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*For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away.
(Mathew 25:29)*

NOVEMBER 2009

Greetings to all of you dear friends. It is hard to believe that this is our last printed newsletter in 2009. There are numerous holidays and celebrations ahead of us. Baby Jesus is still reigning in Czech stores. It looks like Czechs will have another Christmas without Santa decorations. Merchants are afraid that Santa decorations would drive away buyers. For Czechs, the baby Jesus and the manger represent some independence from the western influence. Please understand well, this tradition is driven more by nationalism than an honest reflection of Czech religious beliefs. Unfortu-



nately, Halloween is becoming more popular every year.

ANNIVERSARIES, SPECIAL EVENTS AND AWARDS

The year 1989 was the fall of communism. Many of those who lived behind the iron curtain since the end of the WWII lived in darkness and fear of oppression. 1989 was also the year the Berlin wall fell, followed by the reunification of Germany. All those events were unthinkable for more than four decades. The very same year we committed our life to full time ministry.

SOCIALISM vs. CAPITALISM?

It is hard to believe that it is already 20 years since the fall of communism. Freedom brought many changes. One of the well-known Czech old-timers (our generation) recently said:

Capitalism is much better than communism, but it is worse than I had imagined it.

To understand better the depth of the disappointment with the present state, not only in Czech Republic, one must realize that "capitalism" is a child of the Reformation. It means responsibility. It means: "thou shall" and "thou shall not". Peoples who do not want to obey God will have to obey some sort of totalitarian government:

...for it [government] is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil (Romans 13:4).

Democracy and the free market system never ever properly worked, and never will, in any country where there is a lack of wisdom—no fear of the Biblical God! This applies to any society. Those who fear the Lord are unequally rich; those who do not are equally poor. Not even our Lord evenly redistributes His spiritual wealth:

For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. (Matthew 25:29)

Our Lord rewards personal responsibility. It is our not government responsibility to distribute our wealth:

‘For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; ... ‘When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ ‘The King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.’ (Matthew 25:35,39,40)

THE “MATTHEW EFFECT”

On October 28th 1918 Czechoslovakia was founded. On this anniversary day the President awards number of people who deserve special recognition. For Pavel’s brother Ivan this was the time for the 2nd high State award this year. First, he was decorated by the German President with a German Service Cross and can use the title of Knight (Sir). Second, from the hands of the Czech President he received a Merit Medal with 22 other personalities. To get two awards in one year is what reminded us of the “Matthew effect” (Matthew 25:29). These events were televised and many of our friends thought, in the first moment, that they were seeing Pavel on the screen instead of his brother.

DIGNITARIES

During the month of October our country was visited by the officials from White House and Vatican. While this was going on we were out of town exploring Church history in Moravia. (Please read the later report.)

The new Pope was received very well. He presented believers with some challenging ideas worth mentioning. He asked: “What is the purpose of the Czech church?” Then he answered: “The most important is to lead dialog between agnostics and believers”. The person who quoted the Pope continued: “It is believed about our society that most of the people are atheists. However this is not an accurate statement. The number of consistent atheists is constantly decreasing. Right now their count is about the same as the number of active and committed believers. A rising number of people are agnostics and they have lots of questions. They are open to transcendent ideas while they keep their distance from any particular historical church.” The Pope was challenging the church as to why it is important to lead honest dialogue with those people. He has no illusions that people will join the church in mass numbers. The church will remain a minority in this part of the world, but it should be a creative minority, not an inward, closed, fearful ghetto. In secular world the church should be respected as an expert in social and ethical norms, different from ordinary moralization, criticism and continual lectures about miniskirts and condoms. The church should be the one to teach that morals and ethics should not be ignored.

WHO LISTENS TO OUR BROADCASTING?

As we were recently discussing the broadcasting format, especially balancing word and music, we faced objection that our listeners are mostly elderly. We are convinced that age has nothing to do with broadcasting Christian content. People always appreciate good teaching.

Our commitment is to teach His Word. We were encouraged the next day when we received this kind of response by cell phone short message):

...Dear friends, because of your precious program Sunday morning at 10am, I changed my schedule for mass assistance during ministry to homeless people. I am not sure how to recognize God's will. Listener Zuzana

...I was captured by your broadcasting. May the Lord bless your ministry, Tonka

...your programs are captivating and explain many problems for my 17 year-old soul. Thank you; prayer is not only conversation with God but also silent rest in His palm. Kathy

HISTORY OF THE MORAVIAN CHURCH

Part of our Wednesday Bible study program is focused on church history and revival during 300 years of protestant oppression. We visited some of the places with our church during a long weekend in September.

The movement that became the Moravian Church was started by Jan Hus (*John Huss*) in the late 14th century. In rejecting indulgences, Jan Hus can be said to have adopted a doctrine of justification by grace through faith alone; in doing so, the Moravians became the first Protestant church. The movement gained royal support and certain independence for a while, but was eventually forced to be subject to the authority of Rome. Hus was tried by the Council of Constance and burned at the stake in 1415.

Within fifty years of Hus's death, a contingent of his followers had become independently organized as the "Bohemian Brethren" (*Čeští bratři*) or "Unity of the Brethren" (*Jednota bratrská*). These were the earliest Protestants, rebelling against Rome more than a hundred years before Martin Luther. After 1620, due to the Counter Reformation and the Thirty-Years War (1618-1648), and after being

abandoned and betrayed by the local nobility, who had previously tolerated or supported them, the Brethren were forced to operate underground and eventually dispersed across Northern Europe as far as the Low Countries, where Bishop John Amos Comenius (*Jan Ámos Komenský*) attempted to direct a resurgence.

In 1722, a small group of Bohemian Brethren who had been living as an underground remnant in Moravia (the so-called "Hidden Seed") for nearly 100 years arrived at the Berthelsdorf estate of Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf, a nobleman who had been brought up in the traditions of Pietism. The refugees established a new village called Herrnhut. Herrnhut grew rapidly following transforming revival and became the centre of a major movement for Christian renewal and mission during the 18th century.

The Moravian missionaries were the first large scale Protestant missionary movement. The first missionaries were sent out when there were only 300 inhabitants in Herrnhut. Within 30 years of their beginning, the church sent hundreds of Christian missionaries to many parts of the world, including the Caribbean, North and South America (see Christian Munsee), the Arctic, Africa, and the Far East. They were also the first to send lay people (rather than clergy) as missionaries, the first Protestant denomination to minister to slaves, and the first Protestant presence in many countries.

During our trip we visited a 300-year old church in Teschen (Poland). Believers carried building stones on their backs from far away, since the local decree did not allow them to use building material from the area.

We visited several churches and places we know from our past ministries in the area. Most amazing was a tour of a newly built church and conference center in the small town of Hradek. The church building has about 150 members and with Lord's blessings they were able to build an activity center val-

ued at about \$1.5 million. Their story about governmental contribution during a time where budget cuts are everywhere is nothing short of miracle.

Another sad "highlight" was a side trip to Auschwitz-Birkenau, the Nazi Death Camp. If you Google this topic, you can take a virtual tour. Just take a look at the ruins of a gas chamber in Auschwitz-Birkenau. Mind stops here.

PRAISES and PRAYER REQUESTS

- Please continue praying for strategy planning meetings, negotiations and clarifications of radio broadcasting. In October we met as three radio partners in Brno. We are so grateful to have Milan on our team. What a blessing he is. If he could work full time for the Lord, mountains would be moved.
- In mid November we will get together with US partner, TWR CZ and us in Brno.
- We praise the Lord for the excellent work of the new editorial team. The journal "Battle for the Soul" is done so well that we could not do it better. Webpage tools for searching the archives of individual topics and programs are constantly added.
- For the first time Klara experienced "the reader's joy." When one works with text as an editor, in the final phases it becomes quite cumbersome and tiresome task. However, when someone else does a major part of the work and Klara has the privilege to read and edit the final product, it becomes a pure joy.
- Last item we want to share with you is our frustration with e-mail mailings which are not accepted by your providers like yahoo, ... We are trying all kinds of ways, however the list of returned mail is getting longer and longer. Please, check our web pages to get more detailed and personal info and pictures about our ministry.

TAKE A VIRTUAL TOUR OF PRAGUE:

<http://www.stovezata.praha.eu/list.html>

We do wish you all a very Blessed Thanksgiving and Christmas celebration praising our risen Savior. At this time of the year we miss family gathering and especially grandkids.

Thanks for your faithfulness and loving kindness.

In His precious name,

*Thank you
for your support and prayers*

*In His Sovereign Grace
With love
Pavel and Klara Steiger*

*Your HCJB Global Missionaries
in Czech Republic and Slovakia*

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