

TARTU ACADEMY OF THEOLOGY & HOME OF HOPE

Mission Partner of the  ICMC &  SPIRITUAL ORPHANS NETWORK



**LIFE CHANGING STORIES
FOR GENERATIONS TO COME
HELP THE STORIES TO CONTINUE!**

tatest.org



OUR MISSION

Proclaim the Word of God in **ESTONIA**, the country which suffered for 50 years under Soviet occupation and is considered to be one of the most secular countries in the world.

Four Generations of Continuity

Pastor Siimon Haamer's STORY

Background

Estonia was occupied for 50 years after WW2 by the aggressive, atheistic Soviet Union. This regime tried to break our deep Christian roots. Unfortunately, they were quite successful. During the first 10 years of Soviet occupation, 2/3s of Lutheran pastors were killed, imprisoned, or escaped from the country. **Before WW2 98% of Estonians were Christians; today only around 12% are members of different Christian churches.** These broken connections need to be tied together again.

I share with you a story of hope and trust. This is a story of spiritual resistance, complete trust in God, and the sacrifices of one family through a century. This is a story of the suffering of the Estonian people.

Three Generations of Pastors

My **GRANDFATHER, HARRI**, was a Lutheran pastor. At the end of the 1940s, he was arrested and imprisoned for eight years in a Siberian slave labor camp because he was a pastor.

My **FATHER, EENOK**, 88 years old, is *Father Eenok Haamer and his three sons Naatan, Markus & Siimon.*



...serving three Lutheran congregations. He was forced to hide for six years in the forest and lived in an underground bunker because he was the son of a pastor. Despite these hardships, he later became a pastor himself.

NAATAN and MARKUS, MY TWO OLDER BROTHERS, and I are pastors as well.

Fourth Generation

Now I'm looking to the future and I'm very glad that our family story is continuing. **MATTIAS, THE SON OF MY OLDER BROTHER**, joined our team in the fall of 2020 and is working with me as my assistant. He comes with fresh energy and new ideas. Mattias is 26 years old and is the fourth generation carrying on the legacy of our family.

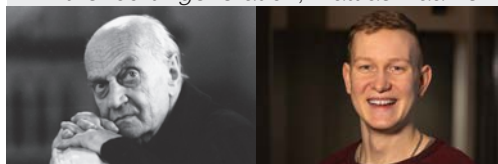
You may watch the videos about the story of four generations at tatest.org/videos.

Launch of Tartu Academy of Theology

Estonia regained independence in 1991. In 1992, my father, Eenok, established the Christian college, Tartu Academy of Theology (TAT), with the financial support of a group of American Lutheran pastors.

During the last 30 years, TAT has trained hundreds of Christian leaders for Estonia.

Grandfather Pastor Harri Haamer and the fourth generation, Mattias Haamer.



For 15 years I *President of TAT* worked side-by-side with my father. Ten years ago, I took over the leadership of TAT.

Home of Hope Christian Outreach Center

Six years ago I was under big pressure because the rental facilities of TAT were in very poor condition and didn't meet our needs at all. We had to decide whether to end our work or take a giant leap of faith.

Trusting the Lord and following His guidance, the vision of Home of Hope was created. In the spring of 2018, \$125,000 was raised within six weeks. As this miracle happened, we had to trust. We made a downpayment and trusted the Lord. I invested myself totally and undertook this project of more than 2 million dollars.

We have to believe there is a different future for the Estonian people, and we need to keep faith alive. We need this unique outreach center to answer God's calling.

God made this project a reality. In December of 2019, Home of Hope was dedicated to the Lord. We have been richly blessed and God has done amazing things, as you will see on the following pages.

We still need 0.7 M to pay off the mortgage and sustain the Home of Hope.

Our goal is to continue for GENERATIONS TO COME. **Please come along and support us with your prayers and financial gifts.**

PASTOR SIIMON'S EMAIL
siimon.haamer@teologia.ee

MINISTRIES of TARTU ACADEMY OF THEOLOGY & HOME OF HOPE

Bible School

Agne's STORY

Bible School student

In the autumn of 2020, I joined the Bible School. I was baptized and confirmed about 25 years ago, but **after my confirmation, I didn't have any connection with the church anymore.** At the time I was the only one in my family who was baptized and confirmed.

At the very beginning of our Bible School, Pastor Eenok Haamer, gave lessons. Eenok's message was so inspiring for me and because of that, I decided to visit



Eenok's church in Mustvee. Since then I was there almost every Sunday, and I took along my niece, husband, my sister with her children, my mother, and friends.

As a result of my inspiration and desire to

- ▶ Launched in September 2020
- ▶ 250 participants over four years
- ▶ On-site and online participation
- ▶ Classes are held Every Monday evening
- ▶ Several campuses gather to watch live-streaming every Monday evening
- ▶ On-demand Bible study streaming

get to know more about Jesus, in the middle of August 2021, in Eenok's church, **eight adults were baptized and confirmed and five children were baptized.**

The same autumn my mother became a student of Home of Hope's Bible School.

Christian Youth Work

Elise Nora's STORY

Team Member of Worship Night

My journey with God started as a young adult. I was raised in a non-Christian but spiritually curious environment. **Up until 21 years of my life, I had been inside a church only a few times for concerts, weddings, or funerals.** But I had seen my mother practice meditating, reiki, yoga etc. I was quite critical and defiant.

All through high school, I kept my alignment with spirituality and when I started university to study dance this mindset got even more flexed. And then my stepfather passed away. The question of the afterlife entered my mind.

Soon after I met a guy. I fell in love. To my



surprise, I learned that he's a Christian. Difficult times in my relationship showed me how unimaginable forgiveness is possible with God. We were blessed with a child. We got married. We gave our vows. But already half a year after the wedding I was facing divorce. I now believe that in our troubles we failed to turn to God. The time of divorce happened to be when I was attending the

- ▶ 80 participants in the various events
- ▶ Producing social media content
- ▶ Youth Bible Camp every year
- ▶ Annual young adults conference 'The Juggler'
- ▶ Worship Night every third Wednesday
- ▶ A meeting place for Christian youth organizations and activities

Youth Bible and Mission Course. That was a crucial factor in staying with God.

Today I'm a team member of the Worship Night that takes place in Home of Hope. Our goal is to bring together young adults to hear the Word and sing in the Spirit.

Now I also lead the youth work in St. Paul's Church of Tartu. This is the work that God had carved out for me.

Pastoral Care Center

Raili's STORY

Coordinator of Pastoral Care Center

I am doing this work because in my life I have also felt a great need for spiritual help. **I spent 3 years at the hospital after the premature birth** with my second child because she weighed 1.3 pounds and had many health problems.

After the birth, Pastor Naatan Haamer, who was a Pastoral Caregiver in the hospital, came to me. He was the first person to take the time to be there for me. This conversation gave me peace and courage. Naatan's promise that I can turn to him later still carries me.



Since I received support and strength from Pastor Naatan, I also wanted to become a person who can give hope and courage to others.

I felt that there was certainly something more that I needed to learn. I realized that Pastor Naatan wasn't actually alone when he met me in the hospital. Later,

- ▶ 24/7 Pastoral Care Helpline throughout 2020-2022; financed by the Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs
- ▶ 21,500 calls received to the helpline
- ▶ Coordination center for Estonia's wide network of pastoral caregivers
- ▶ Partnering with local city government
- ▶ Pastoral caregivers' walking sessions during the Covid pandemic

when I began studying at the TAT myself, I gained an understanding of the bigger picture. As a Christian, I'm a tool in God's hand. **While I want to do my best, I can trust that God will take care of the rest.** The source of the courage and hope is our Lord. Now I'm sharing this with others.

WHY OUR CHURCH is partnering with Estonia mission

Pastor Wendy Poch, Aurora, CO

Spirit of Hope Lutheran Church, from the very beginning of our existence, has partnered with TAT. In addition to seeing the tremendous need for the Great Commission to be carried

out in Estonia, our congregation is also passionate about raising up pastors for Christ's Church. The TAT raises up pastors with sound Lutheran theology who are passionate about delivering Jesus

Christ to a people who desperately need to know of His love. The Home of Hope helps to spread that message throughout Estonia and beyond. We are eager to support this mission for generations to come.



youtube.com/@simonvsgoliath

Follow stories on tatest.org/story

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MINISTRIES of TARTU ACADEMY OF THEOLOGY & HOME OF HOPE

Bachelor & Master Degree Studies + Continuing Education

Marek's STORY

Alumnus of TAT, Coordinator of Bible School

I was born in 1976. It is said that the 70s were the most miserable period of the Soviet time in the Estonian Lutheran Church. A large part of the society was estranged from the church.

I lived near the church building, but it was closed most of the time. My parents did not consider it necessary to baptize their children. It was only later that I learned that one of my grandmothers was praying for us. Another grandmother taught me the Lord's Prayer. **God worked and He had not forgotten us.**

In the early 1990s, a lot changed in Estonia. Suddenly one could go freely to



the church and buy a Bible. One of my older brothers became a Christian and told me about Jesus. At first, I argued with him. At the beginning of 1995, on the evening of my birthday, I again talked with my brother and he gave me one prayer text – a sinner's prayer to God. I read it alone in my room. When I woke up in the morning, I even felt physically that I had become internally new. That same summer, **I told God I wanted to dedicate my life to the**

- ▶ 130 students in partnership with Lutheran Church Seminary
- ▶ 41 graduates during last 3 years
- ▶ Training pastors, chaplains, pastoral care givers, church musicians, etc.
- ▶ 300 hours of continuing educ. courses annually in addition to BA & MA studies

work of His kingdom. In the autumn, I started studying at the TAT. From there I found my first Christian friends and also a great spiritual example, Eenok Haamer. He baptized and confirmed me in Mustvee just before Christmas 1995.

In 2003, I was ordained as a pastor of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church. A couple of years before I had married Pirjo, whom I met at the TAT.

Christian Radio–Family Radio

Paavo's STORY

My own religious path began in parallel with the birth of Family Radio in Estonia. Like most children of the Soviet era, I did not come from a Christian family.

Founder of Family Radio
This is not to say that my parents were atheists, but rather cautious. My wife and I worked in national radio in the 80s without imagining that we would be able to do the same work in Christian broadcasting in the future.

God had his own plans and He put it in the hearts of people on the other side of the globe to start a Christian radio program in Estonia.

In 1995, I gave my life to God in holy



baptism, left behind my former life and materially well-paying job as a music producer, and followed the persistent voice that had begun to speak in my heart.

With the support of God's great grace, over the course of 30 years, a large-scale radio missionary work has grown from one studio, transmitter, and antenna in the

- ▶ 1.5-2M sq mi broadcast area
- ▶ 24/7 proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ
- ▶ Broadcast to Estonia and Russia
- ▶ 3% of Estonian population are daily listeners
- ▶ Every Sunday there are 6 services from various churches on the air
- ▶ 28 years of sharing God's Word

church tower. **Now the output is 3 full-time radio programs—one in Estonian and 2 in Russian and a signal covering a very large territory in Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine.**

Today the Lord has called me to a clerical position. The Lord gives encouragement to cope with all these tasks—*My yoke is easy and my burden is light* (Matt. 11:30).

Helping Ukraine Refugees

Natalya's STORY

I lived with my family in Mykolaiv Oblast, Ukraine. I used to be a manager of the cultural center.

Refugee from Ukraine
When the war started my husband sent me and our two daughters (4 and 6 years old) away from the war. It was at the very beginning of April of 2022. **He stayed and unfortunately was killed by a missile strike on April 5, 2022, while helping people to shelter.** I have tried to find ways to earn a living. I completed a baker's training course to get a professional certificate and the right to work in this profession.



I dream of starting my own small business to make baked goods.

She is one example of a Ukrainian war refugee whom we have supported with the money that our U.S. donors have designated for Ukraine refugees. For example, we bought a Kitchen Aid stand mixer helping Natalya to start her own business.

- ▶ 16 families receiving support to reduce their monthly expense
- ▶ Supporting daycare for Ukraine refugees
- ▶ Encouraging refugees to find jobs and rebuild their lives
- ▶ Offering pastoral care for refugees

Now my younger daughter attends an Estonian kindergarten and my older child goes to the local Russian speaking school.

I'm very thankful for all the support we have received.

WHY I'M supporting Estonia mission

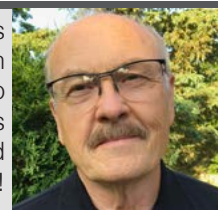
Pastor David Gran, Garfield, MN

I began to support the mission in Estonia when I learned of the passion the Haamer family had for the Gospel, specifically the vision Pr.

Eenok had for a place to provide pastoral training and care. I felt a great need to share the resources I have to support that ministry.

In Isaiah 6:8, Isaiah said to the Lord,

"Here I am, send me." Not all of us are physically able go into a foreign mission field, but we can respond to God's call by supporting our brothers and sisters with our love, prayers, and financial support—for me it's Estonia!



WE NEED YOUR HELP **NOW** TO ENSURE CONTINUITY OF THE **LIFE CHANGING STORIES FOR GENERATIONS TO COME**

Home of Hope's Challenge

Pastor Siimon Haamer's STORY-Part 2

Stories Matter

Do you share our conviction that stories presented in this booklet are meaningful and are good seeds for new God stories?

The Christian Outreach Center, Home of Hope, is a powerful tool that enables us to create these stories and fulfill Christ's Great Commission.

In the four years since Home of Hope was established, we have achieved excellent results as you have read in this booklet.

This Work Must Continue

This is a work that must continue. We need to reconnect the Estonian people with their Christian identity that was lost during 50 years of Soviet occupation.

Will You Walk With Us?

Without God working through you, these stories may not continue.

Establishing Home of Hope was a great leap of faith. I followed Joshua's example (Josh. 3) and stepped out trusting the Lord.

Now we are in the middle of the river bed and I'm happy that I'm not alone:

- ▶ Hundreds have supported this endeavour with their prayers and finances;
- ▶ God has provided faithful co-workers to help carry this vision forward;
- ▶ God has blessed us with people who take part in Home of Hope's activities and always look forward to new events.

Come along and walk with us into the future.

\$0.7 Million to Go

\$1.5 million has been raised.

\$0.7 MILLION STILL NEEDS TO BE RAISED BEFORE NOVEMBER 15, 2024,

to:

- ▶ pay off the mortgage and become full owners of the Home of Hope facility;
- ▶ sustain this great tool for the work of the Kingdom of God;

- ▶ get a permanent source of income to finance our mission work (in three years, we have earned \$100,000 from the rent of premises which covers all maintenance costs and much more)

The lender is the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church. Our payments go back to the fund that finances the construction of churches. The money paid as interest will be used to:

- ▶ publish a new church hymnal;
- ▶ support the church's youth work.

Paying off the loan maintains our independence in preaching the Word of God.

Will you **PRAY FOR US?**

Will you **CONSIDER MAKING A DONATION?**

Will you **CONSIDER GIVING A MAJOR GIFT** to inspire others to join and complete this Spirit-driven cause?

Your sacrificial gift will have an immediate and lasting impact on not only this growing ministry, but an entire nation!

We are grateful for every donation.

GIVING (Tax deductible)

ONLINE


Go to charitylutheran.org/givenow

- ▶ Choose fund *Tartu Academy of Theology* and sub fund
▶ *Home of Hope*

CHECKS

Charity Lutheran Church
120 Aspen Ave.
Bismarck, ND 58503, U.S.A.

Charity Lutheran has been our mission partner for 17 years and sends 100% of all gifts directly to Estonia.

	DATE _____
PAY TO THE ORDER OF: CHARITY LUTHERAN CHURCH	\$ _____
_____	DOLLARS
MEMO: HOME OF HOPE or TAT	_____

HOME of HOPE Mortgage Payoff

Mortgage Total \$2,222,889

\$1,503,835

\$719,055

RAISED

08/23/2024

TO GO

11/15/2024

\$42,105 of MATCHING FUNDS are available

Designation: HOME OF HOPE

TAT & Home of Hope Annual Operating Budget 2024

Budget Total \$355,629

\$197,740

\$157,889

RAISED YTD 08/23/2024

TO GO

Designation: TAT

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRAYERS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT!

SEND AN EMAIL IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS siimon.haamer@teoologia.ee

tatest.org