia and election of officers for 2010-2011
- 2) creation of the quarterly meeting calendar
- 3) preparation for the national FOL meeting April 23-24 in Lancaster OH
- 4) witness from people who are engaged in the work in Latvia
- 5) a presentation and interactive discussion with the District Superintendent in Latvia

Partner with Us!



Updated e-mail addresses needed.

Please send current e-mail addresses for the following individuals to djnance@sbcglobal.net

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Marie Andreen | mlbrie@aol |
| Patrick Friday | patrickfriday@gbgm |
| Vineta Kalmane | VKalmane@globalrefund.com |
| Doug Thomas | cdoug@cafes |
| Karin Thompson | karin.r.thompson@umc-northerneurope.org |

Ways to give.....

new.gbgm-umc.org/work/initiatives/latvia/

Hope Center

Project Number: 3020447

Latvia Mission Initiative

Project Number: 00235A

Pastors' Salary Fund

Advance project: 14706A

Youth Mission and Camping Support

Project Number: 14046A

"the world is our parish."

-- John Wesley