

## *A Message from the Moyer Family*

Dear Covenant Family,

*Liebe Grüße aus Lübeck!* It is hard to believe that over a month has gone by since we made our journey to Lübeck, and an adventurous journey it was, navigating border control in between flights in Charles de Gaulle airport with all of our bags and just minutes to spare. Eventually, we made our way to the cozy apartment we call home on Dr. Julius Leber Straße, just two blocks from the famous church of St. Mary's, the church in which Dieterich Buxtehude was organist for 49 years and where a young Johann Sebastian Bach came to learn from this master in 1705. The old city of Lübeck is resplendent with history, a culture that extends back to its founding in the 12th century and its dominance as the capital city of the Hanseatic League for over 400 years. However, the city does not just remain in its past, its people embrace it and live into our time. Just yesterday, we watched in amazement over one thousand children and adults parade the streets in the pouring rain out of concern for the stewardship of our world and environment. As our language skills slowly improve, it is amazing to experience how communication barriers recede with just the simplicity of a smile.

Christopher and Samuel are working hard at their studies through an online program in the Shaker School system. The many museums and churches of Lübeck and the surrounding cities provide other wonderful opportunities for learning, not excluding a visit to the supermarket! Kaori and Jonathan enjoy practicing on the three organs of the Jacobikirche, where Arvid Gast (Jonathan's sabbatical replacement at Oberlin) is the main organist. His wife Ulrike directs the choirs. A new custom for us after each practice session has been putting a cloth-cover over the keyboards in order to keep them clean from bat droppings!

We have enjoyed attending services at Jakobi during their "winter church" season. Because the main church (nearly 800 years old!) is not heated, the congregation meets in a heated side chapel. Once warmer days return, all will move back to the main sanctuary. We look forward to having the opportunity to provide music for their worship service (*Gottesdienst*) on March 31. In the coming days, we will be traveling a lot, when Jonathan will be giving concerts in Hannover, Bielefeld, Norden, and Alkmaar (The Netherlands). If you want to see more, Kaori faithfully posts updates and pictures on Facebook.

Sabbaticals journeys like this provide us the opportunity to reflect on our lives, the people we cherish, and our calling. We are continually reminded how blessed we are to call Cleveland home and the Covenant congregation our family. We send you our warmest greetings, prayers, and blessings from afar.

Sincerely,

*Jonathan, Kaori, Christopher, and Samuel*

P.S. Did we mention the marzipan? Ah, yes... Lübeck boasts some of the most delicious marzipan in Europe along with a museum dedicated to its history. "Kaffee und Kuchen" time is a daily temptation, one that our waistlines continually caution us against!