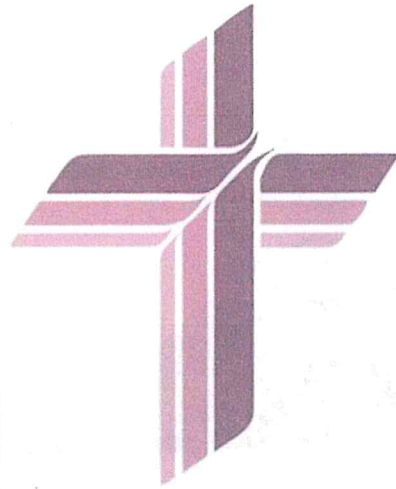


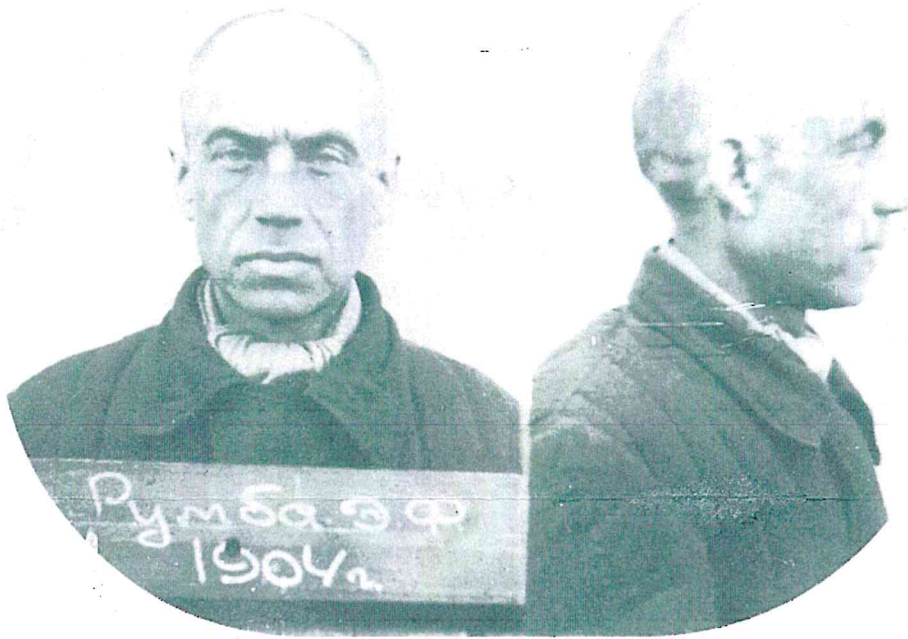
Serving the Lord in Riga, Latvia

News from the Bobby Family



Dear Friends in Christ,

In the *Apology to the Augsburg Confession*, Melanchthon writes beautifully about faith. He says, "For without the Holy Spirit, human hearts lack the fear of God. Without trust toward God, they do not believe that they are heard, forgiven, helped, and preserved by God." [1] Without faith (i.e. that "trust toward God" of which Melanchthon writes) a person cannot possibly please God because the person lacking faith cannot be confident that God *is* who He says He is (or will do what He promises, in Christ, to do!). The faith of the Latvian people was put to the test during the Soviet occupation. Nevertheless, they saw that God hears, forgives, helps, and preserves His people. One of the pastors at a church here in Riga, for example, was secretly baptized in a small room at the age of two because of fear of arrest or worse. And I was humbled (and honestly a bit unprepared) to see the lecture rooms at Luther Academy named after pastors and theologians who were persecuted for their Lutheran faith during the time of occupation. Some of these men were even martyred.



This is a picture of Edgars Rumba (1904–1943). One of the lecture halls at Luther Academy is named after him. He was a faculty member at the Latvian seminary at the beginning of the Soviet occupation. He and his family, including his 7 month old daughter, were “arrested during “the Night of Terror” on 13–14 June 1941 and [were] then deported to Siberia. Rumba starved to death in a concentration camp in Resjot in 1943.”
Taken from the article, “Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Theology during the German Occupation, 1941-1944.”

We too often take our faith for granted, thinking that faith is a right to which we are entitled instead of privilege gifted to us through Baptism and the Spirit and Word. In his letter to the Ephesians, St. Paul reminds us that “by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9). In faith we look to God and His Word to bring comfort, hope, and deliverance, and through faith we know that God will sustain us as He did the Latvian Lutheran Church and as He has done for His people throughout history.

May your faith be strengthened through God’s promises of forgiveness in Christ and please continue to pray for Luther Academy and the Lord’s work of building up pastors in the faith. It is through these pastors that many will hear the Good News of salvation, a salvation in which God intends all people to trust and through which He will sustain His people under all circumstances. Thank you all for you continued support!

In Christ,

Pastor Samuel Bobby

[1] *Apology to the Augsburg Confession*, Article XVIII, 72b.