

# **Singing Men of Texas journey to six Baltic countries**

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Over the past five decades, the Singing Men of Texas have participated in numerous mission trips, but the upcoming Baltic Sea tour marks a first for the musical group—presenting eight concerts in six countries.

More than 100 Texas Baptist church musicians will participate in the Sept. 15-26 mission trip in partnership with evangelist Michael Gott.

The North Central chapter of the Singing Men of Texas will present concerts in Stockholm, Sweden; Tampere and Turku, Finland; Tallinn, Estonia; Riga and Liepaja, Latvia; Klaipeda, Lithuania; and Gdansk, Poland.

Most of the countries the group will visit have “a long history of good choral music” but a small evangelical Christian presence, said Rief Kessler, president of the North Central chapter of the Singing Men of Texas.

## **First exposure to Singing Men of Texas**



Ukrainians packed to capacity the multiple venues where the Singing Men of North Central Texas

performed during their 2015 missions tour with international evangelist Michael Gott. (File Photo)

The group presented concerts in Ukraine several times and performed in Poland last year at the invitation of churches ministering to Ukrainian refugees. However, the upcoming tour will be the first opportunity for audiences in several of the Baltic countries to hear the Singing Men of Texas.

“We don’t know what their expectation of us may be,” said Kessler, minister of music at First Baptist Church in Temple. “We don’t want our message to be buffered by what they think of us. We pray the message of Jesus as our hope—the only hope for salvation—will be received.”

The group will travel from one port to another on the MS Nordstjernen, a Norwegian Arctic exploration vessel built in 1956.



“It’s not a cruise ship. It’s a working vessel,” Kessler said. “We’ll be crossing the open sea, and some of our group—including me—are a bit anxious about seasickness, because it won’t be equipped with the stabilizers that modern passenger

ships have.”

The living accommodations may lack luxury and the schedule will be demanding, but Kessler said the Singing Men of Texas are looking forward to singing about Christ in six nations.

The group is encouraging Texas Baptists to pray for their Baltic

tour—particularly for “open hearts, smooth logistics and God’s presence in each city.”

A daily prayer guide can be [downloaded here](#).

