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For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. 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. (1Co 1:18-21)



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

Thank you for praying in light of recent request:

- For open hearts and minds of those attending the conference. Yes, the Conference opened some hearts.
- For travel mercies to all coming from east to west of Czech and Slovak countries. Yes, roads were clear and dry.
- For the ministry and those who labor in Czech and Slovak Republics. Yes, Kladno and Ústí's churches did an excellent job.
- For Bible Church of Prague and those who stand with us and labor with us. Yes, together we have a team of seven gifted men able and willing to teach, preach and help others to start independent bible-based churches in other places.

- For God's glory as we strive to serve Him. Yes, our Ninth Biblical Conference in Brno praised our Lord.

THE 9TH BIBLICAL CONFERENCE.

It was a great encouragement to us and especially to those who joined us for the first time. We praise the Lord that He brought younger generation from different parts of Czechia and Slovakia. It was a joy to see and greet faithful and longtime brothers and sisters in Christ. We had an excellent team of helpers, since we have to come a day ahead of the conference to set up sound system, signup sheets, nametags, provide tables with books from our publishing ministry, prepare 200 packages with a small refreshment and conference book by Mark Dever "What is a Healthy Church?" All went smooth.

The conference speakers did an outstanding job and the panel discussion was very encouraging. As an outcome of the conference, several individuals expressed interest in church planting.

MINISTRY HEARTBEAT

For a while, we have been welcoming church or unchurched believers who look for bible-based teaching. One of our prayers is that the Lord will give us opportunity to reach the unreached and here they are. As our body of believers is growing in numbers and maturing in faith, the Lord is sending people from the deep swamps of sin. They come from all occupations and even countries. Bible-based teaching and the power of His word is amazing. We see conviction of sin and

their desire to be redeemed. We know that we all have a long walk ahead and not all will remain. They have experience with addiction, dependency, lies, stealing, immorality, deceit ... it looks like a front line battle for souls.

CZECH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

The main issue of the recent presidential election was the European Union pressure on immigration quotas. Some EU countries such as Czechia, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, now even Austria and some others want to decide on their own, rather than on the Brussels' dictate, whom and how many refugees (in most cases economic illegals from Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa) they allow to enter their respective countries.

The mentioned post-communist countries are very sensitive about that issue. One must understand their past. Their history is full, if not solely, of being occupied by other neighboring, more powerful nations. Their history is practically a continuous struggle for national survival, for survival of their culture and language. For example, the Czechs were at the point of extinction at the end of the 18th century; there were only 900 thousand of them. They understand what people of great nations cannot grasp until it happens to them. Germans, French, Spaniards, English etc. have never ever faced their national extinction. Historically they were not inoculated against their eradication. That is why these smaller peoples resist any mandatory migrant quotas. They see it as existential threat.

Now Brussels wants to strip non-complying EU member states of funding in an effort to revamp a key EU asylum law; i.e. all migrants will get the same handouts in any EU country, thus making the much poorer post-communist countries attractive to the migrants. If this happens, the migrants would get about 3 times more than average Czech pensioner would. Those countries who do not accept prescribed quotas will be penalized.

It is not difficult to figure out which candidate won the presidential election. In the first round, we had eight presidential candidates and the current president for reelection. In the second round, we had a record turnout of 66.6% eligible voters. Previously apolitical young voters came in record numbers. The election was a carbon copy of the one in the USA. Metropolitan intellectuals, academia, media and show business on one side, and country common sense called in Czech "farmer's sense" on the other side. Farmer's sense won 52:48.

Relationships between friends were shattered. An animosity among generations showed lack of respect and acceptance of election outcome. No riots, no car burning but sense of deep rift remains. Best comment came from our worship leader Sunday after election. Now, it is over and we have the new/old anti-immigration president Mr. Zeman. There is the witty bon mot uttered from our pulpit: "Our president does not need to be reelected; he must be reborn." In Czech, *reelected* and *reborn* rhyme and sound quite similar: *znovuzvolen* and *znovuzrozen*.

A number of you asked us what we think about outcome of recent Czech presidential election. Our opinion is that the outcome is in our favor. The West misunderstands the social democrat president Zeman since it labeled him as right wing president. No, he is socialist but he is against illegal immigration.

The best insights came from Eliska Haskova Coolidge. See:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eliska_Haskova_Coolidge

Her family fled Czechoslovakia after the WWII before the communist took power in 1948. She spent almost two decades working as Staff Assistant to five U.S. Presidents in the White House (1963–1981). Then she worked in the United States Department of State for 10 years (1981–1990). In the 1990's she returned to her native Prague just as we did. Her comment on the presidential outcome is quite accurate. She said that many fears of those in the West were overblown. "Mr. Zeman's goal was a healthy relationship with Russia, not a subservient one. She said she was not fan of Mr. Zeman's vulgarity, but was willing to overlook some of his flaws because she admired the depth of his experience. "It is so important to have a leader who understands politics and who has met with world leaders," she said. (Excerpts from Marc Santor NYT Feb. 7)

European countries under Euro Union leadership are facing numerous challenges. A demographic decline, Muslim immigration, religious crisis, loss of cultural identity and even confidence in the

values of our own civilization. Europe needs revival of Christianity and repentance.

PRAISES

- Our son is coming in March to Germany on a business trip. He will spend few days with us.
- For the ministry and outreach, opportunities as a number of individuals are serving as volunteers.
- There is no dull moment in our lives.

CZECH ATHEISM?

The idea that Czechs are almost completely indifferent to any religion is not accurate. The apparent lack of interest in traditional forms of Christianity is accompanied by the massive popularity of what sociologists call “invisible” or “alternative” religion and what could be best described as a belief in magic. Czechs may not be very enthusiastic churchgoers but many of them easily accept the idea that fortune-tellers can predict the future, lucky charms bring good fortune or that the stars might influence their lives. Moreover, claims about Czech non-religiosity are also complicated by the growth of charismatic and evangelical movements in recent years. Even though the total number of evangelicals and charismatics is small, some of these denominations have multiplied their membership several times in the 10 years between the last two censuses.

(Dana Hamplová)

PRAYER NEEDS

- Please continue to pray for Slovak ministry.
- Pray for those who came to the Prague church.
- Our conference calendar is shaping up, actually next year (2019) June we should come to a Reach Beyond conference in Colorado Springs.
- Pavel is working on another book: “They Shall Reign with Him a Thousand Years.”

**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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