



## **Persecution Pilgrimage in Estonia [tatest.org/visit](http://tatest.org/visit)**

- DATES:** June 6-14, 2025
- ORGANIZER:** Tartu Academy of Theology (TAT) [tatest.org](http://tatest.org) in co-operation with Spiritual Orphans Network (SON) [sonetwork.org](http://sonetwork.org)
- GROUP SIZE:** 14 people
- REGISTRATION:** Deadline December 1, 2024. Online registration form: [forms.gle/xSQqYFhZoViz5QtQ9](https://forms.gle/xSQqYFhZoViz5QtQ9).
- *Please note that the group is filled on a first come first served basis. The earlier we receive your completed application and required documentation, the more likely you will receive a spot on the Persecution Pilgrimage.*
  - *Your spot is not reserved until ALL items listed below have been turned in (with the exception of those waiting on a passport).*
    - *Completed Persecution Pilgrimage registration form*
    - *\$400 non-refundable registration deposit*
    - *High quality (300 dpi or better) COLOR copy of your passport (If you do not have your passport, you will need to apply before submitting this application. Once received, you will need to send the required copy by email to [pilgrimage@teoloogia.ee](mailto:pilgrimage@teoloogia.ee))*
- COORDINATOR & TOUR GUIDE:** Pastor Siimon Haamer, President of TAT  
[siimon.haamer@teoloogia.ee](mailto:siimon.haamer@teoloogia.ee)
- CONTACT PERSON IN U.S.:** Angela Breidenbach, Director of Operations and Youth Education of SON  
[angela@sonetwork.org](mailto:angela@sonetwork.org) +1 (505) 274-4156

### **ABOUT THE PERSECUTION PILGRIMAGE**

Watch the introductory video of the pilgrimage on our website [tatest.org/visit](http://tatest.org/visit).

The Persecution Pilgrimage in Estonia provides an opportunity to become a part of the story of spiritual resistance, complete trust in God, and the suffering of one nation. To better understand all this history and trials, we will take you on a journey through the story of one Christian family and a nation. You will have a chance to hear about past sufferings and gain an understanding of what it means to be persecuted as a Christian. Through this experience, you will learn how to keep your faith alive and what it means that hopelessness has no place in our lives.

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. Estonia lost every fifth of its slightly over one million inhabitants as a result of the terror of the occupying power. Before WW2 98% of Estonians were Christians; today only around 12% are members of different Christian churches.

Pilgrimage takes you to the paths where Pastor Eenok Haamer lived through the most difficult and pivotal times of his life. Eenok's father, Pastor Harri Haamer, was arrested and taken to a slave labor camp in Siberia in 1948. After that, his whole family was in danger, and they had to flee deportation to avoid being taken to Siberia as well. Therefore, as a teenager, Eenok had to hide in the forest with his mother and brother for six years, living in an underground bunker for nearly four years.

Eenok is 88 years old today, and the participants of the Persecution Pilgrimage have an extraordinary opportunity to go with Eenok to the places where he hid himself and hear about these experiences from him himself.

In addition, we present the story of the suffering of Estonians under communism in a broader way, which also gives an opportunity to understand the context of the war taking place in Ukraine today.

## **SCHEDULE OF THE PERSECUTION PILGRIMAGE**

June 6, Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Departure from USA</li> </ul>
June 7, Saturday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrival at Tallinn airport <a href="http://tallinn-airport.ee/en">tallinn-airport.ee/en</a></li> <li>• Transportation to Tartu (2,5 hour drive) <a href="http://visittartu.com">visittartu.com</a></li> <li>• Accommodation in Tartu (Hektor hostel <a href="http://hektorstay.com/en">hektorstay.com/en</a>)</li> </ul>
June 8, Sunday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service in Mustvee Lutheran Church where Pastor Eenok Haamer is serving</li> <li>• Meeting with Pastor Eenok and Eha Haamer at their home</li> <li>• Some sightseeing in Eastern Estonia</li> <li>• Accommodation in Tartu (Hektor hostel <a href="http://hektorstay.com/en">hektorstay.com/en</a>)</li> <li>• Devotion</li> </ul>
June 9, Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prayer service</li> <li>• The KGB Cells Museum in Tartu <a href="http://muuseum.tartu.ee/en/kgb-cells-museum">muuseum.tartu.ee/en/kgb-cells-museum</a></li> <li>• St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Tartu <a href="http://tartupauluse.ee/en">tartupauluse.ee/en</a> (Pastor Harri Haamer served in St. Paul's before his imprisonment)</li> <li>• Christian outreach center Home of Hope and Tartu Academy of Theology – getting to know their mission work, sharing the stories and testimonies <a href="http://tatest.org">tatest.org</a></li> <li>• Movie night–The Singing Revolution</li> <li>• Accommodation in Tartu (Hektor hostel <a href="http://hektorstay.com/en">hektorstay.com/en</a>)</li> <li>• Devotion</li> </ul>
June 10, Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prayer service</li> <li>• Drive to Southern Estonia to see places where Pastor Eenok Haamer hid himself during 1949-1955. Eenok is coming along and tells the story.</li> <li>• Includes walk in forest</li> <li>• Accommodation in Forest Brethren Farm <a href="http://metsavennatalu.ee/en">metsavennatalu.ee/en</a> (a chance to see an underground bunker and go to a smoke sauna <a href="http://savvusann.ee/et/smoke-sauna/smoke-sauna-and-customs">savvusann.ee/et/smoke-sauna/smoke-sauna-and-customs</a>)</li> <li>• Devotion</li> </ul>
June 11, Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prayer service</li> <li>• Pastor Harri Haamer's church in Tarvastu (he served there for 32 years after returning from 8 years of imprisonment in a Siberian slave labor camp)</li> <li>• Drive to Northeastern Estonia</li> <li>• Visiting places where pastors were killed</li> <li>• Accommodation in Narva-Jõesuu (Liivarand hotel <a href="http://liivarandhotel.ee/?lang=en">liivarandhotel.ee/?lang=en</a>)</li> <li>• Devotion</li> </ul>
June 12, Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prayer service</li> <li>• Visiting several places where traces of communism can be seen</li> <li>• Museum of Occupations and Freedom in Tallinn <a href="http://vabamu.ee/en/visit-us">vabamu.ee/en/visit-us</a></li> <li>• Accommodation in Tallinn (Metropol hotel <a href="http://metropol.ee/hotel">metropol.ee/hotel</a>)</li> <li>• Devotion</li> </ul>
June 13, Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prayer service</li> <li>• Memorial of Estonia's Victims of Communism 1940-1991 <a href="http://memoriaal.ee/en">memoriaal.ee/en</a></li> <li>• Singing Stadium <a href="http://laluvaljak.ee/en">laluvaljak.ee/en</a></li> <li>• Free time and sightseeing in Tallinn <a href="http://visittallinn.ee/eng/visitor">visittallinn.ee/eng/visitor</a></li> <li>• Accommodation in Tallinn (Metropol hotel <a href="http://metropol.ee/hotel">metropol.ee/hotel</a>)</li> <li>• Devotion</li> </ul>
June 14, Saturday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return flight home from Tallinn airport</li> <li>• Arriving to USA on the same day</li> </ul>

## **PREPARATION FOR THE PILGRIMAGE**

- In order to prepare for the upcoming pilgrimage and share important information, there will be at least one group meeting via the use of Zoom or other similar technology.
- **For background information and preparation for the pilgrimage, we recommend reading Pastor Harri Haamer's book "We Shall Live in Heaven"**, which is his testimony of faith, recounting his experiences in a Soviet slave labor camp. Paperback of the book is available in Amazon [amazon.com/dp/994999313X](https://www.amazon.com/dp/994999313X). You can download for free the PDF and Kindle version as well as the Book Study Guide from [tatest.org/haamer-family/book](https://tatest.org/haamer-family/book).
  - The foreword, introduction and epilogue provide also an overview of what happened to Harri Haamer's family during his imprisonment and what suffering Estonians had to experience due to the Soviet occupation.

## **ARRANGEMENTS**

- Spiritual Orphans Network is arranging flight tickets and is helping in preparatory work.
- The Estonian organizers have prepared the program and will carry it out and take care of accommodation, catering and transportation in Estonia.

## **COST**

- The cost of the whole pilgrimage with **double room** accommodation: **\$2,550 per person plus airfare.**
- The cost of the whole pilgrimage with **single room** accommodation: **\$2,800 per person plus airfare.**
- The cost includes
  - a \$400 non-refundable registration deposit which needs to be paid in order to confirm your registration;
  - accommodation, meals, transportation in Estonia and museum tickets.

***! We are not able to guarantee single room accommodation in the Forest Brethren Farm.***

## **Important Notes**

- The entire pilgrimage fee will be paid to Spiritual Orphans Network (SON) after the organizers have confirmed your registration.
- All payments are Tax deductible.
- Payments can be made by check to SON or processed online:
  - Checks
    - Mail to: Spiritual Orphans Network
    - Attn: Director of Youth Education
    - 8210 Louisiana Blvd NE, Suite B
    - Albuquerque, NM 87113
  - Online
    - ➔ Click [here](#)
    - ➔ Fill in all mandatory fields
    - ➔ Write to the designation field the name of the person whose participation fee is being paid
- SON is arranging flight tickets and the participation fee will be wired to Tartu Academy of Theology.

## **NOTICE!**

**This is a pilgrimage, not an ordinary tourist trip. During the journey it is also possible to get to know Estonia and its beautiful nature, but the focus is on your personal relationship with God and your own faithlife. Please keep this in mind if you decide to join the Persecution Pilgrimage.**