

To: Meadowbrook United Methodist Church

From: Outreach Committee Team & Leaders: Lois Bogusch, Martha Deller & Angela Osmundson

Subject: The United Methodist Church in Latvia

God is moving in marvelous ways in Latvia! A seemingly devastating crisis is being used by our Lord to further His kingdom in that small, distressed country.

Unable to afford other space, the Cesis United Methodist Church has been meeting in the upstairs apartment of a church member. Although the price is right, elder members and those with mobility challenges have not been able to meet for worship because of the steep, narrow stairwell. And now, because of job loss in that distressed economy (the documented lowest in the European Union) and resulting financial struggle of the member providing that space, the apartment is being foreclosed upon necessitating the search for other space in which to worship.

A few members of the Friends of Latvia (from across this country), having recently met in Lancaster, Ohio, have been made aware of this situation and the need for permanent space for the Cesis church. They have given an initial \$22,000 of the needed approximately \$65,000 to secure a building. A building has been found divinely located in the center of Cesis with plenty of space and in very good condition. Essentially nothing needs to be done to the structure prior to move in. Additionally, through contacts with the North Alabama Conference, that conference has underwritten and forwarded funds as a loan to facilitate the purchase of the building. So, this week, \$50,000 has been sent to Latvia to allow the District to fund and close the purchase arrangement and to fund the first 6 months of payments on the remaining \$15,000 balance in this owner financed transaction. God is so good!

So, Meadowbrook, what does that mean for you? You now have an opportunity to partner with a people that, like many others across the world, desire a safe, comfortable place to worship and call their spiritual home. Obviously, there will be ongoing upkeep and expenses to operate the facility as well as the need to fund repayment of the resources that made this blessing happen. If you, the church, choose; this one time or maybe annual gifts of any amount to defray these acquisition costs, this would be most appropriate and welcome by the UMC District and your fellow Methodists in Cesis. Or maybe your class would consider an ongoing pledge of monies (again, of any amount) on a regular basis to be used to operate and maintain the new (to them) facility. You might consider becoming a consistent monthly partner to the Cesis church specifically and at a future date, include in your plans a mission trip to meet the people of the church in Cesis and work side by side with them on developing ministry to that city and local area.

It is nothing short of amazing what God has done in the last 2 ½ weeks on this project. Will you be a part of what God is doing in this or any other place in our world? There are several projects on the General Board of Global Missions (GBGM) website that identify other projects in Latvia and around the world. You, as a church, are invited to rally around the Latvian Methodists to support their efforts and you, as an individual, are challenged to find your own place to “bless others as you have been blessed.” Please talk to one of your Outreach Committee members if you have questions.