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For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. (1 Co 1:19-21)

**NOVEMBER 2020
DEAR FRIENDS AND PARTNERS OF
THE REACH BEYOND MINISTRY
TO THE PEOPLES
OF CZECHIA AND SLOVAKIA**

TO BE POSITIVE IS BAD NEWS

In our last electronic Prayer Letter, we sent this message: "*Pavel is at present hospitalized in the Military Hospital, on Remdesivir and Corticoids. He is comfortable and he is very pleased with the care provided.*"



Several of you asked how we are doing. PTL day by day we are getting better. We can take care of practically everything, including driving to a nearby shopping center. Fresh air and a change of scenery do wonder. Day by day we were increasing distances. Bodily we feel almost normal but the shortness of breath going even slightly uphill takes a toll. Throughout the day we function more or less normally. Pavel is scheduled for a lung check-up in December.

We praise the Lord that he was admitted to one of the best hospitals in the country. We live nearby and they took great care of him. In other places, it might not be so efficient. We have just learned from our friends that a man about Pavel's age with whom we got acquainted this summer, was also recently hospitalized with covid-19 and did not make it. He passed away. He was full of life when we met him and his wife. It just blew our minds. We are praising the Lord for the care that we have in Him.

Covid-19 is here and will stay with us. It is a virus and it may not be eradicated as is some flu. The first round of covid-

19 here was not bad. Czechia had one of the lowest death rates in Europe. The second autumn wave got much worse. As of mid-November, the Czech Republic's total death rate per one million of the population is 612 persons. By comparison, the USA's total death rate per one million is 767 persons.

On October 21st, 2020, the Government of the Czech Republic heavily restricted the free movement of all persons in the territory of the country. "Curfew" is on from 9 pm to 5 am. We were then so weak and miserable that it did not make any difference to us.

As of now, the whole of Europe is on red alert. In other words, the partial lockdown is on. It means in the Czech Republic only food, pharmacy, and drug stores are open. Schools are closed, the online distance schooling and home office are on. Restaurants can sell food only through the window, most of them closed down. All public or cultural events, church gatherings, and holiday events are suspended. Border crossings require a 48-hour-old negative covid-19 certificate and on return the same requirements. Travel has practically ceased, and life has largely moved indoors. As the cold season comes in, it is expected that the third wave will be the worst.

The goal of the European strategy is to get covid-19 cases down to zero. The goal is so far partial lockdown, strict border controls, and quarantines to prevent virus spread.

A good piece of advice for these days is to have at hand a small inexpen-

sive electronic fingertip "Pulse Oximeter". This is one way to determine the saturation of oxygen in the blood.

The new coronavirus that causes covid-19 enters the body through the respiratory system, causing direct injury to a person's lungs via inflammation and pneumonia — both of which can negatively impact how well oxygen is transferred into the bloodstream. This oxygen impairment can occur at multiple stages of covid-19, and not simply for critically ill patients placed on ventilators.

There's a phenomenon we've observed clinically where a person with covid-19 can have very low oxygen levels but otherwise appear well, termed "happy hypoxia." It's concerning because those patients may be more significantly ill than they feel, certainly warranting closer attention in a medical setting. (Dr. Connolly).

<https://www.houstonmethodist.org/blog/articles/2020/aug/can-an-oximeter-help-detect-covid-19-at-home/>

The normal oximeter reading is above 95. After days of fever and coughing Pavel's reading started to drop rapidly to 90-85 and at that time we called an ambulance. In the hospital, he was diagnosed with pneumonia — and the same evening they started him on Remdesivir. He got in on time. Not having this indicator, we would have waited and hoped that the next day he would get better. We got this device a year ago while we visited our son in Denver. He is a skydiver and he checks his blood oxygen saturation frequently.

Day by day we feel better and get stronger. A few days ago we took a long walk from our place to downtown. It is all downhill and since it was a nice sunny day we felt wonderful.

FROM CZECH HISTORY

Czechoslovakia was in 1948 the last democracy in Central Europe. Unfortunately, its "liberation" through political decision fell to the Russians, at Yalta in 1945. Patton's 3rd Army had to stop at Pilsen though he could liberate all territory that is today's Czech Republic. After the 2nd WW, the geopolitical decision-making in Europe was left to the Soviets and USA. Regrettably, Czechoslovakia fell into the Russian zone.

For 40 years, communist propaganda and ideology were dictated by the Soviet Union and permeated all aspects of society. First came the nationalization of industry, any private enterprise regardless of how small, and collectivization of farmers. New currency meant that people lost all their savings. Any means of production whether hairdresser scissors or a car were nationalized. Apartment housing was transferred to the "communal ownership". The necessity of joining the communist party or the loss of a decent job was a major decision for many. Next came purges on many social levels, a prison system of labor camps, political executions, and an iron curtain to keep people in. No freedom, no choices where to work or live, no travel, no tourism....

The country went through three phases. Communism, workers internationalism, socialism. In 1968 came the Prague Spring and the direction was changed to building "socialism with a human face" under the leadership of the socialist government. This short episode of hope was crushed by the Russian invasion in 1968. The Warsaw Pact countries of USSR, Poland, East Germany, Hungary, and Bulgaria crushed the liberal reforms of the Prague Spring. The Communist takeover and "normalization", the dissidents were silenced or emigrated, lasted another 20 years. The economy was wrecked to the point that not even toilet paper was available.

The November-December of 1989 Velvet revolution was a non-violent transition of communist power. The leadership of the Communist party realized that their days were over. The entire presidium resigned. Free elections were held six months later. The outcome of the transition to democracy and a free-market economy led to the end of travel restrictions, restitution of confiscated properties, privatization, and other changes. Most of the communists, better opportunists, seized the moment of economic transfers and became capitalists. During the transfer of state ownership into private hands communists transformed their influence and power into other, less visible forms of control. They were at the source of information, connections, financing, etc. Communists and socialists know how to seize the moment.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's. (Exodus 20:17)

The sad part is that the young generation, almost globally, is longing for a change, and for a new form of social changes to repeat the "good intentions" which lead to socialist slavery.

PLEASE PRAY FOR

- Pavel is scheduled for a lung check-up in December.
- Please pray that the hearts of people will be softened during this trial.

PRAISES

- We are praising the Lord for His protection, guidance, medical care, and of course the recovery.
- Our soul searching reminded us how fragile we all are and what a blessing it is to be in His hands.
- Church services are suspended but we have internet sermons and a ZOOM connection for the bible study.
- Every meeting in person with fellow workers is encouraging. Great things are on the way in publishing, translating, and a new spirit of unity.
- Progress on the translation of the wonderful life testimony of Lili Kladensky. She is a survivor of the concentration camp, now she is 95. After the communist takeover, the family emigrated to Ecuador. Lili and her daughter

Georgina started HCJB broadcasting in the Czech language to then communist Czechoslovakia. Her testimony was written first in Spanish, and translated into English. Since we know the person and story very intimately, Klara was asked to translate it into Czech. It is amazing to see how God connected their lives with ours and our ministry here.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING TO ALL

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRAYERS,
SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATION
IN OUR LIFE AND
THE CZECH & SLOVAK
MINISTRIES**

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