



**SPRING 2011**

# **Baltic Reformed Theological Seminary Newsletter**

**PRAY!**  
That is what we ask first and last for the ministry of BRTS!

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God is using the Lithuanian BRTS students to minister in churches.

New Reformed Bible School

Page 3

Latvia is our mission field and BRTS Latvian students and former students are evangelizing.

How will God supply?  
What are the needs of BRTS?



## **A Productive Past and A Promising Future**

Future Events-Eschatology is the course we just had with Dr. Cornelis Venema. What a fitting class for our seminary as we consider all that the Lord has done for us in the past and as we look forward to the future. We stand amazed at how God started the seminary and then has used it to train men for the Gospel ministry. We are grateful to be God's instrument in training men today for future ministries in Latvia and Lithuania.

The seminary is small but so vital. As you can read in the other articles, without this seminary what would the Reformed Evangelical Churches of Latvian and Lithuania be like today? What would be their future with no men trained for ministry? The future need of BRTS is clearly seen, but how God will supply for its needs financially is a matter of trusting in the Lord who always gives what we need.

Our present and future ministries are gifts from God and we work hard to use them as good stewards.

## **Professors Who Invested For The Future**

We have been so blessed by God to have had professors who have taught from their vast years of experience. They, also, have pastored both the seminary students and the leaders of the Reformed churches in Latvia and Lithuania. They are too many to mention, but we know that BRTS and all who have studied here would not be where we are unless God had used their dedicated contribution to the God's kingdom here.



Dr. Gordon Campbell teaching  
The Gospel of John

We ask you to pray that God would continue to send us such men who are capable teachers of God's Word and who give of their time to minister here.

We look forward to our next two classes. Dr. Fritz Harms will teach Reformation Church History April 26 - May 4. Then Prof. Mark Vanderhart will do double duty. He will teach Pre-Exilic Prophets June 6-17 and teach a Greek intensive course for all of us in Riga 6 June to 6 July.

## God's Remnant in Lithuania

Five years ago there were no men training to be pastors of the 450 year old Evangelical Reformed Church of Lithuania (ERCL). There was only one man properly trained and ordained, Dr. Algimantas Kvedaravičius the denominational general secretary. Then God raised up men ready to study. Today four men from the church in Lithuania study to be pastors.



BRTS Rector Artis Celmiņš with two Lithuanian seminary students (middle front and back right) and Algimantas Kvedaravičius (General Secretary of the ERCL) and Carl Chaplin, MTW (PCA) missionary (back left).

Yes, the ERCL is old, but it is spiritually weak. Of the 14 churches only 3 receive regular preaching and teaching and some of the others meet monthly. Also, after years of Soviet persecution and with the lack of trained pastor-teachers, the people are suffering spiritually. Added to this is the fact that about 7 years ago some men had been sent to Germany for theological training. They came back liberal and after being ordained showed their true colors and divided the church. They took several of the congregations and formed a new denomination with exactly the same name as the ERCL. The Lithuanian government registered it as a church, even though it has the same name. There is no rule of the law here!

When BRTS started training men it gave hope to a denomination in serious trouble. Now, the seminary students of BRTS in Lithuania are serving in some churches to teach God's Word. Some travel two to three hours on Sunday to serve. One of the seminary students is the manager of the Reformed Bookstore in Vilnius and directs the translation of many excellent Reformed books ([www.reformatuknygos.lt](http://www.reformatuknygos.lt)). God is using these men to faithfully minister to the remnant in these churches. Today, the future for the ERC in Lithuania is brighter because of these men. We trust in God to revive the church not in men. We pray that God will keep these men faithful and make them his instruments for revival in Lithuania.

## **!NEW! Reformed Bible School**

Lastly, we have seen the need that church members need to be more thoroughly versed in the Scriptures. So, in the Fall we started the Reformed Bible School. Presently, the teachers are Ungars Gulbis, Alvis Sauka and Artis Celmins. We had a couple of guest professors and hope to have others. If you know of a pastor who would want to come to teach and intensive class in the Bible, please let me know. In the next newsletter we will tell you more about the Bible School.

## Continued Investment?

### Who supports BRTS?

There are no large Reformed churches here to support us.

We will be very open with you. Our primary supporter from the very beginning has been from ITEM. But presently they are not able to financially support us in full. Presently we receive only about 50% of what is needed to operate BRTS properly. We are struggling to pay salaries and operate.

Would you be willing to tell others of our need? Would you pass on this newsletter to others? Would you think of ways that we can receive financial support and send them to me? Let me know.

### **Most of all would you please pray for God to supply for BRTS?**

BRTS is asking for support from friends in Europe. We are thankful for the generous gift from the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. We hope others will give.

**Would you be willing to give to BRTS mission or ask others to give? We are in a difficult condition financially. We trust the Lord to supply** and we know that he wants us to make our needs known. Please receive this request in the humble spirit it is given.

**Please send me your suggestions and contact me for donations.**

**Artis Celmins:**

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## The Mission Field Is Here

Few Latvians know the true Gospel of Jesus Christ. Many would say they believe in God, but would not be able to articulate who Jesus is or what the Bible teaches. They may be members of some church, but only attend on certain important events.

Christ said, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore **pray earnestly** to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." (Mat. 9:37-38) This describes our situation in Latvia. People are generally open to talking about the Bible. So, we are sending out laborers into our fields.

Seminary graduate Martins Martinson has two significant outreach ministries plus a weekly Bible study. One is to teach teens and have various evangelistic events to attract more teens, even going to a local high school to talk to students. He, also, has organized with the help of some young adults a weekly outreach called 'Light Café'. It features special talks and guest musicians and interviews each week. This is geared to be an event that high-school and young adults can invite their friends.

Jānis P. (left) and Egils S. are two seminary students who are actively involved in ministry in Latvia.



Our student Janis P. and former student Maris D. are starting several evangelistic outreach events of Christianity Explored, a 10-week study of Jesus from Mark. Then will organize follow-up Bible studies for those who want to study the Bible more. Egils S., another student and Elder in the Riga Reformed Bible Church, organizes and teaches weekend retreats for men and women. Each time several new people attend these and are clearly taught God's Word and shown how to properly study it.

God established the Reformed churches in Riga. Now, more are needed. We are thankful that men have been and are being trained that can do this. Our newest board member, Dr. Martins Kapickis has a burden to see more churches started. The work of church planting is costly in several ways. It requires men and women to commit to diligent and faithful ministries of disciple-making. It requires men trained to lead this work.

We are praying and talking about how to proceed to do church planting. BRTS wants to continue to be involved in helping to train and promote church planting. **Pray with us** as we consider how to proceed to promote church planting.

On behalf of the BRTS board, I thank you for praying and giving.

Artis Celmins, Rector

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