



Partnering  
with  
**East  
European  
Missions  
Network**



Rector Ove Sander celebrating Holy Communion with students.

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 8:12

Visit our website  
[www.tat.news](http://www.tat.news)

## Challenging Time for the Estonian Lutheran Church in Training Pastors

We are thankful to God for the fruitful co-operation of Tartu Academy of Theology with the Estonian Lutheran Church Seminary, now going on 5 years. We all feel the same heartbeat that binds us together, valuing Scripture and a personal relationship with God.

Support that has been given to TAT from our brothers and sisters in Christ has not only been very significant for the Seminary and TAT, but evidently also to the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church. I know there are very many prayers in addition to these donations and we have felt the special blessing that comes through faithful prayers.

The Seminary has seen good developments in co-operation with TAT during these 5 years, but much more is ahead of us. We have a long-term mission that needs committed work during future generations. Our task is to raise a new generation of church leaders to guarantee continuity of mission work among Estonians. TAT is a good example: Pastor Eenok Haamer started TAT 25 years ago and today his son, Siimon, continues in the mission.

Obviously our work isn't without problems and obstacles. We are still strongly influenced by 50 years of Soviet occupation when Christians underwent strong pressure. Today the Estonian Lutheran Church, the largest Christian denomination in Estonia, is struggling with decreasing numbers of church members. As a result of this, we have a situation where the Church no longer has sufficient funds for pastors training in the Seminary. Usually one third (\$125,000 USD) of the Seminary's budget has been covered by the Estonian Lutheran Church, but according to the budget for next year it will be only \$82,000 USD. **This creates a \$43,000 USD shortfall.** Church leaders are of course aware of the importance of pastors training for the Church, while at the same time parish pastors struggle with their daily income.

To fill that gap, the Seminary along with TAT is organizing a fundraising banquet in the spring of 2018. These kinds of events are not common in Estonia but we are trying something new and hope to raise at least \$10,000 USD. **We are looking for a matching partner for this event to make it more successful and to make a strong start with a new tradition in Estonian**

**society.**

If someone would like to help us with this shortfall a donation can be sent through the same channels as you send to TAT, just write the designation as "TAT-Seminary". It is of course very important that stable financing of TAT also continues.

We feel deeply that the work in our hands is God's given call and mission. It isn't just a job or an option for us. Thus, we should boldly go on with the ministry of training and equipping pastors and workers for His name and Kingdom sake. Together with the Lord of the Harvest and our good partners we can complete this mission. Jesus' encouraging promise is still true, "I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit - fruit that will last" John 15:16.

Ove Sander  
Rector  
Estonian Evangelical  
Lutheran Church Seminary



### OUR CURRENT FINANCIAL SITUATION

During the 3rd quarter of the year our deficit almost doubled and on September 30th it reached **\$28,849**. We are very thankful for everyone's support. Now it is possible to donate to specific projects of the mission of TAT. Please visit our website [tat.news](http://tat.news) ("Projects" subpage under "To Donate") for more information. We would be especially happy to see commitments for at least a 1-year period. That gives us more stability and encouragement to go on with our mission.

The **TAT Matching Fund Program** continues through 2017. It is the 3rd year of that program. Please consider partnering with us in this program! More information is available on our website [tat.news](http://tat.news) under „To Donate“.

Thank you for being a valued partner in our mission! May God reward all of you according to His mercy!

### Quick financial update of TAT:

|  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| Total budget for 2017                          | \$ 219,294        |
| Income during Jan.1st – September 30th of 2017 | \$ 135,497        |
| Budget for Jan. 1st – September 30th of 2017   | \$ 164,346        |
| <b>Balance on June 19th of 2017</b>            | <b>\$ -28,849</b> |

### East European Missions Network

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### To 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.**

## ALUMNI VOICES: AIVO

At the time in 1991 when Estonia was becoming free from Soviet occupation many people found their way to church. I was at the time in my last year high school and my parents suggested I go with some classmates to confirmation. I was not baptized and everything connected with church was very unfamiliar to me. Never the less, I found a good contact, Pastor Eenok Haamer who was leading the confirmation classes. His speech touched my heart and after confirmation I continued to go to Sunday services. In the beginning I was sitting alone, but it wasn't very long before Pastor Eenok called me to be a member of the church council. Because of his invitation I decided to go and study at the Academy.

Even when taking the entrance examinations, I didn't realize that I go to college. I just wanted to know more about religion and faith. I didn't think at all about a call to be a pastor. Today I can say that one step prepared the next for me. I believe that all of this has been God's plan for me.

I have very good memories from my college years. I remember with thankfulness, distinguished professors with whom it was good to talk about theological topics. Friendships that were formed during studies continue to be important today. My schoolmates are working in different congregations all over Estonia but we still find ways to grow together in friendship. Special fellowship between students of the Academy was developed with daily prayer meetings, common church services and summer sessions. We didn't receive only academic education but we also learned to pray and trust God together.

Now I have been working more than 10 years as a pastor in the same rural parish where I was baptized and confirmed. Already during my college years Pastor Eenok encouraged me to serve next to him. With support of my schoolmates I started a Sunday school in my congregation. Today my wife, who is also alumni of the Academy, is a Sunday school teacher and also the organist.

I'm thankful I had chance to learn at this school, to grow in faith and to find lifelong fellowship of Christians.



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*Youth are presenting  
Joseph's story in the  
English Bible Camp.*

## EEMN English Bible Camps Welcome New Short Term Missionaries



Through the partnership between East European Missions Network (EEMN) and Estonian Lutherans, we were privileged to facilitate two Friendship English Language Bible Camps, one hosted by St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Tartu, and the other by St. Lawrence Lutheran Church in Kuressaare, on the Island of Saaremaa. Working together with Tartu Academy of Theology, thirteen friends from CO, CA, WA, IA, and ND joined in a Team to provide worship and teaching centered around the life experiences of Joseph. In each camp participants were placed in classes according to their level of English (Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced), while children were divided by age level (Elementary, Middle School and Sr. High).

Since the wall came down in 1989, EEMN (which began in 1991) has held Language Camps in several countries in E Europe and Russia. This was the 12th year of Camp in Estonia, and it has been a joy to welcome many people, some who have been coming most of those years. Each day opens and closes with much robust singing and some sharing of testimonies by Team members, while the children put on skits. The daily schedule includes two class periods for teaching and a break time for snacks. Language lessons assist people with their conversational English and we use Bible stories based on characters as the curriculum base.

Over the years many friendships have been developed, and we have seen people move into different levels with their English and deeper levels in faith. Since the education system in Estonia includes learning English from elementary levels, many have found it helpful to have opportunity to practice speaking English with those whose primary language is English. Through the sharing and learning in classes there is much joy and laughter as we work together!

Team members each commit a time of about 12 days for one camp (about 18 days 2 camps), and each raises the money needed for travel and expenses (this year about \$2400). Training and preparation is provided through EEMN, and we make use of Skype or Zoom conferences to get to know each other. Team Leaders, Pastor Bob and Patti Nordvall, can be contacted if you are interested in being part of the Estonia Team in 2018. You can also contact Director, Pastor David and Angela Breidenbach, EEMN, regarding one of the other Camp options for serving. We would love to visit with you!

Bob and Patti Nordvall

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**Find out more information from [www.eemn.org](http://www.eemn.org)**

**Find out different project funding options of Tartu Academy  
of Theology from [www.tat.news/projects.html](http://www.tat.news/projects.html)**

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