

Ove Sander (Bishop of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church)

Speech at the flag raising ceremony at Toompea on 4 June 2025

I wish you a beautiful and blessed Estonian Flag Day, dear friends!

Last Sunday, I had the possibility to go to Järva-Peetri Church, and after the service I visited the grave of Christoph Wilhelm Beermann, who held the Estonian national flag at its consecration ceremony. He is resting in the churchyard there. Pastor and provost Beermann is a good example of how the church and the people belong inseparably together, and this sense of togetherness and joint action pave the way for a better tomorrow.

The first holder of our national flag gave very meaningful explanations to the colours of our tricolour: blue symbolises faithfulness, black is for determination and white is for purity of the heart. These ideas from 141 years ago still have a meaning for us today.

We need to be faithful to everything and in everything that is beautiful, sacred and hopeful. We need it in our families and in our relationships. If we can remain faithful to the promises we have made, if we love and support one another, we will grow stronger ourselves, and our nation will also grow stronger. Then we will have the strength not to let difficulties break us.

The call to determination is both a call to have a purpose, and to have perseverance and resilience in achieving it. In the midst of the very diverse goals of human life, we cannot forget our common and highest goal, which is the preservation of the Estonian nation, state, culture and language. But it is always good to look even further, and to think of our people as a people in the great and eternal family of the people of God.

And last – purity of the heart. We can never remain indifferent to the way we live our daily lives and how we move towards the goals we have been given. A pure heart is the most important. If our hearts are pure, our hands and our whole life will be pure. The blessing of God as well as the promise of seeing Him belongs to the pure in heart.

Dear friends, may these three beautiful colours deliver their quiet and powerful speech to the soul of our nation today!

May the Almighty and Merciful God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, bless this flag, and our Republic, and its leaders, and our people. Amen.