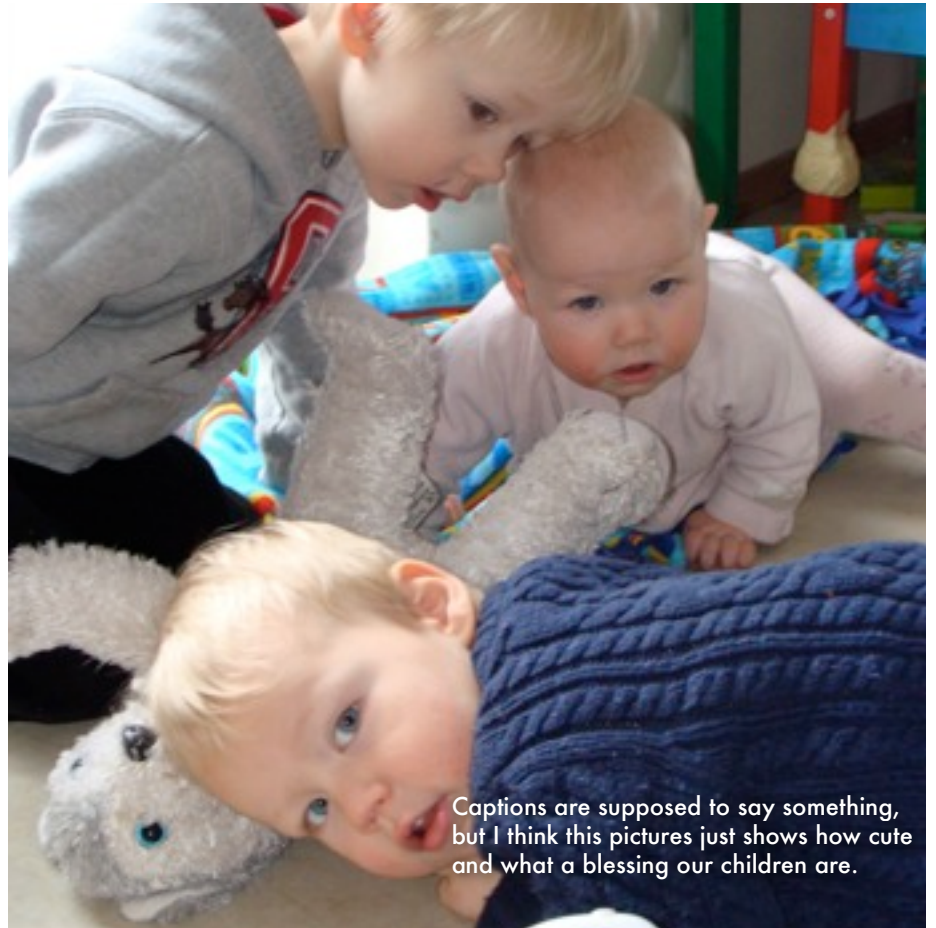


# The Party Press

2009 APRIL  
EDITION



Captions are supposed to say something, but I think this pictures just shows how cute and what a blessing our children are.

## The snow melts and spring is here

### First site of green since November

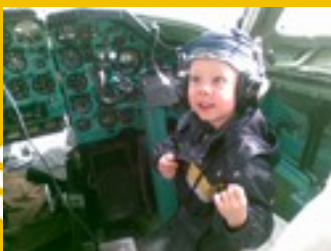
The winters can be very long and very depressing, but once the weather breaks, then it seems to change everything. This winter the snow came in early November and just melted last week so we finally saw the grass. Once this happened you would think it was summer. People came out in their yards, started building again, started smiling again. The temperature only went up a few degrees, but once the snow melts, you start to see the whole world change and its such a welcome change. The boys could finally get outside and play again in their sandbox. They jumped on their swings and really enjoyed the change of seasons. No longer did we

have to put on multiple layers of clothes, hats, boots, socks, wool socks all taking about 15 minutes just to get out the door. Now we can throw on a few things and they can go and run around and just be free. Nora, well she hasn't been running around outside, but she has been crawling around the whole house, pulling her self up to her feet everywhere. She is still learning how to keep her balance and fall down, so there are lots of tears and frustrated cries, but is amazing to see her progress.

Reena and I are hoping to break out the table and chairs on the deck so we can enjoy the outdoors, but its still a little chilly, but we do enjoying taking walks with the kids around the neighborhood in the evening. Its amazing how a nice relaxing walk can change a whole day.

Now as spring approaches, we are trying to get the yard cleaned up some more, finally building a fence for our front yard. I really want to get this done quickly. The boys are always playing and Alex has a tendency to chase birds and doesn't really look at where he is going. This should take a few weekends to get done. Then hopefully we can enjoy some peace of mind knowing everyone is safely inside the confines of the yard.

The spring though is a great time to be reminded of the new life and hope we have in our lives because of Jesus and what he has done for all of us. So as you see the flowers bloom, the grass grow or the leaves rustle in the wind, take a second to say thanks for your new life and hope!



May 15, 2009 through June 22, 2009 we are traveling as a family back to Estonia to visit friends, family, church, work on support, rest, relax, sight see, have fun, eat food, preach where possible and basically hang out. We just bought our tickets and are really looking forward to coming. The boys can't wait to fly on an airplane again. The travel of course is going to be challenging. We go from Tallinn to Stockholm on a 1 hour flight, then we quickly board a 8 hour flight to Chicago, spend 5 hours there and finish with another 1 hour flight to Cleveland. With 3 kids and suitcases and all that stuff it should be an adventure!

## English Camp 9 years and running!

March means its time for English Camp. This year was maybe the most enjoyable camp i have ever help run and attend. We tried to get students more involved this year in the planning and preparation for the camp. We tried to keep them free during the event, but we formed some different teams and it made a huge difference. Northwest Bible Church sent another amazing team to be part of the camp and lead the small groups. I can't say enough good things about this group and the work Northwest has done on behalf of Risttee and Tartu, the generosity

of the people there is paying dividends in eternity. We had several kids make decisions to follow Christ and we also had a huge awakening among all of the students. New small groups are starting up, LIFT, the youth ministry is growing and I am seeing young people become disciples and make new disciples. I hope this trend continues for a long time because English Camp has been a part of so many peoples stories of find new life in God.

## Highlights from the past few months

### Tagahoov

Every month we have a special family event called Tagahoov or Backyard. These events have been becoming and more and more successful. In addition to drama, music and games, we have been able to create a play room after the event where kids can play and do different crafts and parents can enjoy a cup of coffee and talk. With each event a few more people come and several are now attending our services. We hope to see this ministry continue to grow throughout 2009.



### 5 People 5 Stories

Every couple of months we take a Sunday and do a little something different. We don't have a traditional sermon, instead we have 5 people share their story of what God is doing in their lives. We did this on February 1 and Easter and what great mornings they were. Its amazing how stories can say so much in 5-7 minutes that a 30 minute sermon can not. Our church family was so encouraged and challenged. Everyday since those Sundays, people have commented to me and others how a certain story encouraged them or helped them in their lives. Its amazing but it clearly shows how we are to encourage one another and how this leads to transformed lives. We will continue to have these a couple times a year and I encourage you to do that same at your churches, not matter how big or small, sharing stories is one incredible way to encourage and challenge your church.

### Risttee Retreat

In January the entire church went away for a 3 day retreat to Otepaa the winter capital of Estonia. The retreat was done to help our church family get to know each other better, cast vision and also to have a ton of fun being together. Some good friends from Buckhead Church in Atlanta came to help with the event. We had over 80 people including kids attend and its has had a significant impact on our church. I remember sitting in the back of the meeting room and then God saying to me, "this is my church". I started to smile because it was so true. Even though we are young, and inexperienced, we are still God's church and he is alive and working in so many peoples lives. We had the theme of Shine and I was able to speak the last session about the things that stop us from shining and I focused on arguing and complaining. What an incredible weekend and experience for our family, and the impact of this is being felt everyday by our church.

### Church Planting

In late January I attended a meeting with a group of pastors and missionaries throughout Eastern Europe that have a desire to see churches planted in those areas. We had a chance to learn what's going on in each of those countries and then try to come up with a plan of how we can work together to make this dream a reality.

One encouraging piece is that Risttee will become a model church. This means we will have many visitors from Eastern Europe that will come through and learn about what God is doing here and then go back to their countries and plant new churches. We are excited to have this opportunity. Risttee will also take the lead in Estonia to coach church planters. I hope to be involved in this process and spend time with those whom God calls to plant new churches in Estonia, where they are so desperately needed.

## Prayer Requests

### Economic Series



This month we are talking about money and the economic situation that is dominating Estonia and the world. It is our hope to teach our young church how to

handle their finances and also help the people of our city during this rough time.

### Good Health

Our family seems to have someone sick all the time. Winters can be tough and long but we need your prayers. Please pray that we can all get healthy and be able to enjoy the winter a little bit more. Also, pray for Alex's lungs. As he gets sick, it seems to attack there and makes breathing and sleeping very difficult.

### Support Level

The economy is in a downturn, but I believe God is bigger than wall Street. We are still around 80% of our desired support level. Pray for people to respond to God calling and help support our family and the work here in Estonia.

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