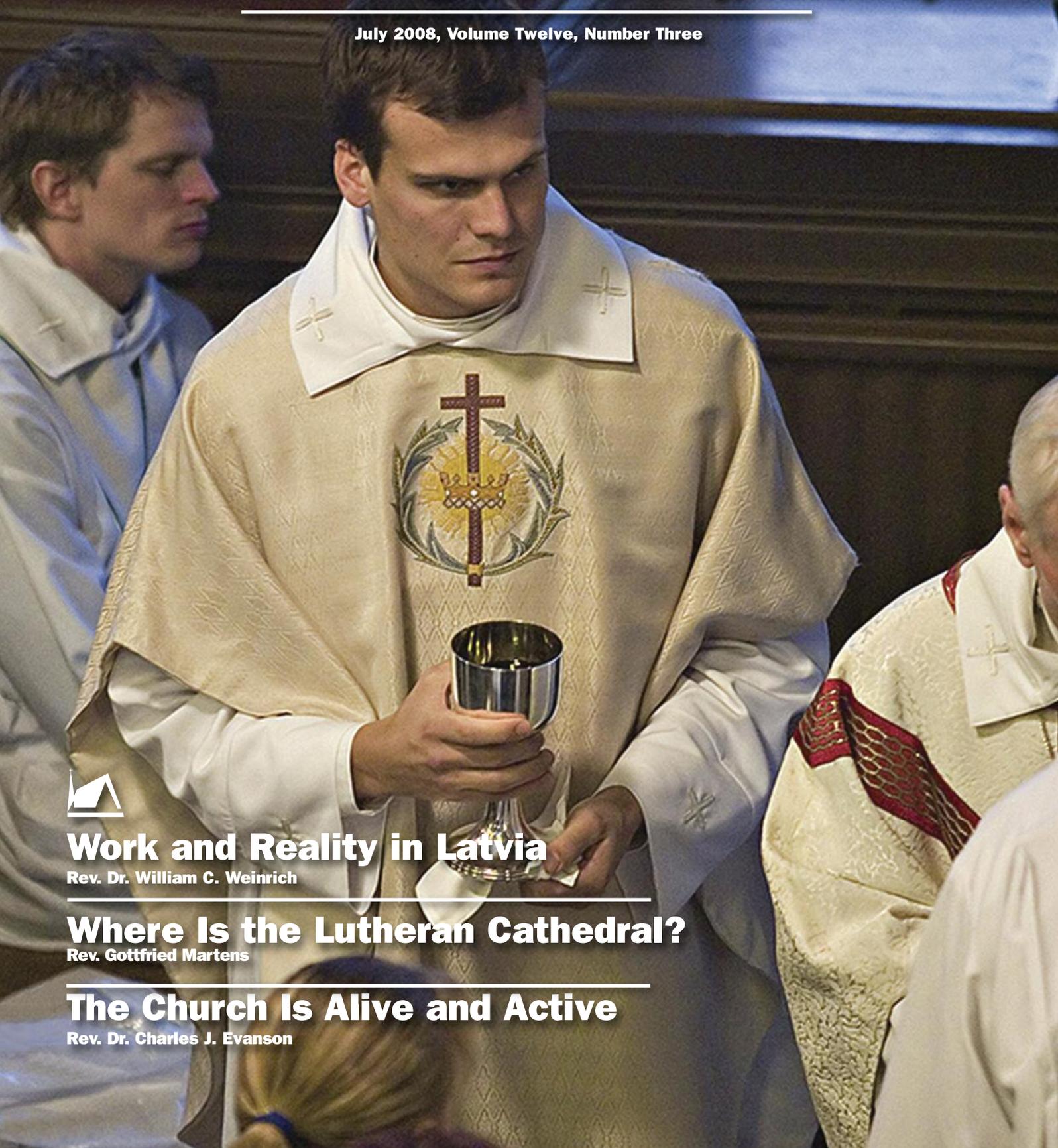


For the Life of the World

Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne

July 2008, Volume Twelve, Number Three



Work and Reality in Latvia

Rev. Dr. William C. Weinrich

Where Is the Lutheran Cathedral?

Rev. Gottfried Martens

The Church Is Alive and Active

Rev. Dr. Charles J. Evanson

CONTENTS

Volume Twelve, Number Three



FEATURES

4 Work and Reality in Latvia

By Rev. Dr. Wiliam C. Weinrich

The Christians of Latvia are deeply pious and committed but have serious challenges: liturgical change; pressure from the European churches to conform to new theological and social trends, institutional development, theological education needs.

8 Mining the Riches of Lutheran Theology in Germany

By Mr. Jason Lane

Study in the German system, combined with the superb theological education we have received from Fort Wayne, where pastoral care is of primary importance, affords a new generation of theologians the great opportunity to carry on the good confession of Jesus Christ into all the world.

12 A Modern Day Circuit Rider

By Rev. Dr. Chris Barnekov

Historically Sweden was a strongly Lutheran country, but today most churches are empty. Although the Church of Sweden claims to be the largest Lutheran Church in the world, only one member in seventy-five attends worship in an average week, and that figure includes Christmas and Easter.

38 "Where is the Lutheran Cathedral?"

By Rev. Gottfried Martens

In Berlin, the "world's capital of modern atheism," as Peter L. Berger has called it, only 30 percent of the population still belong to a Christian church at all, and about 4 percent worship regularly.

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Mining the Riches of Lutherana

One of my professors at the seminary has mentioned on several occasions that one of the few weaknesses of our Lutheran system for theological education in the USA is the inability to use the original languages. By this I do not mean Greek or Hebrew but rather Latin and German. These two languages were the languages of our Lutheran fathers and also our Lutheran Confessions. At the present, we are experiencing something of a theological gap, where there are fewer people who can use these languages well enough to mine the riches of our Lutheran fathers' writings. Of course, we are quite thankful for the American Edition of *Luther's Works* and the ongoing expansion of that project by Concordia Publishing House, not to mention the works of Johann Gerhard that are now appearing in English. However, even with these works available in English, there is always something lost in translation. This is going to continue to be a problem for the Lutheran Church in the USA as long as there remains little knowledge of the original Lutheran languages. So we are faced at the same time with both a challenge and a wonderful opportunity.

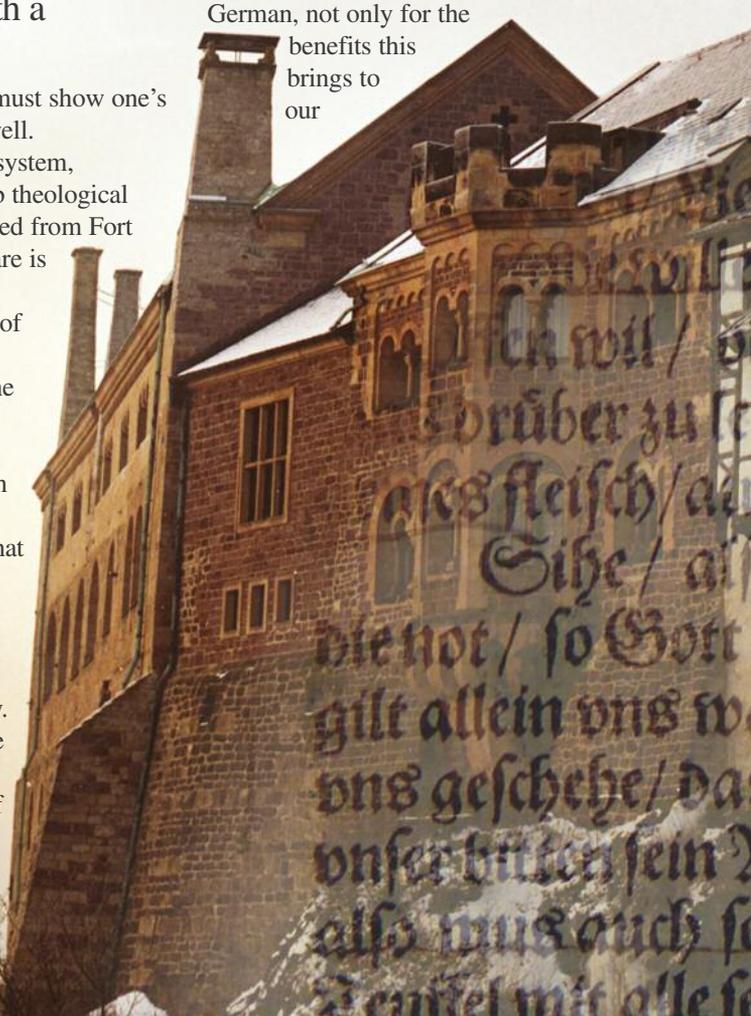
Among others students, such as Jonathan Mumme from Concordia Seminary and Jacob Corzine of CTS, I have been given the opportunity to continue my theological education in Germany. Mr. Mumme is presently studying under Oswald Bayer in Tübingen. Mr. Corzine will begin studies in Berlin under Notger Slenczka this fall. I will begin doctoral studies at the University of Hamburg under the tutelage of the Lutheran church historian, Johann Anselm Steiger. Mr. Corzine and I both had the opportunity to study as exchange students at our sister seminary (Lutherische Theologische Hochschule) in Oberursel, Germany. Under the fine faculty in Oberursel, we were not only given the chance to improve our German, but also we were enriched by the German resources and the Germans' method of doing Lutheran theology. This has given us the tools to continue working in the original German. Upon entrance to any theological doctoral program in a

German University, one must show one's competence in Latin as well.

Study in the German system, combined with the superb theological education we have received from Fort Wayne, where pastoral care is of primary importance, affords a new generation of theologians the great opportunity to carry on the good confession of Jesus Christ into all the world. What is most important in all this is that the Gospel be kept pure among us, that we do not lose our confession in America simply because we no longer know what our Lutheran Confessions say. There is a tendency in the church to tone down its confession for the sake of outward unity. For us there can be pressure to

tone down our emphasis on our Lutheran identity to appeal to Rome, Eastern Orthodoxy, Anglicanism, or some other church body. But I believe that we are living in an age where few will confess the Gospel unapologetically anymore. Lutherans who confess the faith that the Reformers did, and, more importantly, the faith that the apostles taught us, are few and far between. Therefore, it is not a time to look elsewhere for a good confession, but it is time that we continue to study the theological insights of those who have gone before us, and learn again and again what it means to confess with the clarity and boldness of Luther.

A second benefit to further studies in the German system is the chance to uphold a theological conversation around the globe. We cannot expect the Germans who speak English to uphold this conversation alone. It is important that Americans also do their part in learning German, not only for the benefits this brings to our



n Theology in Germany

by Mr. Jason Lane

own theological studies, but also because we have German brothers and sisters that we could know better. Hopefully this will lead to some further theological exchange in the future.

But first there are tests to pass, money to raise, apartments to find, and a new university system with which to become acquainted. All these things we entrust to God's provision and care. In the meanwhile, I am grateful that my wife and I can acquaint our two young daughters with the German culture and language as well as the wonderful experience of living overseas. It is an opportunity and a time to cherish, both for my theological studies and for my family. 🏠

Study in the German system, combined with the superb theological education we have received from Fort Wayne, where pastoral care is of primary importance, affords a new generation of theologians the great opportunity to carry on the good confession of Jesus Christ into all the world.

Mr. Jason Lane is a 2007 graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary and will pursue a Doctor of Theology degree at the University of Hamburg in the fall.

