

# Baltic Methodist Theological Seminary

Greetings from the President  
August 2011

---

## Rejoice with us!

On the very day of our graduation on June 20 we got the long-awaited official confirmation that **the Seminary has got accreditation from Estonian Ministry of Higher Education for another three years.**

Thank you for all your prayers, and celebrate together with us the future opportunities as we approach the new study-year, and are preparing for having interviews with potential new students next week. There are 17 of them altogether, and after some years break we will again open the distant study track for international students from Russia (Finno-Ugric students) and Romania. Please keep these distant study students especially in your prayers as the actual distance and cultural differences probably make it more challenging for them to keep up with their studies. And join us in our prayers that all those who come to study would devote themselves to their calling, and would be willing to go out and do the ministry during and after their studies.

---

## Sharing our Grief...

Life brings some unexpected sadness in the middle of glad tidings also. On July 22, our long-time Seminary President and faculty member Andrus Norak died at age 53. Several of us from faculty, staff, and graduates attended his funeral on July 30. We celebrate and remember his contribution to the life and development of our Seminary, especially in its early years where there was no road map to follow, and it took a great courage to step into the leadership. Please keep his wife and family members in your prayers as they grieve at his sudden death.

---

## Our Recent Graduates

On June 20, 11 students graduated from the Seminary. Three of them graduated *cum laude*. This was our 13th graduation class, and the graduates were all from Estonia this time, except for one young woman from Lithuania - Jelena Povilaviciene. This spring at the Lithuania UMC District Conference she was commissioned as provisional member towards Deacon ordination. We wish all the blessings to her, and to all our new graduates in their ministry.

---

## Financial matters

We struggled financially a lot last year, and so we are approaching the new study year with even more reduced budget, and reduced salaries for some of us. However, we celebrate our devoted sponsors and friends who keep us in their continuing prayers, and keep offering their financial support. We have experienced God's helping hand at some very critical moments, and so we look forward to this new study year in trust that the work God has blessed so far will continue also in the future with His help. The United Methodist Church in Estonia has increased its support according to their modest possibilities, and we are also grateful for some alumni and faculty who faithfully keep supporting our ministry. But we certainly appreciate your prayers in this very practical and crucial matter.

---

## Faculty and staff

This week we had our faculty meeting where we shared some highlights from last year (mostly celebrating the positive outcome of the long and stressful accreditation process!), and our hopes and

dreams for the future. We revised our study plan, and shared information as well as made some decisions for improving the structure and quality of the study. There are no significant changes in the faculty but we are aware of the need for some new faculty members, and we are actively looking for them with prayerful hearts, asking for God's guidance.

Reminding you once more the joyful opening sentence of this letter, I would like to finish with encouraging words of the Psalmist:

I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame.(Psalm 34:4-5)

Blessings

Meeli Tankler

President of the BMTS

If you know someone who would like to be a part of the BMTS Baltic Prayer Chain, have them send an empty message to [prayerchain-join@emkts.ee](mailto:prayerchain-join@emkts.ee)

If you do not wish to continue with the Prayer Chain, send an empty message to [prayerchain-leave@emkts.ee](mailto:prayerchain-leave@emkts.ee)