

Peace to you, dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This year Reformation Day in SELC was marked by pastoral ordination of Deacon Dmitri Dotsenko at the parish of St James in Novokuznetsk.

Dmitri has graduated from Lutheran Theological Seminary in November of 2006. After graduation he moved to Khakassia, to the small town of Chernogorsk, adjacent to Abakan, the capital of Khakassia. Next summer, in July 2007, Dmitri was ordained as a deacon [more about it, please see at Newsletter #165]. As there was no permanent pastor in Novokuznetsk, Bishop Lytkin assigned Dmitri to travel there on weekends. His responsibility [is] to conduct services without Holy Communion and teach Catechism classes.



After purchasing of the church premises in Novokuznetsk, which was made possible through support of the Siberian Lutheran Mission Society [<http://siberianlutheranmissions.com/>], he spent a large amount of his time and energy remodeling and renovating the place. People in the parish of St James have got to know him as a committed minister of the Church, as a person who cares. Bishop Vsevolod Lytkin and probst Pavel Zayakin saw Dmitri as focused and well-trained deacon. Bishop says:



“There is a tradition in our Church -- a person is ordained first as a deacon, and after three or more years the Church will decide whether he is ready to serve as a pastor. It is a very good custom: as deacon is not independent in his ministry, he is subject to the pastor. In several years we can see if he is able to serve independently and make decisions on behalf of the Church.

While a student, Dmitri was one of the most devout and ardent seminarians. Now he has become one of those pastors who consider Holy Ministry as their greatest gift and grace.

Dmitri pays close attention to the people’s needs. He is also very serious about liturgy. The day following his ordination he conducted the Eucharist for the first time in his life. I stayed in Novokuznetsk for that day to support and help him. For us clergymen, every liturgy is like a micro-heart-attack. Can you imagine then what it means to serve it for the first time!

He was afraid and nervous. I even remembered well-known story about Luther’s first Eucharistic service. Dmitri did everything correctly, though he trembled. I worried about him. And parishioners worried about him and supported him. They rejoiced for his sake and for theirs, because from now on he would be feeding them with Christ’s Body and Blood every Sunday.”



Doctor Timothy Quill and Doctor Albert Collver from LCMS were assisting Bishop Lytkin in Dmitri's ordination alongside with SELC pastors Alexei Streltsov and Pavel Khramov. Though our Churches have not yet signed the formal fellowship agreement, this shows that we share true fellowship in common faith and confession.



After ordination Dr. Albert Collver said: *"When I was asked to participate in the sacrament of holy ordination, as it is described in the Lutheran Confessions, I felt deeply honored to be asked. In fact, this was the first ordination I have participated in. Before this I had participated in the installation of pastors in a new congregation. It was a great privilege and honor to be involved."*



*"With Father Dmitri's ordination, the Lord Jesus has answered the prayer to send workers into the ripe fields for harvest. His ordination shows the Lord's love and care for his bride, the Church, and shows that he will preserve his church until his return. We pray that the Lord send more labors into the field not only in Russia but throughout the world."*

Dr. Timothy Quill added: *"I remember Dmitri well as a student while teaching at the Seminary in Novosibirsk. He was a wonderful student. He studied hard and always came to class prepared. Dmitri is a humble man with a great pastoral heart. He will be a blessing to the SELC. I will keep him, his family and congregation in my prayers."*

Please pray for the Lutheran clergy in Siberia, and for develop parish and mission work.