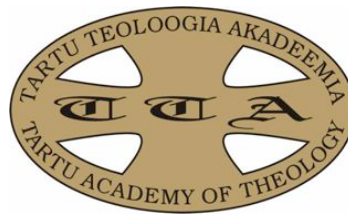


# Tartu Academy of Theology

Tartu, Estonia  
Newsletter, September 2014



Partnering  
with  
East  
European  
Missions  
Network



English Friendship Language Camp teachers and students in front of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Tartu. August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

*Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.*

*1 Peter 5:7*

## Reasons for Joy and Concern

The new academic year began on the 10<sup>th</sup> of September, and we have a reason to be glad and thank God because **32 new students have started their studies**. Eighteen of them are at the undergraduate program and 14 at the graduate level.

The full accreditation that we achieved in the spring has increased both teachers' and students' confidence and has also led to a greater interest in learning opportunities. We hope that acting together with the Institute, we are able to offer the highest quality education for those serving the Church, and to add to our society a considerable number of workers who rely on the word of God. This way it could also be possible to increase

the church membership which until now has been continuously decreasing.

At the same time, we have a great concern about our sustainability because inevitably we also need money for being able to do all that work. But in the current year, our incomes from the donations have been significantly lower than last year.

The situation has become very serious, because **at the end of September, our budget is in the red by \$56,833 USD**. It is a great sum of money considering our current year's total budget what is \$187,300 USD.

This shortage has caused serious troubles in our work. Thanks to God, all of our

workers stand in faith and no one has left despite this crisis. During the years of TAT's existence, we have experienced God's miracles to such a great extent, and we trust that these miracles have not ended.

I call upon the assistance of all our good friends, because only together we can overcome this crisis. I would be deeply grateful if you can support us financially, but most of all we need the prayers that we could experience God's blessings in all that we're doing and planning.

Siimon Haamer  
Dean



### CURRENT FINANCIAL SITUATION

Our **deficit** of the current year's budget has increased and is in the end of September **\$ -56,833 USD**.

Quick financial update of TAT

Total budget of 2014	\$ 187,300
Income January-September of 2014	\$ 81,112
Budget of January-September of 2014	\$ 137,945
<b>Balance on September 29<sup>th</sup> of 2014</b>	<b>\$ -56,833</b>

**Because of the deficit we have had serious difficulties to cover our primary and most urgent needs already during two months.**

We would be very grateful if you could help us to bring our budget back to balance!

May God reward according to His mercy all those who donate us!

### TRIP TO THE STATES IN OCTOBER

From the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> of October 2014 Eenok and Siimon Haamer will be visiting United States at the invitation of East European Missions Network. They will participate in the Lutheran

Mission for Christ Annual Gathering, held in Des Moines from 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> of October, there they will also lead a breakout session on 7<sup>th</sup> of October. After that they will also visit several congregations in Minnesota and North Dakota.



### East European Missions Network

2111 Golf Course Rd SE, Suite C, Rio Rancho, NM  
87124  
Phone: 505-990-1639

### Donate

Mail a check to EEMN office, specifying in the memo portion or on an attached sheet of paper the designation of your donation to Tartu Academy of Theology. All contributions are tax deductible.

## STUDENT VOICES: PEETER

My name is Peeter Kase. I used to live an ordinary life without God, like most people do. As always, life had its ups and downs. Then, at one point, I really hit rock bottom. But a miraculous change took place: as a last resort, I turned to God, and He answered my prayers. It happened in February of 2013. Jesus reached out to me with His mighty hand and pulled me out of the swamp – I became a believer. Since then my life has completely changed – I guess I dare to say that Saul became Paul. First I joined the Tartu Catholic congregation, then I started to look for a new efficacy for myself, through which I could grow spiritually.

Online, I discovered TAT in my hometown. I chose TAT for its clear and strong religious orientation. I passed the matriculation examinations with positive results in August 2013 and began my studies in pastoral care specialization in September.

After the conversion, my life has changed completely – as soon as a person understands redemption, Jesus Christ's sacrifice for humanity and the eternal truth, all of the everyday problems become trivial; they lose their importance and cease to be scary. Since my material situation was not particularly good, I got unexpected help, because through TAT a sponsor was found to finance my studies.

As I started my studies in theology, my priest warned me that a learner has to hold great faith and have firm ground to stand on. At this point I have to thank my priest, Father Miguel, and Siimon Haamer, who always supported me with their encouraging words at the most difficult time. I also deeply honor Eenok Haamer – such kindhearted men with great and powerful faith have nowadays become harder and harder to find.

I really love going to school, because here a genuinely religious and ecumenical spirit is prevalent. Although I'm only on the second course, I am determined to finish this path. In my future life and occupation, I would like to implement what I have learned at school, as usefully as possible for fellow human beings. How it will be done exactly, I cannot yet tell at this point of time, but placing all my hopes in God.

Our class also enjoys what seems to be the feeling of a little congregation, having Eenok and Siimon as spiritual fathers. I thank God for letting me find the peace of soul and the path that is very dear to my heart.

May God hold and bless the teachers and students of TAT and my sponsor!



Barbara teaching at the English Bible Camp. Aug, 2014.

Barbara with pastors David Fisher (left) and Bob Nordvall at Eenok Haamer's home listening Eenok's story. Aug, 2014.



## Committed to Estonia

God has plans and it is amazing when you look back and see how he has carried out those plans. Three years ago, God 'planned' for my husband and me to meet Pastor Bob Nordvall. We both soon caught his passion, enthusiasm and love for Estonia, the people there, the Haamer Family and Tartu Academy of Theology (TAT). I have been blessed to have been able to participate in EEMN's English Language Bible Camp in Tartu, for the past three years and Brian, my husband, was able to participate last year. Like Pastor Bob, we are committed to helping in any way that we can. I would like to share why we feel that way.

First, we believe that God is calling us to help and be involved.

Second, we believe that God planned for and is using TAT to help reintroduce Christian beliefs in Estonia. We have heard Pastor Eenok's incredible story and are amazed by all the miracles God performed to keep him and his family safe so he could one day honor the vision that God gave to him to found TAT. We admire the hard decision that TAT made to reject funding from donors who insisted that TAT not follow the teachings of the Bible. Consequently, they have struggled financially over the last several years. However, their strong commitment to the Bible makes my husband and I want to help more. As a former teacher, I have been very impressed with the level and quality of education that TAT provides, their commitment to the spiritual growth of the students and that they train many different kinds of Christian workers that will go out and spread the Word of the Lord with others.

Third, we have grown to love the Estonian people. Pastor Bob was right when he said, "They are a beautiful people." He meant that Estonians are beautiful *on the inside*. We now have many Estonian friends. During my most recent trip to Estonia I learned how isolating it is for Christians there. I was shocked when I learned that a Christian may not know even one other Christian living in their village. In America, while we have our own issues relating to Christianity, we still know many other Christians in our communities and, thankfully, have many Christian based groups that we can become involved with if we so desire. This is not the case in Estonia where less than 15% of the population is Christian. Due to the harsh consequences they had to endure for their beliefs during the Soviet occupation and the discrimination that still exists there today, it is certainly understandable why many Estonians are hesitant to share their faith with others.

I love Estonia. I love the Estonian people. My fervent prayer is that Christianity will rapidly grow there and that Christians will find ways to gather and support each other while continuing to share the Word with others so that the isolation vanishes. The work that TAT is doing is going a long way to help solve this problem. My husband and I will continue do whatever God calls us to do in Estonia because we believe it is part of His plan.

Barbara Felt, Pharm.D

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