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***This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God. ...***

***But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. (James 1:19-20, 22-24)***

**APRIL 2017**

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

This is our second printed Prayer and Praise Report this year. It looks like April is almost over. We know it is better three hours too soon than a minute too late. So



here we are, catching up after Easter. So, here is our report:

Since we are thorough believers in the Holy Scriptures, we had a lovely Good Friday service followed with lamb dinner, Resurrection Sunday service and on Easter Monday we joined the partner church in about 5 miles hike. The weather was getting from Friday to Monday cooler and cooler, and on Monday it rained. We got back on asphalt road with heavy mud balls on our shoes. As we drove back home the weather cleared and it was sunny.

The Easter Week in the Czech Catholic tradition that is heavily mixed with pagan spring celebrations starts with: Blue Monday, Gray Tuesday, and Ugly Wednesday. Since now on it gets better: Green Thursday, Good (Great) Friday, followed by White Saturday, Easter (Resurrection) Sunday, and is topped by Easter Monday.

The Easter Monday is a merry holiday with typical pagan connotations celebrating fertility and rejuvenation. Men and boys visit the home of girls they like or have crush on. They whisk girls' legs and behinds with an Easter *pomlázka* (from *po-mladit* or "make younger"). It is a braided whip made from pussywillow twigs. It has been used for centuries by boys who go

caroling on Easter Monday and symbolically whip girls on the legs. The girls give them in return dyed hard-boiled decorated eggs, chocolate baby animals like lambs, bunny rabbits, and chickens. Adults prefer shot of alcohol. The more boys that come to whip a girl the more honored or desired she is; and she truly enjoys it.

Dousing a girl with water has a similar symbolic meaning as the *pomlázka*. When Klara was a young girl her father kept the boys from the door by spurting them with gardener hose.

In the past, *pomlázka* was also used by the farmer's wife to whip the livestock and everyone in the household, including men and children.

It all symbolizes spring procreation, rejuvenation thus new young life in general. To get more on the subject open the following page:

[http://www.myczechrepublic.com/czech\\_culture/czech\\_holidays/easter/](http://www.myczechrepublic.com/czech_culture/czech_holidays/easter/)

In Slovakia it's very similar:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R41V1ZrhtnU>

After watching the previous video from Slovakia we have to tell a story. Pavel's mother was Slovak and was born on Easter Monday. In those days (1915) practically every child was born home with midwife assistance only. Her father went to vicarage to record her birth. However, on the way there was so much whipping and dousing commotion and spirits shots (celebrating birth of his daughter on top of Easter Monday craziness) that he got under an impression the recording to register went as it should. When Pavel's mother was to present the first time in her life birth certificate, when marrying (1936), she found out she has not been officially existed for 21

years. At least she could change her name from Ilona to Helena.

If you want to make next year some Easter eggs or to try to make whip stick from 8 pussywillow twigs, here is the link in Czenglish from Portland Oregon:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H4mrN-vqM0o>

Well these were a few facts about Czech and Slovak pagan traditions.

### A FEW THOUGHTS ABOUT CONFORMITY

We live in an atmosphere of postmodern negation of truth and absolutes. This means that we entered the age of post-truth era. This is important expression acknowledged by the Oxford Dictionaries. After much discussion, debate, and research it was declared Word of the Year 2016. *Post-truth* – is an adjective defined as 'relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief'. Measure of good and evil is men, respective human arbitrariness. This describes world as well as Church condition.

Christianity in Europe is so weak and insignificant that no wonder it is focused more on social issues worldwide, flirting with socialist and humanist ideology than concentrating on Christ and biblical values. So many absolutes are now viewed and often marked as extremism linked to discrimination. It is true that former communist countries are free from totalitarian government control however state noninterference or impotence in crucial questions of national survival creates out of freedom another form of totalitarian system. Multiculti insanity, anti-discriminatory laws, political correctness, open arm policies to dif-

ferent cultures and religions paves the road to the world with no tolerance to Christianity. It is true that Europe may be one of the hardest places for the Gospel but as majority of so called Christian institutions accept global political goals and values the church self-destruction will follow.

Internet wisdom describes our days quite accurately:

### NOT 75 YET ...

I used to think I was just a regular guy, but ... I was born white, which now, whether I like it or not, makes me a racist.

I am a fiscal and moral conservative, which, by today's standards, makes me a fascist.

I am heterosexual, which, according to gay folks, now makes me a homophobe.

I am non-union, which makes me a traitor to the working class and an ally of big business.

I am a Christian, which now labels me as an infidel.

I believe in the 2nd Amendment, which now makes me a member of the vast gun lobby.

I am older than 60, which makes me a bit less than I used to be.

I think and I reason, therefore I doubt much that the mainstream media tells me, which makes me a reactionary.

I am proud of my heritage and our inclusive American culture, which makes me a xenophobe.

I value my safety and that of my family and I appreciate the police and the legal system, which makes me a right-wing extremist.

I believe in hard work, fair play, and fair compensation according to each individual's merits, which today makes me an anti-socialist.

I believe in the defense and protection of the homeland for and by all citizens, which now makes me a militant.

Recently, a sick old woman called me and my friends a "basket of deplorables".

I need to thank all my friends for sticking with me through these abrupt new-found challenges in my life and my thinking!

I just can't imagine or understand what's happened to me so quickly! Funny ... it's all just taken place over the last 7 or 8 years!

And if all this wasn't enough to deal with I'm now afraid to go into either restroom!

### ON HIS NOTE

We enjoyed February Gospel Conference in Krom íž, Moravia, with Paul Washer. We could be there only for a day but all messages are available on web pages through internet. Our publishing ministry prepared for the conference book "Ten Indictments against the Modern Church" by Paul Washer. You can watch and listen on:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oul-9fbp1Ak>

Several likeminded pastors we work closely with together attended Pastoral Conference topic in UK with „**Liberty not License.**“

### PRAISES AND PRAYERS

- This month we got an unexpected message from Reach Beyond president Steve Harling:

*Hi there Pavel and Klara,*

*Becky and I very much enjoyed meeting the two of you back in September of last year. Your passion for Christ, enthusiasm for mission, and commitment to the local church... was very encouraging to us!*

*There's a little surprise accompanying your paycheck at the end of this month. The extra \$5000 (minus taxes) is in recognition of your having served with Reach Beyond for more than 25 years! It's yours to use... in any way you want to use it.*

*God has blessed our mission...and we want to bless our people.*

*We love you guys*

It feels like Grammy Award. Thank you all.

- Celebration of our 52nd marriage anniversary was this time according my heart. Day full of fun activities.
- Our church plant is maturing and slowly growing. At one of our communion events we actually ran out of cups and a married couple shared a cup.
- Pray for spiritual growth and increase in numbers so that our church will become a self-sustaining body of believers in the near future. Most of our people are young and finishing their college studies.
- Please pray for those who are preaching and teaching in the sending and sister churches praying for this church plant.
- Building a body of believers with many needs is tedious work. We see how damaged believers are coming from liberal churches. More and more people are finding their spot to serve.
- Pray that the Lord will give us opportunities to reach the unreached.
- Please continue to pray for Slovak ministry.

#### WHAT IS AHEAD OF US

On April 23<sup>rd</sup> Klara will fly to Dubrovnik, Croatia, to attend retreat for missionary women serving in this region presented by

Thrive Ministry. As if this is not enough there is a bonus. I will be with Mary Ellen wonderful friend we met in Jakarta about 30 years ago. We kept in touch all those years and now we will spend a few days together. The Lord is so good!

In May we are looking forward to catch on with several pastors we love dearly who will pass through Prague.

The calendar for our summer time events is filling quickly. Actually we have some commitments marked through October. To conclude we have to say LIFE IS GOOD when you serve the Lord.

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

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

<pavel.steiger@gmail.com>

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