

Tartu Academy of Theology

Tartu Academy of Theology, or simply TAT, is a Strategic Ministry Partner of East European Missions Network. The Academy is located in the Estonian city of Tartu.

TAT was founded in the Autumn of 1992 with the financial support of a group of American pastors who had visited Estonia earlier that year. TAT worked as an independent Christian college until 2013 when it merged with the **Theological Institute of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church** (Seminary). It is now a separate department within the Seminary, maintaining the TAT name and identity. As the result of the merger, a single strong Christian college was created to prepare Lutheran pastors, as well as to train Christian lay leaders and specialists to serve as Pastoral Care Givers and Counselors, Christian Youth Workers, Chaplains, Christian Family Therapists, etc.

Additionally, the merger has provided for better stewardship of gifts, as the two institutions now share both professors and administrative costs, resulting in a more fruitful preparation of pastoral students and church workers at the graduate and undergraduate levels. Already we are experiencing exciting results as enrollments increase and successful accreditation has been achieved.

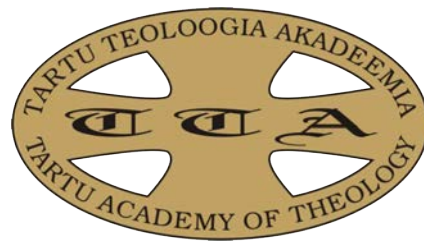


Graduation class of 17, June 2016.

History **Pastor Eenok Haamer,**

founder of TAT and a pastor's son, grew up during the Soviet occupation, where he witnessed firsthand the suffering of the Estonian people at the hands of the Soviet Army. But even as the Soviets hunted Eenok and tried to wipe out Christianity in the nation, he began to have a vision for the future. God showed him that once their fervently prayed-for freedom would return, there would be a great need to educate Estonian men and women so that they would be able to carry on God's work and clearly communicate the principles of the Bible.

The vision for a new school began to take shape and with initial financial help pledged by 8 pastors from the USA; TAT was founded in the fall of 1992.



Tartu Academy of Theology Estonia

www.tatest.org

Mission

- * To build up the Christian Community in Estonia.
- * To offer Bible-based education.
- * To value each student's personal relationship with God.
- * To train students in applying theological knowledge in practical experience.

Key Facts

- * Average annual student enrollment is 25 during last years.
- * 130 students (demographically equivalent to a U.S. college of 30,000 students).
- * Merger with Lutheran Seminary provides for better and stronger stewardship of gifts.

Estonia

- * Located in Eastern Europe
- * Bordered by Russia on the East
- * Population of 1.3 million
- * Area 17,000 sq miles
- * Only 13% of Estonian people are Christians
- * The largest denomination is Lutheran
- * Suffered for 50 years under Soviet occupation during which time Christians were persecuted
- * Regained independence in 1991



Impact on Society

Graduates of TAT are working in a wide range of fields:

- * Teaching religion and ethics in the public schools
- * Serving as Ministers in the Estonian Lutheran Church and other denominations
- * Engaged in Pastoral counseling and chaplaincy in hospitals, nursing homes, prisons, Defense Forces etc
- * Teaching Sunday school in local congregations
- * Serving as Youth workers in churches, community organizations and local government programs
- * Working as Writers and producers in Christian and public media

Today

TAT and the Seminary have:

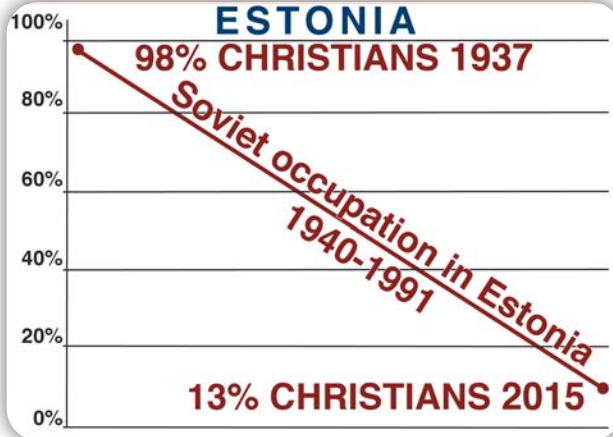
- * 130 students
- * Full accreditation
- * Bachelor programs in theology:
 - * Ministry
 - * Chaplaincy (hospital, prison, army, police)
 - * Pastoral Care and Counseling
- * Master program with two curriculums in theology
 - * Master of Theology
 - * Ministry and Chaplaincy
 - * Pastoral Care and Counseling
 - * Diaconal work
 - * Master studies in Christian Culture
- * One year internship for pastors before ordination
- * Continuing education opportunities for about 400 participant each year in the following areas:
 - * Christian Youth Work
 - * Christian Media
 - * Church Musician
 - * Pastoral Care and Counseling
 - * Chaplaincy
 - * Family Therapy
 - * Diaconal Work
 - * Administration of Congregation
 - * English Bible Camps

Vision for Development

- * Our own facility for current needs and expansion autumn 2019 – fulfilled
- * 200 students (long term)

Challenges We Face Today

- * Estonia is one of the most secular countries in the world.
- * Only 13% of Estonian people are Christians.
- * Church membership declines annually.
- * Tuition fees cover only 20% of TAT's budget. Because of very low salaries students are unable to afford higher fees.
- * Classroom space is inadequate to meet current needs.



5 facts about Tartu Academy of Theology

80%
of ordained pastors of the Lutheran Church are from the Seminary and TAT

130 students, significant and comparable to a U.S. college of **30,000** students

49 graduates during last 3 years, significant and comparable to a U.S. college of **11,500** graduates

TAT and Seminary joint annual budget is **\$680,000**

Working together with the Seminary, sharing professors and staff, **we save \$200,000** annually

Students Say

Heidy – TAT did not only provide the education but also the community who prayed together and taught me to rely on God. As time went by, I found myself getting deeper and deeper into care of soul, where I discovered the whole new world: kingdom of God revealed.



Kai – My time at TAT have only strengthened my desire to work with people, specifically as a pastoral care giver and counselor. Thanks to my studies, I feel that God has blessed me and I can share it with others.



Students say

Kristjan – I have been working for years in an orphanage and have learned much from the children. I believe I have learned more than I am able to teach them. I learned to experience God. My wish is that God's will, not my will, be done in my life. Training at the Academy has opened my mind and heart and it has woken me up. I often give thanks to God for connections I have been experiencing with professors and students of the Academy. God's grace is holding that school.



2019 TAT annual budget **\$236,471**

\$162,857 raised Sept. 24th, 2019 **\$73,614 to go**

To Donate

Gifts may be made through **Charity Lutheran Church**

CHECKS
120 Aspen Ave.
Bismarck, ND 58503

Make donations payable to Charity Lutheran designating "TAT" in the memo portion.

ELECTRONICAL
go to www.charitylutheran.org/give
follow the steps and choose "Tartu Academy of Theology" fund

All contributions are tax deductible.

More Information About TAT

Go to our website www.tatest.org
Contact **Bob Nordvall** (U.S.)
email: pastorbob@eemn.org cell: 701-391-0182
Contact **Siimon Haamer** (Estonia)
email: siimon.haamer@teoologia.ee Skype: siimon7



Partners in U.S.

East European Missions Network (EEMN) has worked in close partnership with TAT since our beginnings in 1992. Their support, together with the faith and vision of the leaders of TAT, has brought others from the USA to assist in prayer, teaching, and finances.

Bob and Patti Nordvall continue through EEMN to serve as ambassadors for TAT and the Estonian Church, leading short term mission teams and partnering



with pastors and church workers in Estonia. Together Bob and Patti visit congregations in the USA bringing encouragement, inspiration, and support for missions while sharing Eeok Haamer's vision for TAT and the building up of the Estonian Church.

Leadership Today

The school established by **Pastor Eeok Haamer** as the result of a vision from God and the inheritance of his father is being carried forward today by Eeok's youngest son, **Pastor Siimon Haamer**, who serves as Dean of TAT. One of the first graduates of TAT in 1998, Siimon continues to expand the work begun by his father. Eeok continues to serve as the spiritual leader of the school, as well as to teach various courses.



Pastor Ove Sander, Rector of the joint school, studied at the American Free Lutheran Seminary, located in Medicine Lake, Minneapolis.



He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Jesus Christ.
Philippians 1:6