

## December 2011 Riga Bible Centre / Child Play Centre, UK Conference

This Sunday's *Bible Companion* readings include Hebrews 11, and there's an MP3 about this chapter at <http://www.aletheiacollege.net/audio/heb11.mp3>

### RIGA BIBLE CENTRE

We're pleased to say that today we baptized ANDREJ, husband of sis Sandra. It's great to see someone who's attended for a long time finally decide for the Lord Jesus, and this is a testimony to the welcoming spirit there is in what is now a large ecclesia, as well as to the faithful encouragement of sis Sandra, who you can see very happy too after the baptism:



And young Adrian's dream of beating us all at chess got a bit sidetracked because the older brethren all wanted to play, and only two chess sets have so far arrived [more are on the way from kind donors], but anyway, the chess idea is quite a winner. About 10 brethren remain up to 4 hours after meeting because of it! Here's Adrian watching his father br Gennady playing with br Vlad.



Cindy began the mothers and toddlers group by distributing fliers in the park to other mums as she daily walks the children. The group has slowly grown, they meet at the **Riga Bible Centre** three times / week, and there can be up to 20 present. Cindy has the idea to create an indoor play area in the hall which would act as a further magnet for young mothers and their toddlers, especially in the long Winter months. There are no such indoor play areas freely available elsewhere. So she's got some ideas and appeals to make. She writes as follows:

*"The great response I've had to Mothers and Toddlers group over the past 6 months has helped me realise how isolated and unsupported a lot of Mums here feel. People here in Latvia are really doing it tough. Things were difficult enough before the financial crisis, and now it's even worse (One of Latvia's largest banks just went bankrupt - the crisis is far from over here). It would be so lovely to be able to extend Christ's love in a very practical and visible way to the local community here. The days are really short now, and it starts to get dark after 3pm, which means that there isn't really anywhere safe for little kids to go in the afternoons which is free and kid friendly. The large front room at our Riga Bible centre could be a really great solution to this problem. I'd love to transform the back part of it into an indoor kids play area for use on some weekdays when we don't already have meetings. This would provide a great opportunity for us to witness Christ's love to the local community and increase the visibility of **Riga Bible Centre**. Free Bible literature would always be on display for people to take home and read. I'd also like to be able to offer free tea and coffee for the parents on the cold winter nights. The weather here is so dreary (4 hours or less of sunlight per day for half of the year) that I'm sure the kids would use it a lot in spring and autumn too when there are lots of windy, snowy or rainy days. We will be having some Australian DIY brothers with us soon, and I'd like to utilise their skills to erect some sturdy, toddler proof barriers to section off part of our big room for the play area (we*

don't want kids and balls near the dangerous stacks of chairs and the projector screen etc). The barriers could also double up as blackboards, if we have the funding to buy blackboard paint. One of the mothers at Mother and Toddler's group is a lawyer, who has advised me to be careful to get new equipment which meets European safety standards just in case of any accidents, and to be careful to keep proof of purchase. I will also print big signs saying that children are only allowed to play under strict parental supervision and that parents are responsible for the safety and wellbeing of their own children. This isn't just to try and protect ourselves from litigation - it's the parents who we really want to be able to talk to about Christ - the child's play area is really just another way to get more adults into the hall so that we can have an opportunity to witness to them, if they are open to it. I think that to get this indoor play area up and running we would need about 400 GBP for the barrier, and then we would hopefully find kind donors for some of the following (or similar) equipment:

**Ball pit and balls** (about 230 GBP): <http://www.abode.lv/product/lv/439830a>  
(balls: <http://www.abode.lv/product/lv/fbb22efcca6e4f388fd51e7b19717163> - could probably buy these cheaper off ebay but they'd need to be posted to Latvia

**Play kitchen** (about 60 GBP, could be paid for via paypal): <http://www.babystore.lv/?dir=view&id=23457&page=1>

**Cubby house** (about 130 GBP, can order via paypal): <http://www.babystore.lv/?dir=view&id=18887&page=1>

If anyone has experience with playgrounds or can suggest better ideas for equipment I'd be really thankful - please email me at [cindyheaster@gmail.com](mailto:cindyheaster@gmail.com) .

I really think that this indoor play area would be a great way to get people together, spread the love of Christ, and get more people into the hall and hopefully eventually baptized.

Thank you!

Cindy"

The total cost of what Cindy's suggesting is about 1000 GBP / 1500 \$. You can donate to **Carelinks** by PayPal at [info@carelinks.net](mailto:info@carelinks.net) , or by bank transfer or cheque as per the details at <http://carelinks.net/doc/otherdonations> ; or as Cindy has mentioned, there's the possibility to order equipment yourself from the links provided. Let's pray this is another project which works out to God's glory.

## **CARELINKS UK CONFERENCE**

Here's an advance note from Br Steve Gretton:

### **Location:**

St John's Community Hall, Upper Seldon Road, South Croydon. CR2 8DD UK

<http://www.list.co.uk/place/20015691-st-johns-community-hall/>

### **Date & Time:**

Saturday 25 Feb 2012: 14.00 - 20.00

### **Theme:**

"The case for grace."

### **Co-ordinator:**

Steve Gretton ([steve.gretton@gmail.com](mailto:steve.gretton@gmail.com))

### **Food:**

Debbie Clements has agreed to co-ordinate the food so please discuss ideas and offers of help with her: [clementsrc@hotmail.com](mailto:clementsrc@hotmail.com)

### **Accommodation:**

Rob and Debbie Clements have said they will match beds and visitors. However, they are away until the 26 November. If anyone needs B&B Friday and / or Saturday please contact them.

(clementsarc@hotmail.com)

**Speakers:**

Duncan is giving the opening talk: "The case for grace". Intriguingly there is no word in Russian (or many other E European languages) for grace!

Bro Andy Taylor of Windermere ecclesia will give a presentation called "Grace on the road", talking about grace and his experience of it on the road on mission work.

We are looking for offers of some short talks (10 mins) on aspects of grace, e.g Grace in Hosea, Grace in Genesis, 'Grace and truth came through Jesus.'

Yes, I know, you could give a weekend course on each of those subjects, but we are just looking for a BRIEF 'snapshot.'

Also short testimonies of 'How grace has changed my life.'

Offers please to Steve Gretton or Rob Clements.

We hope to have a sister from Latvia to tell us about her conversion from Soviet atheism to the grace of God. "How the grace of God has impacted my life."

Bro Charles Abel hopes to put together a presentation of the stories of some bre and sis. "Grace in Riga"

**Bookings:**

*Please let Steve Gretton know if you are coming! (steve.gretton@gmail.com)*

**With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks**