



Once again, Jesus spoke to the people and said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life." Jh. 8:12

## *Dear friends and supporters of Peeteli children*

We are sending you a brief summary of what the children of Peeteli kiriku sotsiaalkeskus/ Bethel's Centre of Pastoral Care did in 2020. More than 25 children received regular help at our Day Care Centre, which works 5 days a week; there were approximately 7–11 children living at the Student and Youth Home throughout the year and 18 children participated in our study support programme. Teachers and staff of the centre help children with their homework and our days are filled with different activities. We offer warm lunch to children every day and our new study kitchen is also in active use – children enjoy cooking there. Since our centre is working round the clock, our day care children can also come to the Peeteli on weekends if needed, to have a meal and spend time with their friends in a safe environment. As many of our children do not have the opportunity to participate in hobby groups, we provide them with many different activities: dancing lessons, drawing, painting, movie evenings, etc. Also, we have a children's choir that has been coming together for three years now. What we consider important is developing social skills and studying different languages. Twice a week, we have the Estonian-language day and also English classes. Children are a great help to us in maintaining the surroundings of the church and also with many other practical matters. We continue to offer social counselling to families and they can use a shower and a washing machine if needed. It is important for us that children also learn Christian values, which is why reading the Holy Bible is a part of our daily life.

As in the rest of the world, our life also changed due to the COVID-19 outbreak. In mid-March, when the emergency situation was declared, we temporarily closed the Day Care Centre and 9 children stayed in the Student and Youth Home. When the Day Care Centre was closed, we supported children by the phone and in social media as much as we could and also helped them to send homework to school. For a couple of children who normally attended the Day Care and who were in a difficult situation, we provided a separate room at the centre where they received individual help with homework from our team members. During distance learning, we saw that almost half of the children who visited our Day Care Centre had worse learning outcomes than usual and there were also those who completely stopped to participate in schoolwork. At the same time, the study results of the children who lived at the Student and Youth Home either improved or remained on the same level. In our opinion, distance learning is not suitable for all students since their parents might lack possibilities and skills to support their children in their studies, and not all families have computers and internet connection that distance learning presumes. Luckily, we were able to reopen our Day Care Centre at the beginning of June and therefore several children managed to improve their grades before the summer holiday started.

In earlier years, our centre's children have been assisting in retirement homes, kindergartens, soup kitchens, etc. As these opportunities were very limited this year, we were able to spend more time together and our relationship and trust grew even deeper. We had different group tasks, interesting debates, career counselling sessions, and teenagers had a chance to work with their inner world.

In the summer, we had altogether 52 days of camps in our Camp Centre in Saaremaa (a 3-day preparation camp, four 10-day camps and one 9-day camp). There were 12–14 children and 4–5 educators in one camp. The worklist in the preparation camp was very long – there were altogether 37 tasks that needed to be completed. Everyone did a great job and by the end of day three, everything was ready.☺ We were very glad that one of our former child Kirill and his daughter also came to help.

When camping in Saaremaa, children went swimming and hiking, we had campfires and visited different museums. Children helped with mowing the lawn, keeping the campsite in order, cooking, and other daily chores. They had the chance to taste the salad and herbs that they had grown themselves, they saw how people lived in the countryside, and could also try milking a cow. In the camp, we were visited by our friends from Young Life Latvia, a Christian youth centre in Latvia, who spent three days with us and gave wonderful Bible lessons to children. One of the topics we focused on this year was raising environmental awareness and caring about nature. We had eight different waste containers in the campsite and we started sorting waste, which provided us all with a great opportunity to learn and practice green behaviour. We have seen that camps help all participants to improve mutual cooperation and trust, and experience the positive feeling we get when we stay away from the internet and social media for a while. There were altogether 56 children participating in our summer camps this year, some of them took part in several. Over the year, we also held several shorter camps, hikes and bike trips, and a canoe and kayak trip.

Before the school year started, we distributed school supplies, donated by our friends, to more than 60 children. At the end of August, we reopened the Day Care Centre and the Student and Youth Home. This autumn, some schools have already established partial distance learning due to virus outbreaks, and children come to study to the Peeteli already early in the morning.

At the beginning of October one staff member tested positive for coronavirus and self-isolated at home. The Health Board was very supportive and had all our staff and children tested immediately. Altogether 49 people were tested and all results were negative. Praise to our God!

Peeteli kiriku sotsiaalkeskus was founded in 1997. The fact that we have been able to continue working throughout all these years has been a God's blessing and we are very grateful that He has provided us and our children with such good and loyal friends.

We are sincerely thankful for your support to our centre and wish you and your families good health and lot of blessings. We are looking forward to the virus to become under control, so that we could meet again.

We hope that our joy and gratitude can also be seen in the photos attached to the letter. ☺

With best wishes on behalf of our children and the entire team,

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[www.peeteli.com/sotskeskus](http://www.peeteli.com/sotskeskus)

In Tallinn, 3 December 2020









Suur tänu toetuse eest! Thank you very much for your support!