

Pastor's Pen

Introducing New Friends in Estonia

Friends, one of the blessings we have decided to embrace in 2016 is the gift of relationship with the Methodist congregation in the Estonian village of Rapina. Part of their weekly schedule is a prayer service on Friday afternoons. The pastor Ele Palo and I are making plans for our two faith communities to share in that service on Good Friday through Skype; it will mean we gather at 8:00 in the morning as they gather at 3:00 in the afternoon.

In order to better know our new partners in ministry, I am sharing parts of a letter Ele sent to me to introduce her family; husband, Tanel, and sons, Benjamin and Daniel:

Benjamin is 12 years old, goes to 5th grade. His dream is to play in NBA one day! At first I thought it is joke. Tanel took that idea seriously and today Benjamin plays so well, that he has been the best player and his every free moment goes to basketball: videos, trainings, games... His marks at school are very good and it is God's blessing. He has got some injuries during games, which has put him more trust God and pray. One day he came from school with announcement – tomorrow I have to lead the History lesson about Jesus Christ and Christianity, because my teacher told, that you will do it better! Praise God! He has grown too fast, so his prayer requests are being in Christ's will and his health.

Daniel is 10 years old, goes to 4th grade. His life is also full of basketball. Same like Benjamin. They both have 4 times each week basketball training and twice a week swimming. So just one day a week is free. Daniel likes also brass and he went to music school since this autumn and he plays Horn. So Daniel's schedule is very busy, but we try to do the best to encourage and help him. He is pop boy at his class, because he helps every mate and he is kind. So I pray and teach him how to evangelize and give the best testimonies of Jesus. His prayer request is how to plan time and how to give the best testimonies.

Tanel's life has changed a lot in some few years. At the moment he works as a truck driver, at the same time hoping and praying to move on. In this January he got a prophetic message – he was stepping down on the ladder and on the last two steps he was stumbling. He has had during a year some possibilities to change the workplace, but this message has put him pray and trust God more. His dream is to be the fulltime coach in Basketball Club. The work in Club has grown so much, that Tanel and boys are already living there. Tanel is doing this work as a voluntary. County has seen the work what Tanel is doing so Tanel got a title of honor: The Voluntary of the year 2014.

They have so many games out of Võru county and some even from Estonia. Tanel's task is also to find money for clothes, trips and so on. At the moment he is trying to get the professional camera for the Club. At the other side God is using Tanel so powerfully as a Christian. Boys are trusting him a lot, so do their parents. In August Tanel and Taavet organized AIA camp in Parksepa.

It was amazing, how open boys were. More than 30 kids took part of the camp and 15 kids came to the church to take part of youth evening. I feel little sad, because I have no energy and time to work on with them in Christian field. Totally new start in Tanel's life is mentoring work. God has brought some men to Tanel's life: successful, professionals, Christians and in needs. God has used Tanel to help these guys. Tanel has looking directions from Bible, fasting with them even in 2 days, travelling with one guy, praying together, hanging together even during nights. It has been so exciting to see the life changing, but also how broken and difficulties are life of people. Tanel is such a precious person in my life. I just miss the time to spend more with him. Tanel's pray requests are: God's wisdom and may God close and opens the doors by His will. He needs also wisdom to mentor coaches, boys, friends and to lead the own family and help me as well in Rápina.

Our life – our home: it is miracle. We still thank God for rooms, kitchen, and toilet what we haven't had. I enjoy that I can close the door and prepare the sermon or just relax. It has been God's grace that we have lived so many years so lack of space, but still alive! We are very, very thankful, even it is difficult to pay the loan. We still have some needs, but it makes us more trust God and be thankful. I remember when I told God, if He let this house be able for us, we will open it for our neighbors and friends to serve them. Our home was so open that one moment we realized that we need time to ourselves. So many powerful moments have been and God has used this house to serve people. Prayer requests are: finishing the kitchen and get some more furniture.

Ele is working as a tank, but then I can hear the message of my husband: I can smell smoky smell, I know too much work and my brains are burning. I am working fulltime at kindergarten. Our church in Rápina is growing. On the first Advent we celebrated our 5 anniversary in Rápina. Look at boys: only 5 years!

LIFE with God is perfect and every piece of it comes on the right time. It has been so many things what we would like to share. Thanks to God for the connections to You! May God lead it and strengthen it.

Again, it is our great joy to come to know this servant family. Please begin to add them to your prayer life, and seek God's will for us, the Crieewood congregation, in developing this relationship. And remember, in every relationship God blesses, teaches, and strengthens both ends of such connections and relationships.

Peter van Eys

Up-Coming Events



Sunday, March 20

Palm Sunday,
Gathering and Traditional Services

Thursday, March 24

Holy Thursday Service,
6:30 p.m. in the CUMC Sanctuary

Friday, March 25

Good Friday Services
8:00 a.m. at CUMC through Skype
6:30 p.m. at South End UMC

Sunday, March 27

Easter
Sunrise Service at 6:30a.m. on CUMC lawn
Traditional Easter Worship at 10:45 a.m.
in the sanctuary

Looking Ahead to Easter Sunday . . .

The Easter Sunday schedule this year is a little different. The morning activities will include

- 6:30 a.m. Sunrise Service
- 8:00 a.m. Pancake Breakfast served in Fellowship Hall (serving until 8:50 a.m.)
- 9:30 a.m. Easter Egg Hunt for children age 2-5th grade during the SS hour
- 10:45 a.m. Traditional Worship Service in the Sanctuary

Invite your friends, and make plans to be with us as we celebrate the risen Christ!

Missions

Easter Memorials

This year the Worship Committee has suggested a modification in the way we honor our loved ones through the flower offering at Easter. The committee would still like to decorate the sanctuary with lilies for Easter, but would purchase only 20 plants for that purpose. Any flower memorial money received beyond the cost of the twenty plants would be applied to the purchase of cots and mattresses for the Room in the Inn mission. Thus memorial money would not only decorate the sanctuary, but would also go to aid our mission to the homeless. All flower memorial gifts honoring loved ones would still be printed in the bulletin on Easter Sunday in the traditional fashion.

The Easter flower envelopes will be available in the narthex. During this Lenten season, please prayerfully consider making a donation.

Norman Binkley Food Packs

The Searchers Sunday School class will be making food packs for children at Norman Binkley that have food insecurities at home. Please bring these items to the Searchers SS classroom as you feel led:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Gallon Ziplock Bags | Goldfish packs |
| Plastic Spoons | Individual Mac N Cheese |
| Canned Tuna, Chicken | Cracker Snacks |
| Fruit cups with peel tops | Ravioli or Spaghetti O's |
| Individual Applesauce | Lipton Instant Soup |
| Instant Rice | |
| Peanut Butter or Sunbutter (for peanut allergy children) | |
| Canned vegetables (potatoes, green beans, carrots, peas, corn) | |

***Individual packets and easily prepared items are the best, Thank you!

30 Hour Famine

On Saturday, [March 26](#) our Youth will be participating in World Vision's 30 Hour Famine. This is a mission to teach what hunger feels like while raising money for those who go hungry. When we live in a country that has an abundance of grocery stores and restaurants, it is hard to imagine that in 2013 one child in the world died of hunger every 10 seconds.; 17,000 children under the age of five died every day. World Vision will feed a child for a month with a gift of \$35. If you would like to help, sponsor our youth as they participate in the famine and raise money for this cause.

Hike2Heal

Hike2Heal is a 5k benefit to promote healthcare for the students at Raise the Roof Academy in Uganda. This benefit will allow healthcare to be provided in the form of immunizations, antimalarial treatment, and preventative treatment for the students and staff of the school. A local 5k has been organized on [April 23](#) at 9:00 a.m. at Edwin Warner Park. If you are interested in participating or donating, see www.raisetherooftacademy.org. The event will also have music, prizes, kids zone, and dog show.

Dorcas Circle's Soup Luncheon

The annual Dorcas Circle's Soup Lunch will be on **Tuesday, March 15th**, in Fellowship Hall at 11:00 a.m. You can enjoy a variety of soups plus drink, cornbread/crackers, and dessert, all for \$6.00. Proceeds will be used by the circle for their mission projects. Please pass the word along to your friends and neighbors.



Activities

Women's Retreat 2016

Theme: *BELOVED: Our Identity in Christ*

Registration for the 3rd Annual Beersheba Springs Women's Retreat has begun, and a group of women from Crieewood will be going! Please join us **March 18 and 19** for this one-night women's retreat on the mountain.

Details may be found here:

<http://www.beershebaassembly.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/2016-Womens-Retreat.pdf>

Men's Breakfast

The United Methodist Men will hold their monthly meeting this **Saturday, March 12** at 8:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. There will be the traditional Saturday breakfast followed by a program.

On April 9th the men will meet for breakfast followed by a presentation from the Cumberland River Compact. This group works with government and community groups to improve the water quality of the Cumberland River basin.

Please make plans to attend both these events. All men are welcome.

Wednesday Night live

Wednesday Night Live begins with dinner at 5:35 p.m. For reservations, please contact Jan at 615-832-2897 or turn in the reservation form in the Sunday bulletin. Upcoming menus are listed below.

March 9 —Potato bar, salad bar, and peach cobbler
Serving on 3/9 — New Journey

March 16 —Pork chops, mashed potatoes, pinto beans, green beans, and rolls
Serving on 3/16 —Wesley Class

March 23 —No WNL Dinner

March 30 —Olive Garden's lasagna, tossed green salad, and bread sticks
Serving on 3/30 —Fellowship Forum

The cost for all weeks is \$8 per adult, \$5 per child 3-8 years old, free for ages 2 and under, and \$25 family max

Programs-

6:15-7:00 p.m.-Preschoolers meet in Room 116 for Art and Bible time.

6:15-7:00 p.m.-School-age children meet in the Choir room upstairs.

6:30-7:00 p.m.-Meditative service in the Sanctuary.

Peter will be speaking on the theme of the *Lord's Prayer* through March 16.

There are no WNL activities on March 23.

Please join us on Thursday, March 24, for Holy Thursday service at 6:30 p.m.

Beginning on March 30, the program theme will be *Life in the Spirit*.

Even if you cannot make it for dinner, join us for evening meditation, prayer, and praise at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

JOY Club

Joy Club's next activity is a trip to and lunch at the Bean home in Gallatin. Participants should meet at the church at 10:00 a.m. on **Thursday, March 17**.

Tuesday Bible Study

Tuesday Bible Study meets every Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. in the Wesley classroom and is led by Jim Kannon. This group is studying the book, *God Was Here and I Was Out to Lunch*, by James W. Moore. New members are always welcome.

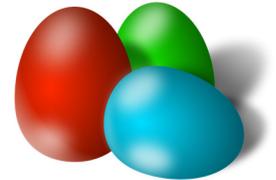
Children and Youth

Help Us Fill Easter Eggs

It's that time of year! We need help filling our Easter eggs for our annual egg hunt.

Please drop off bags of individually wrapped candy or small treats that fit in plastic eggs (chocolate is acceptable this year!!) in the Education office as soon as possible.

Thanks!



Summer Fun

Summer days come and go so quickly, so please make sure that you block out time on your family calendar for these events.

June 5-10	Youth Mission trip to Mt. TOP
June 13-16	Vacation Bible School
July 13-16	Youth trip to Gatlinburg
August 19-21	Family Retreat
August 25-30	Youth Christian Adventure Week

Nursery

March 13
March 20
March 27

1st Shift

Bill and Nina Tucker
Tom and Becky Freck
Jimmy and Carla Arnette

2nd Shift

Bill and Nina Tucker
Tom and Becky Freck
Jimmy and Carla Arnette

Child Care News

Summer Fun:

Crievewood Summer Fun is a nine-week summer camp for school-age children, from K through 4th grade. Watch for the Big Red Bus all over town as we take field trips with activities such as swimming, go-carting, skating, exploring the Adventure Science Museum, and much more. Our program serves 60 children each summer, and **less than ten spots remain**. If you know of anyone interested in joining the fun, please have them contact Sharon at director@crievewoodumc.org.

Safety First:

The center recently purchased three 8-ft portable barricades. As the weather turns warmer the children spend more time outside, these barricades help block the area at the top of the playground from traffic in our parking lot, making it safer for our children and the drivers.

Smiling Faces:

Be sure to check out the smiling faces of our Child Care children. We've had a busy 2016, and it is only March! New pictures have been posted on the board downstairs. Thanks to Karen Hattan and the youth for sharing the Valentine Photo booth with us.

Thanks for all your support,
Sharon