



### **December 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>**

December is the official beginning of the holiday season. For Latvians, this month was filled with traditions, family bonding, and mandarins. For us, we began to learn Russian. We have a contact who speaks Russian, but is learning English. We decided to help her learn English and she wanted to help us learn as well. Several of our other contacts met with us this week to show us their favorite Christmas foods, and to celebrate my belated birthday. This was also a time of transition, for one team member left and another came in the same week.

### **December 9<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>**

As we crept closer to Christmas, many of our contacts became unavailable. School was in its final week, people were traveling to other cities to visit family, and it was colder than I was used to. Nevertheless, we welcomed another team member back to the city and were able to meet with some of our regular contacts. We were invited to participate with several of the churches in the area. Russian was a large focus for us this week. Also, we have the opportunity to begin Sunday School lessons at the monthly celebration service.

### **December 16<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>**

This was the most exciting week I have had on the field, yet. Winter is often a time where animals hibernate and plants die, but the work of God is in full force! We were given the opportunity to go to different schools in the smaller surrounding cities and pass out gifts to less fortunate children. Seeing their faces light up filled us all with joy. We were able to reconnect with someone the team has not been connected with since the summer time. Another significant moment is when one of the regular contacts I meet with weekly asked me if she could study the Bible with me to help her understand it more!

### **December 24<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup>**

We soon gathered together in the small European apartment that we call home and spent quality time together for the holiday. Eager to get back to the long to-do list I had formed for myself, December 26<sup>th</sup> I eagerly left the house to stand in a long line at the bank. To my dismay in Latvia there was a bank holiday called Second Christmas. I had to patiently wait until the next day. This week was very busy. We had the contact over and studied the Bible together. It went well and she wanted to continue studying in the future. We also had the opportunity to go to Riga for New Years Eve. We were able to meet some of their contacts. I am excited to see what the new year brings!

