



JANUARY 2018
DEAR FRIENDS AND PARTNERS OF THE REACH BEYOND
MINISTRY TO THE PEOPLES IN CZECHIA AND SLOVAKIA

We are back home again. As you know from our previous Prayer Letter, we spent five weeks of our home ministry in CA, AZ, and NYC. The sixth week we spent in Manchester, NH with our “children” (49 and 50) and grandchildren. What a blessing it was! Klara could write a whole book about our impressions and experiences. We departed icy cold Boston just a few days before its calamities; such as the airport closure etc., and landed in almost spring Prague.

This time we drove over 3500 miles, visited nine churches, stayed with 15 host families and saw the devastation by fire in Santa Rosa. We reconnected with many friends. All went according our plan and schedule with one exception. We missed Fallbrook, CA. Just before we were ready to drive there, we found out that the mission committee dropped our support. At the same time, our host totaled her car and because of CA fires part of the family moved to their place. As an alternative going to Fallbrook, we spent that Sunday in Grace Community Church in LA. One of John MacArthur’s sentence spoke to our hearts and minds: “We are living in age when Christianity may be criminalized.” We live in age of cultural, political, intellectual and religious intolerance, ignorance and acceptance of evil agenda of our days. From time to time, we felt the oppressive atmosphere of ideas, which in some way reminded us our life under communism. The communists called their system as progressivism (pokrokovost). Since the fall of communism, the Czech word for progress (pokrok) has an ironic connotation. Thus, Czechs now prefer to use neutral “progres” from Latin “progressio” in place of “pokrok.” This is something we should keep in our mind as we observe changes and even church conformism to replace Christ’s gospel with humanistic love and compassion.

HOMESCHOOLING AGENDA

Most of our time we spent with homeschooling families. Since our grandchildren are homeschooled, Klara was gathering and sharing experience. Those homeschooled kids we met we remember as young as toddlers some twenty-five years ago. We were curious to find how they are doing now. It was interesting to listen to the parents and their offspring as they evaluated the whole process. Not all of them entered adulthood with smooth transition. Homeschooling children does not mean that they will be super achievers or college graduates. On one hand, there are those who are doing extremely well and others become manual laborers. Interesting comment

came from a pastor of a „homeschooling church“. He said that homeschooling is not as much about academics but about values. Some children accept them others do not. Some of them walk with the Lord others do not. There is no guarantee that they will not make foolish decisions. Parents cannot make them but no matter what happens they have to pray for the outcome. We were overjoyed to see how well some of them are doing; starting businesses, getting married, starting families, but the most important is that they are walking with the Lord.

All parents try to do the best but there comes a time when they have to let him or her go. Klara found a very interesting book dealing with this issue from Dr. Everett Piper: „Not a Day Care“. It surely helps to better understand young generation especially millennials and those who are labeled as „snowflakes“.

ANOTHER TOPIC WAS AGING

As we visited 15 different homes, we could interact with as young as 10 and as old as 94. For every age, there is a time to serve or to be served. We shared with all churches we visited the joy of our Prague church planting ministry, and opportunity to be “parents” or “grandparents”, for younger generation. Most of them come from non-believing families, and they long to be with physically not as strong but spiritually mature role models.

COLD DAYS IN NEW YORK AND NEW HAMPSHIRE

Our time in cold pre-Christmas NYC with our dear friends from North Shore Baptist Church was fantastic. Last time we were in NYC four years ago at the conference and Pastor Ed visited us in Prague last year.

The last time we spent Christmas together as the whole family was in 2006. Our arrival to spend Christmas with the family was a bit challenging for more than one reason. The newest member of our family, Aspen “Bernise Mountain Dog” is quite protective and we became the intruders. Wikipedia says that this breed is usually calm and placid toward strangers. Not this one. After the boys took her out before we entered the house, we could get in with our suitcases. Then we were introduced to Aspen. Right after that the girls arrived from ballet class. The first sentence came from Emma. She put her arm around Klara’s shoulders and said: „Grandma, you are so short“. Jordan was as attentive as always. Her favored activity with grandma was “speech therapy”. She lined up grandma and Emma for pronunciation lecture and test of words definitions like “metabolism, photosynthesis, pre-colical, ...” words Emma was mumbling while she read from her biology textbook. Jordan is good teacher. Grandpa and grandma are short standing up to boys, now 16 and 17. Both of them are quite good long distance runners. We had an opportunity to be at two of their track-and-field races. We admired the track-and-field arenas.

Days in NH were cold. No wonder that runny nose and sneezing overtook us one by one. After we left Boston on December 29, temperatures on the East coast dropped even lower. The difference of temperatures in NH and Prague was 55 degrees in Fahrenheit. Temperatures in NH were -4° F and in Prague, we had 51 ° F.

BACK HOME

We arrived Saturday before the New Year. Sunday the December 31, we attended our church. To our surprise, we had a group of young visitors from another church. Following Sunday, we had a joint worship service with Kladno Church. Both times capacity of our theater auditorium was overflowing.

2018

New Year began with number 8. Most important national historical events happened in the years with number 8 at the end. Some of those years were years of celebration and others were stricken by tragic events. This year we will celebrate the **100-year anniversary of Czechoslovakia proclamation** and 25 years of creation of Czech and Slovak independent Republics in 1993. This is the year of presidential election, new government and critical decisions "To be or not to be" compliant member of EU.

Secularization and dominion of atheists and a demographic decline is behind Christianity evaporation in Europe while Islam is proliferating. In the words of Turkish president Erdogan: *"Our minarets are our bayonets, our domes are our helmets, our mosques are our barracks"*. According to Austrian statistics for 2017 male baby names derived from „Muhammed“ moved into third place, while in UK name Muhammed has been first since 2011.

GREAT MORAVIA AND EARLY HISTORY OF CZECH AND SLOVAKS (833-907)

From the tenth and eleventh centuries well into the fourteenth century, the rulers of Bohemia (now the Czech lands) garnered great political influence in Eastern Europe and the region became the Holy Roman Empire. Charles IV came to power during the latter part of the fourteenth century and made the greatest early contributions to Czech culture. As the King of Bohemia, he founded Charles University in Prague (which still exists today), declared Czech one of the official languages of his country, and devoted much of his time to art and architecture. Prague's present-day beauty owes much to Charles IV.

The independence of Czechoslovakia was proclaimed after the end of World War I. The First Republic lasted only 20 years (1918-1938).

The Second "Republic" (1939-1945) part of Czechoslovakia was annexed by Hitler as a Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia. Slovak State declared its independence as the First Slovak Republic.

The Third Republic (1945-1948). Following Nazis Germany surrender, some 2.9 million ethnic Germans were expelled from Czechoslovakia.

The Czechoslovak Socialistic Republic (1948-1989) was era of Communist rule with Russian grip.

The Prague Spring (1968) gradual liberalization was crushed by a Soviet Invasion of Warsaw Pact troops. The era of occupation called "normalization" lasted 20 years and culminated in Velvet Revolution (1989). This was the end of communist dominion and fall of communism in Eastern Europe.

Velvet Revolution led to „Velvet Divorce“, peaceful dissolution of Czech and Slovak Federative Republics (1990-1992)

<http://www.jobmonkey.com/europe/history/>

PRAISE AND PRAYER NEED

- Blessings we experience during our home ministry, home away from home, sweet fellowship and passion for the lost
- We covered 3500 miles, stayed in 15 homes, rejoiced with churches and individuals. Thank you all for your love and hospitality.
- Growing, serving, reaching together
- Number of you expressed that Prague is on your list of places to see – here it is:
<http://www.prague.eu/en/articles/the-top-10-reasons-to-visit-prague-10591>
Take a look on short video clip Capture the World: “Made in Prague”
<https://www.justapack.com/photos-that-will-make-you-want-to-move-to-prague>

WHAT IS AHEAD OF US

First week of February, we will host **The 9th Biblical Conference in Brno**. Five speakers address topics like: What is New Covenant Church; Role of the Church in the World; Bible Leadership in Church; What does it mean to be Body of Church; Church Planting and the Panel Discussion at the end. All registered participants will get the book by Mark Dever “What is a Healthy Church?”

PLEASE PRAY WITH US

- For open hearts and minds of those attending the conference
- For travel mercies to all coming from east to west of Czech and Slovak countries
- For the ministry and those who labor in Czech and Slovak Republics
- For Bible Church of Prague and those who stand with us and pray for us
- For Gods Glory as we strive to serve Him

PEACE, LOVE AND JOY TO YOU ALL

**Thank you for your prayers,
support and participation
in our life and
Czech & Slovak ministry**

**In His Sovereign Grace,
Pavel and Klara Steiger**

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