

Jesus said: "For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will."

—John 5.20-21



Jesus, Thy Boundless love to me
No thought can reach,
no tongue declare;
Unite my thankless heart to Thee,
and reign without
a rival there!
Thine, wholly Thine alone I am;
Be Thou alone my constant flame.

In suffering be Thy love my peace,
In weakness be
Thy love my pow'r;
And when the storms of life shall cease,
O Jesus, in
that final hour,
Be Thou my rod and staff and guide,
And draw me safely to Thy side!

—*Jesus, thy Boundless Love to Me,*
Lutheran Service Book #683

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Jesus Christus spricht: Wie mich der Vater geliebt hat, so habe auch ich euch geliebt. Bleibt in meiner Liebe! (Lutherbibel 1984)

Jesus Christ says: "As the Father has loved me, so also have I loved you all.
Remain in my love! (personal translation)

—John 15.9

For me, at least, it's rather remarkable to think that Jesus has the same love for us—His chosen, His beloved—that His Father has for Him.

After all, as beings, we stand outside that interpersonal "go around" of love, which is nothing other than the Holy Trinity itself. Certainly, as fallen and rebellious beings, we are cut off from it, from Him altogether.

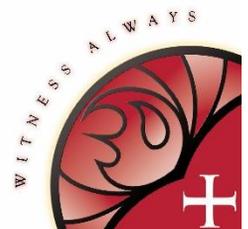
Nevertheless, it is this love that Jesus has for us. Here the Eternal takes on the temporal, the Creator takes on the created, the Holy takes on the sinful, the Immortal takes on the mortal, Glory takes on shame, Wisdom takes on foolishness, Honor takes on dishonor, Power takes on weakness—all in a form and manner that is unbroken and unyielding, enshrined in resurrected flesh.

You and I have a love that is the only love that will do: the only love God can be, that love only God can give, the only love that we broken and rebellious beings will ever need and, in the end, will have.

But may all be able to use that saying, "I am like a green olive tree in the house of God. I trust in the steadfast love of God forever and ever."

—Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*, 7.7

Scott R. Murray, *A Year with the Church Fathers: Meditations for Each Day of the Church Year* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2011), 201





Let Us Pray . . .

- In thanksgiving that, baptized into Christ, we are God's beloved children
- For the pursuit of the common good among the leaders of our lawful governments
- For relief from tyranny far and near
- For a greater reverence and respect for religious liberty and living in accordance with conscience
- For a spirit of penitence and trust in the gracious promises of God in Christ Jesus
- For continued blessing and guidance upon current and future work



Die Taufkapelle,
Die Kirche Sankt Mang,
Füssen, Germany

Hier und dort und alles inzwischen

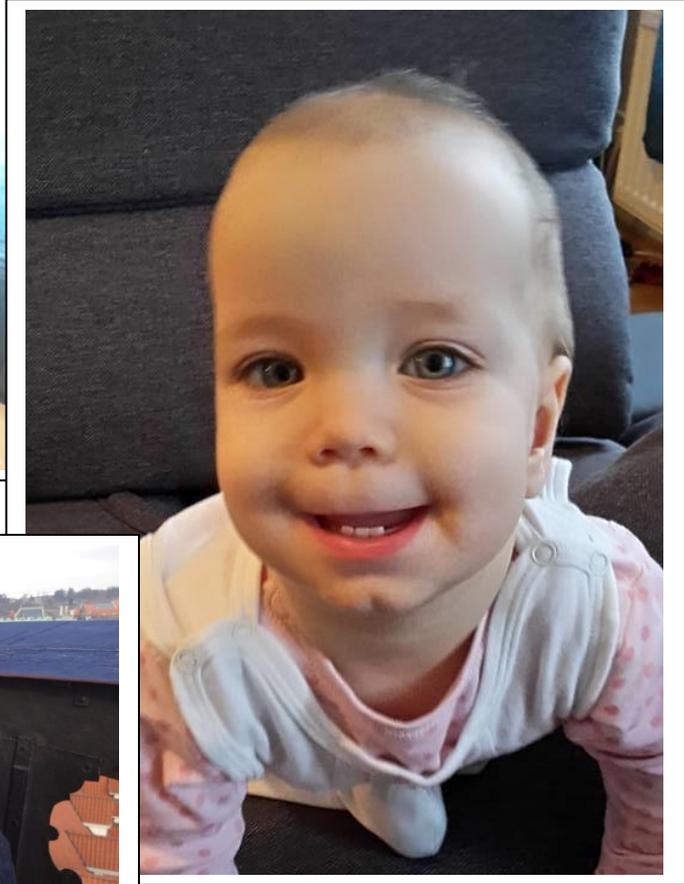
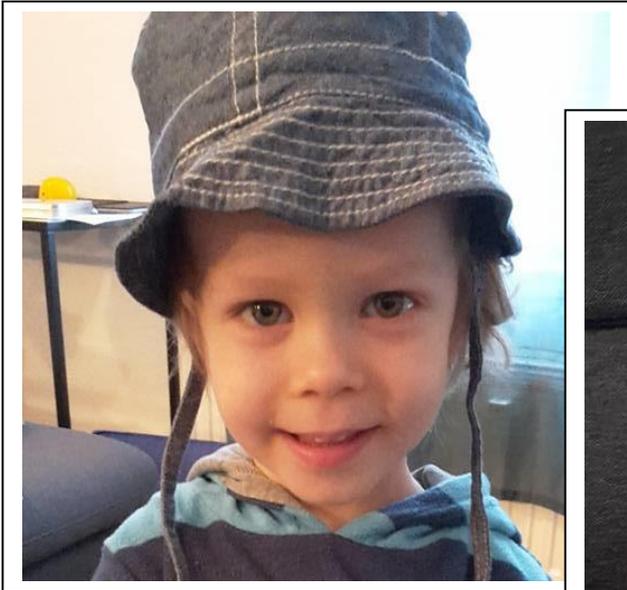
February was somewhat of a more abnormal month for us. After lending considerable effort and attention toward regional work planning, the entire family then headed to Prague for two short back-to-back conferences: the first for the Network of Young Lutherans Theologians 12–14 February, followed by the LCMS Eurasia Team Meeting 14–17 February. The first conference was a bit of a *novum* for Chris since deployment, but a happy one at that, as he was able to meet a good number of new people who are engaged in our common churchly endeavor of the proclamation of the Gospel, with whom he was not only able to exchange a number of ideas but also to spend some time becoming acquainted with them and their joys and concerns. The second conference was more of a “group meeting” of our LCMS Eurasia Personnel, where we shared professional strategies for our respective work endeavors. The remainder of the month found almost all of us sick—one person in succession after another—with a stomach virus, through which God brought us while we pressed on with the work-related, school-related, and personal tasks and routines, as well as with health recovery.

While working toward the completion of the professional review of the new Ingrian Altar Book, Chris is lending considerable thought and effort toward the creation of multiple strategies for future regional work, as well as proceeding on with adult Christian instruction in support of our congregation's refugee work. Life is never (and, truly, for us, never has been) dull, and when push comes to shove, we probably wouldn't want it any other way.

Elizabeth's Ecke

New Missionary Orientation began today (November 29, 2016) at the International Center in St. Louis. The Eurasia Region has new missionaries attending the orientation in preparation for deployment. One of them, Rev. Craig Donofrio, will be the Director of Regional Communications. I will report to him. I am looking forward to he and his wife arriving on the field. They will be based out of Prague, Czech Republic. We are hoping to create an even more unified and varied communications plan for the region, which will include radio, video, podcasts and more. Rev. Donofrio brings considerable expertise in media to the table, and I am looking forward to working with him. Please be in prayer for Craig and Paula as they go through orientation, raise their network of support and prepare for deployment.

Helene turns one on March 23, so we are busy thinking through good baby girl first birthday gifts. A dolly might be in order. I'm used to trains, planes and automobiles for the boys; it's definitely a new experience with Helene. She is preparing to pull up to stand. She mainly likes to do so on Mommy or Thomas for now, with a little bit of help. Matthias is chattier and chattier all the time, adding words to his vocabulary every day. He loves Helene and can't wait for her to wake up when she takes her naps. Thomas is enjoying school as always. He is a caring big brother, and taking on more jobs around the house. He likes to mop using the Swiffer after I vacuum. It certainly makes a difference in how long it takes me to clean the apartment!



May God in Christ through the Spirit bless you now and forever.

Christopher & Elizabeth

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