

TARTU ACADEMY OF THEOLOGY & HOME OF HOPE



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Newsletter, February 2023



During Covid restrictions, when we couldn't have in-office meetings with people, we did walking sessions in the city. It was received very positively.

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I will recount the steadfast love of the Lord, the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord has granted us.

Isaiah 63:7

Meaningful Work Gains Meaning

We are thankful Covid restrictions have been over since last spring and the pandemic is not limiting our work. Instead, during last year our lives have been affected by the war in Ukraine. Nevertheless, we testify that **we have a good work rhythm at Home of Hope and we are fulfilling the set goal.**

We can even say that all these crisis have given us many good opportunities. Due to the Covid pandemic, Estonian society paid much more attention to the mental health of the people. Because the Tartu Academy has been training pastoral caregivers for the past 30 years, we have a network of people who stepped up and showed up with a willingness to help people in their struggles. The Ministry of Social Affairs sought a partnership with us. For several decades we offered our partnership but hadn't received a positive response... and now the situation was turned upside down. The Ministry provided funds for a 24/7 pastoral care helpline and in 2021 funds for pastoral care for people receiving home care nursing service. They also financed pastoral caregiver studies

in our Master's program in 2021-2022. **Today the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Tartu City Government** (Tartu is the second biggest city in Estonia) **consider the Tartu Academy and Pastoral Care Center at Home of Hope as their trusted partners.**

Over the past three years, we have tested various youth events and **now we have teams helping to organize youth activities:** youth evenings, worship night, a summer Bible camp with SON Network missionaries from the U.S., and a young adult conference in March of each year called 'The Juggler.'

The Bible School for adults has already been going for three years and this coming August we are planning to organize, along with short-term missionaries from the U.S., a summer Bible camp for adults.

And of course, the bachelor and master program studies continue to go on in cooperation with the Lutheran Church Seminary. However, hybrid lessons are now very much a part of the regular study process due to adjustments during

the Covid pandemic. There is great uncertainty at this time and we have seen that potential students are not so proud to start their studies because they are not sure whether they can pay tuition fees. This has had a negative effect on our student body numbers.

One very important reason we have achieved all this is that we have our own home, Home of Hope. That says to our partners that we are not here for a short time and builds trust and confidence. At the same time, these rooms give a good opportunity to run all these activities and to earn extra income. **We have become quite a popular place for seminars and training. During 2022 we earned €42,600 in rental income.**

Of course, we can't forget we still have \$1,052,505 in payments to make before Home of Hope is free of its mortgage. We need your help with that and we pray God's blessing on this challenging journey.

Pastor Siimon Haamer
President of TAT

Current Financial Situation

TARTU ACADEMY & HOME OF HOPE ACTIVITIES

In order to run all our activities we need also donations for our annual operating budget. **Total need during 2023 is \$322,825 and by February 28 we have raised \$23,344.**

Over the years we have been able to diversify our income resources and especially after the opening of Home of Hope outreach center at the end of 2019.

HOME OF HOPE MORTGAGE

Home of Hope mortgage is a real challenge for us. Mortgage due date is **November 15, 2024.** We have raised so far 53% of the total construction cost of the Home of Hope outreach center and **we still need to raise \$1,052,505.**

We truly need your help to sustain Home of Hope and all these good activities that we have launched during this short period of time.

We are very thankful to all of our donors and are hopeful to have continuing partnerships.

Christian Outreach in Estonia for GENERATIONS TO COME

TESTIMONY: Youngest Student of the Bible School

Eerik, 17 years old

I came to the Home of Hope Bible School because my family and many friends recommended that this is a new and interesting Bible School where you can learn so much about the Bible.

For me, the Old Testament is especially a weak spot. This school has helped me a lot to love and discover the Old Testament that I haven't known much about. There are nice people in the Bible School. I'm privileged to see very interesting,

professional, and smart teachers. This whole school is crucially important for my spiritual growth. I can get to know God's word and Jesus.



Pastoral Care is Gaining Popularity in Estonia

Raili, Coordinator of the Pastoral Care Center, alumnus of TAT



We are also helping Ukraine refugees. Pastoral caregivers make the first contact with them at refugee centers and are supporting their living in Estonia.

During Covid restrictions, when we couldn't have in-office meetings with people, we started doing walking sessions. We met up with people daily in different parts of the city. People who showed up had a chance to talk with the pastoral caregiver while walking.

The Center tries also to support the caregivers themselves. We have mapped out all the caregivers who are working in Estonia and we organize supervision,

supportive events, and training for them.

Our goal for the future is to stand out even more with the Pastoral Care Center all around Estonia. If there is any kind of crisis, for example, a student who has committed suicide or died in an accident, we will find a pastoral caregiver to go to this school to help students, teachers, and parents.

The Pastoral Care Center has already proven to be necessary. People find us more and more and truly need our help.

Pastoral Care Center at Home of Hope is launched based on the enthusiasm of students and alumni of Tartu Academy of Theology. The Center supports people in their spiritual struggles and is a coordination center for Estonia's wide network of pastoral caregivers.

Since August 2022, the Tartu city government is supporting the work of the Pastoral Care Center to provide free pastoral care to the residents of the city. Tartu is the second biggest city in Estonia and we hope this will be a good role model to other Estonian cities as well.



Representatives of Tartu city government met with pastoral caregivers at Home of Hope on Dec. 1, 2022. Willingness to continue cooperation with the Pastoral Care Center throughout 2023 was confirmed.

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