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***... He who is holy, who is true, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, and who shuts and no one opens, ... (Rev 3:7)***

**JULY 2021  
DEAR FRIENDS AND PARTNERS OF  
THE REACH BEYOND MINISTRY  
TO THE PEOPLES  
OF CZECHIA AND SLOVAKIA**

**CZECH HISTORY  
CONNECTED WITH JULY**

The 4<sup>th</sup> of July in the USA, and the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of July in the Czech Republic, all mean a long weekend.

The 5<sup>th</sup> of July is the public holiday in remembrance of the first „Apostles of the Slavs.“ Cyril and Methodius, two Byzantine brothers, Christian theologians, and missionaries, came from Thessalonica. In 862 they began the work in Great Moravia (a West Slavic tribe). They devised and introduced the Glagolitic alphabet, translated the Gospels and liturgical



books into the Old Slavonic language, and thus they introduced Christianity to the then mostly pagan land. The mission of Cyril and Methodius had great success among Slavs, in part because they used the people's native language rather than the Latin or Greek used in Orthodox churches. They were canonized as saints by the Roman Catholic church, and even during communism, their names were kept in the name day calendar. In 1980 they were declared „Patrons of Europe.“

The 6<sup>th</sup> of July is celebrated in remembrance of John Huss, the second Church reformer after John Wycliffe, who opposed many aspects of the Roman Catholic Church in Bohemia. The Moravians were the earliest Protestant Church, rebelling against the authority of Rome some fifty years before Martin Luther. By the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, as many as 90% of the inhabitants of the Czech lands i.e. Bohemia and Moravia, were Protestant. The result of John Huss's powerful teaching led to his burning at the stake in Constance, Switzerland. His followers, known as Hussites, refused to submit to the pope and the Catholic

church. The years between 1420 and 1431 became known as the Hussite Wars. The majority of the nobility was Protestant, the schools and printing shops (last video we shared) established by the Moravian Church were flourishing. One unusual and (for its time) shocking belief was the group's eventual focus on universal education. Both the Bohemian and the Moravian populations remained majority Hussite until the 1620s until a Protestant defeat in the Battle of the White Mountain. The beheading of 27 protestant insurrection leaders (22 Czech, 5 Germans) was executed at the Old Town Square in Prague on June 21<sup>st</sup>, 1621. Their heads were displayed at the gallery of the Old Town Bridge Tower as a warning. Those turbulent events resulted in the Lands of the Bohemian Crown coming under Habsburg dominion for the next 300 years and being subject to immediate and forced conversion in an intense campaign of return to Catholicism.

This was the time when almost half of the Protestant mansions and estates in Bohemia and Moravia were confiscated and redistributed among the domestic Catholic nobility and the officers of the winning army. (This change in property ownership was the biggest one ever in terms of size until the nationalization of all real estate by the Communists in 1948.) The Czech language was gradually reduced to a means of communication among peasants, who were often illiterate. Protestants operated underground, practiced their beliefs secretly, and even-

tually, they were dispersed across Northern Europe. (This was the time of the exile of John Amos Comenius).

On the land of Count Zinzendorf, the refugees established in 1722 a new village called Herrnhut, Saxony, Germany, just a few miles from the Czech border. The Christian community grew rapidly and became the center of a major movement for Christian renewal and mission during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Moravian missionaries were the first large-scale Protestant missionary movement. They were also first to send "non-ordained laypeople" (rather than trained professional clergymen), the first to go to enslaved people, and they were first in many countries of the world. Out of Herrnhut were sent hundreds of missionaries to many parts of the world including the Caribbean, North and South America, the Arctic, Africa, and the Far East. Less remembered is the fact that in some cases missionaries transmitted diseases to local populations and in some cases, decimated entire communities.

The beginning of the Moravians' mission work to natives in America was established in 1740 in New York. By summer 1742, the first native Christian congregation, Shekomeko NY, was established. The towns of Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Emmaus were founded as Moravian communities in Pennsylvania and Graceland in Maryland ... The Moravian denomination continues in America to this day, with congregations in 18 states. The highest concentrations of Moravians exist in Bethlehem and Winston-Salem.

Additionally, in the 1800s, Hussite immigrants to the United States organized in the state of Texas, where they established the Unity of the Brethren.

The Moravian method of evangelizing was not always looked upon kindly, nor always welcomed. The motto of the Moravian church is: „In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; and in all things, love.“

The oldest and most widely read daily devotional work in the world was established by Moravians. They originated the „Daily Watchwords,” published today in 50 languages. They encouraged personal prayer and worship, bible study, confession of sins, and mutual responsibility.

They established a prayer watch of continuous prayer which ran uninterrupted, 24 hours a day, for 100 years.

We live near the White Mountain battle site and streets in our neighborhood (including ours) are named after those beheaded martyrs. We compiled the above information from different Wikipedia sources.

## **WHAT HAPPENED TO OUR CHURCH?**

We started to attend a new church about a year ago. Then came the Covid lockdown and we were participating in the internet, ZOOM, and other distance activities. After pre and post-Covid restrictions, we came to the church. We had a guest speaker and it was nice that he mentioned the 4<sup>th</sup> of July in America. To underline the independence and freedom we have, the Freedom song from

Gospel singers was presented live. However, the Sunday attendance was down. We realize this was a long weekend and the first weekend after kids got out of school when it is normal that Prague is almost evacuated. About 20 people came, and the sad part is that we did not know one person who was there. It was „in and out” Sunday; people left without greeting or paying attention to anyone. (Frozen-chosen?). Sad to admit, but it seems that in churches with light theology, people are warmer.

## **PRAISES**

Pavel is becoming more “fluent” in the Polish language. Since he lived for years in the area where Czech, Slovak, and Polish languages intermingle, he has feelings for the language. It is hilarious when almost the same sounding words have an opposite meaning e.g. *smell and odor* or *grace and love*. He enjoys “translating” his book to Polish so much that he put another book on the back burner. However, the book will have to be professionally proofread by a native Pole who knows Christ and theological terminology. He is already in contact with four such proofreaders.

## **ANOTHER OF OUR YOUTUBES**

As we promised in our last Electronic Prayer Letter, here is short YouTube showing beauty in the Czech Republic:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gZXhiJ6dBhs>

There are at the end of it three slides of the Russian jetliner of Czechoslovak Airlines TU 104 converted to a restaurant. It looks like a sleek plane; however, the workmanship is very sloppy. It was the second to enter regular service, behind the British de Havilland Comet, and was the only jetliner operating in the world from 1956 to 1958, when the British jetliner was grounded due to safety concerns.

### PLEASE PRAY FOR

- Finding a good Bible Church in the Czech Republic is a challenge. We have to admit that we are in limbo. There are so many issues of our days that undermine the Gospel in most denominations.
- Pray for the European Union since the godless political pressure reminds us of the brainwashing days of old communist ideas. Scripture says it much better than we can.
- Pray for stopping the present-world progress of “babelization, sodomization, and gomorrhahzation”.

***But these people disparage all the things that they do not understand; and all the things that they know by instinct, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed. ... These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage. But you,***

***beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they were saying to you, "In the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts." These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit. (Jude 10,16-19)***

### 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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