

# Lee & Robin Henry

Tallinn, Estonia

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Lee was born in Ft Worth and graduated from Ft. Worth Christian School. Robin was born in Georgia while her father was an Air Force pilot and the family moved to Texas when she was a child. Lee and Robin both attended Texas A&M University and met during an Aggies for Christ event. They married after his graduation.

Lee worked as a Software Engineer for 30 years, completing his career at Hewlett Packard. After a career as a teacher and librarian of 26 years, Robin retired from public school last June.

Robin and Lee were both active in the Aggies for Christ program. After numerous mission trips to South Texas and Mexico, another couple told Lee about Tallinn, Estonia, another work supported by the McDermott Road church in Plano where they were members. The Henry's first mission trip to Tallinn was in 2014, where they taught in the adult Bible Class for the summer Christian Youth Camp. Upon returning from this trip, Hewlett Packard laid off 16,000 employees. Lee was one of the laid off employees.

Lee and Robin briefly considered moving to Tallinn at that time but ended up opening a historic house Bed and Breakfast

in Lampasas. For 5 years Robin honed her baking talents and they worked on their hospitality skills, and continued traveling to Tallinn, Estonia every other year. In 2019 they committed to moving to Tallinn and sold their business. In June of 2022 the Henry's sold their house and vehicles, packed up and moved to Tallinn.

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## Mission Update

This is our first year in Tallinn, Estonia. It has been a great adventure for our first 7 months here. The adventure began with a search for an apartment in Tallinn. Nice apartments did not stay on the market long as demand was high due to Ukrainian refugees. We found our apartment during our layover in Helsinki. We scheduled an appointment to look at the apartment in the airport and told them we wanted it within two days of our arrival. This was another item in our "Trust in God" list. It was becoming a long list and we had not started work yet.

After a week at camp, we moved into our apartment and started working on our residency. While we were not able to get an appointment during the required time limit our residency was approved for two years and everything was remarkably smooth thanks to Nikolai, the local preacher, and of course, God.

A large part of our effort here has been working on the songs we sing. Singing is certainly a big part of our interest but we were not sure if this would be something we would be involved with. The Tallinn congregation sings in Russian and then we will sing the song in English. A big part of our early effort was to find Russian translations of English songs and English translations for the Russian song. I was under the impression that Christian songs were primarily English songs that have been translated. I am happy to report that there are those that translate English songs to the Russian language and also many who compose songs in Russian. I am now an active part of the song service each week leading songs in Russian and English.

There are also 3 missionaries in Tartu, the second largest city in Estonia. They have a very small group that meets each week. I was asked to come and preach when two of the missionaries were scheduled to be out of town. We found Tartu to be an interesting University town. English is the official language at the University so it was a little easier to preach since no translation was required. We plan to go back and visit Tartu to build on the relationship we started there and help out when needed.

The children's class in Tallinn was trying to teach toddlers through young teens. There were obvious problems due to the age differences. Since the lesson was directed primarily at the older children, the youngest kids were not engaged and very disruptive. Robin was asked to help with the younger children. She was able to get some material and start working on a curriculum for their age. With a weekly lesson at their age level and a steady routine of songs, she was able to tame the young ones which resulted in a better experience for all. The older children were able to get through their lesson with less interruption and the youngest now had a lesson at their level.

One thing we have noticed here is that the women are more active and participate at a higher level. Olga and Robin planned a Ladies' class where they could get together to study and socialize. The attendees were so happy with the first meeting that they decided to make it a monthly event.

Our plans for 2023 will continue along the same lines. We will continue to have people over to our apartment for singing or food (or both). I will continue to work with the men leading singing. We will participate in the Spring and Fall Retreats as well as Camp BalChYoCa (Baltic Christian Youth Camp) in the summer.

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## Good News Story

We had our first Ladies' Class in December. The ladies of the congregation met on a Friday afternoon for tea, sandwiches, and stollen along with our Bible lesson and prayer. Our first lesson was about Mary, the mother of Jesus and how we are also chosen to follow God, and how we might be as faithful and obedient to God as Mary was.

The best moment of the afternoon came right after our closing prayer. One of the ladies who came said, "we need to do this every month!" To which the rest of the ladies heartily agreed and immediately set about choosing a regular time and day for a monthly meeting.

The ladies themselves asked for more of God's word and more time to bond and pray together, which will be a blessing to all in the congregation, directly from God, through a woman's soft heart.