

Lia Staaf

I have been a life long Lutheran baptized by a minister, two months after I was born. In 1940 Soviet Union occupied Estonia. My father a policeman, lost his job and was to be deported to Siberia in 1941. He was warned and hid for two months.

My parents and I had plans to flee to Sweden with two of my aunts from the island of Saaremaa. However the fisherman's boat was confiscated. Our only option was to flee to Germany in September of 1944. In October we were refugees living on a direct route to Allied bombing missions, which was four times daily. We never knew if we would be bombed. I approached my mother and told her that I no longer believed in God. How could he allow this to happen to us? We had little food, only uncertainty. My mother was speechless. I have a feeling that she felt the same way.

I found God in my life again the following spring after the Americans occupied Oberlahnstein. One morning I went to a church. Even though the church was Catholic and the service was in Latin, people around me were praying and I felt that I was being blessed by God again.

*How I found my green thumb. Two friends from church recommended that I get a tomato plant for my balcony. I informed them that since I moved here 18 years ago, I have never been able to grow anything. Meanwhile two lovely women from Prince of Peace brought me a little yellow flower in a paper cup. I placed it on my family room window. It started to grow by the sunlight by the help from god. Thus I ended up with a tomato plant and a flower together planted into a large pot on my balcony. Now I know a secret of a successful gardener and I am sharing it with you. Stay home! Water!*