

Letters from Russia

3 April 1924, Die Welt Post

Splavnucha , February 7th 1924

To George Niederhaus in Lincoln, Nebraska

My dear, dear unforgettable friend Georg Niederhaus!

I apologize for hesitating so long with the answer to your letter. I wanted to wait until we received the money you sent. But since we have not received it yet, I decided to write anyway, even before the money reached us. From the Saratov post office I received 2 checks, one for 10 pounds Sterling and one for 6 pounds Sterling; so, together 16 pounds Sterling. I cannot tell, how much that sum is in Russian money, according to the current exchange rate, because I am not familiar with the daily rising exchange rate. If you had sent your money directly to Balzer, the withdrawal would be less complicated and costly; and the money would already be in our hands. We already have had the money from Portland, Oregon, in our hands, because they had sent it directly to Balzer. From them we received 25 Dollars for the Church, 5 Dollars for myself, and 5 Dollars for the old Ludwige Johann Adam from his daughter Katharina Elisabeth. With the withdrawal of that money we had no costs and troubles; we simply received the money in Dollars. To travel to Saratov now in cold winter is not easy for me, an old man, and to give someone else the power of attorney is too expensive. So, I will leave it there until it warms up; then I will withdraw the money myself. Well, whatever, the money will not be lost for us. But I am glad that you, dear old friend Johann Georg, did not leave my request unanswered and did not mind the trouble to collect (money) for our poor church. May God who rewards all good (deeds) bless you and repay your deed. Myself and our whole church community herewith express our warmest and heartfelt thanks to all happy donors in Montros(e) Colorado and in Lincoln. May the Almighty give you all his salvation and blessings and repay your deed here now and there in eternity. .

Our hands cannot reach across in order to shake your with thanks, but we place the feelings of our thankful hearts onto the paper so that you can read it. We can see from your deeds that you are still interested in the church community of your mother-colony and that you have not forgotten the place where once stood your cradle. You probably still vividly remember the hours when you taught the salvation-teachings in your prayer house and made your (hot) promises at the altar of the Lord. May the blessed impression you received here in this holy place never leave you for the rest of your life! If you had shut your hearts against my request, then our church would be in trouble; I think, because of lack of various things, all church activities would have had to be closed. Now a day our church is in a very precarious situation anyway. It has to take care of itself without any assistance and support and has to help itself. And since so many alienated the church, it is difficult to keep it going. But it has the promise: that even the doors of hell will not overcome it.

I speak in this letter to you, dear friend Niederhaus, about the thanklessness of those who earned it because of their concern with others. It cannot be different in the bad world, which is clearly and completely said in the saying: " Thanklessness is the reward of the world".

Even I have received plenty of thanklessness for all my work I have done for the Hucker Community. The greatest ingratitude that was dished out to me in my old age is that my community gave me the burden of taking care of the heating of the sacristan's apartment myself. Two leaders were responsible for this. They thanked me for my 39 years of service and for the distinctions I received from my community, 2 reward papers and a golden chest medal, by putting me in the position to have to stumble through the woods at age 64 to collect wood so that I will not freeze to death But all of this should not stop us and make us lazy to continue the work of the Lord and to stand up for the Good. It is not totally without reason that many mistakes were made in the administration of various distributions, but one should not measure all with the same stick. - You said in your letter that there should have been a shirt in the package to be given to Nikolaus Hau. There was a shirt but no instructions to whom to give it to. Was there a mistake, then it is not my fault. There should have been a note taped to it saying: To Nikolaus Hau. God save me for embezzlement! My honor is worth more to me than a

shirt. The same with the razors. I found 3 razors in the package and did not think any different than that they were for me. Finally I found a piece of paper stating: "I have filled your wish" next to the address of Georg Hamzel. I could not figure out what it meant. I took the paper and went to the first Georg Hamzel and asked him: Do you have something sent from America? He said No. Then I went to the second Georg Hamzel and he gave the same answer to my question. Finally I came to the third Georg Hamzel and asked him the same question. After a long thought he said: "Wait, teacher, I had written to my brother to send me a good razor." Now I was clear and knew whose razor it was. Had the little note been lost, I would have thought the razor would have been for me. For such mistakes, which could have been made, I could not have been responsible.

Well, this brings my report to you to an end. Should I have forgotten something or should I have not done something right, you should be able to forgive me.

Otherwise, everything is not necessarily good but bearable.

Whatever the future may bring for us, happiness or suffering, good or bad, we do not know. May come what will, we hold still and submit to God's will.

Your son Johannes is preparing eagerly to leave. As I heard, he already has papers taken care of. Soon you will be able to celebrate a happy reunion with your son and brother. May the dear God keep you alive and let you have the joy to see your son face to face soon.

Give greetings to all friends and loved ones from me, also greetings to you son Johann Georg and his wife Eva Katharina. Also, my wife sends greetings especially to Eva Katharina. She thanks her again for the gifts.

Many greetings thankfully yours

J. Rusche
Teacher