

Riga Bible Centre May 2009

As mentioned in a previous carelink, the fast growing Riga, Latvia ecclesia is moving into new premises, and we invited your support of the rebuilding work. A great team of brothers and a sister- Graham Mitchell, Pauline Brett, Pete Eichhorn and Mark Leadbetter- came over from England to assist in this work; they worked extremely hard and returned home with the empty hall now a functioning Bible centre, with a baptismal pool, kitchen, etc. There's still much work to do but everything's now functional. They tackled some major plumbing issues, installing drains and bringing water quite some way to enable this property to be functional. Here are the team installing the baptismal bath:



In the 10 days they were in Latvia, they stayed at Duncan & Cindy's apartment and each evening did the daily Bible readings together from the Bible Companion. Staying at the apartment was LJUBA, whose mother is a sister, and who lives normally in Azerbaijan. She enthusiastically joined in the daily Bible readings and finally made the decision to be baptized. So she was the first to be baptized in the new tub. Here she is with Cindy just beforehand:



She's now returned to Azerbaijan, and our thoughts and prayers are with her there. A few days later it was our pleasure to baptize MARIJA in the same tub. Marija lives in the women's shelter in Riga and became aware of the Gospel through our ministrations to the women there.



Brother Mark is a master carpenter and put up shelves around the place, where we are already displaying our literature in several languages:



Mark also did an amazing job transforming the storeroom into a kitchen. And already the ecclesia is meeting here and using it:



So, Sunday breaking of bread meetings are already being held here- but we have many plans to start holding seminars, "Improve your English through reading the Bible" courses, mothers and women's groups etc.



What we need is workers! Those empty chairs in the photo above are waiting for you to fill! Thanks to our brethren's work, the hall now has a kind of apartment which can provide basic accomodation for short to medium term visitors. It's on the direct bus route from the airport, and has a supermarket next to it. We're looking for anyone interested in coming out to give presentations just for a weekend; or coming to stay for 2-3 months [or longer!] to run the classes here. There have been many baptisms in the Baltic states over the last 20 years; there's much pastoral work to do as well! Please do prayerfully consider this challenge, and do contact us if you're interested at info@carelinks.net . The Latvian economy has well nigh collapsed and there is huge unemployment and slashing of wages- leading many people to turn to God. You may have read press reports about it, here's a quote from http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/country_profiles/1106666.stm : "An economic contraction of 12% and a 50% increase in unemployment was predicted for 2009, and the government was prompted to seek aid from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The social turmoil triggered by the financial crisis led to the fall of the government in February 2009". All this makes fertile ground for the Gospel.

With love from your brothers and sisters of Carelinks