

Sharing Together Our Mission in a Secular Society

The PC USA and ECCB Partnership Conference

organized by the American Working group of the ECCB in Prague
and by the Czech Mission Network in the US

Prague, April 19-26, 2016

A collection of sermons, lectures, and presentations
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Sharing Together: Our Mission in a Secular Society

The ECCB-PCUSA Partnership conference, Prague and local churches in the Czech Republic, April 19-26, 2016

It was already the fourth time in the last 10 years that a small-scale conference brought together representatives of more than a dozen churches both from the Czech Republic and from the US. This time it took place in Prague and in some local churches both in Bohemia and Moravia. The basis was the Hus House in downtown Prague. It was here that the guests were accommodated and where most of the lectures, discussions and meals took place. During the weekend (April 22-24, 2016) the American guests visited their respective partnership churches outside Prague. The conference was bookended by festive worship services in the medieval churches of St. Martin in the Wall and St. Clement. Rev. Dan Ženatý, the moderator of the Synodal Council of the ECCB, preached at the beginning of the conference about the precious gift of meeting and sharing together. Rev. Ken White from Pittsburgh described in his final sermon how this miracle became visible during the week of encounters, sharing and learning.

Theological challenges

The challenging theological theme of the week was secular society as both denominations, the ECCB and the PC USA, experience it. Professor Mark Douglas from Columbia Theological Seminary categorized the ways US Christianity encounters secularism into three groups (*the mumblers* of the Gospel concentrating on personal transformation and avoiding public responsibility; *the screamers*, trying to shout down other voices; and the *line-repeaters* of all kinds of political slogans). The task of the church in these conditions is, according to Douglas, “to reflect on the question of how to engage surrounding cultures during seasons of change and to discern the work of God in itself and those cultures as God continues to bring new things out of old.” Petr Sláma from Charles University in Prague suggested seven emphases common to both the ECCB and the PC USA (God's grace, human freedom, God's being quite different from us, the prominence of God's word, the church as a fellowship, the public responsibility of the Church and the heritage of the Reformation), each one of these emphases having – to put in Richard Rohr's terms – a redeemed but also an unredeemed form. And we are challenged to work on the redemption of each emphasis. Interwoven with this typology was a biblical meditation on Abraham welcoming foreigners contrasted to Lot's daughters' incestuous fear of the Other (see Genesis 18). Rev. Pavel Pokorný, the deputy moderator of the ECCB, shared the dream he has for his denomination. Having analyzed the tendencies and challenges the church faces in these days, he concluded: “In my dream, my church is not a young lady but an attractive middle-aged woman, experienced, sure in her identity, but still flexible, full of mature love and humor, communicating in an open and friendly way, walking in peace and heading toward the sun.”

From a mission to the partnership

The key emphasis of the conference was the partnership between churches and how it starts, how it grows and how we can learn from each other to foster it. Betty McGinnis from Annapolis, Jan Sláma from Brno and Rev. Pavel Ruml, the former pastor from Letohrad, shared their personal memories reaching back to the early 1990s. Initiated from the American side by

David Murdoch and Betty McGinnis and welcomed from the Czech side by the former moderator of the ECCB Rev. Pavel Smetana, the first mission group from the PC USA came in 1992 bringing people from various churches in the US and volunteering in the Diaconia center in Klobouky near Brno. Later on, bilateral partnerships emerged between particular churches. There was a block of dual witnesses on how the partnership has been doing, and what benefits and dangers there have been in the trans-Atlantic relations between Letohrad and Annapolis, Olomouc and Athens, Vsetín and Cumberland, Ratiboř and Pittsburgh. Since the beginning, there have been stories of successful English camps organized in Czech towns by the local churches helped by American teachers and eye-opening visits by Czechs to their partner churches in the US. And above all, there was a polyphony of witnesses about long-range personal friendships.

Lectures and presentations

Also, there was a series of short lectures and presentations. One of them was introducing the manifold ministry of the Diaconia by Kateřina Svobodová and by the director of Diaconia Petr Haška. Another was elucidating the financial considerations of the ECCB and discussing the secrets of fund-raising (Kateřina Srbová). Still another provided a historical typology of the ECCB congregations (Rev. Martin Horák). The brief history and present statistics of the Protestant Faculty of Theology of Charles University was presented (Jan Roskovec from Charles University). There was a vital Scottish voice to be heard at this conference articulated by Carol Finley providing insight into the overseas networking of the Church of Scotland. And there was a farewell retrospect by Rev. Karen Moritz, the US co-worker of the Ecumenical Department of the Synodal Council, who is leaving Prague after some years of ministry for another position in the US.

Not just sitting

Besides the serious lectures, there was an item on the program called “It's all a Bohemian village to me”. Before the American guests left for their hosting churches, two professional English teachers, Ivana Marková and Ivana Adámková, led them in this funny and practical lesson in the Czech language – and some peculiar Czech habits. One evening we saw a movie on the forced collectivization of Czech farmers in the 1950s. The next evening all the conference moved to the theatre to see the opera Don Givanni by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Invisible yet omnipresent, providing assistance or advice, Rev. Gerhard Frey-Reininghaus and his team from the Ecumenical Department of the ECCB were extremely committed and helpful during the conference. Thinking about its outcomes, let's quote Rev. Bill Hathaway, as he finally reflected on the week: “In response, we trust. We trust in God so we are committed to worship. We trust in the body of Christ. The friendships we share within these partnerships provide real support. When I return home from the time with you I am determined to be a more faithful pastor and Christian because of your witness. *Děkuji* [“Thank you” in Czech].

Petr Sláma

Opening worship, St Martin in the Wall, April 19, 2016

Rev. Daniel Ženatý

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But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. 1st Cor. 15:20

Dear friends, you have closed the doors of your homes behind you, flew over the ocean, and now you are sitting in the church where Holy Communion with bread and wine was served a hundred years before this came into practice in other churches of the Reformation. We, from Czechia, are here together with you, as well as some brothers and sisters from Germany and perhaps other European countries.

How is this possible? That we are together, that we want to be together, we look forward to being together when it is not yet the case, we write emails to one another, skype, and we are connected through words.



When I think back over the 35 years I lived in the communist regime, back then it was impossible to write or call to the States with no control, just to fly to each other, be together, and, on top of that, in the church.

And today, in a different form and different context, we also overcome such powers that try to separate people. Powers that try to make them fight with one another and awake religious or other tensions between them.

So the fact that we are here together is nothing we can take for granted, on the contrary! And therefore we may view it as a miracle, as a concrete touch of God's Kingdom here on Earth.

How does it happen that it's possible? I believe the crucified and resurrected Christ is the

deepest basis of this miracle. The one who is living and present among us.

Miracles happened in his power and presence as He once used to walk upon this Earth. And they happen today as well. He is here with us. He touches us with His grace. He puts our worries aside. He changes the way we think. And therefore we are able to wish good things to other people. We don't feel the need to harm them. We have no idea why we should attack someone else's identity and originality.

The Apostle Paul sees it as important to remind us that it is not only the time that we live that has been changed through Christ's resurrection, but that a life of a new quality has been opened

for us. A different one. The one that comes from God. A complete one. And Paul assures us that Christ was led into this new life as the first one.

And the expression that he was the first one means that there will be others following him. There will be a second one, a third one a thousand's one... And me and you will follow one day as well.

Then many things change. The fullness that is one day to come affects us already. And many things happen:

The prejudices against those who are different are fading away.

I can smile at my neighbor without the fear that it might be awkward.

I can share with others, what God has given to me.

I can strive for freedom.

I can defend myself against anyone who would want to deprive me of my freedom.

I can express my fear.

I can afford to make mistakes.

I can even learn a foreign language and make mistakes when using it – because it is more important to be with my neighbor and friends.

I can confess my failures.

I can love.

I can forgive and receive forgiveness.

I can begin anew even though I may end up in a blind street again.

I can pack myself up, close the door behind me and fly to Europe.

I can sit in places where my sisters and brothers used to sit or stand 500 years ago.

I can imagine what might have been hard for them, whether they were healthy, what were the things they were looking forward to, what they wore.

I can simply live, be free, wish freedom to others and thank God that He stands in it with me.

Thanks to Christ He holds me.

Amen



Rev. Bill Hathaway and Rev. Gerhard Frey-Reininghaus celebrating the Lord's supper at the opening service.

The frozen chosen trying to warm each other up or : Why foster partnership?

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The following lines are a combination of a Biblical meditation on the tendency to pull people out of their habits (and habitats) into new encounters and a preliminary sevenfold list of characteristics of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren, showing how badly we need one another in order to fulfill our mission in our societies.

I. Biblical meditation on Gen 18 and 19

These two chapters of the book of Genesis present a baroque altar with one principal theme of hospitality. The question of hospitality had appeared earlier in Genesis. Abraham himself was an economic immigrant in our terms. Modern Biblical scholars support the hypothesis of two competing versions of Israel's origins, the one of Abraham standing for peaceful infiltration as opposed to the one with Moses and Joshua, standing for a violent conquest. Thus when we speak about Abraham we are in the realm of a peaceful encounter. In our



reading Abraham had settled in Canaan a long time ago. The question now is whether he would be hospitable. Three men visited Abraham. And he hastened to Sarah and said, “Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes.” (Gen 18:6) His hospitality prepared the stage for his guests to announce the good news about his son Isaac. The letter to Hebrews 13:2 writes in a similar vein: “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.”

After the visit to Abraham, the messengers continue to Sodom. Please note that there are just two of the messengers going to Sodom. According to Jewish tradition, the third archangel, whose name was Raphael (God heals us) didn't join them. He knew that this mission would end up in a tragedy. Another test of hospitality takes place in the city of Sodom. Lot stands the test well and so brings redemption to his family. The citizens of Sodom, on the other hand, fail in this test, they violate the elementary rule of respect for and protection of travelers visiting their gates – with a result that is well known.

Between the two stories about hospitality there is the story about Abraham's negotiation with the Lord on behalf of Sodom (Gen 18: 16-33). Haggling with God, he is able to bring it down from fifty to ten righteous people in Sodom. Yet even this is in vain because there are not even ten righteous people in the city. Abraham is bargaining not just on behalf of his family or of his nation, but on behalf of a nearby Canaanite city whose reputation must have been well known not only to the Lord in heaven. The story of Abraham interceding for Sodom is a crux, connecting the two stories about hospitality towards foreigners who need refuge and food.

II. Being the guests of the ECCB

Now, you, our American guests, are here like the three visitors to Abraham – or possibly like the two visitors to Sodom. Unlike the Biblical story, both of us, the Czech hosts and the American guests, have many things in common. We should behave towards one another like Abraham did to the Sodomites and try to find 50 righteous people – or at least 50 nice features – on the other side. And if not fifty than at least ten. On another occasion I put together seven characteristic features of the ECCB. None of these features is in itself positive or negative. Rather, they present tendencies, hereditary inclinations. As the case usually is with hereditary issues (I am indebted here to Richard Rohr and *The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective*, Crossroad 2001), each one of them has its positive, redeemed form, and its dark, un-remembered, pathological and unfortunate form. And the wisdom consists in realistically recognizing these features and in fostering the redeemed forms of each one.

1 Emphasis on God's Grace Both the ECCB and the PC USA are the heirs of the Reformation of the 15th century, drawing on Martin Luther and his rejection of the Biblical Law and his rejection of the idea that we can be saved due to our own efforts. The merciful God became an exclusive hero of evangelical sermons. The mercy of God turned out to be his sole feature, God's Grace turned into a self-evident rule. This is however precisely the opposite of what Luther discovered in 1517. On Reformation day in 1943 Dietrich Bonhoeffer, then a prisoner of the Nazi regime, wrote that in our days Luther would have written the opposite of what he wrote in 1500. In Luther's days the discovery of God's grace meant breaking through the shell of self-contentment of the institutionalized church. Luther found himself quite naked in front of God, who then – surprisingly – covered him with his mercy. I wonder whether we are still able to communicate this dramatic moment today, when grace has become something automatic, something we are entitled to, at least in Protestant churches, ending up in self-contentment and boredom. Our secular contemporaries suffer from a lack of meaning and seek for orientation, inspiration and even guidance in their lives. And Jesus himself hardly spoke about his vicarious sacrifice, but rather about his kingdom that is coming as a new authority that contests all other authorities.

2 Emphasis on freedom. Here also Luther serves as a godfather. However, the concept itself has much older parents and it has taken various, often contrasting forms. Freedom is a key motif in the story of Exodus; in this case freedom means that the Israelites owe their loyalty and obedience to the Law of Moses instead of to Egypt. It is freedom *because of* the Law. In the mission of the apostle Paul freedom is a function of grace. He opposes Jews who connected

being part of God's people with the Law of Moses and made it conditional on the Law. According to Paul, one *can be* part of God's people without first becoming a Jew. Paul coins the concept of freedom *from* the Law. Biblical concepts of freedom became the inspiration for all kinds of liberation movements (e.g. for the struggle of African American slaves or for Christians under Communism). In Protestant churches, the adjective *free* has been used to describe two contrary features. On the one hand, the revivalist evangelical movement of the late 1800s established the Free Reformed church in Czechia (later known as the Church of Brethren), opposing the course of the mainline ECCB. On the other hand, "freedom", in the sense of an absolute respect for the individual way followed by a person, the absence of authority in spiritual matters, and ecclesial decisions became the keyword of the struggle of the ECCB with religious conservatism. It became almost impossible in the ECCB to say with Paul (Phil 3:17) "Brethren, join in imitating me...". There is an allergy to any form of leadership in the ECCB. Yet even the Decalogue starts with the assertion of God's Lordship.

3 Emphasis on God's difference from all our ideas about him. This accent grows out of the prophetic refusal of all visual and tangible representations that could be substitutes for God himself. It had always been the *cantus firmus* of the major Reformed (Calvinistic) congregations. It has echoed strongly in Karl Barth. He and his pupils refused the optimism and theological liberalism of the 1800s, which relied on an alliance of feeling, culture and institutions with God. This distinction proved to be far-sighted during the Nazi period in Germany. Most of the "German Christians" felt Nazism was a manifestation of providential necessity, Barth and his friends from the Confessing Church did not believe it – and they were able to withstand the temptation of Nazism. Yet the accent on the insuperable gap between God and man has neutralized the tradition of Christian spirituality. Human experience and human religious emotions have been declared unimportant and even suspect. When the revolutionary excitement of this theological revolution went off the boil, the church was left with an even weaker ability to address its contemporaries. The "frozen chosen", unsatisfied and frustrated by their own sober spirituality, search for all kinds of "warming-up" technologies on a spiritual market which is often quite alien to the "DNA" of Christianity.

4 Emphasis on the Word of God. Historically, this accent has developed out of the Reformation repudiation of the authority of the Roman church and its hierarchy by Jan Hus, Martin Luther, and others. In contesting the hierarchy and its legitimizing tradition, unfortunately liturgy and the visual, bodily character of worship have also been passed by. A typology emerged according to which Protestants listen and Catholics see. The concentration on the aural reception of the faith was justified from the Bible: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (J 1:1). Yet John did not mean just talking and talking. The *logos* in his Hellenistic understanding was rather the very purpose of God with the world. It was his effective power to carry this purpose out that was meant, rather than just words. According to Hebrews 1:2, God expressed himself in the person of Jesus (he "has spoken to us by his Son"). Becoming man is anything but just speaking. I like very much the notion of Walter Brueggemann formulated in his "19 theses or on the Counterscript",¹ the notion of the church as a community *scripted* by an alternative script, namely by the Scripture. Worship becomes a battlefield of all kinds of scripts that determine us. I have discussed with my colleagues whether the sermons we preach do bear some prophetic features. It seems to me that in general the

1 Walter Brueggemann, Counterscript: Living with the Elusive God, *Christian Century* 122/24 (2005), 22–28.

prophetic quality of a sermon depends on 1) whether the source of the sermon is theologically well qualified (we can say: whether it comes from above), and 2) whether it really comes down to touch the experienced reality of a congregation. This linking of a sermon with a particular situation – and this could be bad news for some of us preachers – should make a sermon prepared for a particular situation “unpreachable” anywhere else. We need badly to think about forms of appropriation of the Word, some rituals of response to what we have just heard, some rituals that would enable us to enact the transformation.

5 Emphasis on fellowship. There is a strong feeling among Czech Protestants that to be a Christian inevitably means belonging to a particular congregation or church. Much more than among Catholics, our churches are fellowships of people who know each other, are friends and meet even beyond the framework of church life. Partly this is a result of the fact that the ECCB is a minority church. When the fellowship in our churches fades, we strive to create and strengthen it. Yet there is a danger in this concept that our churches become clubs of those who are similarly minded. In doing so we isolate ourselves from others around us who do not share the group (or social class) code of our fellowships. It is therefore quite important to see that our congregations are not goals in themselves. Amiable as they may be (and sometimes this kind of amiability is quite a remote goal), they are part of a bigger project, which is God’s kingdom in progress in this world.

6 The public responsibility of the church has been taken quite seriously in the ECCB. The reasons are numerous, the most important ones being: our Calvinist and Moravian heritage; our close identification with the democratic Czechoslovakia established after 1918; and the impact of Josef L. Hromádka, the theologian and long-term Dean of the Protestant Faculty of Theology (or *Comenius Evangelical Theological Faculty* in his days), who embraced the communist regime as a historical necessity and taught his students to play their part and assume responsibility to build up socialist society. Seen as a collaborator with the regime by some, he was followed by pupils who took seriously their responsibility to build up society and became forerunners of the democratic opposition. There was a far higher proportion of ECCB ministers who publicly became members of the Charter 77 democratic opposition than was the case with ministers of other churches. Quite recently the ECCB called for openness and a humane approach towards immigrants.²

On the other hand, the idea of “responsibility for society” is in itself a formulation derived from Constantinism, from an idea that the church and state build a unity and the church should serve as a moral and ideological backbone of the state. But should it really? In the radical secularization of society we need a network of islands of *positive deviance*, a network of congregations that would enable and strengthen local Christian communities to live in an alternative way and become the basis for social change. It seems to me that the primary responsibility of the church, which in some ways starts from nothing again, does not consist in changing society but in providing islands of positive deviance, of transformed relations and values.

2 <http://www.e-cirkev.cz/en/clanek/5554-Helping-the-refugees-is-helping-people-in-need/index.htm>

7 Guardians of the Reformation heritage. We live in a period of anniversaries, remembering recently Jan Hus (1415 – 2015), Jerome of Prague (1416 – 2016), and Martin Luther (1517 – 2017). As a minority church we easily get stuck in the programmatic mantra “not to be like Catholics”. And indeed, there is no one else to look after this particular Reformation tradition. At the same time however, if there has been a lasting heritage of the Reformation, than it is its reduction, its sole attention to what really matters theologically (grace, faith and the Bible). All other questions of church organization, of forms of worship and the like are auxiliary and we should have the flexibility to weigh them and keep or refuse them when faced with a specific reality. We should, in my view, embark on an eclectic search for forms of spiritual and communal life measured exclusively by their Biblical legitimization – and by their effectiveness.

III. Biblical meditation, second phase

Finally, there is an embarrassing, scandalous appendix to the story of Sodom. After the rescue of Lot and his family we read about Lot's wife who didn't make it to escape from the city. Now only Lot and his two daughters remain. Sure, it is difficult for an incomplete family to manage. There are few ways how to manage in such a situation. Lot's daughters act out of the fear of what the future might bring. Therefore they seduce Lot into an incestuous intra-familial relationship. They have sex with a member of their family, so that they would not have to have sex with a foreigner. I see this embarrassing appendix about Lot and his daughters as a negative, as a contrasting reverse of the two examples of Abraham's hospitality, his openness to the strangers coming to us, perhaps demanding something and yet bringing new life and even salvation. Abraham is sometimes described as the example of Biblical faith. This faith means to be open to new calls and to be ready to abandon what we've known and built. You know the story of Abraham being called by the Lord when he was 75. We can learn three lessons from this Biblical father:

1. It is never too late to hit the road. Abraham was 75 and the whole story only starts at this moment.
2. There is a promise of blessing connected with him leaving his homeland behind and going to a foreign country. Abraham might have been wondering what new adventures and encounters the journey would bring. The same thing happens when we foster partnership.
3. Having hit the road, Abraham will receive blessing. But not only that, he will himself be a blessing (see Gen 12:2). I hope that this partnership will enable us to receive blessing and that we ourselves shall be a blessing to others.³

³ I would like to thank Peter Stephens for proof-reading the English of this text.

The Church's Life in Post-Secular Culture

Reflections on Theological Education in the U.S. and Czech Republic

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Abstract: For several decades, Columbia Theological Seminary has brought students to central Europe, including Prague, as part of a yearly course entitled, "Explorations." This course is designed to help students gain a greater understanding of the global church while also advancing their capacities to do cultural analysis and work with others in the class. Recognizing that the purposes of a particular course in a particular PC(USA)-related seminary are not universal, I nevertheless want to build on my experiences in teaching this course to explore the complexity and promise of creating systems in which small groups of persons might engage in new setting with a majority population whose languages, ecclesiologies, and cultures both overlap with and differ from their own.

I. Introduction.

I want to begin by expressing my gratitude for chance to be in the Czech Republic or Czeska (or whatever you're going to call it), in Prague, with friends from Charles University, the ECCB, and the U.S., and to represent CTS and, to a lesser extent, the PCUSA at this conference. I bring greetings from C.T.S., from the faculty--many of whom have come here--and from its 10th President, Leanne Van Dyk. My hope this morning is to explore the changing way the gospel is understood and shared in the U.S. through the lens of the way CTS teaches its Master of Divinity degree students.

II. 1989 (was a good year).

I begin with the year 1989, which is an auspicious starting point for several reasons. First, it marks the year of a couple important texts in the United States that address questions of secularism. The first of these is Haddon and Shupe's book, *Secularization and Fundamentalism Reconsidered*, a book that has continued to grow (there are now multiple volumes) and change over time. The second is Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor's *Sources of the Self*. In that book, Taylor explores the sources of contemporary understandings of the human being in western culture while also initiating a trajectory of thought that will lead to his landmark text, *The Secular Age*, which appeared about a decade ago and continues to shape thought on matters pertinent to this conference.

Second, in 1989, Columbia Theological Seminary began teaching a new course, called at the time "Alternative Context" and now called "Explorations." In 1989, the purpose of course was to take a group of almost exclusively Presbyterian students from the southeastern United States and send them to a part of the world with which they are not familiar to see how the church understands itself and its mission in such a place, with the goal of enlarging their view of the gospel. I recognize an irony in taking Presbyterians to do this: though they are a minority in southern culture, they've wielded disproportionate political and cultural power. That said, these powers have been diminishing for reasons having to do with both the power of secular thought and the power of a distinct religious perspective. Among the places that we've taken students have been Jamaica, Mexico, the coal-mining areas of Kentucky, Northern Ireland, Brazil, India, Ghana, the Texas borderland, inner city Atlanta, and central Europe, particularly Prague and Hungary.

I don't know that anything happened in the Czech Republic in 1989. (I kid, of course): 1989 marks the beginning of the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia, inaugurating a time of great hope and great confusion. I take it that the relation between this hope and this confusion is, in part, what this conference is dealing with; that among the questions we might fruitfully address is, "What has happened to that hope and that confusion since that time, especially for a church that recognizes that it lives between 'the already' and 'the not yet'--between a first and second resurrection that not only provide the basis for hope but clarify the reasons for confusion. This morning, I'm going to spend some time reflecting on the way the first two sets of 1989 events--the initiated sets of reflections on secularism and the initiated course at CTS--might help us in this conference think about how the ECCB might relate to its surrounding culture, how the PCUSA might relate to its surrounding culture, and how the ties between the ECCB and the PCUSA might grow as a result.

III. On Alternative Context/Explorations

Explorations is the longest-standing and, in many ways, least-changed course in the curriculum. It is also the course that our students are most likely to remember and remark upon long after graduating. It has survived two major curriculum revisions and two other minor ones.

Interestingly, it has always been designed to build upon earlier courses in the curriculum even though the courses that it has been designed to build upon have, themselves, changed. That is, it has always been designed to be an integrative course, but it hasn't always attempted to integrate the same things. And, over time, it has increasingly had to make two related adjustments to what it integrates.

First, the nature of our students has changed. We are significantly more diverse theologically and racial ethnically and our students come from a far wider range of places, including other countries. Our students also are far more likely to have international travel experience than previous generations were. As such, helping students think about how to interpret the work of God in other contexts doesn't begin with the simple upheaval of dislocating them from the only context they've ever known. Instead, it begins with helping them to think about the assumptions they carry into engagement with other cultures so that they can think about the way they'll engage with their own culture. (Steven Yoo example).

Second, the nature of the American public has changed in a number of ways. Pertinent to the work of this conference, the public has changed with regards to how it thinks about religious convictions shape engagements with society around it. Notably, belief in God has decreased--though from the mid-90% to the mid 80% (and for those born after 1989, to 80%) and the

percentage of those who claim to be Christian has dropped from the upper 80's to 71% even as the number who claim to be "spiritual but not religious" now are the second largest religious group (after evangelical Protestant) in the U.S. And any other number of statistics (re: those of other faiths, the willingness to transfer from one denomination or religion to another, etc.) has gone up. So if we used to send our graduates back out to a world in which they continued to recognize those around them, increasingly we are sending them out into cultures in which they need to be able to offer some form of apologetics for their own religious predilections. Let me take up those two changes in order, beginning by describing the course in a bit more detail through attention to what we expect students to learn in it. Our expected student learning outcomes are these:

That students can:

1. Can accurately name and critically engage the cultural and theological forces that have shaped one's personal faith and practices.
2. Can competently analyze social contexts through the use of a range of methods (e.g., ethnography, social psychology, sociology of religion) and tools (e.g., power grids, sector analysis, theologies of culture).
3. Can work comfortably and appreciatively in unfamiliar contexts and with persons of other cultures.
4. Can map out courses of action in contexts of change and initiate them.

Toward achieving these ends, our approaches have tended to be driven by the competencies and perspectives of whichever faculty member was leading any particular trip. So, for instance, my comfort with sector analysis means I might teach the course in one way whereas a colleague whose strength is in ethnography and participant-observer studies might lead it very differently. This has complicated the internal coherence of the course, especially since we would like the course to build on earlier courses and lead to later ones--and as the fairly new director of our MDiv degree, it falls to me to fix this--which turns out to be one of my major tasks for next year.

IV. On changing demographics and the changing shape of secularism in the U.S.⁴

As far as the topic of changing religious demographics in society, I think you can see something of the way we approach engagement with society through a lecture I give on the topic in another of the integrative courses. In that lecture, I highlight six possible bases for Christians to think of engagement beyond the church's walls as an important part of their particular faith commitments.

1. **Biblical authenticity.** Almost from the creation stories at the beginning of Genesis there has been a repeated refrain that runs through the scriptures. It is this: faith has implications for how to live with others. Whether focused on matters of justice (Moses before Pharaoh, the warnings and promises of the Old Testament prophets, Jesus' command to care for the "least of these"), righteousness (Abraham's hospitality to angelic visitors, Job's dealings with his so-called "comforters," Paul's call submit to secular authorities), or witness (Israel's call to be a blessing to the nations, Jesus delivering the Sermon on the Mount to the gathered crowds, Peter preaching in the marketplace), the refrain is clear: the Bible does not support a "just God and me" faith.

4 For a much more developed treatment of some of the ideas in this section of the paper, see Mark Douglas, *Believing Aloud: Reflections on Being Religious in the Public Square* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2010).

2. Historical precedent. In the long history of the church, it has always been most relevant when facing outward. Sometimes that relevance has been less-than-laudatory: scandals like the Crusades, missionary endeavors less interested in sharing the gospel than in obliterating indigenous cultures for their own advantages, and, perhaps above all, the *Shoah*, perpetrated by a particular group of Christians claiming to know the mind of God on matters of race and salvation. But the church has also shaped profound—and profoundly good—movements in history. It has established countless charitable organizations, hospitals, and support services. It has led fights against slavery, segregation, apartheid, and totalitarian governments. It has built schools, led literacy movements, and run after-school programs; dug wells, built houses and worked to make them homes. It has lobbied for more just laws and on behalf of the under- or unrepresented. One would be hard pressed to find any part of the globe that the church has not touched and, in touching it, done good works.
3. Evangelical attentiveness. Unlike Judaism, in which one becomes a Jew by being born to a Jewish mother, or Hinduism, in which one is already caught up in the cycles of incarnation and reincarnation whether one knows it or not, Christianity is a proselytizing religion. People don't become Christians by birth; they become so by rebirth. And even those of us in traditions that baptize babies still recognize that full participation in the church comes at the point of confirmation, when one is old enough (and in principle trained enough through catechetical) to claim one's own faith through one's own faith statement. It follows, then, that the church moves into the future by appealing to outsiders (recognizing that our children—even those raised in the church—at least prior to their confirmations, are simply the closest outsiders to us). Though God may ultimately secure the future of the church (and, for that matter, be the church's future), in the meantime, the church attempts to live and speak in such a way as to attract outsiders into itself.
4. Doxological commitment. Believing that God is the primary audience for all their actions, Christians practice at incorporating worship into more and more of their lives. They struggle *against* making too much sense of a world that can be neatly divided between matters that are “public” and matters that are “private.” In a way, they recognize that everything they do has a public: the God whom they seek to glorify in their actions. Obviously, this doesn't mean that they can't understand or value actions that ought to be protected from interference by others in the community or the state. At a political level, Christians see the importance of preserving and maintaining such space. But at an existential level, Christians live their lives before God and, as such, properly ought to refuse to let the distinction between public and private go all the way down. The worship—praise, confession, thanksgiving, supplication—that shapes their whole lives will necessarily occur both in politically public and politically private spaces and thereby undermine claims that put too much emphasis on keeping public and private apart.
5. Theological credibility. Christians cannot make sense of their faiths without seeing the world as a sphere of divine activity nor make sense of themselves without trying to discern how God's activity in the world is both shaping and

encouraging their actions in it. Through its claims about the continued presence of the Holy Spirit that blows where it will, Christians recognize that God's interactions with the world extend beyond its own borders. Churches face outward because they believe they can seek and find God there as well.

6. Moral responsibility. Christians treat the commandment regarding neighbor-love as near the core of their moral commitments. Those neighbors are not us; nor, necessarily, are they like us. They will have different faiths, different worldviews, different opinions, and different values. Undoubtedly, contact with those differences will create tensions. But at the same time, it will also put Christians in places where they can see a new revelation or hear a fresh word from the God who is at work in the world, often through those very neighbors.

These possible reasons to engage the surrounding culture--reasons that may go so far as to constitute a mandate to do so--answer *why* but not *how*. To make sense of the *how*, though--and, perhaps, to offer a bit of clarity about the American context--it helps to have a bit of history in place (especially the history of secularization).

Begin by recognizing that in the U.S., matters of faith have always mixed with political and cultural matters. From the arrival of Pilgrims, Puritans, and Quakers before the country's founding to the continued influence of churches, synagogues, and other houses of worship on laws, on candidates, on social welfare, and even on leisure time, religion and culture have always been inextricably and potently mixed. And this has happened in a comparatively more steady way than the Czech Republic has experienced, especially in light of its experiences with a much longer history (including the so-called "wars of religion," two World Wars, its period of Soviet control, and the changes since 1989). So, paradoxically, the Czech Republic and the ECCB exist simultaneously with a much longer history of church-society interactions than we'd find in the U.S. and a much, much shorter history of those interactions.

In the U.S., the influence of faith on political and cultural matters has had many benefits: promoting social stability, maintaining traditions of volunteerism and altruism, shaping political language and enriching culture. Yet it hasn't been only beneficial. Religion, after all, has a long history of promoting division, rejecting wisdom, exacerbating violence, and pursuing defenestrations. (And now to show that I shouldn't be trusted with a joke, I'll explain that a defenestration means throwing somebody through a window and two famous defenestrations happened in Prague; one in 1418 as part of the Hussite conflict and another in 1619 as part of the Catholic/Protestant conflict). Anyone who would speak religiously in the public sphere has the obligation of recognizing not only religion's benefits but its costs as well.

Indeed, attention to the dangers associated with religion's costs helped shape the United States' two traditions of secularism: political secularism, which, via the First Amendment to our Constitution, maintains a separation of church and state, and cultural secularism, which has sought to emphasize the distinction between public and private (and to place religion in the private realm) as a way of culturally undergirding political secularism. More importantly, these two traditions of secularism (the political and the cultural) were founded on and funded by a longer tradition of secularism that began, really, even before the Reformation when, as Charles Taylor has argued in his magisterial *The Secular Age*, people began to admit choice into their faith--not necessarily whether to be Christian (let alone whether to believe) but how to be Christian. Once religious faith could actually be something about which people made choices, it ceased to function as ubiquitous and implied in all of existence and became an object of thought as well as a means of thinking. That is, once Christianity became something we could

think about, it became something that we did think about. And it's worth noting that Jan Hus has a role to play in all this.

Collectively, the effect of these two traditions of secularism--the political and the cultural--has been an attempt to keep religious voices not only out of government but out of the public sphere as well (or, at very most, to insist that religious people translate their religious language into one that could be understood by everyone.) A history of religious perspectives given public expression in the U.S. (e.g., during abolition and the civil rights movement) did little to shape the opinions of many secular philosophers that religion was quaint at best, for the weak-minded in general and the cause of atrocities on occasion. Given its potentially divisive impact, even the generously-minded tended to treat religion like strong medicine: to be administered only as needed and in small doses. Such were the arguments of cultural secularism, anyway.

And for quite a while it looked like the cultural secularist argument was winning. Religious folk tended to respond either in reactionary ways or in agreement with secularism. They allowed the promoters of secularism to shape the argument; as a result even when religious folk won particular battles (e.g., keeping a moment of silence in public schools, getting government vouchers for private schools), it still looked like they were fighting a rear-guard action. In spite of the fact that fears of godlessness in American society had been around almost as long as there was such a place as America, during the 1960's and '70's it seemed that the forces of history were moving conclusively toward the victory of secularization and the dissolution of publicly valued religious authority in the west.

It's not that there was no religious language in public settings but that where religious language was being used--like printing "In God We Trust" on money and adding "under God" to the pledge of allegiance--it tended to be pretty innocuous language even if it was intended to exclude some people (e.g., Jehovah's Witnesses, CLDS, etc.). It was a kind of "here's something we all agree on" approach that denied the actual disagreements that particular people of faith might have with each other and thereby significantly circumscribed the "we" who were agreeing--a kind of common denominator approach to religious sentiment that revealed itself via the rather peculiar argument that there was such a thing as "The Judeo-Christian Ethic." Indeed, one way to think about this kind of common denominator faith is as the residue that remains after all the rich but clearly distinct religious languages have been pulverized and screened by the secularist project: it's what a universally shared (and therefore publicly accessible) faith language would sound like if such a thing could actually exist; a way of avoiding the perceived social costs that come with religious pluralism by denying pluralism a foothold in the public sphere.

However, there is no universally shared faith language. Instead, as the variety of religions in the U.S. increased and the frustrations of people with particular religious perspectives grew, the arguments for secularization began to be drowned out by the cacophony of new and very particular religious voices, each claiming the right to speak in their native tongues.

Before such an onslaught, it was almost inevitable that the arguments for cultural secularization would lose. And they did. Their chief proponents (e.g., John Rawls, Richard Rorty, and others) either died or changed their minds. Sympathetic political philosophers and theologians pointed to the double standard used to privatize religious perspectives while allowing various ideological perspectives into the increasingly pluralistic public sphere. Historians paid more attention to the benefits of religious voices in that sphere, including in their abilities to shape the American Revolution, Abolition, Suffrage, Prohibition, and the Civil Rights Movement. Religious conservatives for whom secularization was a dirty word gained political power. With the

election of Ronald Reagan, an ascendant Republican Party threw their weight behind the project of establishing government grants for faith-based initiatives. Immigrant groups coming from non-secular states grew in number even as secular citizens in the west became more globalized and noticed the impact of religion to shape politics in, for example, Iran or Poland.

And people everywhere in the U.S. looked around and noticed not only how religious the culture was but how frequently many of its citizens were willing to listen to religious perspectives at least in the name of tolerance. Cultural secularity—or at least the arguments that undergirded it—fell out of style. Not everyone is happy about it, but for all intents and purposes, we in the United States now live in a post-secular world.

So now it is (mostly) settled that faith matters in the public square—that religious thinkers neither have to leave their faith at the door when they enter the square nor translate their religious perspectives into a shared secular vernacular. There is common consent *that* faith matters in such a setting. But *why* and *how* faith matters is far less clear—and religious folk have done little to settle those questions.

By the time we were given permission to speak in our own idiomatic tongues, people of faith seemed to have forgotten how to talk in ways that were both faithful and publicly meaningful.

Perhaps this is because we have been affected by the same trends that helped us gain admission into the public square (e.g., growing pluralism, the retrenchment of religion in and against society, the growing political power of religious conservatives, greater attention to the way earlier generations of religious voices had spoken). Perhaps we had internalized the public/private split that marks secularization and had decided the most important matters we could talk about were internal ones (like whether or not to ordain gays and lesbians). Perhaps some of us entered the public square looking for a fight against secularists rather than seeking a new way to speak and be heard. And, as people so often do, perhaps we cut intellectual corners and tried to say simply things that are, by nature complicated (much as the last few paragraphs did, having taken a complex set of arguments and boiled them down into a few broad stereotypes). Said differently, having spent so little time rehearsing our lines, we were affected by the political equivalent of stage fright once we were allowed to speak in the public square—and so we did the same things most frightened performers do: we mumbled, screamed, or repeated earlier lines.

The mumblers continued the project of shaping a common denominator faith, albeit one that is oriented more toward personal transformation than social stability. Religious language could be public language provided it spoke to everyone's situation, albeit in vague and aphoristic ways (speaking the language of what is sometimes called "moral therapeutic deism"). Religious faith became faith in one's own project of self-fulfillment and religious language became the language of diffused spirituality (as in "I'm spiritual but not religious"). Where a common faith used to help maintain social stability, now it served the ends of personal growth; advancing projects of individual spiritual growth and personal wellbeing replaced those of communal growth and public welfare as the chief purposes of religious activity.

The second way that those with stage fright react to forgotten lines is to get angry. The screamers attempted to overcome the diversity of religious voices in that sphere by controlling it.

The attacks have been two-pronged. One prong has accepted a vision of the world in which the state is the dominant player in politics and politics the dominant force in culture; they've attempted to foist their candidates upon the rest of us, to position themselves as close to the sources of political power as possible, and to speak as loudly as they can not so much in the public square as toward the halls of power. The other prong has recognized the degree to which

culture precedes politics; they've attempted to make themselves arbiters of what is good or right in culture, to aggressively market their own products, and to co-opt the languages of other groups to their own purposes (e.g., "right to life" from the right and "freedom to marry" from the left—though they leave unclear how the languages of rights and freedoms fit Christian visions of why we care for others or how we understand covenantal commitments).

Then there is the third approach that those with stage fright use when they forget a line: they repeat an earlier line in the hopes that it will stimulate memory. Line-repeaters in the U.S. seem to have ignored the demise of cultural secularism. Having grown used to translating the language of their faith commitments into the vernacular of the public sphere, they carried on as if that vernacular were their native language. They regularly make statements about the various economic, political, and social afflictions of the day—but always making those statements in largely non-religious terms. In part, their approach was shaped by practical considerations: they regularly form coalitions with politically and socially similar groups from non-religious coalitions or other religious traditions and the secular language of the public sphere has been helpful in keeping those coalitions focused on their objectives rather than on their constituent members.

And this is where we find ourselves today: in a post-secular age with no clear idea (or at least no agreed-upon idea) about how the church should engage its surrounding culture. Which isn't a great place to be, necessarily, but neither is it a horrible place as long as the church is continuing to reflect on the question of how to engage surrounding cultures during seasons of change and to discern the work of God in itself and those cultures as God continues to bring new things out of old.

So what insights might follow from all this for the good of the conference?

V. Gleanings and Questions:

Among the many gleanings that might follow from all this are, at least, these:

1. There are many kinds of secularism, including: political, cultural, existential.
2. We should treat secularism in society not so much as a kind of amnesia but as a kind of pluralism in which the church enters a marketplace of ideas.
3. The church responds to these multiple secularisms in multiple ways and none of those way is perfect.
4. What we learn from any of those ways will mandate some translation/interpretation.
5. Such translation/interpretation will mandate some careful self-reflection on our parts, understanding who we are as well as where and when we are.
6. Self-reflection becomes more possible when we know how we encounter other cultures. This is part of the genius of the Explorations course.
7. Such self-reflection is made possible through attentiveness to culture through best forms of theological reflection on that culture.

And as far as questions for the conference and the ECCB, I'd float at least these:

1. Where might we find these various forms of secularization at work in Czech society and how do they relate to each other?
2. Where might we see the church as a network of positive deviations, in Petr's lovely phrase—and especially the ECCB—responding to these various forms of secularization in Czech society and how many types of responses do we see?

3. Most importantly: Where might we see God at work in the world and in these various forms of secularism and how might we respond to God's work?

This last question will take us back to deep concerns of the church as it has existed since its start and its practices shaped by virtues like faith, hope, and love. It will also remind us that our future and that the church's future is always founded in God who both shapes and is the future of the church. Which is where we ought to be, anyway.

The Dream I Have for the ECCB and Protestants in our Society

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In my speech „The dream I have for the ECCB and Protestants in our society“ I would like to reflect upon the spiritual, societal, and political context of our way to the future. I will also share the vision of the Synodal Council, the leading body of the ECCB which was elected in 2015 for the next 6 years. What is, or will be, our mission and what is the role of partnership in it?

DREAM AND REALITY

JESUS AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

„The dream I have for the ECCB and Protestants in our society“ – I guess, this title was given to me by Gerhard or someone from the Ecumenical Department. I like it but I do not want to support any impression of an intended similarity to the “I have a dream” speech by my famous American colleague. In our general understanding, a dream is the opposite of reality. But the relationship of a dream and reality is

much more complex and dynamic. Dreaming is actually a part of reality. And sometimes a dream becomes the reality and sometimes a dream changes the reality.

What Jesus says about the coming kingdom of God can be seen very close to the category of a dream. But his saying (his spirit) has the power to change everything.

A Dream, compared with an idea, is something that comes from somewhere outside myself. I do not create my dream, I get it and in this sense I have it. A Dream, compared with an idea is more emotional than rational. A Dream is longing for something. A Deep source of motivation, new ideas, will, and hope. That is why I like to talk about a dream rather than an idea or a plan.

The Dream I have for my church is inspired by the dream proclaimed by Jesus. By his vision of the coming kingdom of God. It makes us free because its coming and its presence is not dependent on us, on our efforts and achievements, on the condition of our church. The church is invited to take part in Christ’s kingdom but the church is not its author nor the keeper nor the guardian. The independence of the kingdom also means that it is not possible to push it away from the world or to stop it. This is a good starting point for our trust and hope and for activities that are sprouting up out of these hopes.

PROCLAMATION AND PROGRAM OF THE SYNODAL COUNCIL INTRODUCTION – SOURCE AND MISSION

The new leading body of our church, the Synodal Council, was elected last year. We are six members, ministers and laymen (one laywoman, to be precise). We proclaimed our program for our term, i.e. for the next 6 years. In the introduction, we say: “We continue in the work of those who led our church before us. We would like to administrate the ECCB in a way that she could live in joy and healthy self-confidence. We want our worship to become precious time that is worthy to take part in. We believe this is a miracle that happens again and again when we celebrate Christ together and long for his presence. We would like, each of us according to his or her faith, to carry the fruits of faith out of our church buildings and prayer rooms for the sake of others.”

The source of our (church's) existence and life is Christ and his presence in the worshipping community.

MISSION

Our mission? How often and how deeply do we think about and discuss it? In our congregations or in our synods? What does mission mean to us? For some (maybe many) of our members, mission means to hand out New Testament brochures, to organize public sermons which simplifies the paradoxical and manifold message of Gospel. Something that most of us do not like to mix with. Simultaneously, we know that mission is something that we as the church should provide. So we are worried and feel sorry for ourselves. And some of our members criticize the rest of our church for failing in mission activities.

I would like to talk more about our mission. I understand it, in a very broad sense, as everything Christ calls us to do. It is what the church is here for and it bears the fruit which comes out of faith. Our mission can also be preaching every Sunday, teaching kids and adults, and maintaining church buildings – if this is all open for newcomers. From my experience as a hospital chaplain, I learned the power and value of just being here. Present, open, accepting, bearing silently the burdens. I believe this attitude can be represented not only by individuals but also by congregations.

We might be afraid of going out of our safe church space. The world outside does not look friendly at the church. (I am going to say more later.) The good message, that can give us courage to go, is that Christ is already present in the world. Christ is there in so many ways that we are not able to perceive all of them. (And we are not called to control them.)

Our mission has many features that we can creatively develop. In general, the task of the church is diaconia, propheta, and koinonia. Diaconia (service) can be spontaneous or organized.

Diaconia can be voluntary or professional, on the congregational level, the community level, or the nationwide level. Propheta (proclaiming the Word) can point inside (to the church goers) or outside (to the public, especially to political powers). Koinonia (building community) can encompass the church community on all levels as well as the secular community.

It is all about our phantasy and courage. I dream of my church full of phantasy and courage about our mission...

CONTEXT – SOCIETY

POSTTOTALITARIAN – POSTMODERN – POSTCHRISTIAN

RESEARCH ON VALUES

What is the context that we live in and fulfil our mission?

Czech society could be defined as post-totalitarian, postmodern, and post-Christian. All these “posts” indicate that we are not what we used to be but we do not know who we would or

should be. Post-totalitarian can mean that we appreciate the freedom of the individual but we have a problem accepting authority and rules. Postmodern can mean the loss of structure and of shared core values. And post-Christian can mean that the majority of the population thinks they know what Christianity is about and it is a matter of the past.

In 2009, the outcomes of broad sociological research on values and priorities were published. It showed the scale of priorities from the most to the least important: family, friendship, free time, job, politics, and religion. Compared with the research done ten or twenty years ago, there are significant tendencies: low esteem of politics and religion, decline in meaning of family and job; rise in the importance of free time. The authors conclude: our society is liberal but closed, which is a strange and unusual combination. There is a prevailing individualism concentrated on the quality of individual life in terms of consumption. There is not much sense for community life, responsibility, consequences and connections.

Our mission in this societal context is to support community life. To organize meetings and discussions with different groups, to provide effective solidarity with the nation, to be ready to cooperate with state administration as well as with secular NGOs.

We are called to pay special attention to family life. Although about a half of our population prefer to live without any formal family structure I believe that there is still the value of marriage as a covenant we can affirm. Many of our ministers are asked to do weddings by people without any church background. Those people might be looking for a forgotten ritual that emphasizes the weight and importance of marriage in their lives.

RELIGION – SPIRITUALITY

Most of our population are indifferent about religious issues. Regarding churches, they keep their distance and distrust them. It is not easy to analyze the roots of this attitude. Maybe, we Czechs do not like to be organized in any way. That could be our experience from the totalitarian regime that pushed everyone to be part of an organization in order to be controlled. We see the same aversion to political parties as to churches. I have been inclined, for a long time, to understand this rather positively – that we do not like to be manipulated – but recently, I changed my mind because I see a willingness to accept simple slogans, I see a resonance toward easy solutions, like closing the borders against refugees or transferring our Gypsies to other country. The image of the church as rigid and manipulating goes hand in hand with this distrust toward any organization. The Church is associated with extremism, fundamentalism and fanaticism. When I say that my son is studying evolutionary biology many understand it as a protest against his father and are not able to imagine we can talk and be interested in one another and be even in harmony. Quite often, the people who become finally acquainted with the church say with surprise: Yeah, you are normal people! (I am not sure whether it is good or bad. It is good that they are no more afraid of us. It is bad that we probably are not inspiring as special people of God. Just normal!? How boring!)

It is necessary to distinguish between religion and spirituality. While religion can be understood as a systematic, communal and traditional cultivation of spiritual life, spirituality is the raw material of emotions, images, ideas, and experiences that form our core values. The Spirituality of Czechs nowadays is difficult to describe. It is individualistic, non-reflected, non-articulated. Very often, we hear confessions like: “I believe there has to be something.” Or “I have my own god.” Every time, we have to talk, to listen to personal stories in order to understand what is actually meant and what is behind such vague proclamations. As a significant expression of this individualistic spirituality, I see the fact that in our country, many burials are done without any

ritual. There is probably no need to conceive life as a whole, no feeling of gratitude, connectedness, and community. Or they are just unaware of the way how to express all this? Is it only ignorance? Recently, I was asked as a hospice chaplain to lead a burial of a one-year-old child. The parents wanted something – a burial, a ritual but not a church one. They did not feel comfortable with reading from the Bible but they agreed with prayer. We gathered in a church prayer room but I did not wear a robe. My speech was not a sermon but there were hints of the Gospel. (I am not sure if this is the way...) After that, they were very glad for this and the mother told me: “When my mother was a child she used to go to church. But the minister told her parents that going to church could spoil her career. So they stopped to go.” Our mission in this context can be especially to overcome prejudices against the church. We have to avoid the danger to be caught in the trap of animosity. Consequently, we have to keep a non-judgmental attitude. Rooted in the Gospel of Christ, we are called to open the door to seekers, to be patient and persistent in individual pastoral work, and to hold together a colorful community of pilgrims.

POLITICS AND CULTURE

From the Middle Age until modern times, our countries (Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia) have been a part of Western culture. We are members of the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. But in the 19th century, there was the idea of a pan-slavic alliance that became quite popular and meant an orientation to the East, especially to Russia. Nowadays, we have to be aware of the fact that not everyone experienced the Soviet regime as an oppressive power and that there are still strong bonds to Russia. Along with the present activity of President Putin directed at former lands of the Eastern Block in order to get them back under control, this fact creates obvious tension in society and in politics.

Political parties, like all organized bodies, do not enjoy much trust. It seems that voters make decisions on the basis of their affection for an individual person rather than ideas or programs of parties.

Geographically, Czech countries lay in a large basin surrounded by mountain chains. In this naturally closed area, we are quite a homogenous society in terms of nationality and social status. We incline to narrow-minded views and judgments of the world beyond our scope. We can see a lot of fears and expressions of hate to anything strange and foreign. On the other hand, our society is able to provide generous humanitarian aid which I could interpret as a sign of sympathy and understanding for those who are in need by events that they had not been guilty of.

Our prophetic mission in this context is to raise our voice. In the past, during communist times, a prophetic role meant to be rather critical toward political power. All organizations had the duty to celebrate the endless success of the regime and any critique was prohibited. Today we see almost the opposite: so many negative voices, not only critical but full of hatred including proclamations of our President. We feel called to support positive ones. For instance, regarding migrants and refugee, we prefer saying Yes to the policy of our Prime Minister to saying No to our President because every confrontation attracts the attention of the media to him.

(I realize it sounds arrogant to say “prophetic” – we have to be aware of the very fact that in the moment when prophets are talking nobody can know or judge if their words are prophetic or not.)

CZECH CHURCHES – CHRISTIANITY IN THE CZECH REP.

ROMAN CATHOLIC - PROTESTANT

Christianity came to the Czech lands in the 9th century and quickly became the dominating religion. In the 15th. and 16th. centuries the Czech and world Reformation movements were prevailing. After the confession war in the 17th. century, the Roman Catholics gained control over the whole country. At the end of the 19th. century and at the beginning of the 20th. , we can see a rising atheistic movement which was intensified by the communist rule later. There is a significant difference in terms of religiosity between Bohemia on one side, and Moravia and Silesia on the other, while the latter are more traditionally religious. When I visited the Roman Catholic archbishop's palace in Olomouc (Moravia) some years ago, I could see huge and splendid portraits of former archbishops who were often members of the royal family from Vienna. For several hundreds of years, there was a close and influential connection between the state and the church. I came to realize how special the Roman Catholic position has been in the life of our nation.

Besides Roman Catholic and Protestant churches (like Methodist, Baptist or several free churches), Christianity in the Czech Republic also includes the Czechoslovak Hussite church, Orthodox, Pentecostal, and the charismatic movement. Quite special is the Czechoslovak Hussite church, which was born out of the Roman Catholic Church from nationalistic and modernistic impulses. It is not easy to understand the Czech Christian scene for someone who is not involved in it. (Also not for many of our people, I guess.)

Our mission and our task is to give Christian witness to society in an ecumenical way. All voices of animosity or competition among churches have a negative impact on the public opinion of Christianity in general. But cooperation is not easy. For instance, hospital chaplains of different church background team up in many hospitals very well. Five years ago, they decided to affiliate in one Association on the basis of voluntary membership but the Roman Catholic bishops established a Roman Catholic Association only for their chaplains with compulsory membership one year later.

We are glad that Pope Francis is very open and friendly to all people, including Protestants. Last year, a worship of reconciliation was celebrated in the Vatican and in Prague simultaneously on the occasion of the jubilee of the death of Jan Hus in 1415.

EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF CZECH BRETHREN – WHO ARE WE? WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?

THE NEED OF TRANSITION – THE PARTNERSHIPS

THE DREAM

Who are we? We are a classical Protestant church. Rooted in the reformed tradition. We focus on the quality of the Word and of our words. Under the care of the quality of the Word with a capital "W" I understand biblical studies that we learn at the theological faculty and develop all our professional life concentrating on the fullness of Gospel. Under the care of the quality of our words, I understand the disciplines of practical theology directing to preaching, teaching, and pastoral work. We are a Presbyterian church. We have the parity of clergy and laity on all levels. Although sometimes our members pay more attention to ministers than to other presbyters, laymen and laywomen have the same right to be respected and listened to. We are a church of a

great inner plurality. We integrate the Brethren, Utraquist, Lutheran, and Reformed traditions. We give a great portion of freedom to our congregations to make their own choice of liturgy and mission.

Why do we think a change is necessary? Change is not a matter of the essence but of the structure. When we talk about transition we do not want to lose our soul but to reform the body and dress. (It is like the necessity to take some exercise and dietary cure when putting on weight.) Our church have had the most congregations in the country (in villages) for many years. She has covered all the land – it means that we felt responsible for all places. But gradually, most activities moved to towns and in some areas, we diminished almost to zero. To cover everything brings an inadequate burden to our administration. We started many new activities, especially in the Diakonia that became bigger than her mother church. This all calls for a change.

Where do we want to go? What do we need to change? We need to change the structure of congregations and seniorats (dioceses) and to find a new system of management. We would like to integrate more laypeople in pastoral work. In this context, we have to develop a system of education of laymen/women. While preserving our plurality we would like to strengthen our unity. We have been preparing a new hymnbook for twelve years to be published in two years. For the identity of our church, the hymnbook is of the greatest importance. Songs we have been singing from our youth to death are a very sensitive matter. The hymnbook will be crucial for liturgy and personal devotion.

What role and what sense can the partnerships have? Basically, it means to be one community in Christ. It gives us the awareness we are not alone. Meeting and sharing experience support our faith, broaden our minds, and give us courage to change.

In the Czech language, church is a feminine. I have an image of my church today as a woman. She is an old lady with a worried grey face dressed in a heavy thick coat bigger than her figure. She is walking unsurely, hesitating at the crossroads.

In my dream, my church is not a young lady but an attractive middle-aged woman, experienced, sure in her identity, but still flexible, full of mature love and humor, communicating openly and friendly, walking in peace and heading toward the sun.

(“In God we trust.” – I did not say this but it was in the first version of my speech.)

What I Find Important about Partnerships

Dr. Ivana Marková

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Partnerships arise, last for a certain time and, sometimes, tail off. To slow down this process, to prevent untimely fading away, one should observe certain guidelines which are worth applying. It is widely recognized that for partnerships to work and develop a congregation should have a team of those who supply or collect ideas and mutually evaluate them and sort of test their viability. Despite of what has been said here about such teams or boards, it is usually individuals who do most of the jobs. What is very important, however, is that whatever and however much they may be doing, they mustn't do it for their own satisfaction etc., but simply for good reasons, i.e. to serve the congregation. It follows, that they should not only inform the congregation of what is being done, but also get it involved in the things done and prepared. The English camps which

we've had were unique in that they were, unlike other camps aimed at specific age groups, intergenerational. An unintended function of the structure of the course was that over 50 members of the congregation (approx. from five to ninety years of age) spent a week together in a good mood, enjoying a lot of music, smiling at one another, not only learning but also taking part in some "extracurricular activities". It seemed one of the good ways of involving the congregation. Our congregation has been involved in three partnerships. They started and developed against the background of very different historical contexts –

- Within the bounds of totalitarian regime (Friedenskirche, Ludwigshafen, Germany)
- In the unbound enthusiasm of new possibilities and freedoms after 1989 (Telford, England)
- Now, at the time of realism and in the face of new emerging threats (PCUSA Athens, Georgia)

We feel we have always learned something, things partially depending on the context, in all of them, however, it was something much deeper than that.

Ludwigshafen: He who wants to help, can always help, despite of the iron curtain, – generally speaking and updated – despite all types of new walls and fences. Also, over the period of communism we had a false feeling we were the only ones who suffered – we complained of being citizens of the second order, who were discriminated against due to political, religious or social reasons. Then step by step, by deepening the relationship we came to see that there was a lot of suffering on our partner's end as well.

Telford: we learned what it meant to be ecumenical. Telford was a new town founded on five mining villages with closed pits, which led the various churches to work together, sometimes

even to building one church for two denominations, etc. Simply their ecumenical life was highly developed and rich, which was an inspiration for us at our end as well.

Now with Athens, Georgia, the relationship goes far beyond language teaching/learning. We are learning to be equal. Before, under communism, the Czech crown was not convertible, we couldn't pay for things ourselves, and traces of this feeling are still as if rooted somewhere deep in us. But now it's time to learn to be equal, and not only in terms of money. Now not only can the crown be exchanged for foreign currency, but we are free and qualify for entering doors open to things unheard of before. But definitely not only in the area of material things. In meeting friends, we meet partners, and step by step touching on deeper and deeper layers of the historical context, we learn about its effects on social and personal lives. This brings us closer to one another, creating firmer ties of partnership with a network of personal ties.

Typology of ECCB Congregations

Rev. Dr. Martin Horák, Brno

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Praha, 12 April 2016

Typology of ECCB Congregations

- **congregations of the Tolerance (1781);**
- **conversion congregations (1918);**
- **incomer congregations (1945)**

Typology of ECCB Congregations

- congregations of the Tolerance (1781):
 - Vysočina, Valašsko, Polabí;
 - countryside, traditions, confidence;
 - Sloupnice, Klobouky, Vsetín

Typology of ECCB Congregations

- congregations of the Tolerance (1781):
 - move to urban centres (19th century);
 - Olomouc, Polička

Typology of ECCB Congregations

- congregations of the Tolerance (1781);
- conversion congregations (1918):
 - towns, cities;
 - anti-Catholicism, nationalism, historicism;
 - České Budějovice

Typology of ECCB Congregations

- congregations of the Tolerance (1781);
- conversion congregations (1918);
- incomer congregations (1945):
 - Sudetenland;
 - pietism, traditionalism;
 - Trutnov.

Typology of ECCB Congregations

Activities:

- church services
(choirs, brass bands; flute ensembles);
- Bible Study, Bible Study, Bible Study
(catechization);
- pastoral care;
- social events
(trips, outings, meetings)

Typology of ECCB Congregations

Activities / Mission:

- **Diaconia?**
- **Evangelization?**
- **Christian Clubs?**
- **Being the Church?**

It's all Bohemian village to me

**UN UNORTHODOX LESSON OF CZECH
BY IVANA MARKOVÁ**

Why unorthodox?

- ▶
- ▶ **AN UNORTHODOX LESSON OF CZECH?**
- ▶ Why unorthodox?
It has been designed
- ▶ **NOT TO TEACH YOU ANYTHING**, but
- ▶ to show you some differences between Czech and English
- ▶ to show you some **discouraging difficulties**, stumbling blocks
- ▶ to show you why is Czech³⁷ difficult

Academically speaking

- ▶
- ▶ Putting it academically
- ▶ **CZECH** – synthetic language – you put various parts of words together
to arrive at the resulting meaning
- ▶ dělat, děl-**á**-vat, u-dělat..., děl-**ám**, děl-**áš**..
- ▶ In **ENGLISH** you use a number of simple words to do the same
- ▶ do, **used to do, have done, I am doing, You are doing...**

Oh, all those endings to learn!

-
- In **CZECH**– besides the elements inserted inside the word, there are a number of **ENDINGS** – Let's have a look at them!
-
- They have to do with
- language difficulty/easiness
- with the opposition **ENDINGS vs. WORD ORDER**

Some basics

▶ MEETING PEOPLE, GREETINGS, INTRODUCTIONS.

▶ Ráno, poledne, večer, den, noc....

▶ they all show different **genders** – Strange, isn't it?–

▶ Dobrý den. M **Good day**

▶ Dobré ráno. N **Good morning**

▶ Dobrý večer. **Good evening.**

▶ Dobrou noc. F **Good night.**

▶ Even with these greetings you can say how easy English is and how Czech is difficult

„To be or not to be...“

sloveso BÝT/TO BE

➤ CZECH



➤ **já jsem**

my jsme

➤ **ty jsi**

vy jste

on, ona ,ono je

oni, ony, ona



jsou

➤ **6 different forms, none is the same)**

To be or not to be sloveso BÝT/TO BE

▶ ENGLISH



▶ I **am**

▶ You **are**

▶ He, she, it **is**



we **are**

you **are**

they **are**

3 different forms, 4 of the total of 6 are the same

Negatives

▶ **Nejsem** doma.

▶ **Nejsi** tady.

▶ **Není** student.



▶ A tricky nature of **Czech negative questions.**

➤ You are looking for Petr. You enter a room and ask:



▶ **Neni tu Petr?**

Nejsme doma.

Nejste tady.

Nejsou student.

Is Petr here?

Isn't Petr here?

A linguistic joke/ a puzzle

- ▶ *A gentleman enters a shop and asks:*
- **“NEmáte klobouky?”** (*Have you got hats?*)
- ▶
- ▶ *The shop assistant answers:*
- ▶ **“Ne, my nemáme boty, klobouky nemají vedle.”**
- (*boty- shoes, vedle – next door*)
- ▶
- **“No, we don’t have shoes. They don’t have shoes next door.”**
- *Now, guess – What is the meaning of this joke:*

Endings give clues Who does What



▶ Nominatives and Accusatives



Czech

English

▶ N – pán, muž, žena,

man, woman

▶ A – pán-**a**, muž-**e**, žen-**u**,

man, woman,



Endings vs word order

Czech

- ▶
- ▶ They make the language difficult (see the numbers !)
- ▶ They put us on the safe ground when we want to know who does what
- Let's have a look at two cases
- ▶ **NOMINATIVE and ACCUSATIVE**

➤ An example: Jana miluje Pavla.

Pavla miluje Jana – the same

46

Pavel miluje Janu. - different

A teacher and a pupil

- ▶
- ▶ **English – Word order**
- ▶ **The teacher** asks a pupil a question.
- ▶ **A pupil** asks the teacher a question.
- ▶ **Czech- Endings**
- ▶ **Učitel** se ptá žák-**a**.
- ▶ Žák-**a** se ptá **učitel**.

A more drastic example

▶ **Czech**

▶ **Rybář** chytá ryb-**u**.

▶ Ryb-**u** chytá **rybář**. (Ryba chytá rybář-
e????????)



▶ **English**

▶ **A fisherman** catches a fish.

▶ **A fish** catches a fisherman **????????????????**

Rules and exceptions

- ▶
- ▶ There are certain **rules**, regularities, but – alas – there **are exceptions**. And it's just the exceptions that make the language difficult.
- ▶
- ▶ Take the creation of diminutives.
- ▶
- ▶ Diminutives usually denote something **tiny, cute, little**.
- ▶

Endings – to form diminutives

There are endings to be used to create diminutives – e.g.

–**ička** – kočka (a cat) – Koč-**ička** – (little cat)

–**ičko** -jablko (an apple) – jabl-**ičko** - (a little
apple)

-**ek** – kocour (a Tommy cat) - kocour-**ek** –
(a little tommy cat)

- **ka** – ryba (fish) – ryb-**ka** – (little fish)

Another example

- ▶
- ▶ **ČECH-ÁČEK** – but be careful – some diminutives are denigrating –
- ▶
- ▶ An example that diminutives can be **revolting, self-deprecating, even masochistic**; it is used of people who are **mean, uninspired, unimaginative, earth-bound...**

Isn't life too short to learn foreign languages?



**No, it is not.
Definitely not with our
partnerships.
We **do** need English,
You **may** need (some)Czech..**

It's good to be bilingual

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| ▶ Iva | Sue |
| ▶ Where are you from? | Jsem z Georgia |
| ▶ Who are you? | Jsem Sue. |
| ▶ Who is that gentleman? | To je Mark.. |
| ▶ Where is Mark from? | Je z Ameriky. |
| ▶ Odkud jsi? | I am from America. |
| ▶ Odkud je Linda? | She is from Athens. |
| ▶ Kdo je ten muž? | He is Mark Harper. |

CZECH IS EASY

(?!?)

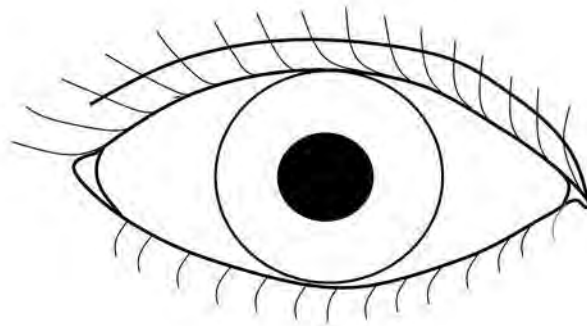


Ivana Adámková, Stará Boleslav

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LEVEL 1

oko



syn



děvče



Ježíš



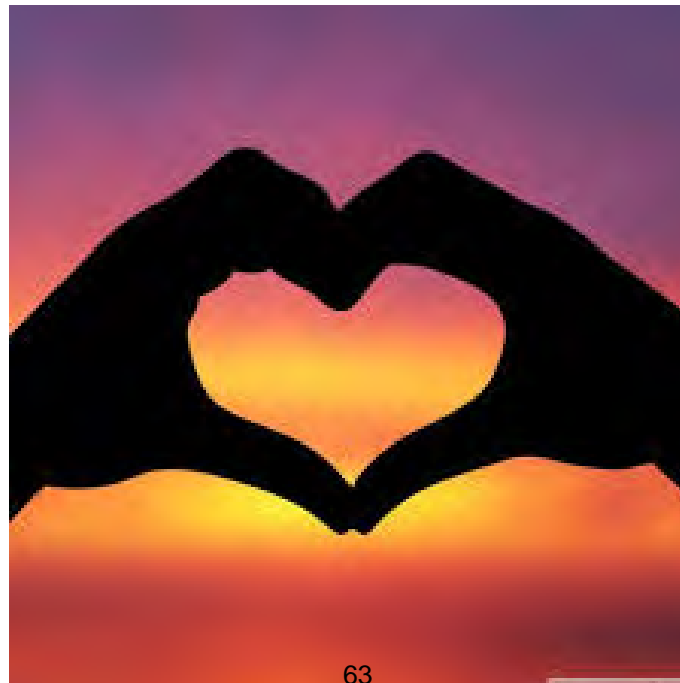
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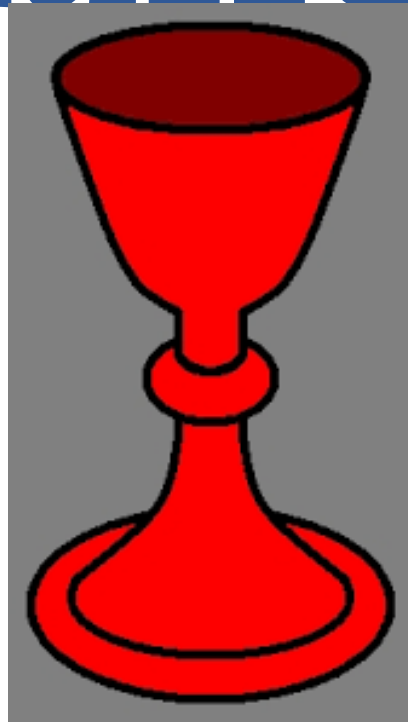
čtyři



srdce



kalich



Duch



Bůh



tchýně



cesta



LEVEL 2

This is my ,
the Beloved, with
whom I am well
pleased.

Mt 3.17

You are the
of the world.

Mt 5.14

An for an
..... and a tooth
for a tooth.

Mt 5.38

hand and said to
her, “Talitha cum,”
which
means, “.....,
get up!”

Mk 5.41

Now Simon's

..... was in
bed with a fever, and
they told him about
her at once.

Mk 1.30

Then some
people came, bringing
to him a paralyzed man,
carried by of
them.

Mk 2.3

**A Samaritan woman
came to draw water,
and said to
her, “Give me a
drink.”**

J 4.7

... and (they) began
to speak in other
languages, as the
..... gave them
ability.

Acts 2.4

**And saw
that it was good.**

Gn 1.12

For the gate is narrow
and the is
hard that leads to
life,...

Mt 7.14

Therefore my
..... is glad, and
my soul rejoices;...

Ps 16.9

...you anoint my
head with oil; my



overflows.

Ps 16.9

LEVEL 3

- **1** This is my **Son**, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.
- **2** Now Simon's **mother-in-law** was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once.
- **3** He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha cum," which means, "**Little girl**, get up!"

- **1** You are the **light** of the world.

- **2** An **eye** for an **eye** and a tooth for a tooth.

-

- **3** And **God** saw that it was good.

-

• **1** For the
gate is
narrow

- **1** Then some people came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by **four** of them.
- **2** ... and (they) began to speak in other languages, as the **Spirit** gave them ability.
- **3** A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and **Jesus** said to her, “Give me a drink.”
-

Thank you

Děkuji

Second Run DVD

All My Good Countrymen

a movie by Vojtěch Jasný

All My Good Countrymen (Všichni dobří rodáci)

A film by
Vojtěch Jasný

Following the socialization of Czechoslovakia in 1948, a series of magical and humorous events happen to various residents of a small Moravian village. Director Vojtech Jasný, called "the spiritual father of the Czech New Wave" by Milos Forman, fled Czechoslovakia following the completion of this film. It was also one of the last films completed in the country prior to the Russian invasion in 1968.



Všichni dobří rodáci

All My Good Countrymen

a movie by Vojtěch Jasný

Námět a scénář: Vojtěch Jasný
Kamera: Jaroslav Kučera
Hudba: Svatopluk Havelka
Hrají: Vlastimil Brodský,
Radoslav Brzobohatý,
Vladimír Menšík,
Waldemar Matuska,
Drahomíra Hofmanová aj.

Český film
Vojtěcha Jasného
z roku 1968

Bylo jednou sedm kamarádů
a Veselá vdova





Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart is inseparably bound to the Estates Theatre. The world premiere of the very “Opera of Operas” Don Giovanni took place on October 29th in 1787 and since then it has been staged regularly. The director of the last production is the SKUTR duo (Martin Kukučka and Lukáš Třípišovský).

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

DON GIOVANNI

In the Beginning There Was ... The Partnership of the *Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren* and the *Presbyterian Church (USA)*

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During the years between 1982 and 1989, a great joy was an invitation from the Presbyterian Church (USA) to work on developing an international component of the *Youth Triennium*. Letters were sent all over the world to the PC USA's partner churches in various corners of the world. We sent an official letter from the PC USA offices to the ECCB in 1984 to Pavel Smetana. This seemed not to work out. How could this be? We had them from East Germany, Poland, Hungary, but not Czechoslovakia.



For the program booklet, we had prayers for areas of the world. This year, the prayer read for Europe. "As nations seek to work out patterns of

stable government, guide them to the establishment of just orders and structures, which are rooted in Your righteousness and love. We pray for the churches of Europe and the ecclesial communities. The voices outside of the churches. We rejoice that *Glasnost* has provided new opportunities for churches." How could there be... no Czechoslovakian youth delegate? We pray for opportunities to open for their church, but what would we learn over the horizon from a people who had kept their faith during such difficult history of such a long time?

When leading a group of Presbyterian youth to Cuba, I was in a home. Why so little light, I asked. No light bulbs, they came from Czechoslovakia. Czechoslovakia! Again! The country resounded and the ECCB were not at the *Triennium*. So many Czechs had immigrated the US.

Soon after returning, Bob Lodwick, then the PCUSA Europe coordinator, mentioned that a mission co-worker (Jane Holslag) who was in Eastern Europe had met a man by the name of Jan Sláma who was doing creative and great work as they were restoring the buildings, which belonged to the churches in Czechoslovakia. He told me to write to the Synodal Council in which Pavel Smetana was General Secretary and to Jan Sláma in Brno and Prague. This note was tucked away.

I wrote a letter by mail to Pavel Smetana, the Synodal Council, and Jan Sláma. A reply came from Jan Sláma and Pavel Smetana. For about 18 months using the postal service, Jan Sláma and I wrote ... Czech and English. Some wonderful volunteers helped me to translate Jan's letters.

Soon, Jan Sláma became Honza. He was the church's architect from the ECCB Office. He worked with the Synodal Council, the Diaconie and the Theological Faculty. But soon, I found a wonderful sincere man who was far more than an architect but a deeply committed Christian with vision and great perseverance. And soon, I was to know a person with an unending patience, grace and deep care for humanity. With each letter, the sun continued to rise.

Between us all ages would be invited to participate; they would work and live together. This was a great opportunity for people to get to know one another, as well as do a small project with the ECCB. Five PC USA presbyteries, in Maryland, Washington DC, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Virginia embraced the idea of sending members to the group. The group would be in a manor of Klobouky near Brno working on a project for the disabled, a part of the Diaconie, the outreach of the ECCB.

Knowing that I must know as much as possible, I found out that Olga Havel, the Czech president's wife, had a great interest in the disabled people. A letter was mailed to her and she responded with a video of her work. A Czechoslovak doctor doing postgraduate introduced me to Czechoslovakia. After explaining what that I was working on a project with the ECCB, he responded that these church people are some of the most wise, clever and well-educated people in the country. Didn't we discover this after we arrived?

An inter-generational group of 17 people was formed before the summer 1992 with 12 adults and 5 youth. Numerous discussions and meetings were held to prepare, learn and think about what was beyond the horizon. What would this bring? How do we learn? Develop mutual understanding? Observe? Listen? Question? Promises could not be made there, yet, this experience must continue. Before departing, there were discussions that this could be a beginning to future relationships. And before leaving the US, we talked with Paul Seto at the PC USA Mission to the USA office about the possibility of bringing a pastor to the US. He confirmed that this could happen and this would be supported if it could be worked out mutually.

The letter arrived from Jan Sláma that we would go first to Prague and on to Klobouky where the ECCB had a ministry to the disabled. In a manor, called Betlem, and down the road there was place they hope to turn into a home for disabled children (Morkuvky). So on July 2, 1992 the group flew on Czech Airlines to Bratislava, which was still part of Czechoslovakia then. Info was left with families and church: Return on July 16. Contact Jiří Gruber, pastor, Klobouky, and a Synodal Council fax or Jan Sláma, Brno.

Over the horizon, a reunion of East and West filled with sharing, learning, living, fellowshiping, caring, and worshipping was about to happen. A sunrise of such beauty about to transpire could not be imagined.

From the moment of arrival, Jan Sláma met us in Bratislava, and showed us his country and his culture. We arrived in Prague to stay at 9 Jungmannova. It was being renovated and one had to pull the rope with a board to go up on the elevator. They had the idea of turning this into a pension for church members visiting Prague. We went to the Synodal Council offices to learn about the church from Pavel Smetana, Jan Čapek, Alena Zikmundová, and met many Czechs who inspired us with the work of the ECCB.

We learned about the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren, the Czech nation, president Masaryk, Jan Hus and the reformation, and how the Hussites were the climax of the Czech history. That Jan Hus, a martyr, became one of the crucial landmarks in the comeback of the spirit of Europe. He bears a witness to truth, which cost him his life. They emphasized that truth is not just a matter of a proper belief or theory, but also of a great use with its moral dimension. Also recent history was shared as Milada Horáková who was executed. She was silenced, tortured and stood her principles in spite of the high costs. Bear witness to the Truth. Not matter the cost. What does that mean to us as Christians now?

And did we learn that Czechs could walk and move quickly as we went to see Prague! Seeing the beauty of Prague, the architecture, the music, the educated people, the work of the ECCB. The West could not even imagine!

Off to the beautiful countryside of Moravia with the farmland, vineyards, fruit. Arriving in Klobouky, the group unpacked our sleeping gear and bags, met a lot of Czechs who would live and work side by side, the group settled into the manse with the Czechs to eat and sleep, work, share day and night, worship together for nine days. We planned, painted, worked together. One young woman, Dagmar Urbánková, shopped for the food and prepared with us daily. Each day she walked to the town several blocks, to purchase the food. Walking swiftly, the quietness in the air was deafening as the motorized bed of Ivan, the paraplegic sped down the street, the monuments smashed in the town square, the houses hauntingly beautiful, the people speaking little on the streets.

Each group member had his or her responsibility. Piling out with energy and ready to begin, Jeff Gallaher and I went with the teens who gathered their brushes which they brought along to get them started with Honza on the rusty wrought iron fence in front of Betlem. That small bucket of paint which Honza had carefully mixed for the group was set out for careful work. Getting their brushes, the US teens quickly painting carelessly while spilling and dripping, with our usual “we can buy more” attitude. Oh! Honza ... replying “oh, oh, oh” in Czech. Jeff and I raised our eyes at one another and thought... umm we need to stop and revisit this with our group. What they must learn quickly! And I am sure that Honza wondered what on earth he had gotten himself into! That one can of paint remains in our memory.

As the week continued, many stories around the dining table were shared. A college professor who was put into an elementary school talked about life during these years. I will never forget the sounds of the men discussing their stories until the wee morning hours. Daily we went to the church where Jiří Gruber was pastor. We learned to stand to pray and sit to sing. And could the Czechs sing! This became a singing group and one who shared everything TOGETHER. Everyone was learning English and Czech. We grew to know one another well living all over the manse together.

How I remember quiet thinking people and our groups' loud voices! I remember the quietness on the streets. Jeff Gallaher remembers... sitting at the dining table and having a cup of coffee, talking with Honza about the work, chewing on something in the coffee and wondering what it could be. He remembers that cup of coffee as the best cup of coffee he ever drank. Linda Smith remembers ... that though we had spilled paint, been a bit noisy at times, done little work considering the task, I believe we all knew that this was only a genesis. Before we departed, we had already discussed future possibilities. There were no promises, but many hopes and dreams. Deep and lasting memories evolved over these days. Lasting relationships were formed. We knew that our relationship was one of mutual understanding, differences were respected and commonalities embraced. As we walked onto Czech Airlines, joy filled our heart with gladness as we waved... until the next time. The sun was setting on this experience, but we knew the sun would rise many times over the horizon.

Following our return, already the pastor coming was being put into motion. Honza assisted us to put this in motion with Synodal Council through Pavel Smetana. Ondřej Stehlík would come to the Frederick Presbyterian Church. And plans for another group to come to Běleč, a camp for the ECCB, which was a place for generals. A group from every presbytery in the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic came. Běleč filled with small cabins, a great freshwater but freezing lake, and a campfire where many great experiences of sharing, working, living were enjoyed. Honza planned this again so he had to have survived the first one. What great times working on the fences and the cabins, digging for the pipes, swimming in the freezing lake, singing around the campfire, worshipping morning and evening together.

Tomáš Najbrt, the church musician, who gave us a great concert came and traveled to numerous Presbyterian Churches in the US. The young woman who cooked for the group in Klobouky was a professional painter. Dagmar Urbánková traveled with Tomáš Najbrt. They were in church from Pittsburgh to DC to Maryland to Virginia and North Carolina. Finally, Honza traveled to the US and was in many of the homes of the groups. Honza came in 1993 and shared in many, many churches.

A group would go back to Klobouky and Brno to continue helping with the two disabled places and also, with the children's home in Morkuvky. It was a miracle---one could hardly believe the rebuilding and all that was happening in the Diaconie and the Synodal Council and the theological Faculty. Each facility was taking on a new face. The university had a retreat center where they

wanted a similar group to build together relationships and would work on the Center in Hvozdnice. Betty McGinnis organized with the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic and Jeff Gallaher returned in 2003 to lead a group of high school and college age students there.

In 1999, a group from Synod of the Mid-Atlantic went to work in Letohrad and Kunvald. Pavel Ruml, the pastor, stood by this project. He organized many wonderful experiences together side by side with the people of the parish. Kunvald was a great experience because the group learned much about Comenius. A memory for this time was Petr Šilar, the Mayor of Letohrad, bringing supplies and climbing on the roof in Kunvald. I am sure that in his mind he was wondering, “what on earth am I doing?” And Pavel Ruml with his hearty laugh and humor encouraged him. Now, Petr is a member of Czech Parliament.

The Letohrad church was in a row of businesses with books in the front. Pavel Ruml had the vision of building a church building. This we found was the first church to be built in the Czech Republic. Members of the First Presbyterian Church in Annapolis were among the Synod Group and took a great interest in this. They sent numerous groups over the years that it was being built to help in various ways. The crazy Americans digging ditches during their vacation were completely covered in the newspapers. Volunteers were not known. After Annapolis and Letohrad sharing for these years, it was only natural that the Letohrad and Annapolis churches would form a formal partnership. The partnership had its challenges. I must admit that I was used to partnerships being created by both groups together and signed which included the vision, the gifts and needs of each, and a timeline. Pavel Ruml encouraged this to continue and the first document was actually signed in 2000. Another is about to be signed through 2021. This evaluation of church partnerships annually and then, resigning for a period of time has given the partnership focus, vision and creativity.

In the beginning, there were numerous other activities and experiences of which I will mention only a few with admiration:

- Princeton Seminary had Dr. Josef L. Hromádka as a professor;
- Columbia Seminary began exchanges with the Theological Faculty;
- An American and Czech Working Group were formed to build the relationship;
- Mission co-workers were sent to assist in the groups coming to Czech Republic;
- Fox Chapel in Pittsburgh developed interest in the ECCB’s Diaconie in these early years and continues to support through this day;
- Jan Dus served in a church in Ponca City, Oklahoma and began a partnership with the Polička congregation. A young person came from Ponca City to Polička and learned fluent Czech. Today, Katie Salmon is a pastor in a PC USA church.
- In 2008, a partnership conference was held in Prague to unite congregations who may want to share in a partnership in all the efforts of the ECCB. Synodal Council, Diaconie, and Theological Faculty. Churches continue and many of you are present.
- In 2013, a *Walking together* conference was held in Annapolis, Maryland by the PC USA with the First Presbyterian Church of Annapolis supporting it.

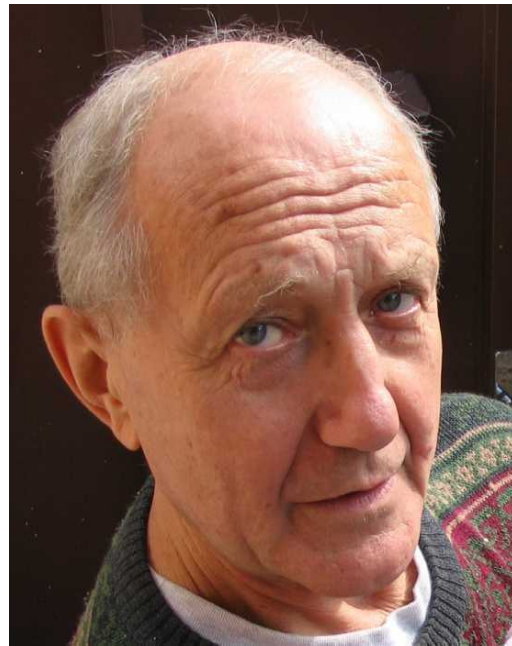
Last but not least, David Murdoch, an elder of the Sewickly Church in Pittsburgh, PA must be remembered. He had the vision to make a formal overture to the General Assembly to develop a partnership between the ECCB and the PCUSA. Last year (2015), David passed away. At that time, in Pittsburgh learning English was the director of the Diaconie, Petr Haška. He was able to attend David's service of resurrection. Now, about thirty years later, David's daughter, Deborah, is here with at the conference to continue to work on the partnership as her father did over 30 years ago. In memory of David and a heart filled with gratitude, I would like to present the symbol of the ECCB, a chalice with the symbol of Truth to Deborah, David's family and the Sewickly Congregation. We will always be grateful to David for leading our denomination to see over the horizon when he made this overture to our General Assembly.

Many PC USA and ECCB relations have transpired – and I must add: with the support and vision of people like Jan Sláma, Pavel Smetana, Joel Ruml, Jan Čapek, Pavel Ruml, Alena Zikmundová, Daniel Ženatý, Gerhard Reininghaus, Petr Sláma, Petr Peňáz, to name only a few, and many pastors and committed church members. We have been inspired and supported by you to develop mutual relationships and partnerships; to learn together; to fellowship and worship together; to pray together. From PC USA members in the US, I must say a genuine thank you from our heart, for your patience, your willingness to continue working on partnerships no matter the distance, the language, the differences, and above all, for leading us to better know the Truth. Over the horizon, where East did not know West, where there were different ways of living but a vibrant family of God, there were humble, quiet, simple beginnings. Together, I believe that we continue to be surprised and enlightened continuously by the joys of walking, sharing, serving together, worshipping together as a family of God; of learning from one another with deep histories and committed followers; of sowing seeds to grow even deeper roots of mutual understanding; to support one another to understand and keep the Truth wherever we live. And over the horizon, may the transforming journey continue as we share together toward the fullness of God's eternal and unconditional love.

In the beginning there was...

Jan Sláma, Brno

janslama41@gmail.com

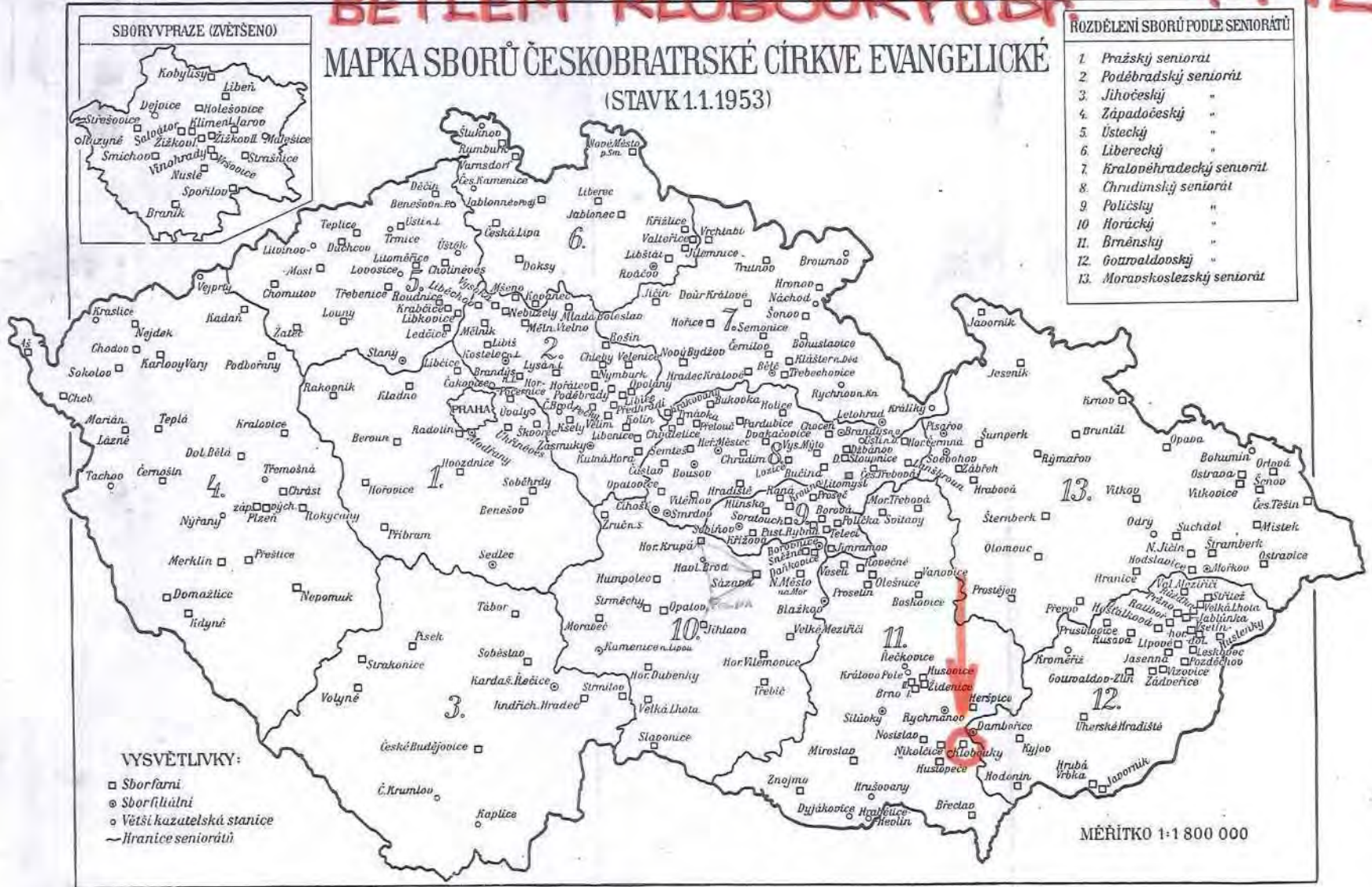


Diakonie BETLÉM

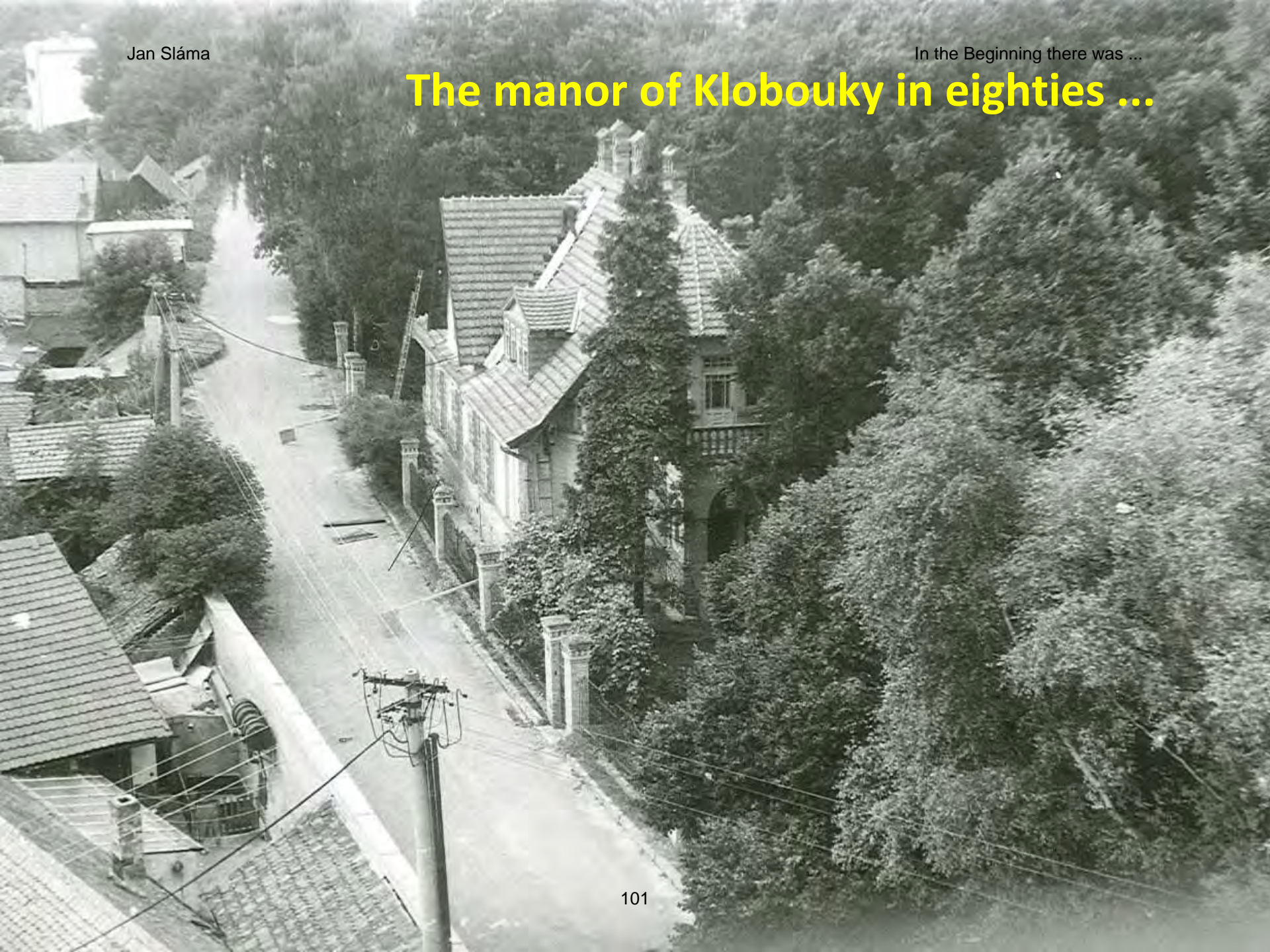
Klobouky u Brna

1992

BETLEM KLOBOUKY, Br. 1992



The manor of Klobouky in eighties ...





Jan Sláma

In the Beginning there was ...

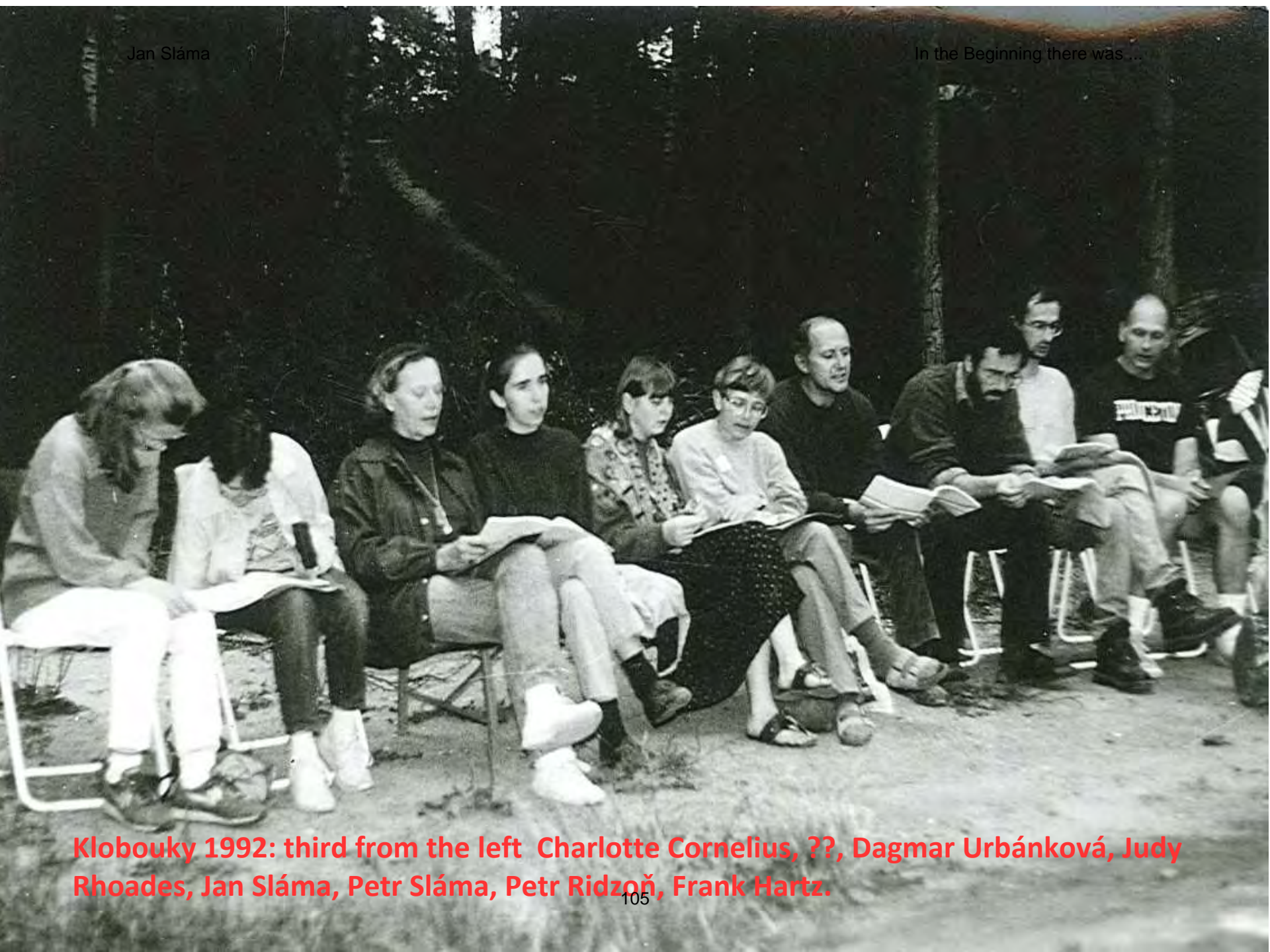


...when the church received it back

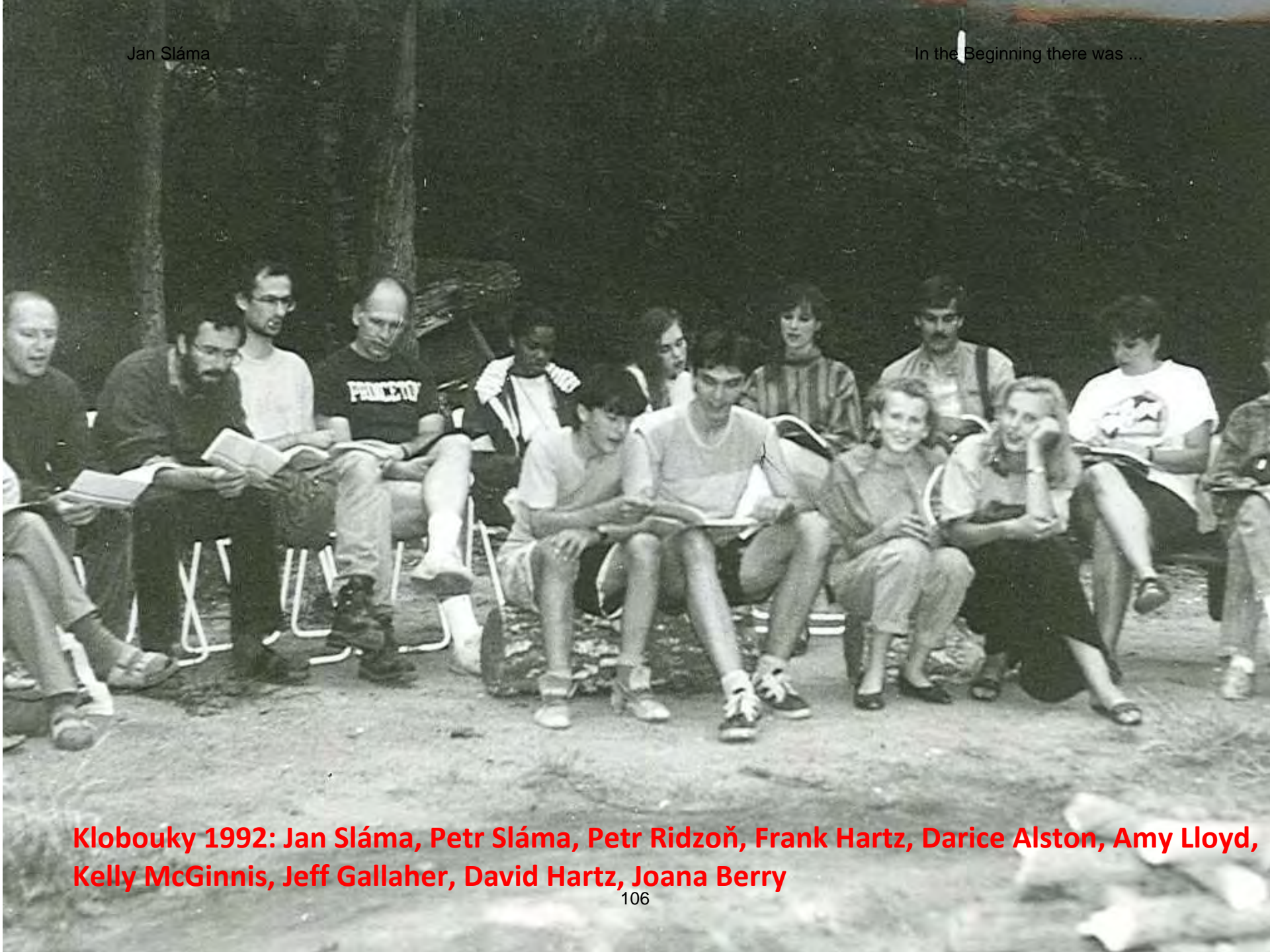


The first inter-generational group from PC (USA) is coming: July 1992

Rev. Mary Louise Ellenberger, Frank Hartz and Louise Hartz, Becky Hewitt, Andrew Davis, Amy Lloyd, Kelly McGinnis, Jill Vasbinder, Darice R. Alston, Heyward Stuckey, Joana Berry, Jeff Gallaher, Jay Forbes, squatting down are Betty McGinnis, Charlotte Cornelius, Linda Smith and Judy Rhoades.



Klobouky 1992: third from the left Charlotte Cornelius, ??, Dagmar Urbánková, Judy Rhoades, Jan Sláma, Petr Sláma, Petr Ridzoň, Frank Hartz.



Klobouky 1992: Jan Sláma, Petr Sláma, Petr Ridzoň, Frank Hartz, Darice Alston, Amy Lloyd, Kelly McGinnis, Jeff Gallaher, David Hartz, Joana Berry





Betty McGinnis, July 1992



Rev. Mary Louise Ellenberger, Carlotte Cornelius and Judy Rhoades



Inspired by Tom Sawyer: painting the iron fence in Klobouky, July 1992

Jeff Gallaher has been there from the very beginning

Jan Glama

In the Beginning there was ...





... and Klobouky today



The summer camp of J.A. Comenius in Běleč 1996

TÁBOR JAK BĚLEČ 1996

Jan Sláma

In the Beginning there was ...

SBORYV PRAZE (ZVĚTŠENO)



MAPKA SBORŮ ČESKOBRASTRSKÉ CÍRKVE EVANGELICKÉ

(STAV K 1.1.1953)

ROZDĚLENÍ SBORŮ PODLE SENIORÁTŮ

1. Pražský seniorát
2. Poděbradský seniorát
3. Jihočeský "
4. Západočeský "
5. Ústecký "
6. Liberecký "
7. Královéhradecký seniorát
8. Chrudimský seniorát
9. Poličský "
10. Hrádecký "
11. Brněnský "
12. Gottwaldovský "
13. Moravskoslezský seniorát



VYSVĚTLIVKY:

- Sborfarní
- ⊙ Sborfiliální
- Větší kazatelská stanice
- ~ Hranice seniorátů

MĚŘITKO 1:1 800 000



Běleč 1996: Jack Crawford, ? ,Nicki and Ryan Jafar Artes,behind him Rev.Tim Havlicek, Petr Sláma, John McGinnis, ? , Jeff Gallaher, MaryShannon McGinnis, John Byron McGinnis, squatting down from the right to the left are Betty McGinnis, Marian James, ? , ?



Běleč 1996: ... and there were also Marilyn Silvey, Audrey Gatewood, Thomas Kort, Sue Thrower, Eileen Major, JoAnn Wolfe, some Czech volunteers ... including Martina Stejskalová! Thank You all!!

Jan Sláma

In the Beginning there was ...



... and today

Diakonie Hrnčířská, Brno 1998

MAPKA SBORŮ ČESKOBRATRSKÉ CÍRKVE EVANGELICKÉ (STAV K 1.1.1953)



ROZDĚLENÍ SBORŮ PODLE SENIORÁTŮ

1. Pražský seniorát
2. Poděbradský seniorát
3. Jihočeský "
4. Západočeský "
5. Ústecký "
6. Liberecký "
7. Kralovohradecký seniorát
8. Chrudimský seniorát
9. Poličský "
10. Hrádecký "
11. Brněnský "
12. Gouwaldovský "
13. Moravskoslezský seniorát



VYSVĚTLIVKY:

- Sborfarní
- Sborofiliální
- Větší kazatelská stanice
- Hranice seniorátů

MÉRITKO 1:1 800 000



Hrnčířská was a house Diaconia obtained in a deprived part of Brno to run a social care





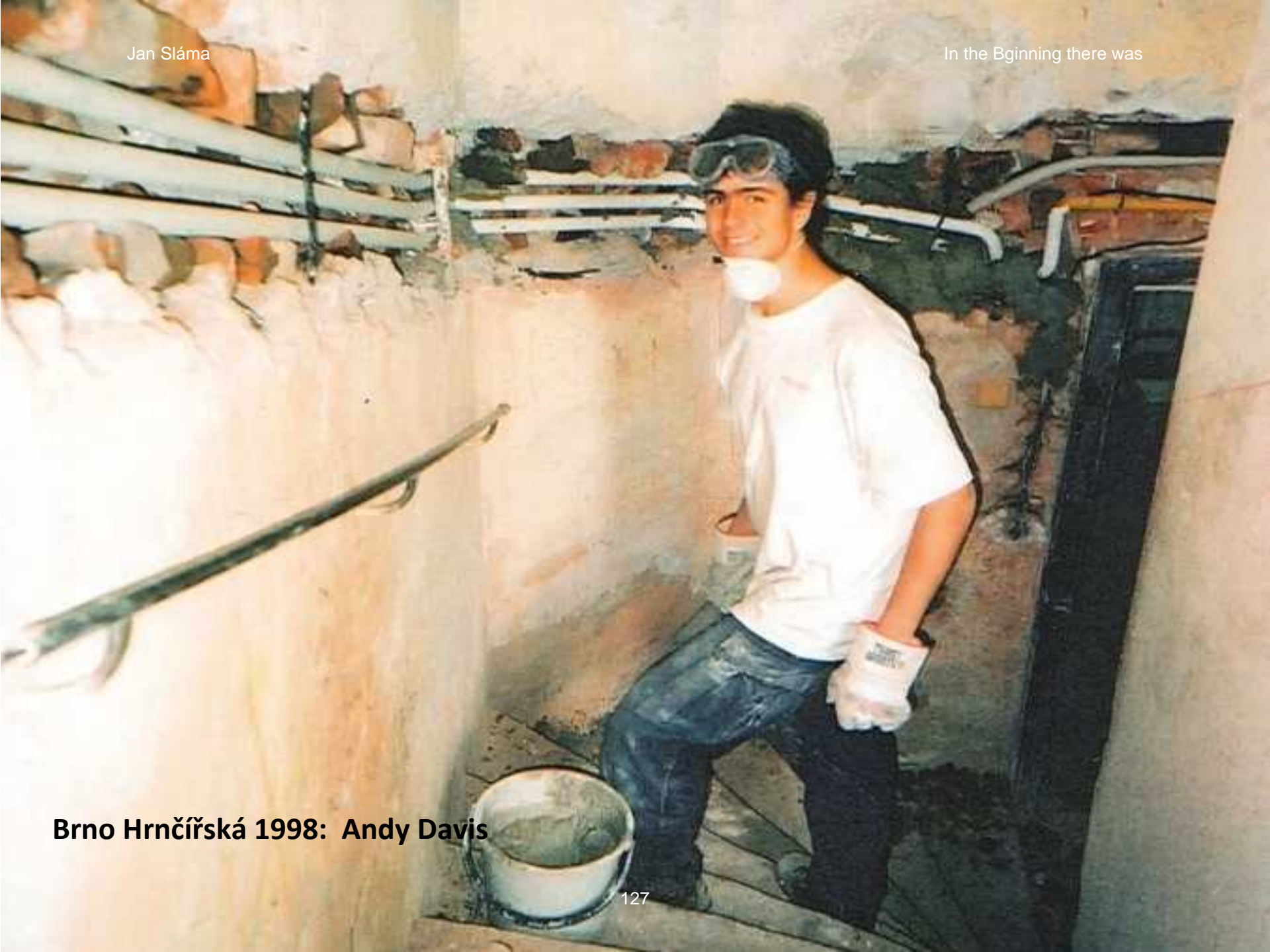
Jan Sláma

In the Bginning there was



Brno Hrnčířská 1998: Petr Sláma, Martin Soběslavský, JohnMcGinnis and Samyon Daniluk





Brno Hrnčířská 1998: Andy Davis



Jan Sláma

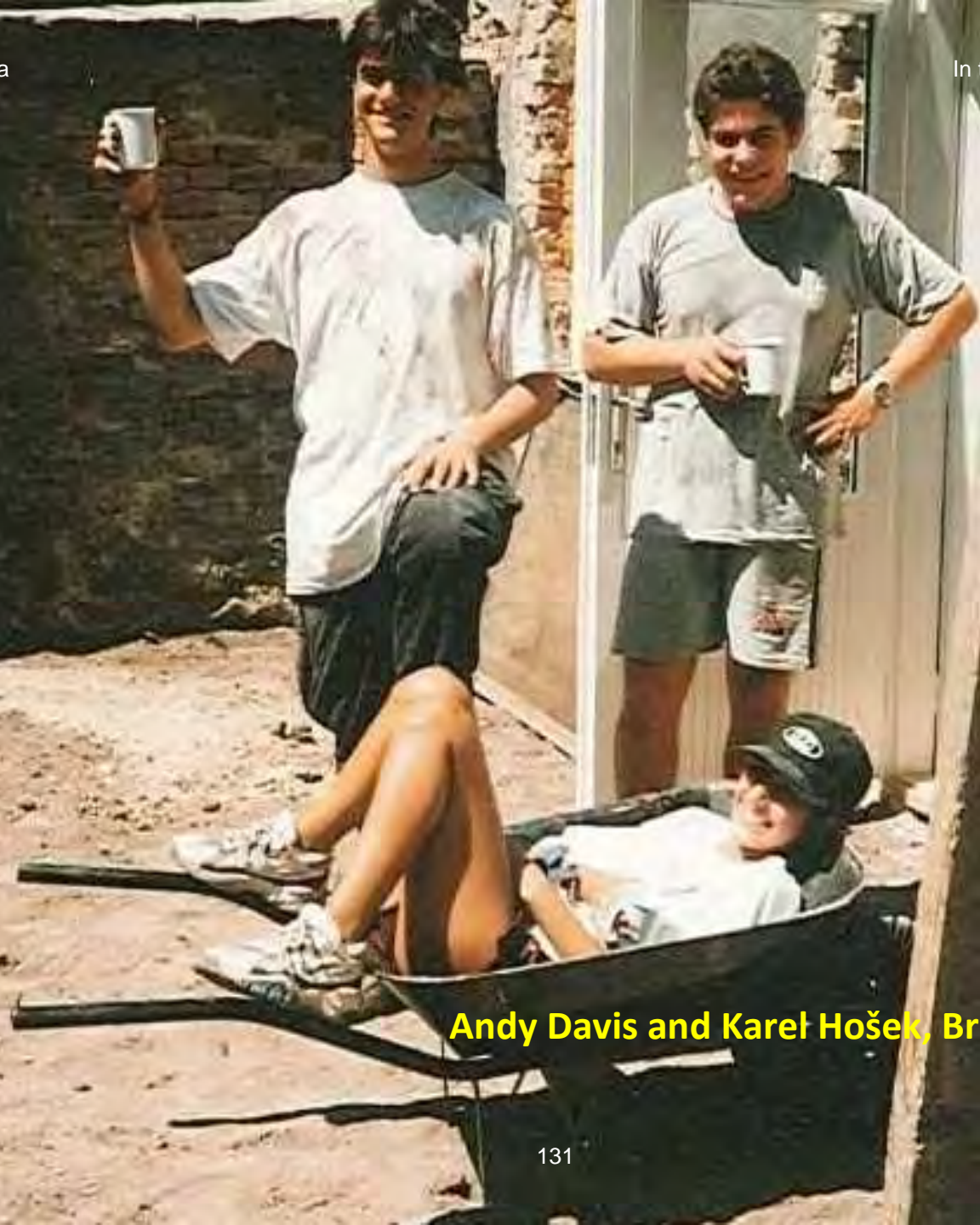
In the Bginning there was



Linda Smith and ???



Emily Roosa, Ann McGinnis, ?, ?, ?, Eliška Soběslavská, Linda Smith, Petr Sláma, Betty McGinnis, Samyon Daniluk.



Andy Davis and Karel Hošek, Brno 1998

Jan Sláma

In the Bginning there was

Brno Hrnčířská 1998, Petr Sláma, Betty McGinnis and Samyon Daniluk



Jan Sláma

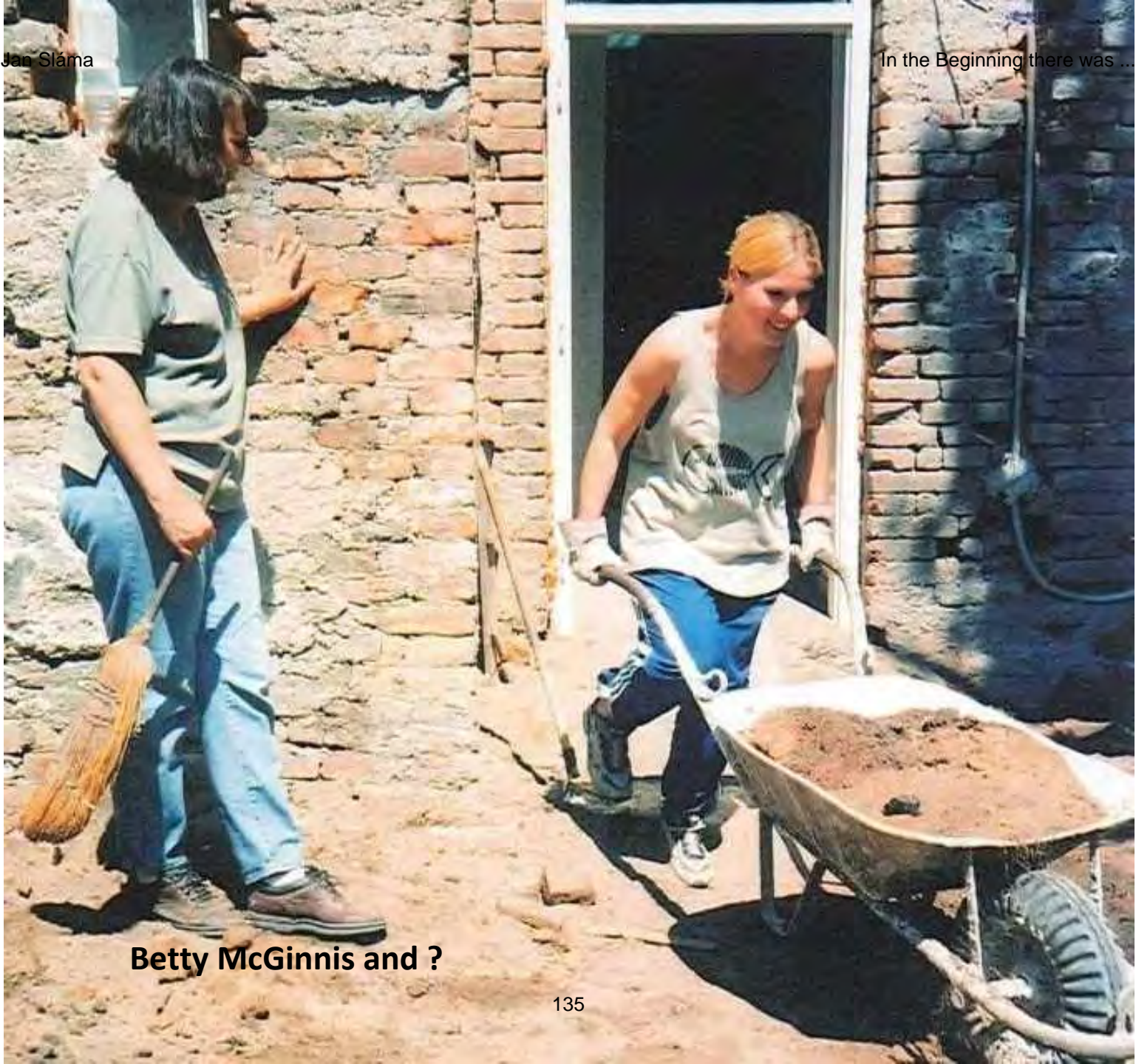
In the Beginning there was ...



Linda Smith and ?

Jan Sláma

In the Beginning there was ...



Betty McGinnis and ?



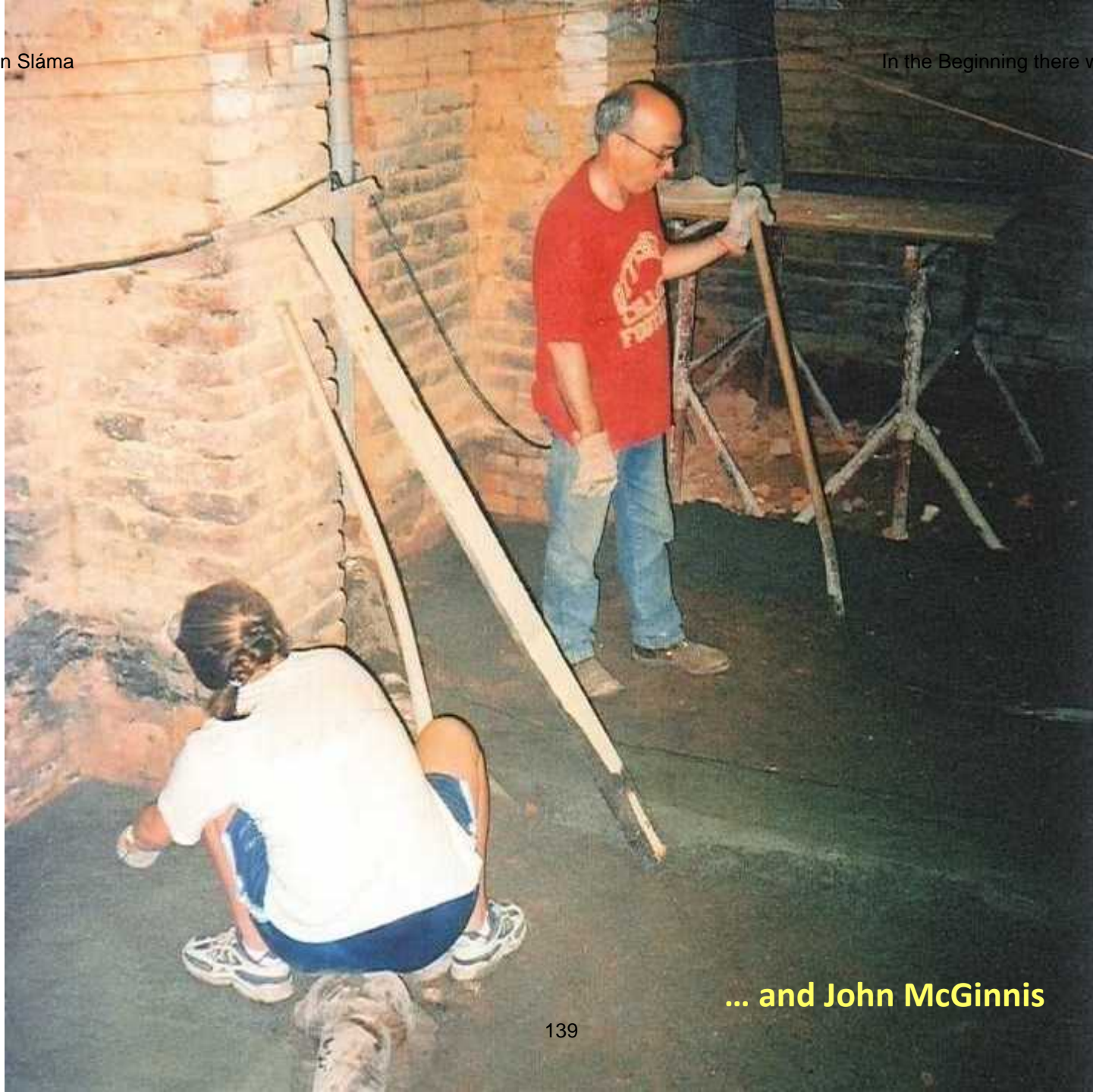


Jan Sláma

In the Beginning there was ...



Brno 1998: Ivan Houfek, ??? and Martin Soběšlavský¹³⁸



... and John McGinnis



Ing. Josef Prudký about the work of Diaconia in Brno, Martin Soběslavský, Ivan Houfek ... and Eliška Soběslavská (Brno 1998)



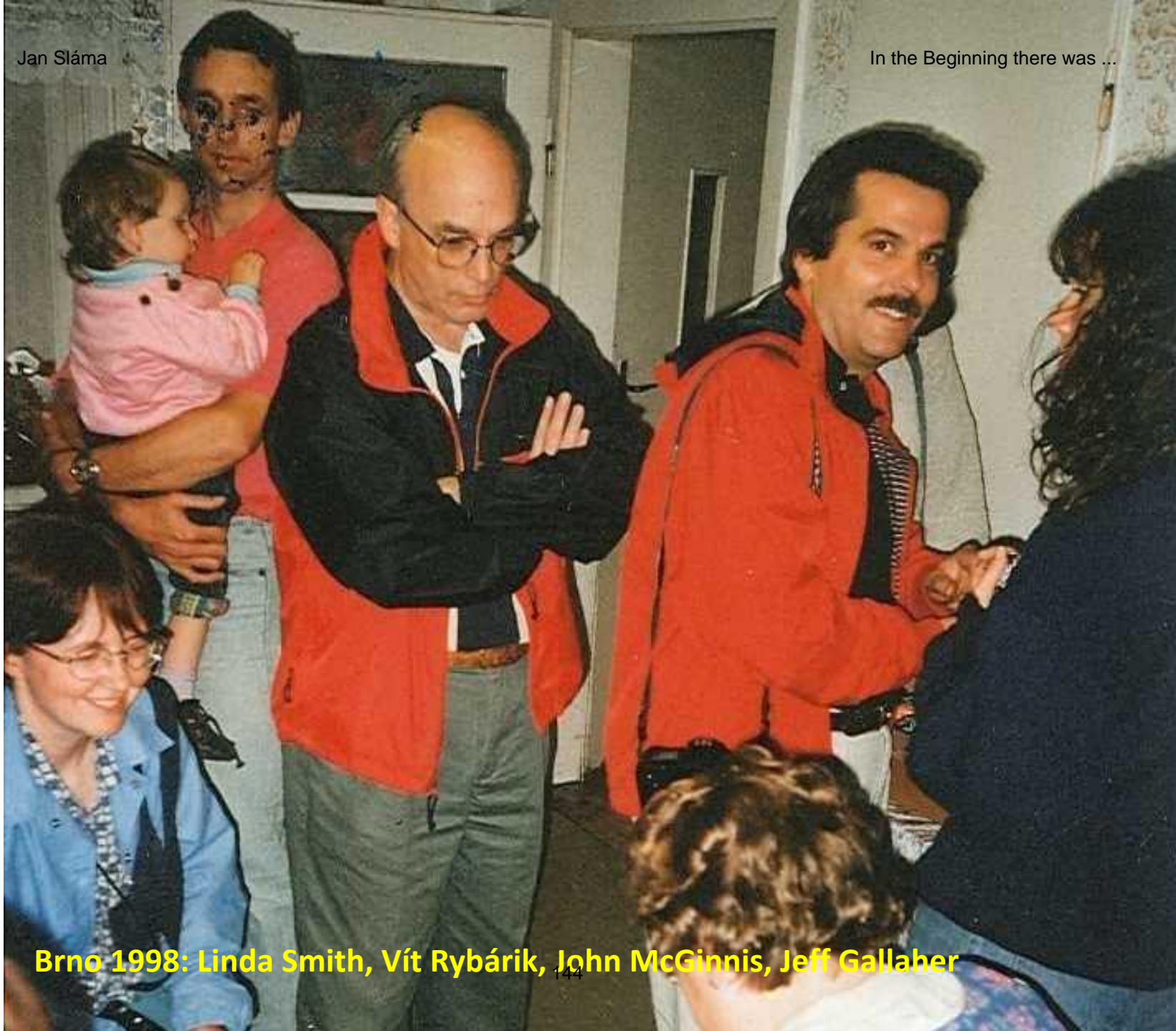


Emily Roosa and ??? and ???

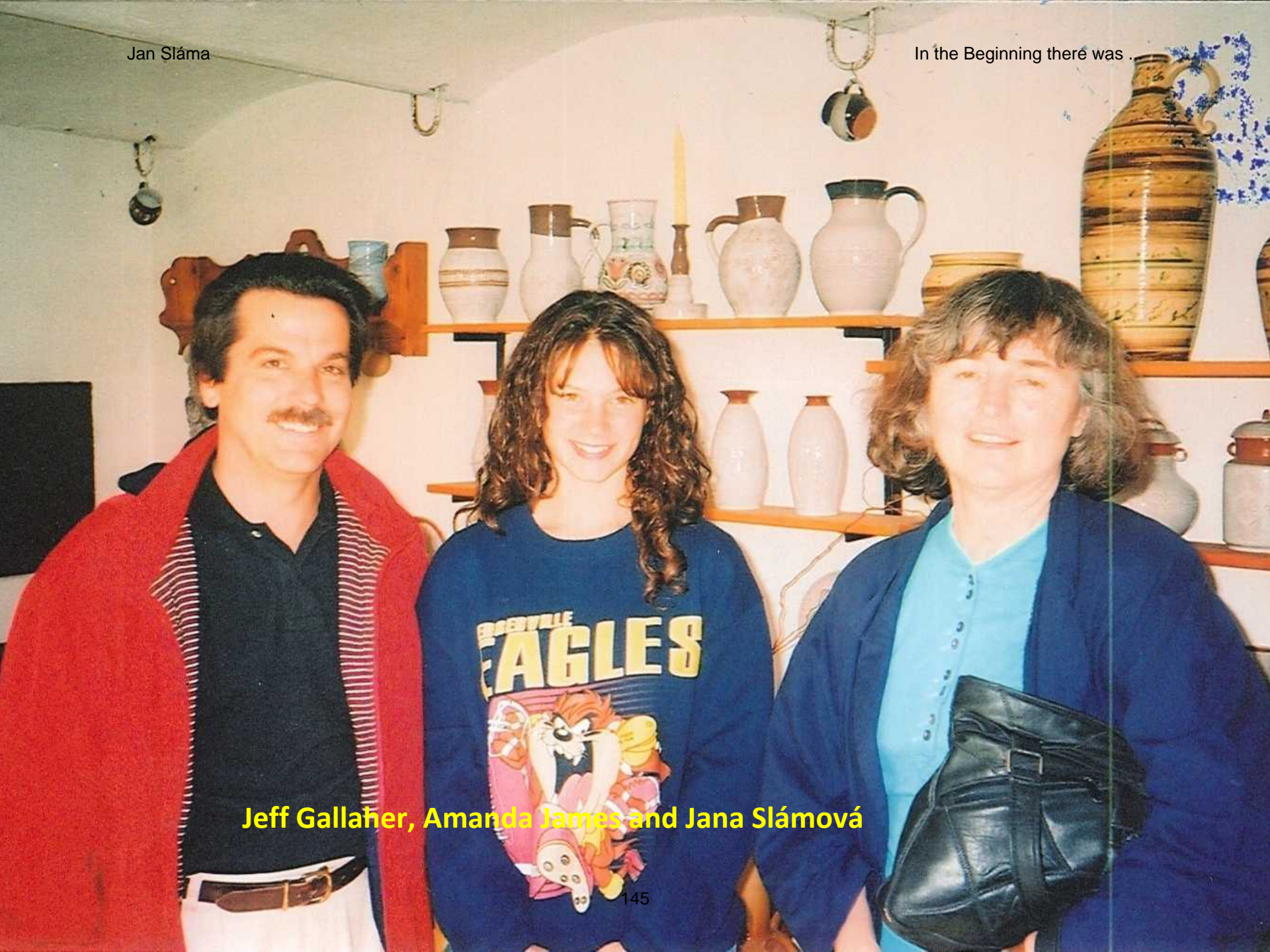


Jan Sláma

In the Beginning there was ...



Brno 1998: Linda Smith, Vít Rybárik, John McGinnis, Jeff Gallaher



Jeff Gallaher, Amanda James and Jana Slámová







Barbecue in Klobouky, 1998





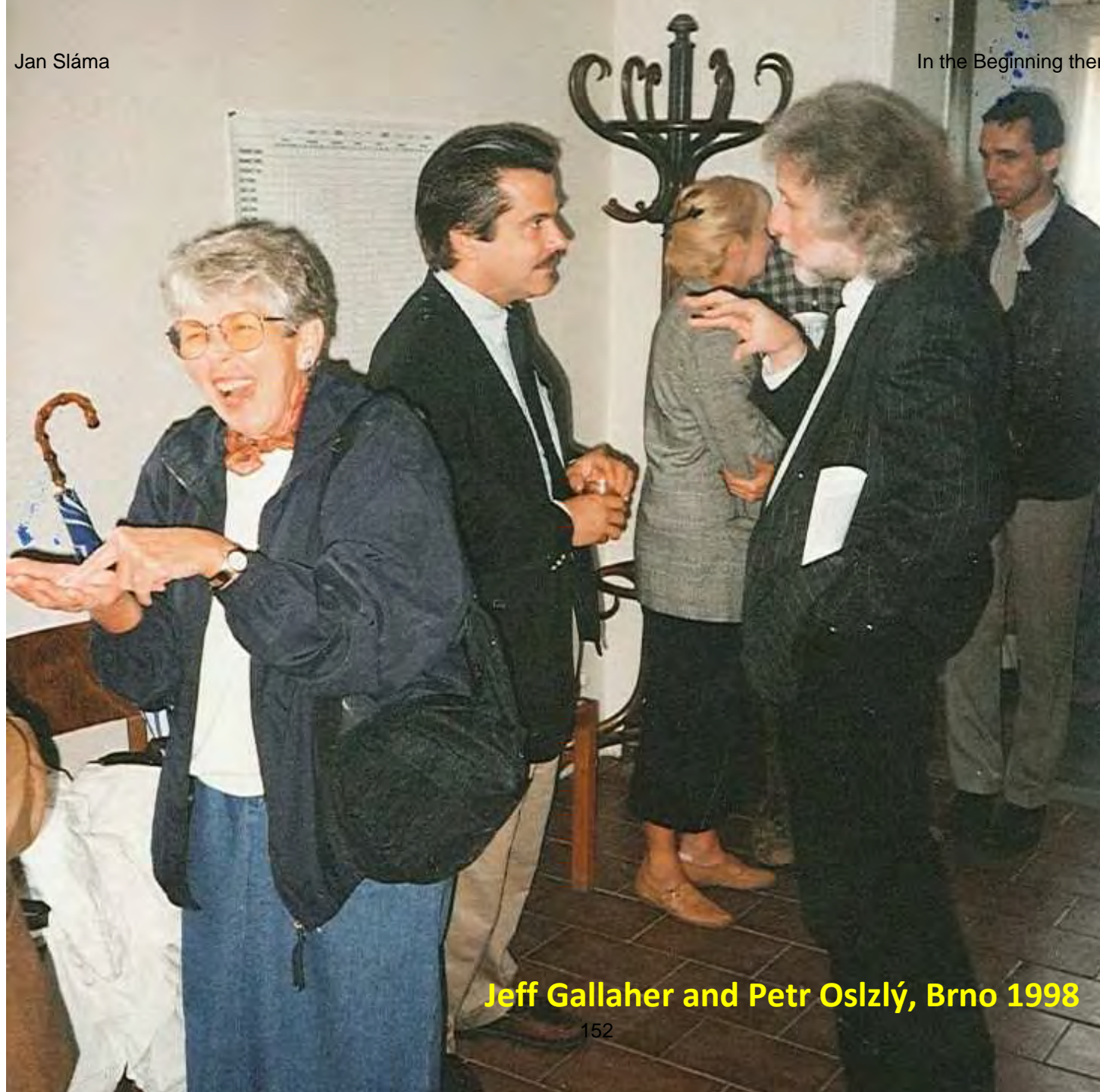
Final worship at Brno Židenice church 1998 (from the left to the right): Věra Slámová, Lydie Zukalová, Jan Soběslavský, ???, Vít Rybárik, ???, Ivan Houfek, Eliška Soběslavská, Jeff Gallaher, David Novák, Andy Davis, Marta Zikmundová, ???, Rev. Pavel Kašpar.

Jan Slama

In the Beginning there was ...




John McGinnis, Linda Smith, Anna McGinnis and Pavel Maláč, Brno 1998



Jeff Gallaher and Petr Oslzlý, Brno 1998



A photograph showing a group of people, mostly women, standing on a sidewalk next to a white and black bus. The bus has "ROSKICE" written on its side. Several people are holding suitcases and bags, suggesting they are either boarding or disembarking. The scene is outdoors, with buildings and trees in the background.

+ also present in Brno and Morkuvky and helping stoutly were David Christenburry, Candence Cupples, Ruth Ann Daniluk, Ruth Gallaher, Caroline Harrington, Gloria Johnson, Claudia Mitchell, Linda Mitchell, Jennifer Morgan, Marie B. Pearson, Laura Robins, Emily Roosa... Many thanks!!!

27
Hrnčířská

Jan Sláma

In the Beginning there was ...

Diakonie
Křesťanský ústav
Křesťanský ústav
Křesťanský ústav

Information board with text and images

Graffiti on the wall

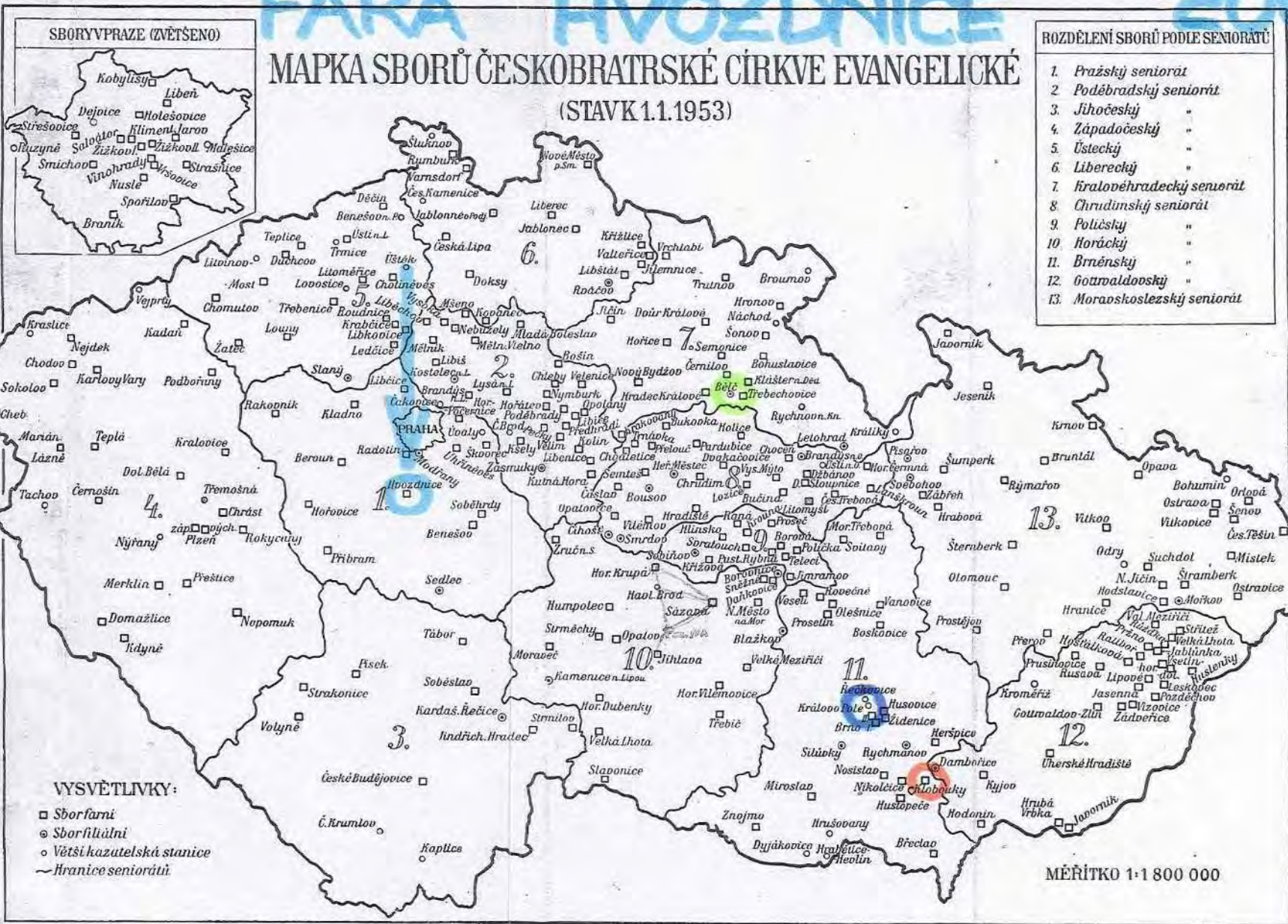
... and today



156 .. and today

The parish house in Hvozdnice 2003

FARA HVOZDNICE 2003



MAPKA SBORŮ ČESKOBATRSKÉ CÍRKVE EVANGELICKÉ (STAV K 1.1.1953)

ROZDĚLENÍ SBORŮ PODLE SENIORÁTŮ

1. Pražský seniorát
2. Poděbradský seniorát
3. Jihočeský "
4. Západočeský "
5. Ústecký "
6. Liberecký "
7. Kralovohradecký seniorát
8. Chrudimský seniorát
9. Poličský "
10. Horácký "
11. Brněnský "
12. Guttvaldovský "
13. Moravskoslezský seniorát

VYSVĚTLIVKY:

- Sbor farní
- Sbor fiktivní
- Větší kazatelská stanice
- ~ Hranice seniorátů

MĚŘITKO 1:1 800 000





... and today

Jan Sláma

In the Beginning there was ...

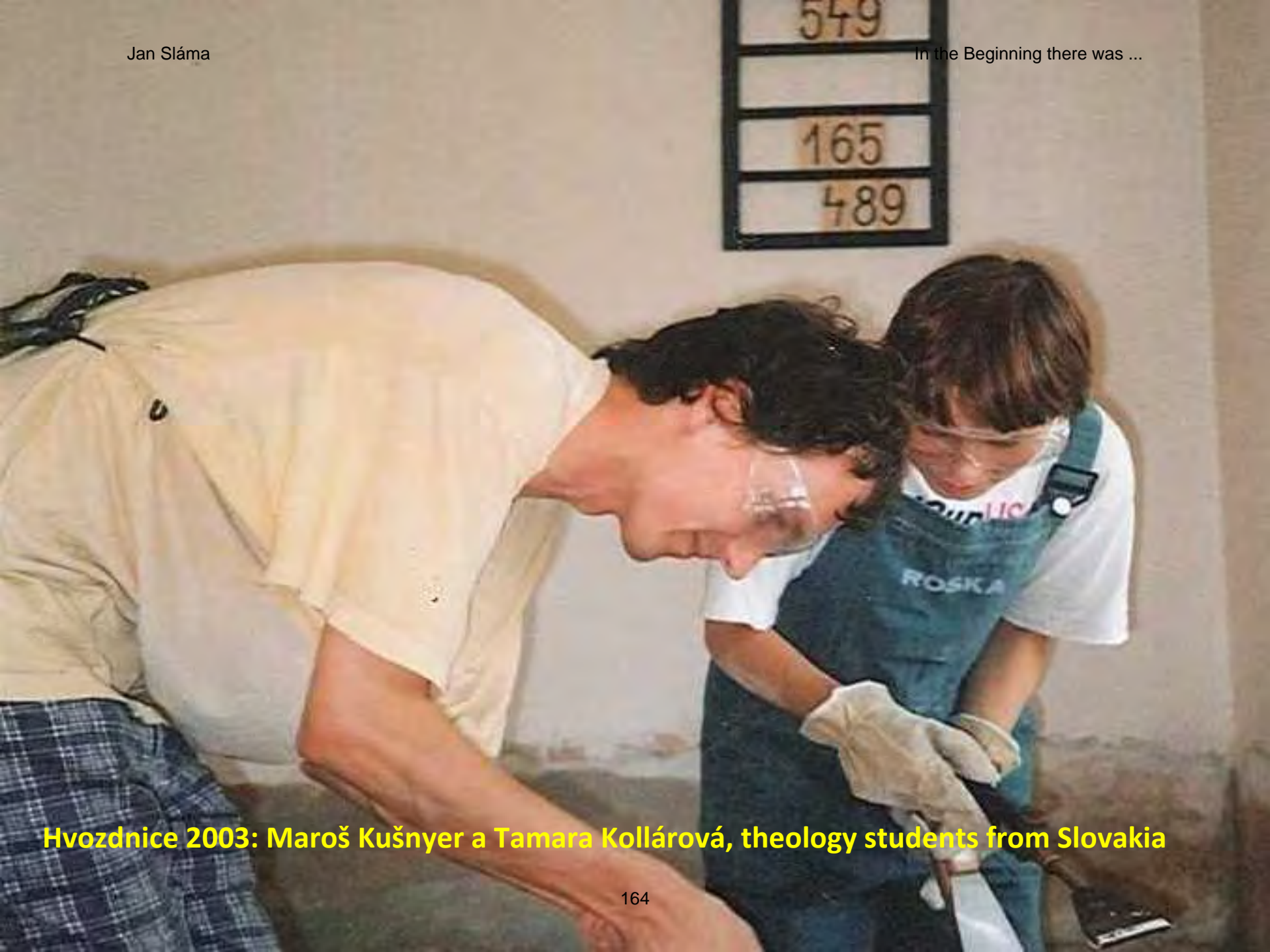


Hvozdnice 2003: Samantha Workman, Benjamin Mareček, Kelly Chappel, Pavel Balahura, Jana Slámová, Milan Balahura, Mike Berry, Jeff Gallahar, Sara Warren, Lucie Slámová, Liz Workman, Jacki Workman, Petr Sláma.

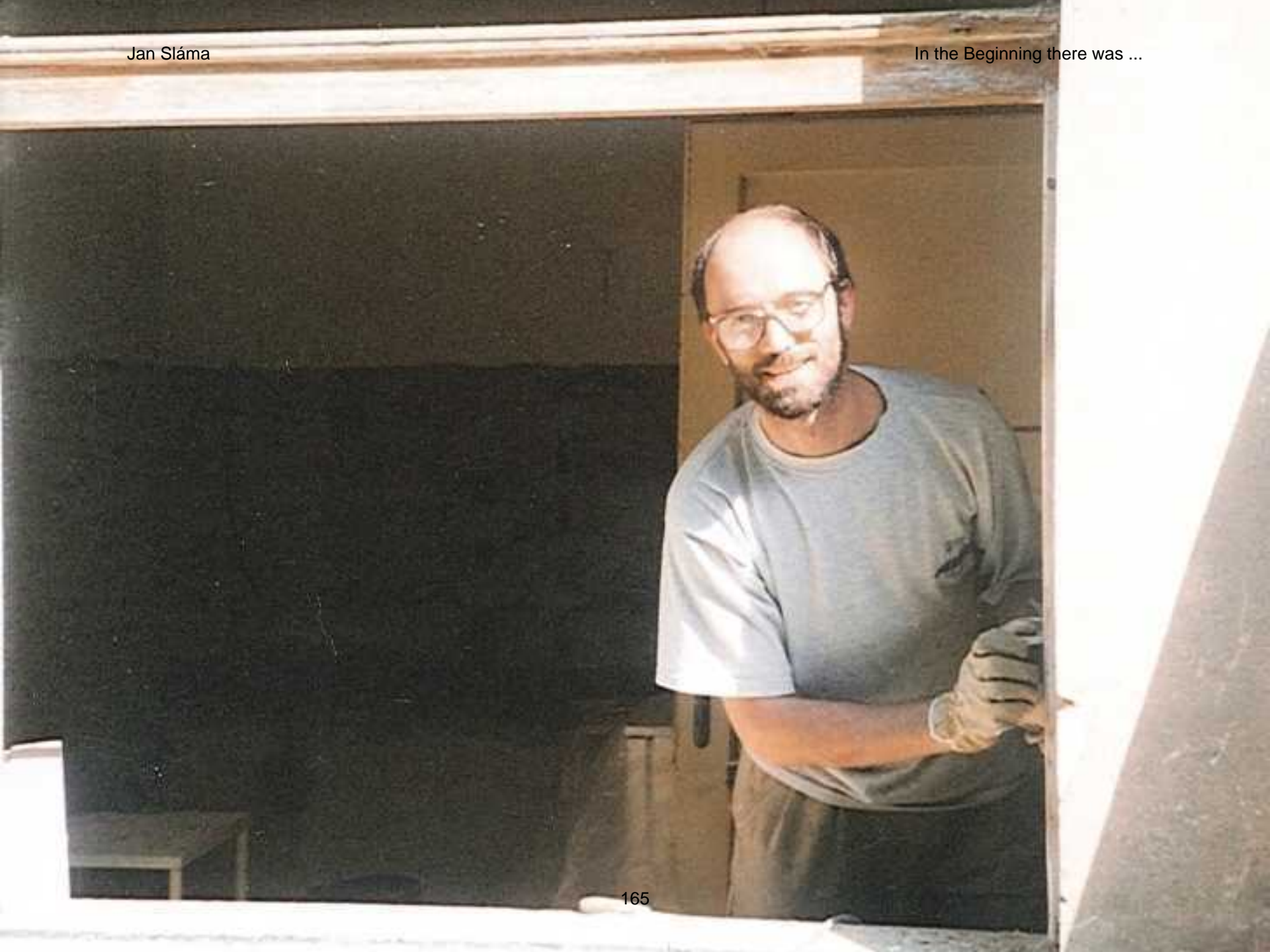


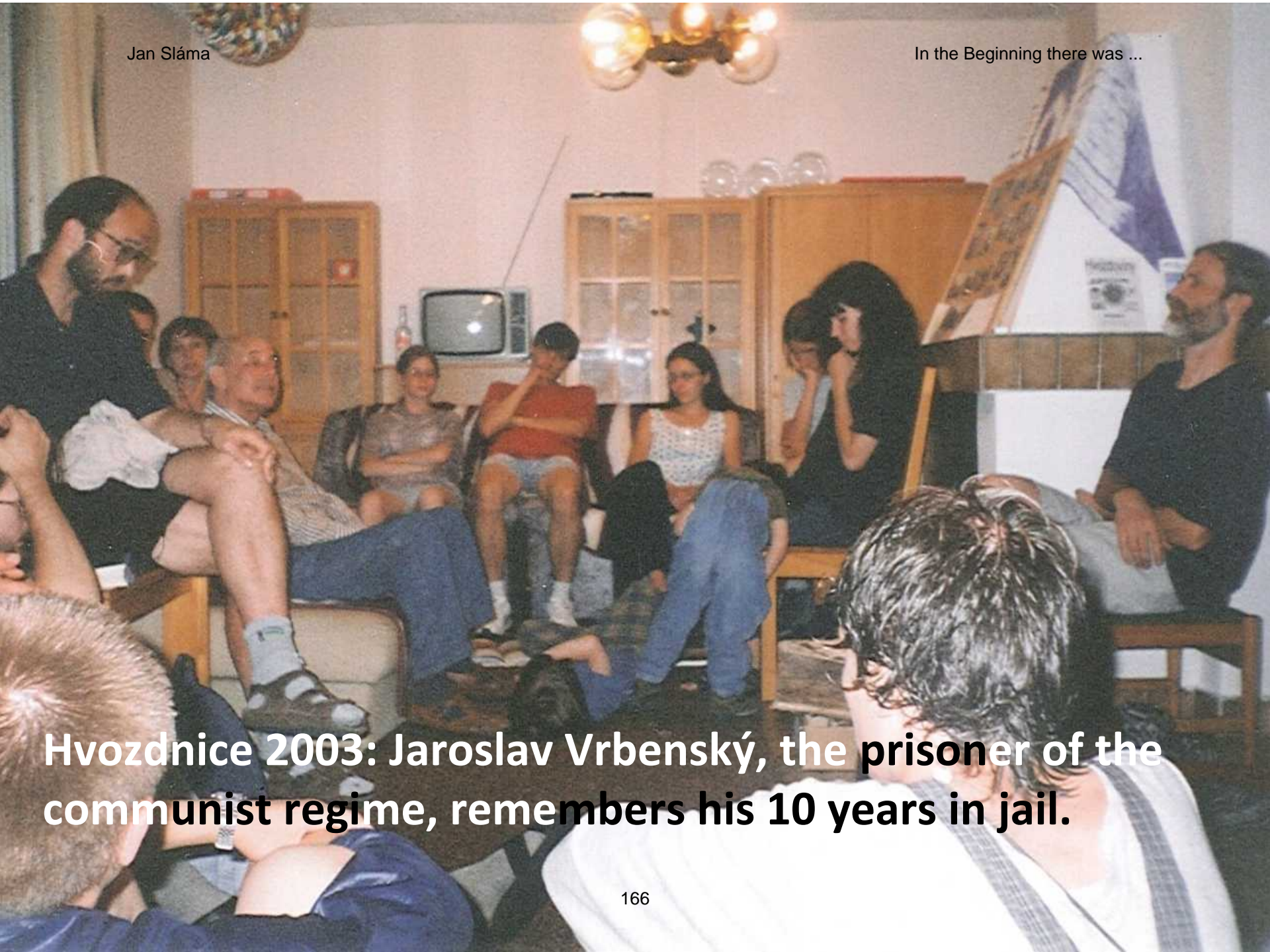


**Rev. Jíra Weinfurter
pastor in Hvozdnice**



Hvozdnice 2003: Maroš Kušnyer a Tamara Kollárová, theology students from Slovakia





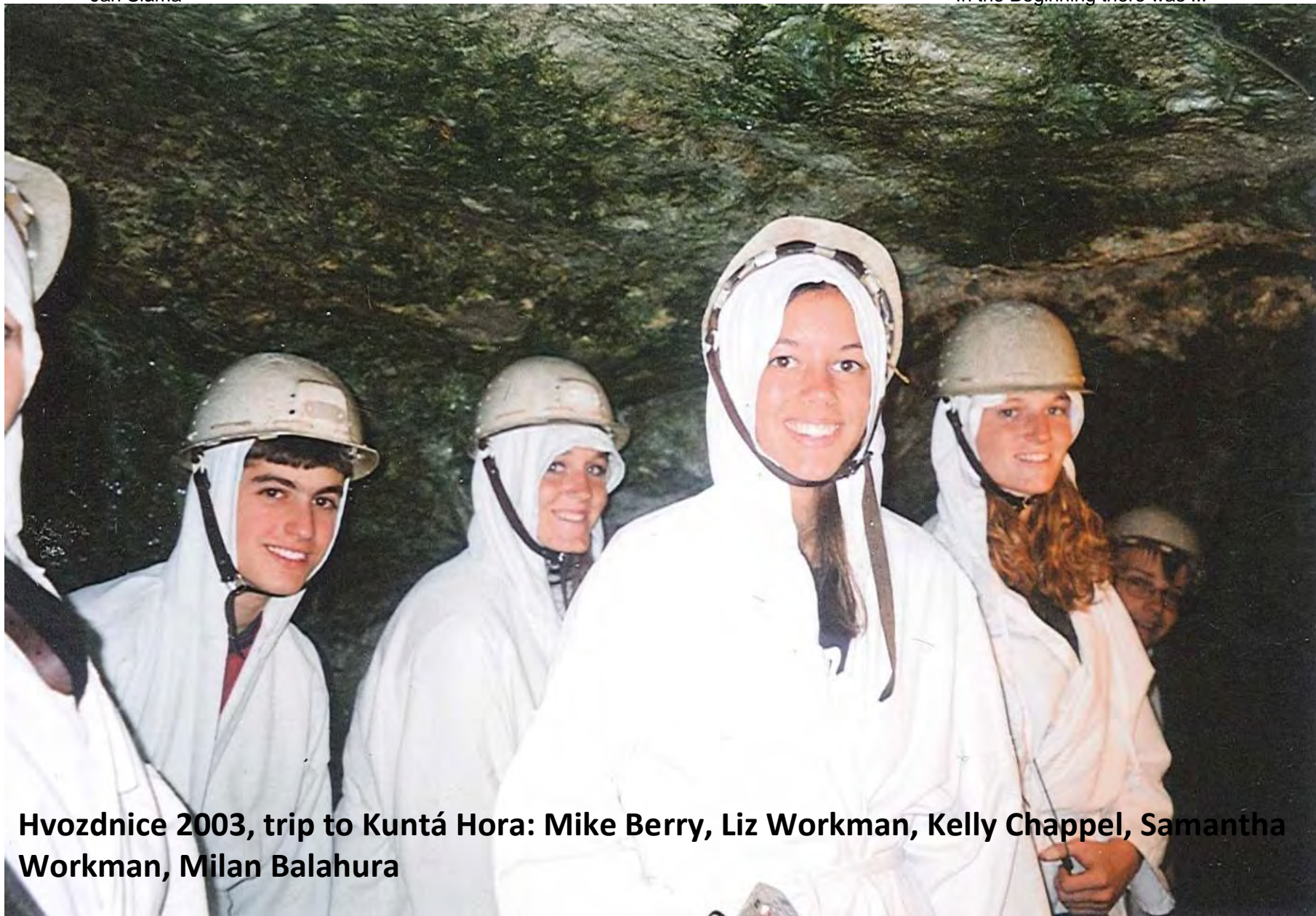
Hvozdnice 2003: Jaroslav Vrbenský, the prisoner of the communist regime, remembers his 10 years in jail.



Hvozdnice 2003: Trip to Kutná Hora



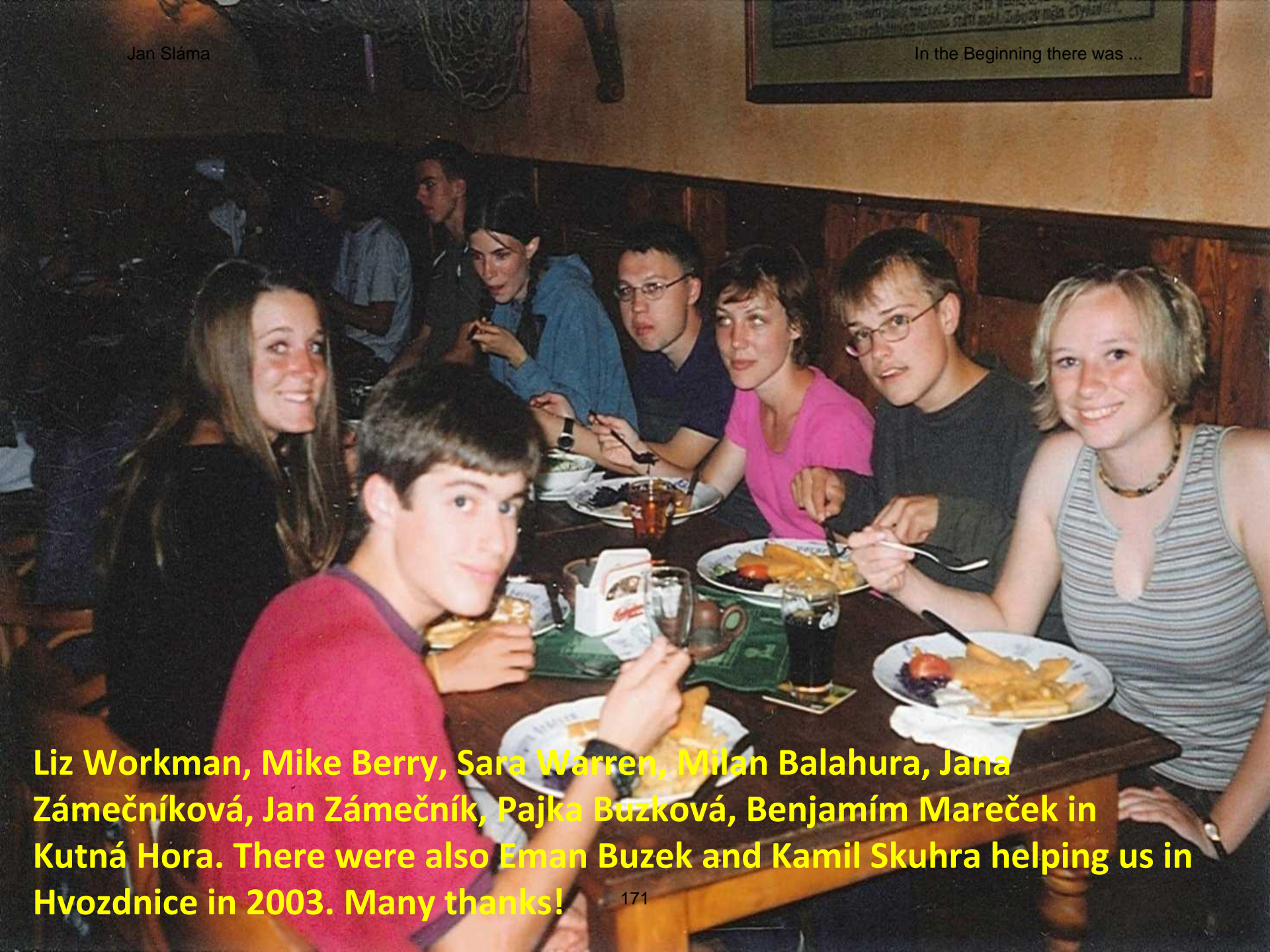
Visiting the historical silver mines in Kutná Hora



Hvozdnice 2003, trip to Kuntá Hora: Mike Berry, Liz Workman, Kelly Chappel, Samantha Workman, Milan Balahura



Kutná Kora, dinner, left side of the table: Jana Slámová, Lucie Slámová, Petr Sláma, Tamara Kollárová, Martina Vaňásková, Mike Berry, right side of the table: Jakub Weinfurter, Jitka Weinfurterová, Samuel Weinfurter, Maroš Kušnyer, Jíra Weinfurter, Sara Warren, Milan Balahura...

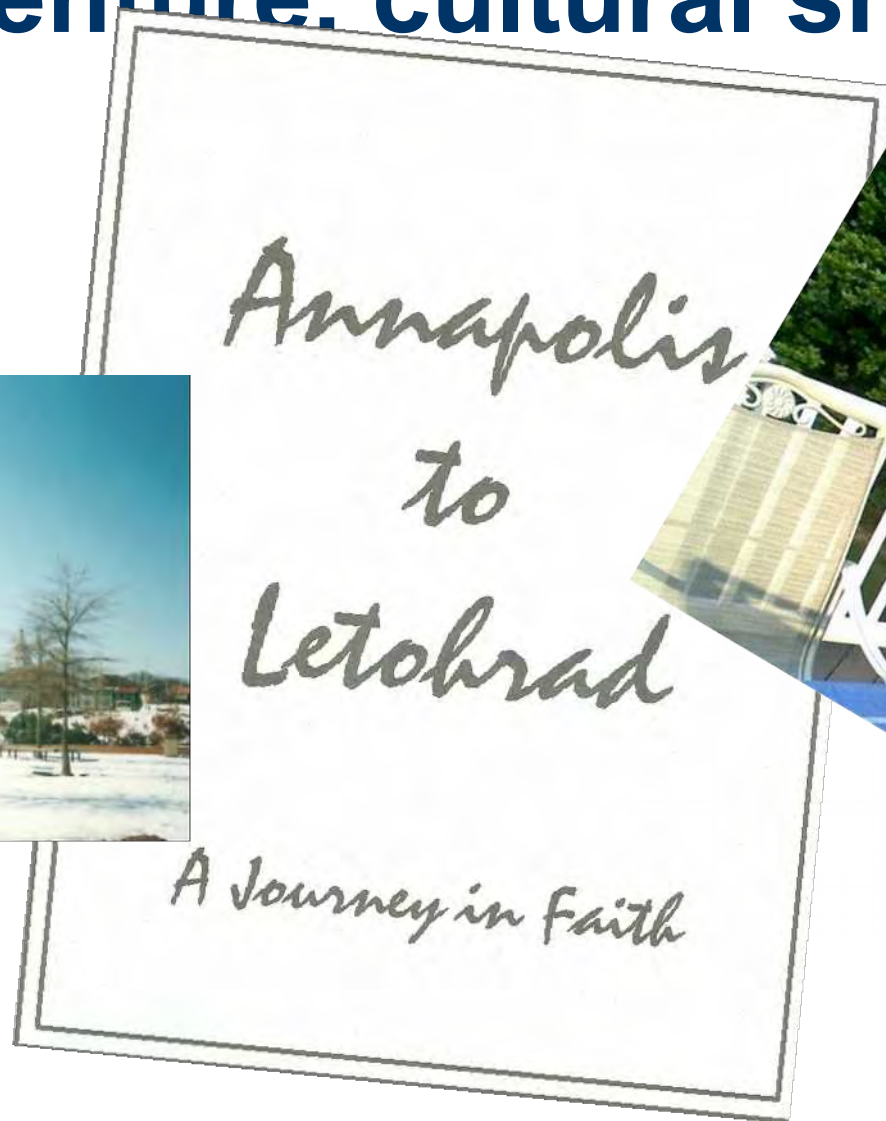


Liz Workman, Mike Berry, Sara Warren, Milan Balahura, Jana Zámečnicková, Jan Zámečník, Pajka Buzková, Benjamím Mareček in Kutná Hora. There were also Eman Buzek and Kamil Skuhra helping us in Hvozdnice in 2003. Many thanks!



**Sharing our mortality:
in the charnel-house of Kutná Hora**

...journey in faith...miracle, adventure. cultural shock



journey in faith...needs the courage



A lot of courage...hitchhiking too...



**Hitchhiking near
Vicksburg, Mississippi in 1936,
photograph by Walker Evans**



Choice is... every time



**Even before the world was made,
God has already chosen us
to be his through our union with
Christ...**

Very special guests...

**Remember to welcome strangers
in your homes.**

**There were some who did that
and welcomed angels
without knowing it.**

Hebrew 13

Four angels...

David Ruml

Journey in Faith



3 angels...



WARC /CANAC ...first journey to USA



WARC CANAC Toronto, 1991



KNOX COLLEGE

59 ST. GEORGE STREET TORONTO, ONTARIO M5S 3K6

Office of the Principal

April 18, 1991

The Reverend Pavel Ruml,
Tyrsova 353
5 61 51 Letohrad
Czechoslovakia.

Dear Pavel:

I hope you have had a safe and happy return to your personal and your Church families. It was an important time for the Alliance in North America, and we here at Knox College, to make immediate and personal contact with the Reformed Christian community in Eastern Europe.

For me personally, your visit to the College revived memories of 1948-49 which were very important to me. The Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren has remained firmly identified in my consciousness.

I'm sorry that I failed to have a letter ready for Zdenek when you left the College. I would be obliged if you would forward the enclosure to him.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

W. James S. Farris
Acting Principal

Draft of sermon in English – Jan Hus – Luke 5,1-11 ...catching the fish

Lk 5,1-11

Who do you say that I am? was the theme of General Council last year. Since that time have been changed very many things. And we are asking another serious questions about ourselves. What we are – as the churches? What we were as the Christians during last period? Did we follow Jesus demands or not? We will have to answer these questions because of the changes in Europe too. Some of Christians /churches/ feel that they have been really good witnesses of Christ. Some others are embarrassed because they have trusted to socialist system more than was right. But one point is common for all the churches in Europe. How is it possible that during one century have appeared two total systems in Europe and the churches were not able to oppose them – in their crimes, racism, hatred and evil which they were spreading. The responsibility of the churches for it is clear. Who other should be able to "drive out demons" /Mk 16,17/ or to recognise false prophets /J 4,1/ if not the churches?

Let's try to find some answers in Jesus call of disciples. I am using some ideas from John Hus sermon on this text. It is a parable too. It is not a story about the successful catch. Otherwise the disciples would take care about the catch. But they are leaving everything – the result of their work. Their work? No, it was Jesus success. Christ was a good preacher. What he said he did. His words went hand in hand with his deeds. No wonder that he is pushed by the crowd. First conclusion is simple – what we are, what we did – the words and the deeds of the churches were not often on the agreement.

Christ is offering the salvation – he does not hesitate to go on the deep water to do it freely, to offer the help for everybody. The lake Genesareth is for Hus the picture of our life in this world. Where we are swung by the waves of our pride and horrible crashes. Up and down, up, down. The lake is stinking like a sea and there is in it the fight of one man against the other, like I a sea between the fish. Than of course Jesus sermon on this terrible depth of tragedy of human history is God's fort and the port for those who are lost and can not swim. Christ sermon is the light and the lighthouse on the seashore for those who are lost in the depths of sin. And from this sermon the faith is growing. The faith which is given to us. Another point for us – the Christians in East Europe very often did not find the courage to go with their sermons to the depths of human poverty and stayed on the shore /inside the churches/ because it was not so dangerous. /instinct of selfprotection/.

To believe means to obey too. To obey Christ demands. Jesus asks the disciples to try a new catch. Who is objecting? Peter – that first among twelve /person important for the church/. He answers his Duty Obedience but with the reservation. Later on Peter confesses what was speaking from him. It was his sin /v.B/. And this is the reason why Peter could be a disciple – he was "able" to confess his sin. It is another condition for the church – we have to find the way how confess that we have been in the past sometimes very wrong. Peter's objection is clear. He is a fisherman, he knows what to do to be successful. Jesus is the "beginner". Nevertheless Jesus gets the success with his gospel and the disciples with their experience they don't. It is the hope for everybody. The gospel can succeed in this world better than our experiences and wisdom. The gospel is a source of salvation for us and for everybody even with its apparent "naivity". And we – experienced men, who know the life; we who have tried so many attempts to help us or others; we who have preaching so many times – we are admonished.

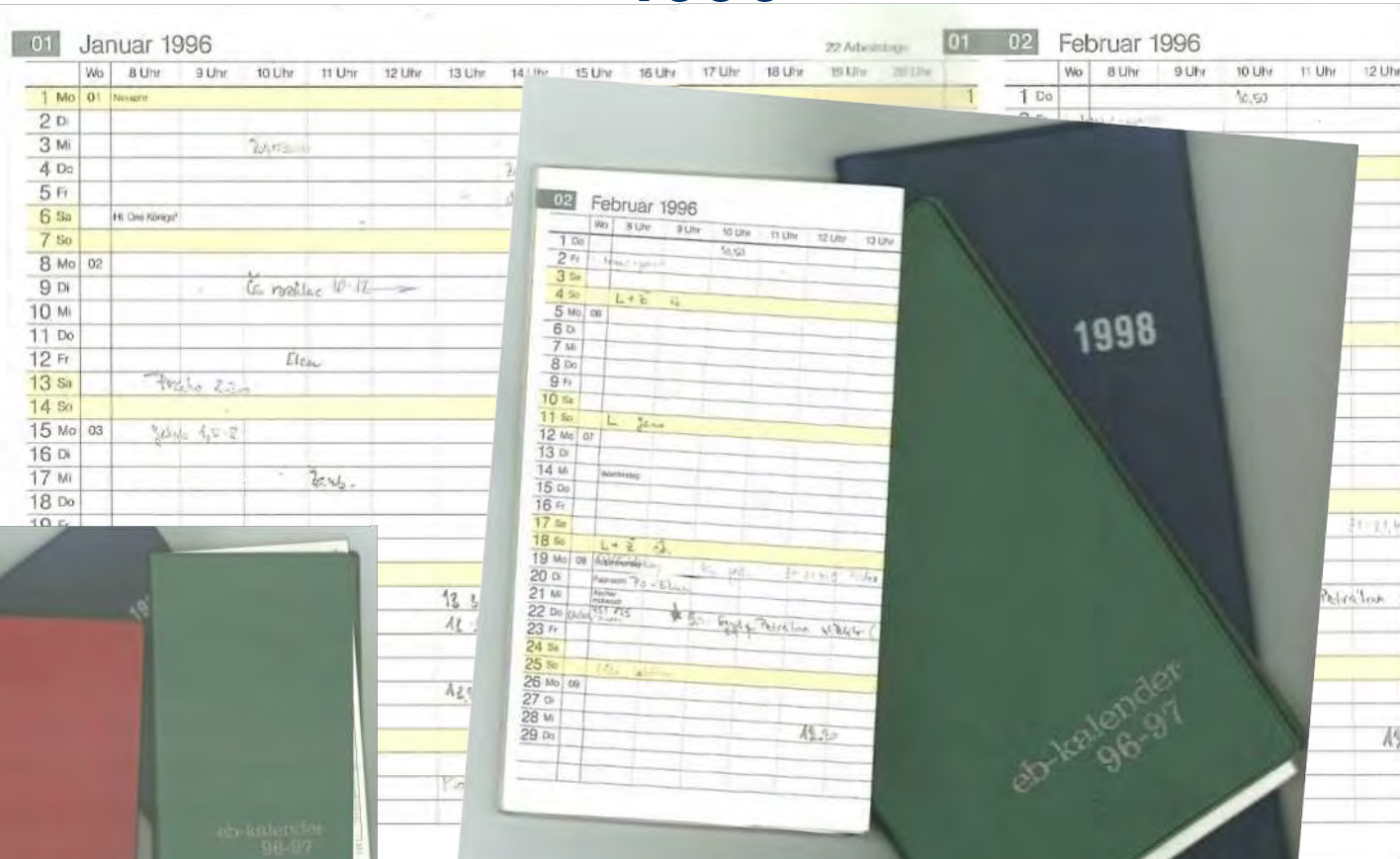
Not only admonished. We are again – saved! Christ gospel is not the whip and Peter – doubter – is not falling on his knees demerged and hopeless. Surprised by the result of the catch he is falling down to confess his sin. Here the miracle of salvation is finished – we all justified sinners can hear – Don't be afraid. We have tried very many times to save ourselves, to help others, world. What a difficult work! How many nights without the dreams. And the result? Empty net. Maybe just the wisdom and the experiences and the carefulness we have learned. But without God's blessing even these achievements mean nothing for us. Don't be afraid; from now you will be catching men. This is a program for Peter. And for the church. To save the people from stinking deepness of the world. Everybody who thinks that this task is too noble or too difficult for him hears Lord's Don't be afraid. Hus is preaching "Let us make the penance. Wash our nets by our tears. Stiek to Christ's nets otherwise we fall to devil's ones. What we have missed in the loving of God and the neighbour, let's wash it by our tears and holy penance.

To catch the people for Christ is not easy. It knows every pastor, every Christian coming from traditional church. Every contact with the world is a risk for the tradition. But even in this point the text is helping. What is the place of the church? The nets were about the break. The boats were about to sink. This is a risk which the church has to have in mind. Because she is still in the world – on the deepest of the death. She is catching, saving but in the same time is about to sink. Even in this situation the boats have reached the shore. But there were people on the boats who were falling on their knees and there was Christ on the boat too. His presence was the guarantee. And when they reached the beach they left everything and followed Jesus. The church is following its own mission when she is able to risk her own existence. The church is not the aim of life of Christians. They must be prepared to leave everything – if Jesus will say.

P.Ruml, Lotohrad 28.June1950

It started for Letohrad and Annapolis and me

1996





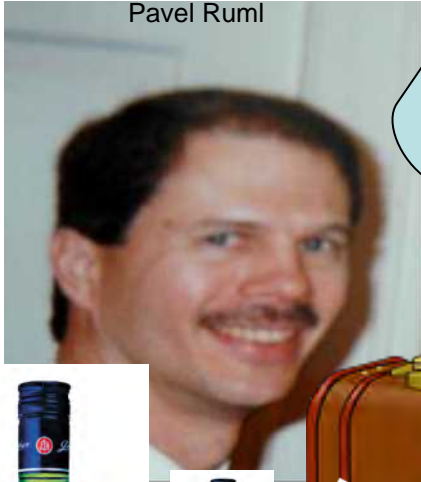
Why I am here
???

Baltimore airport
February
1996



The
MISSION

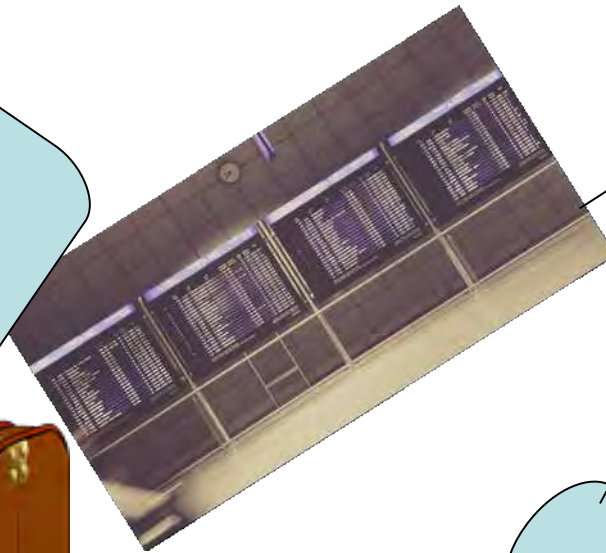
Pavel Ruml



Journey in Faith

Baltimore airport
February
1996

This is
your only
bag???



Oh
God...
Why I
am here
???



Personal things for 3 weeks



...normal size of US luggage ☺...



Great adventure – „the faith“ can be „planned“ (under communists, the only goal was to „survive“)

First Presbyterian Church
Annapolis, Maryland

Seven Goals
for
2009–2014



My landlady... 1996

OUR CHURCH FAMILY



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 1012 Harbor Drive
 Annapolis, MD 21403

MARTHENS, Maria
 (410) 266-7404
 751 Bon Haven Drive

MASON, Cora
 (410) 263-8781
 601 Creekview Avenue
 Annapolis, MD 21403

MAY, Doug & Jennifer
 (410) 826-0226
 Bryant
 27 Harness Creek View Court
 Annapolis, MD 21403

MCCANN, Terry & Wendy
 (410) 923-4892
 Jay, Alice
 tjmwam@netzero.com
 854 Birch Trail
 Crownsville, MD 21032

MCCLURE, Jane
 (410) 224-4138
 9105 River Crescent Drive
 Annapolis, MD 21401

MCCUTCHEON & HULT, MaryLou & Stephen
 (410) 956-3392
 stevehult@verizon.net
 925 Shore Drive
 Edgewater, MD 21037

MCGINNIS, Anna

MCGINNIS, John & Betty
 (410) 647-7494
 cobe@comcast.net
 1234 Tamarack Trail
 Arnold, MD 21012

MCGINNIS, Mary Shannon
 (410) 647-7494
 1234 Tamarack Trail
 Arnold, MD 21012

MCGLAUFLIN, Geneva
 (410) 263-2547
 gmclauflin@earthlink.net
 2004 Quay Village Court, T-1
 Annapolis, MD 21403

MCINTYRE, James & Wendy

MCKENZIE, Leon & (Betty)
 (410) 266-7804
 innmj@aol.com
 5109 River Crescent Drive
 Annapolis, MD 21401

MCKENZIE, Matt

MCCLAIN, Ruth
 (802) 748-2538
 c/o Martin & Susan Cherry
 St. Johnsbury, VT 05819

MELLO, Terry & Charlie
 (410) 864-8457
 terrymello@gmail.com
 206 Providence Road
 Annapolis, MD 21409

MIERAU, Mike & Samantha
 (443) 949-8803
 Ashleigh, Darian
 michael.mierau@mac.com
 1 Fitzgerald Drive
 Annapolis, MD 21401

MIGUEZ, Lauren & (Paul)
 (410) 897-9549
 Alexander, Serafina
 1060 Carriage Hill
 Annapolis, MD 21401

MILANETTE, Karla and Jeff
 (908) 789-9747
 jmilanette@aol.com
 325 Kimball Ave.
 Westfield, NJ 07090

MILLER, Kevin & Cynthia
 (410) 263-7844
 Alana, Emma
 cynthiamiller@comcast.net
 2 Somerset Court
 Annapolis, MD 21403

MILLER, Leslie
 (443) 520-1571
 les.mill@juno.com
 58 Regatta Bay Court #228
 Annapolis, MD 21401

Jane Mc Lure



Preaching...

THOSE ASSISTING THIS MORNING: Ushers: Betsy Stewart, Ed & Julie Hester and Gary Lindbergh; Acolyte: Maggie Porath; Preacher: Pavel Ruml; Liturgists: Chris Dunn and Charles Hargrove; Time With Children: Miss Good; Children's Church: Miss Good; Sunday Receptionist:

FOR PRAYER: Iraq: Mike Mierau; Afghanistan: Chris Larson, Earvin Taylor, Max Gross, Geoff Tibbetts. Rob Cockey is home safe from Afghanistan, and Mike Allert has returned from his deployment aboard ship in the Persian Gulf.

STAFF NOTES: Associate Pastor Heather Shortlidge is participating in a wedding in

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE REV. PAVEL RUML, TODAY'S GUEST PREACHER, has served since 2006 at the Central Military Hospital in Prague. He studied theology at Charles University in Prague, spending one year at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland. Pavel is married to Jana Rumllova, pastor of the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren in Olomouc. Together they have three children in their twenties, David, Jakub, and Kristina. Join us in McBee Fellowship Hall immediately following the 9:30 am service for a reception and "Conversations with Pavel." Session Clerk and member of the Czech Workshop, Bill Hatchl, will be facilitating discussion from 10:30-11:30 am.

CHRIS DUNN, TODAY'S WORSHIP LITURGIST, has just completed his first year of study at Austin Theological Seminary. Prior to theological education, Chris served as the Director of Youth Ministry here at FPC Annapolis. Please take a moment to welcome Chris home. He's here for a short time before returning to Austin for summer Greek school.

FIRST TIME ACOLYTE! We are pleased to have new acolyte Maggie Porath serving for her first time today. Congratulations!

WHERE'S BILL? Bill continues on his three-month sabbatical generously funded by the Lilly Foundation. Today, Bill and Alison are at a game park in the Western Cape of South Africa, then will return to Cape Town for a week of visits with local church and community center leaders, re-connecting with the Rev. Jan de Waal and Elder Willie Newhoudt.

NEXT WEEK IS YOUTH SUNDAY! Youth group will meet tonight from 5-7, and we will have a Saturday morning rehearsal in the sanctuary from 9-12 on June 4th.

CONGRATULATIONS TO KATIE CASHWELL, former year-long seminary intern, who graduated from Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, Virginia yesterday. Katie will be in the area this summer while completing Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) at The Washington Hospital Center.

SUMMER SEMINARY INTERN, AMY MOLINA, begins her internship with us this Wednesday, June 1st. Amy's office will be in the Kinhart Center, room 3A and her email address is amy@annapolis-presbyterian.com. Please join us in welcoming Amy to Annapolis.

Guest pastor 2006

www.HometownAnnapolis.com
THE CAPITAL, Saturday, May 28, 2011

CALENDAR

TODAY'S EVENTS

FARMERS MARKET, 7 a.m.-noon, at Riva Road and Harry S. Truman Parkway. 410-949-0317. WIC and Senior FMNP checks accepted.

FARMERS MARKET, 8 a.m.-noon, Route 2 and Jones Station Road, Severna Park. 410-924-3092. WIC and Senior FMNP checks accepted.

YARD SALE/FLEA MARKET, to benefit The Sounds of Joshua Community Praise Choir, 8 a.m.-noon. Interfaith Christian Ministries, 1274 Defense Highway, Gambrills. 410-693-2841, 410-353-2997.

NAUTICAL FLEA MARKET, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium, 550 Taylor Ave. www.usboat.com.

STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Davidsonville United Methodist Church, 819 W. Central Ave. Rain or shine. 410-798-5511, www.dumc.net.

CARNIVAL, 5:30-11 p.m., Odenton Volunteer Fire Company, 1435 Annapolis Road. www.ovfc28.org.

TOMORROW'S EVENTS

FRESHFARM MARKET, 8 a.m.-noon, Donner parking lot, Compromise St. 202-382-8889. WIC and Senior FMNP checks accepted.

NAUTICAL FLEA MARKET, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium, 550 Taylor Ave. www.usboat.com.

FARMERS MARKET, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Westfield Annapolis Mall, parking lot next to Sears Automotive. 410-349-0317. WIC and Senior FMNP checks accepted.

WESTFEST, sidewalk vendors, face painting, moonbounce, music, noon-5 p.m., West Street closed from Church Circle to Calvert Street. www.annapolisbusinessassoc.com.

SHRIMP FEAST, 1-4 p.m., Loveless Building, 919 Walnut Ave., Holland Point. 410-287-6533 410-288-5555

RELIGION NEWS

Today

107th anniversary
 Silas First Baptist Church of Severna Park, 91 West Earlsigh Heights Road, will celebrate its 107th anniversary at 3:30 p.m. with the Garden State Choral Chapter of the National Convention of Gospel Choles and Choruses (The Dorsey Convention). The concert is free; a freewill offering will be accepted. For information, call 410-299-7232.

Tomorrow

Cathedral dedication
 Davidsonville United Methodist Church, 819 Central Ave., will hold a service at 8:30 a.m. commemorating the 35-year celebration of the Green Cathedral and its history. The Green Cathedral, located directly off Birdsville Road, is situated behind the church. Church members have refurbished the area after last summer's storm damage. For information, call 410-798-5511 or visit www.dumc.net.

Guest pastor
 First Presbyterian Church of Annapolis, 144 Conduit St., will again host Czech Republic pastor and Army chaplain Pavel Ruml at the 8 and 9:30 a.m. services. He will host a discussion at 10:30 a.m. Ruml was the first chaplain in the Czech army following the Velvet Revolution and serves as a chaplain at an army hospital in the Czech Republic.

Memorial service
 Union United Methodist Church, 274 West Bay Front Road in Lothian, will hold a memorial worship celebration at 11 a.m. with the Rev. George A. Stansbury, retired former pastor of Union UMC. For information, call 410-741-9377 or 301-423-1497.

Service dedication

EASTPORT EVENT JUNE 4



Courtesy

From left, Annapolitans Sally Malampy and Wendy Edstrom prepare for the June 4 yard sale at Eastport United Methodist Church, 926 Bay Ave. The sale runs from 8 a.m. to noon and will feature a wide assortment of household items, bedding, plants, and goods. Proceeds benefit church programs. Call 410-963-5490 for more information.

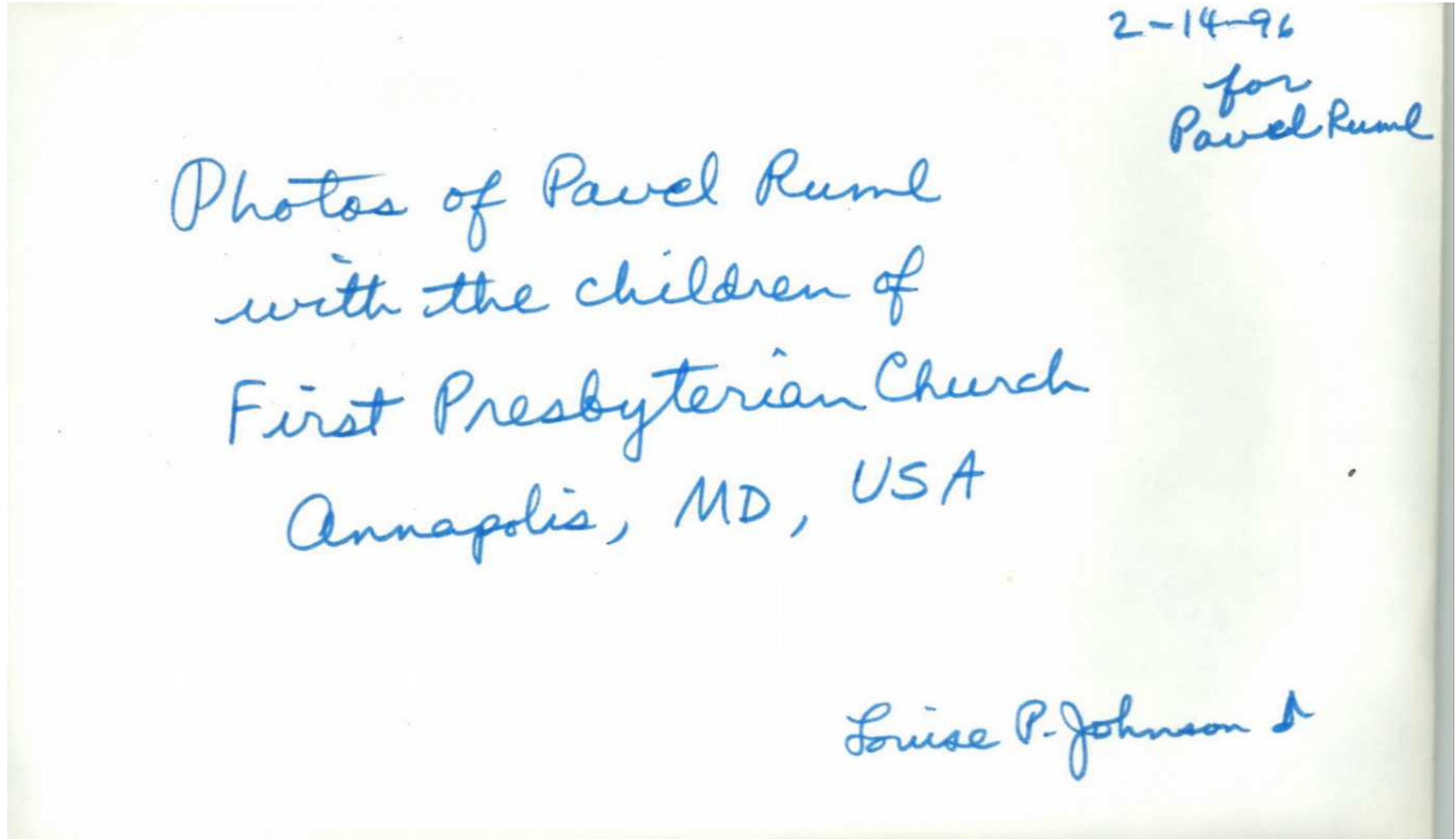
June 4

Church picnic
 First Baptist Church of East Chesapeake Ave., will host a church picnic and barbecue from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information, call David Lawrence at 410-288-2392.

ELCA welcome
 Joy Reigns Lutheran Church, 35 Mayo Road in Edgewater, will be welcomed into the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at the annual MD/DE Synod assembly in Ocean City. Joy Reigns Church members will process into the convention center, and be welcomed as the Joy Reigns Praise Team joins in the celebration and leads the assembly in three praise and worship songs.

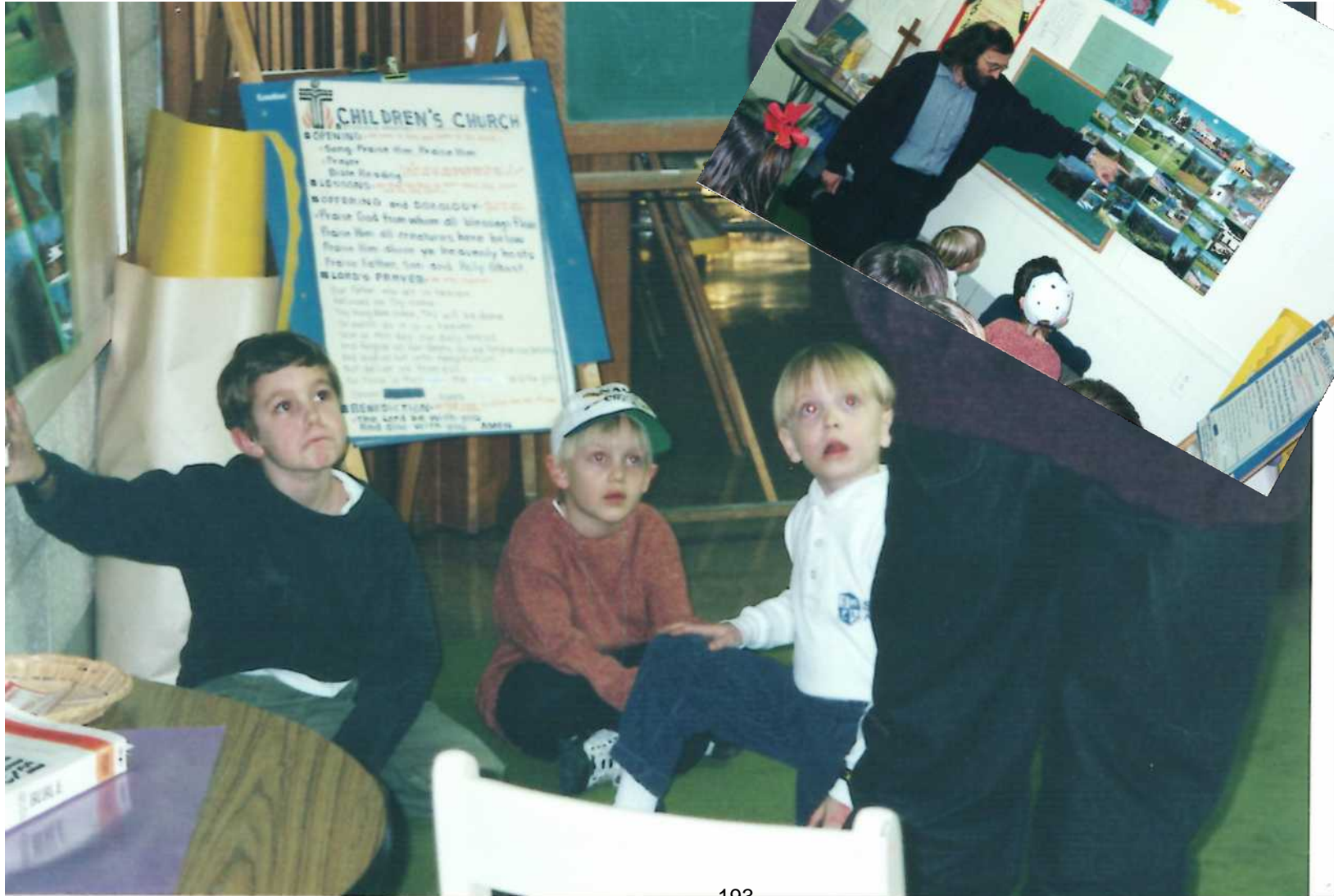
Send Religion News and photos to nity News at commnews@capitalgazette.com or call 443-482-3133. Submit online news at www.HometownAnnapolis.com. Two weeks' notice of events is suggested.

14.2.1996 ...with children



Pavel Ruml
Eyes – real cultural shock

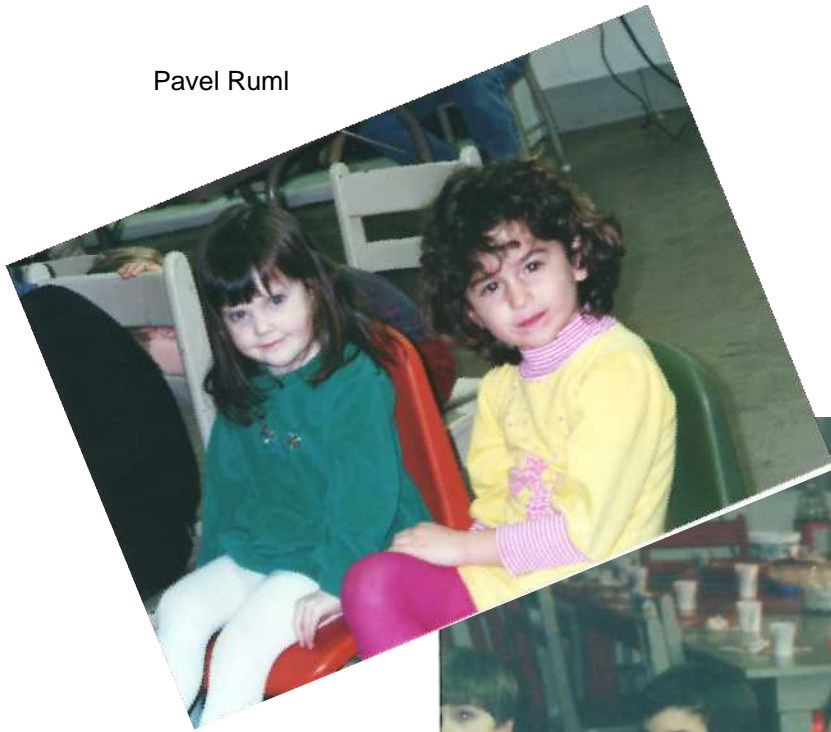
Journey in Faith



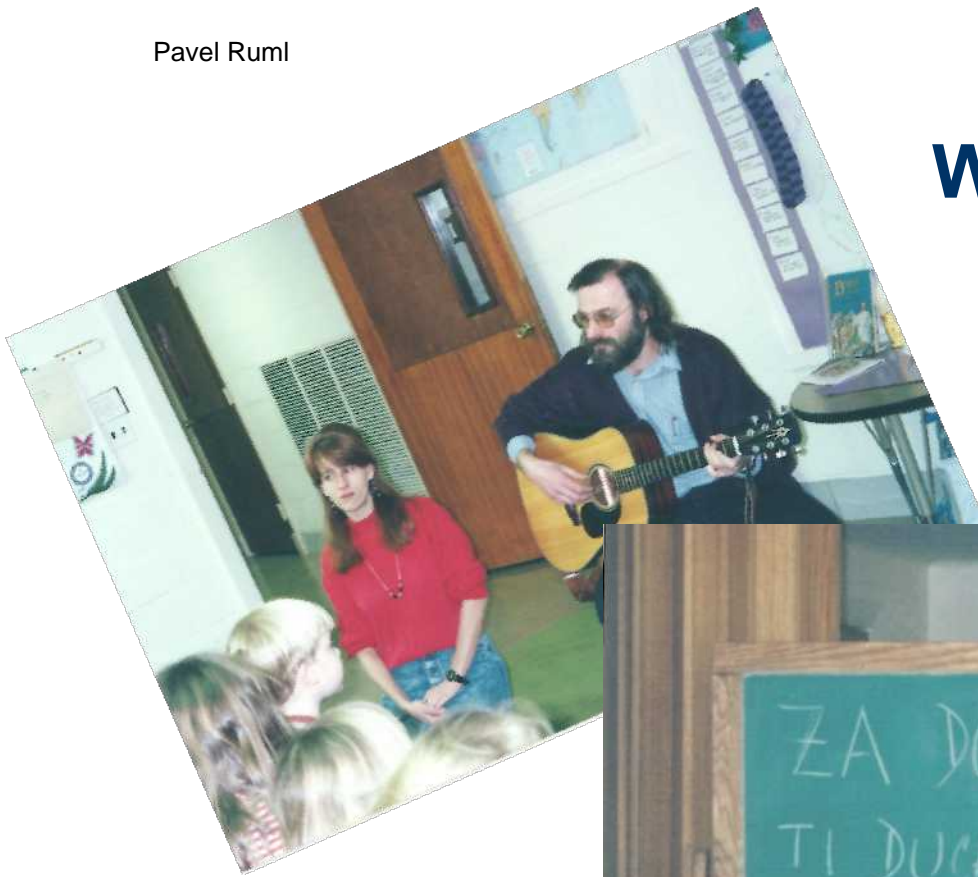
Here we are...



Still shocked...



We were singing a lot...



Let us rejoice and be glaaad in it...



We have today very special guest??? Jesus



Carrying baby – USA, Scotland...

Pavel Ruml

Journey in Faith



Co-pastor



secretary



Martha Johnson's mother



Father – pastor



Topic – american Indians

First Indian doctor of theol.

Richard Twiss, Sioux Lacota



Group meetings – not every time, pastor is needed



Three kings



Another group – Sunday morning bible study – Sunday used for more activities, because no time during the week



Pavel Ruml



Journey in Faith



Bass



Reserved

Bass

Number in Party 2

Room The Bridge *Time* 6:30pm

I wish... I could be like a bird in the skye



Supervision...

General - 6x 70 min me 1 part
(for 50 - 60 US)

support mechanisms

- slyng
- spiritual director - share & k. population
MC Room School (if use)
- counselling - provide (pastoral/prod - the
enlighten) (pajabayan)

what for Jesus
managing decline → for experience
(debt to bank → success
... etc) → long time to develop it & maturity,
→ maturity knowledge,
- provide confidence, support

proceed - independent abstracts -
- details

Jesus - manage direct experience & peace
for the people's sake

man & woman & experience experience - share the
"form use"

- Jesus born experience, (25-30% Jesus
put his life power! in death, 13 to 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100)

Hospital chapl. David Oravec, Bethesda

19
San Marcos 176
Chap Ann 734
Chap Rbin 105
Chap Jon 448

Pastoral Care Services

Patient: _____ Age: _____ Gender: _____ Religion: _____ Room: _____

Referral Date: ____/____/____ Time: AM PM Pt. Not Available; assessment to be made later

Presenting Situation:
 Code Death Referral Initial Visit Routine Visit Other: _____

Services Provided To:
 Family Patient Staff Visitor(s) Other: _____

ASSESSMENT - Date: ____/____/____ Time: AM PM

Observed Symptoms:
 Denial Anger Anxiety Apathy Confusion Crying
 Lack of Support Doing Well Fear Frustration Guilt Hopelessness
 Resentment Loneliness Meaninglessness Pain Relief
 Vulnerability Shame Shock Spiritual Sadness Tired
 Withdrawal Other: _____

Spiritual Issues:
 Abuse Adjustment to Change Adjustment to Illness Belonging Celebration
 Communication Change in Lifestyle Communion Controlling Critical Illness Death
 Family Relationships Forgiving Information Needed Loss Marital Relationship
 No Issues Observed Personal Space Purpose Relationship With God Self Concept
 Terminal Illness Transcending Unresolved Grief Valuing Other: _____

INTERVENTIONS

Level 1: Advance Directive/Education Affirmation Anointing With Oil Celebration
 Comfort Encouragement Explore Appropriate Resources Facilitate Story Telling
 Information Provided Ministry of Presence Obtain Church/Parish Data Prayer Sacrament
 Support Group Referral Support for Chronically Ill Other: _____

Level 2:
 Crisis Intervention Debriefing Stress Empathetic Listening Explore Images of God
 Explore Meaning in Change Explore Meaning in Loss Explore Meaning in Recovery Process
 Explore Perceptions Explore Relationship with God Explore Relationship with Others
 Explore Support from Belief System Explore Support from Spirituality Funeral/Memorial Service
 Grief Facilitation Other: _____

Level 3:
 Conflict Management Complex Issues with Advanced Directives Ethical Consultation
 Explore Faith/Health Relationship Explore Meaning in Illness Explore Meaning in Past Events
 Incident Debriefing Other: _____

OUTCOME(S)

Observed: Able to Deal with Ambiguity Able to Identify Key Issues Able to Identify Key Stressors
 Acceptance Acute Crisis Subsidied Appeared Calmer Belonging Closure Comfort
 Control Emotional Healing Forgiveness Gratitude Honesty Improved Sleep/Rest
 Involvement in Care Peace Progress with Grieving Purpose Renewing Meaning
 Resolved Issues Restoring Harmony Restoring Hope Restoring Peace Restoring Faith
 Support System in Place Transcend Trust Value Wonder Other: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Date: ____/____/____

Date: ____/____/____


8901 Wisconsin Avenue
Bethesda, Maryland 20889-5600
E-mail: David.Oravec@nvmc.navy.mil
Commander, Dave Oravec, U.S. Navy
Casualty Affairs Chaplain
NVMC Pastoral Care Services
Office: (301) 295-0412
Cell: (301) 633-2952
Fax: (301) 295-2194



Hospital – support for my future chaplaincy



Hospital chaplaincy

Dear Pavel,
We so enjoyed your visit to Saint Agnes Hospital. It was my pleasure to share how we care for patients and our staff. My duty is similar to your work, provide spiritual and emotional support to those that are suffering while being a calm leader on the outside even though we feel turmoil on the inside.

As a partner in healthcare I would like to offer my contact information to your nurse colleague by your office.
Home email - JGallagher5@msn.com
Work email - Carol.Gallagher@stagnes.org.
Perhaps as nurse leaders we can share some common knowledge and discuss what will be our legacy to the profession of nursing.
Take Care
Carol Gallagher

NAVY (military chaplaincy)



veterans – military chaplaincy



handicaped



School – do not speak about God !!! ... my cultural shock



School – do not speak about God



Pavel Ruml



Journey in Faith





Synodal council thanks for my report from staying in Annapolis and informs about coming group from PC USA 1996

Kancelář synodní rady Českobratrské církve evangelické, Jügnmannova 9,
111 21 Praha 1, pošt.příhr. 466

V Praze 29. dubna 1996
Č.J.926/96-II-R

Pan
Pavel Ruml
evang.farář
Tyršova 353
561 51 Letohrad

Věc: Návštěva skupiny s pí McGinnis z USA 15.-27.6.1996

Milý bratře,

děkujeme za Tvůj dopis z 25.3.1996 a zprávu o Tvém pobytu v USA. Doufáme, že při příští schůzi PO ekumenického, která je plánována na 21. 5. 1996 budeš moci něco o tom preferovat.

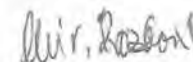
Pokud jde o návštěvu skupiny Američanů pod vedením pí McGinnis, rád bych Tě informoval, že celou věc má na starosti b.Jan Sláma, který se také z dřívější návštěvy této skupiny s pí McGinnis zná.

Nevím ovšem, jak to bude s nějakým návštěvním plánem po sborech. Já už jej asi nepřipravím, protože se chystám v květnu na operaci srdce. Ale zmiňuješ-li ochotu věnovat se při té příležitosti svému hostiteli, což aby ses pokusil navrhnout celý plán? Je to ostatně v Tvém domácím seniorátu, protože pobyt je plánován do Bělče n.Orl.

Kdybys potřeboval nějakou pomoc, napiš nám, ale v tuto chvíli by "silná decentralizace" byla tím nejlepším řešením. Případně bys mohl dělat tlumočnicka pro návrhy b.Slámy. Rozhodně byste se měli spolu spojit a společně se na návštěvu připravit.

Děkuji Ti ještě jednou a srdečně zdravím.

Tvůj



Preparation for flight





8 pages of lists of „angels“

200/90 ??? Annap/Let???

Mary Terry & Annapolis

v. 2000 1999

1. brigáda ra kostele, esa 18 lidi
 & telo 2 k Annapolis - Terry + Betty
 Martin

v. 2001

2. brigáda ra kostele - 18 lidi
 & Annapolis

Betty + John Mc. Ginnis
 Connie + Mark Moran
 Craig Moran Martin
 Erica Schaub
 Gene Hayes
 Charles Hargrave
 4 Gallahers
 3 Newmans
 Bill Hallaway Hamant
 Ben Hancock Olerion Kostela
 Lisa Schilder Gene + CC Hayes

v. 2003

1. anglic Lina - 5 lidi
 Gene Hayes, Ben Hallaway,
 Connie + Mark Moran, Katie Barbour

Letohrad (Neratov 1999)



Pastor in action (pastoral care☺)... carry each other...





Pavel Ruml

200??

Journey in Faith



1998





1998 stone



Carry each other



Lighthouse Family - Free.webm

- I wish I knew how it would feel to be free
I wish I could break all the chains holding me.
I wish I could say all the things that I should
say. Say 'em loud say 'em clear
For the whole wide world to hear

I wish I could share all the love that's in my
heart . Remove all the bars that keep us apart
nd I wish you could know how feels to be me
Then you'd see and agree that every man
should be free

I wish I could be like a bird in the sky
How sweet it would be if I found I could fly
Well I'd soar to the sun and look down at the
sea
And I'd sing cos I know how it feels to be free

I wish I knew how it would feel to be free
I wish I could break all the chains holding me
And I wish I could say all the things that I
wanna say
Say 'em loud say 'em clear
For the whole wide world to hear...

- One love one blood
One life you've got to do what you
should
One life with each other
Sisters, brothers

One love but we're not the same
We got to carry each other Carry each
other
One One One One One...

- I wish I knew how it would feel to be
free, I wish I could break all the chains
holding me
And I wish I could say all the things
that I wanna say
Say 'em loud say 'em clear
For the whole wide world to hear...
One love one blood
One life you've got to do what you
should
One life with each other
Sisters, brothers

One love but we're not the same
We got to carry each other Carry each other
One One One One One...

I wish I knew how it would feel to be
free
I wish I knew how it would feel to be
free

Starting... in Letohrad 200?(1)



Signing of Agreement









200???



2002

**1.000.000,-
1st PC
Annapolis**

**1.000.000,-
Isolit Bravo
5.000.000,-
ECCB**

**... carry each
other**



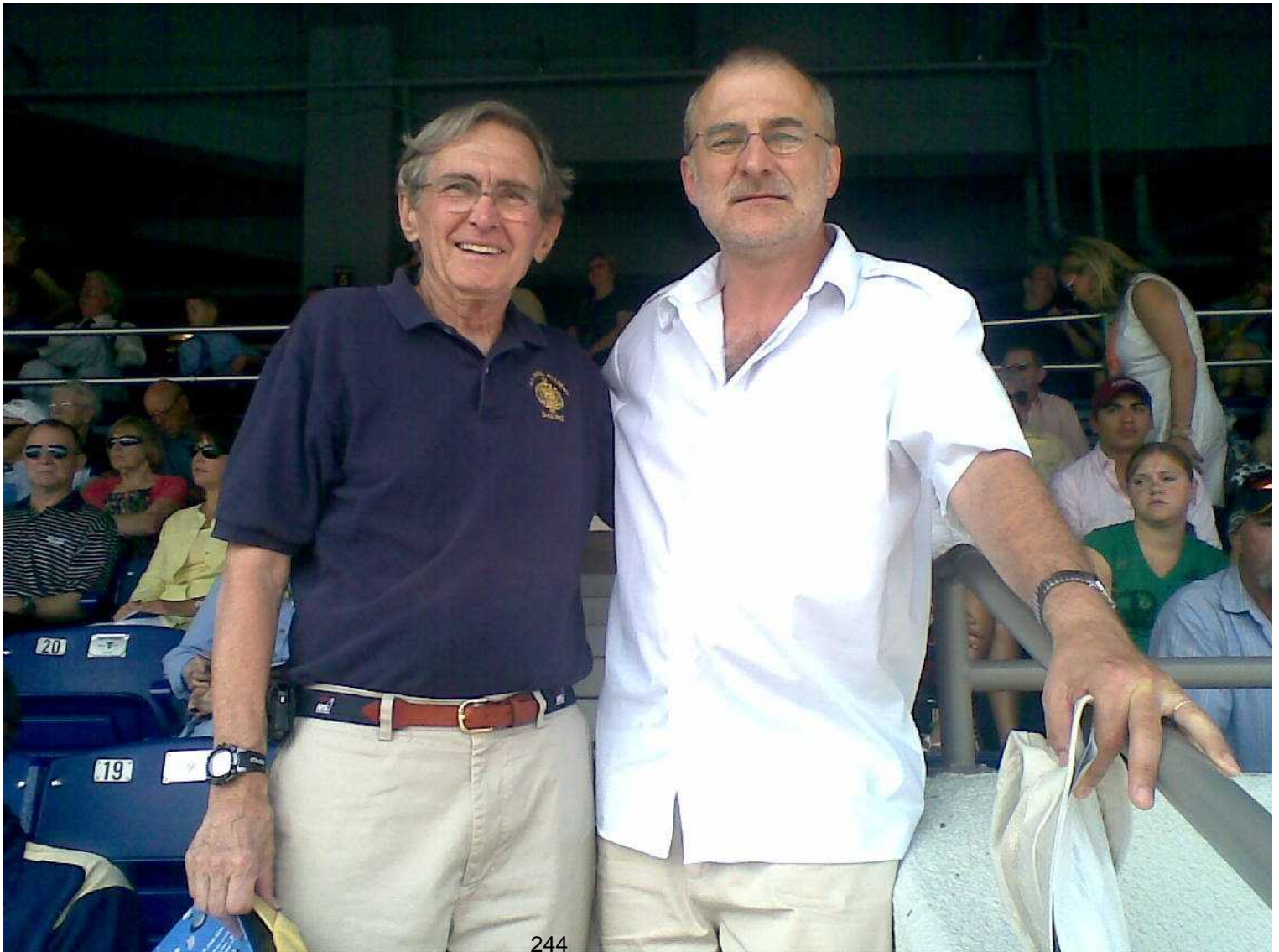
Gift for our children



For ever and ever...sisters, brothers... carry each other...



Two...veterans





For ever and ever...sisters, brothers... carry each other...



Very special guests...

Remember to welcome strangers in your homes.

There were some who did that and welcomed angels without knowing it.

Hebrew 13

Pavel Ruml 18.4.2016

Stewardship

What we do after we say what we believe.

Part One

Family Stories

Mark 8:1-21

Acts 4:32-35

Exodus 16

Genesis 2:15

One more: Jesus and the Gatekeeper

What did you do in times of exile and wilderness wandering? How did God help you find a way out of no way?

Other texts: Matthew 25:1-13; Luke 16:1-8; 1 Corinthians 16; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Philippians 4:1-20; Matthew 6:19-21, 24; Matthew 14:13-21; Matthew 25:31-46

Part Two

Thinking Theologically about Stewardship

The Myth of Scarcity

The God of Abundance

What about the Prosperity Gospel?

Two quotes from the Book of Order:

Christian stewardship is a response to and a reflection of *“God’s self-giving in Jesus Christ and Christ’s call to minister to and share with others in this world” (W-5.5004).*

“Those who follow the discipline of Christian stewardship will find themselves called to lives of simplicity, generosity, honesty, hospitality, compassion, receptivity, and concern for the earth and God’s creatures” (W-5.5005).

Part Three

Stewardship Practices in the PCUSA

Money is Hard to Talk About

We Should Not Try to Be More Spiritual Than God

Material Things Can Bring Glory to God and Life to Our Neighbors

The Word Became Flesh

Presbyterian Mission Agency: www.presbyterianfoundation.org

Local Examples

Covenant Presbyterian Church in Athens, GA

Annual Stewardship Pledge Drive

Telling Our Story

Weekly Offerings

Special Offerings

Capital Campaigns

Care of the Earth, One Another, and Ourselves

Stewardship is what we do after we say what we believe.



janouchova.k@gmail.com

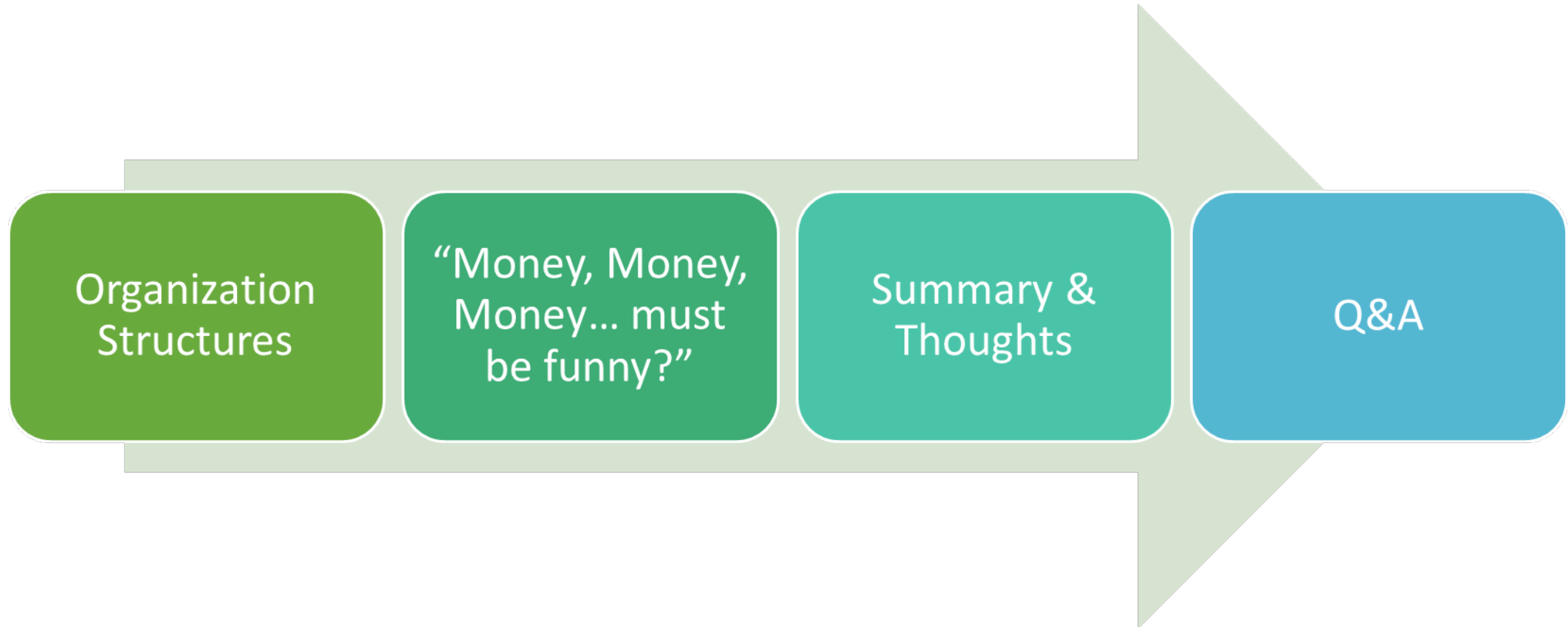


Analysis of Church Financing – International Comparison

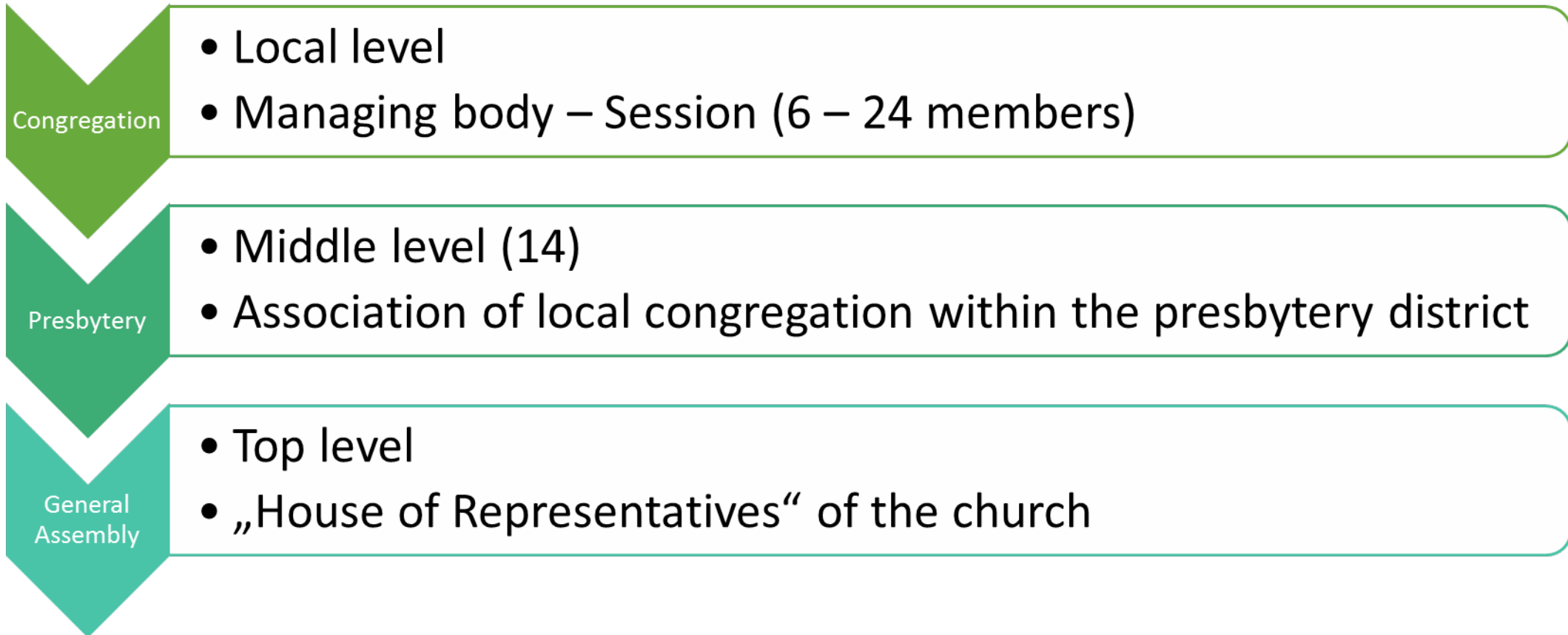
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH VS EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF CZECH BRETHREN

*Kateřina Srbová
Ondřej Srb*

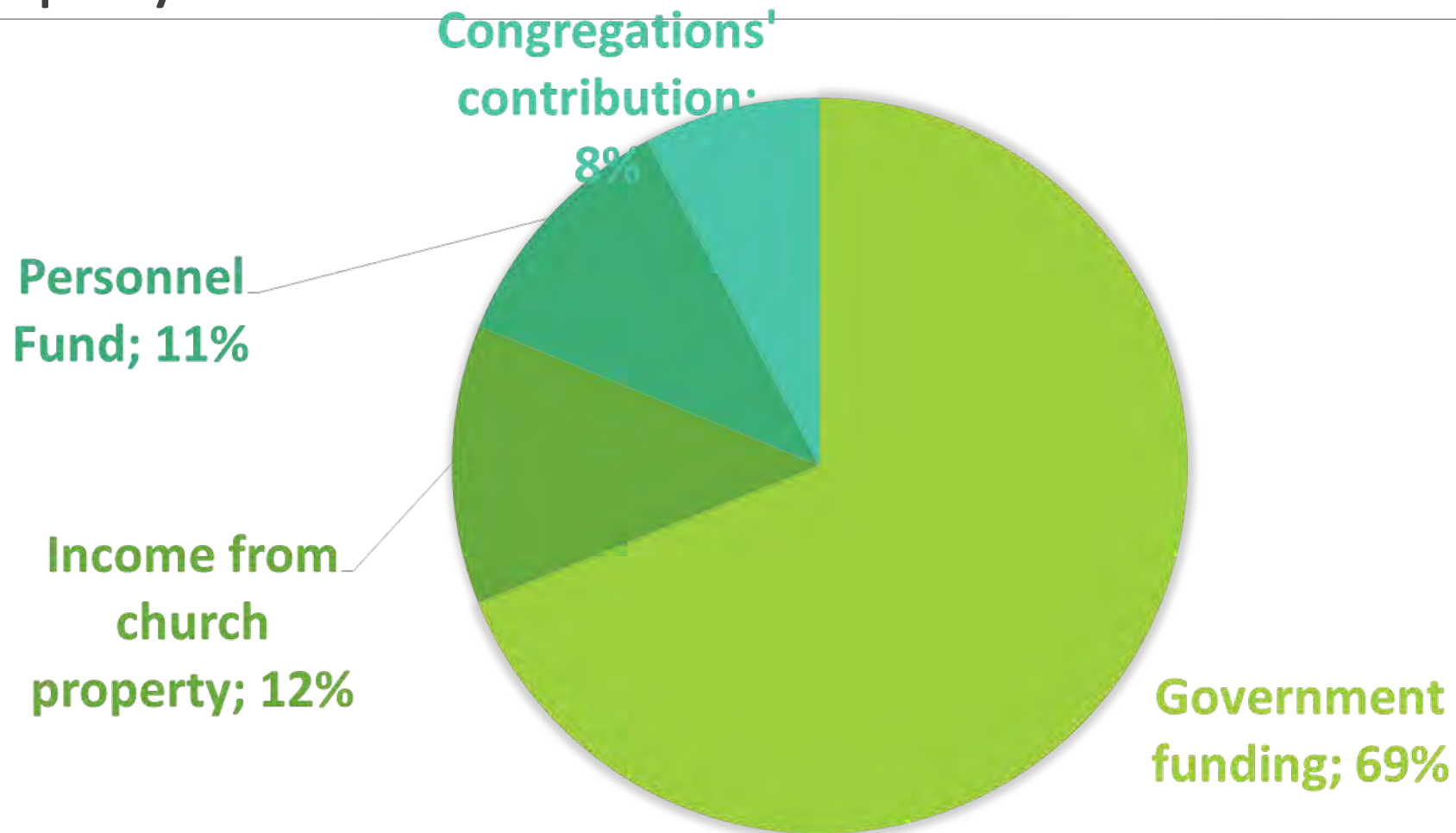
Content



Who decides what? - ECCCB



Who pays the bill? -ECCCB



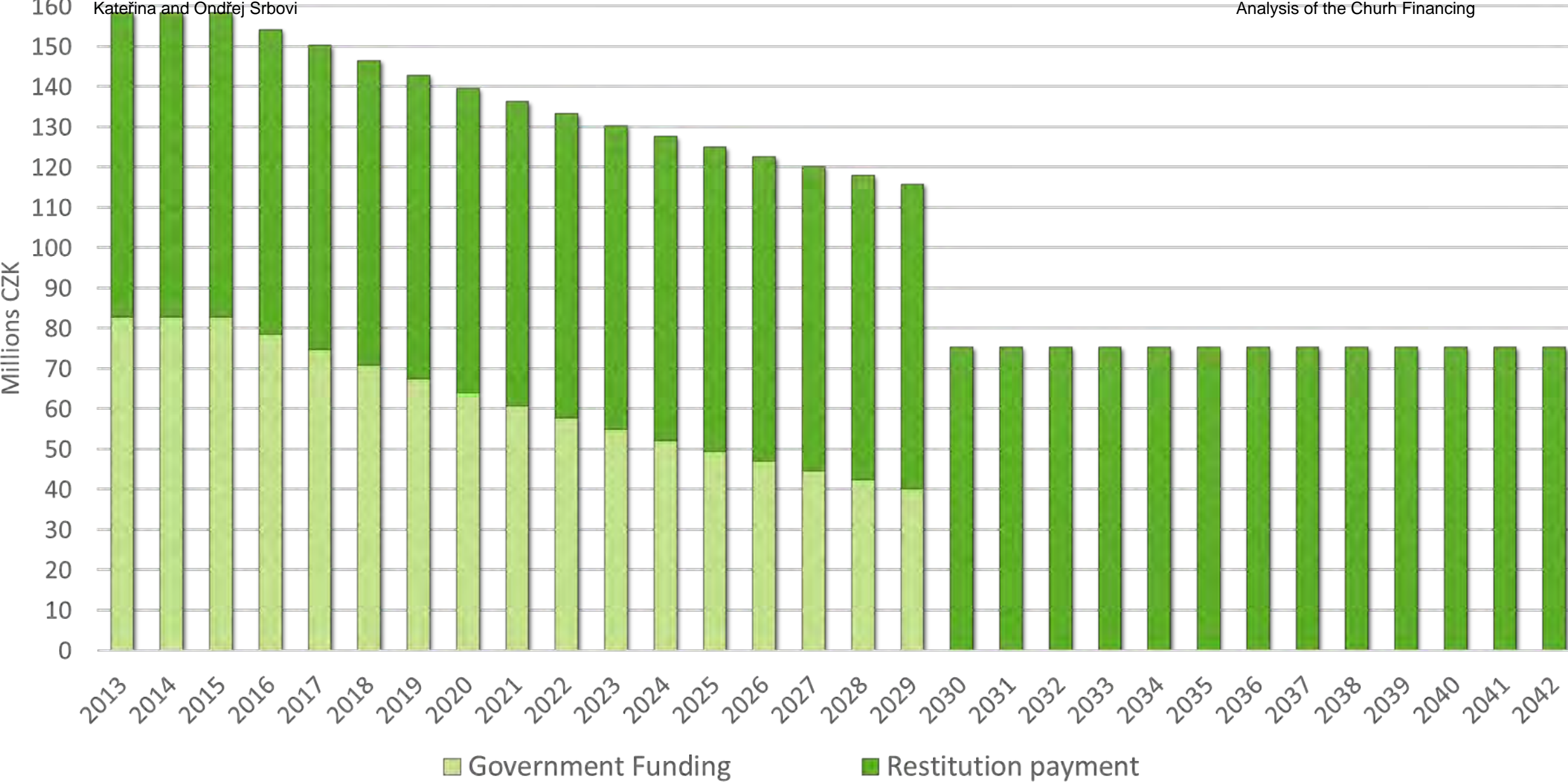
Government Funding

After WWII the government has nationalized church property while promising pastor salaries will be financed from its revenue. This situation lasted till 2012

Since 2013 the church and the government commenced a 17-year long journey ending with separation of church and state

ECCB will receive 2,25 billions CZK (91,5 millions USD). This lump sum will be paid in even payments in next 30 years

Meanwhile the government funding will decrease by 5%/year till 2029 when it fully stops



Kateřina and Ondřej Srbovi

Personnel Fund

Congregations pay certain set amount by General Assembly (the amount is counted according to number of pastors and pastoral workers)

Before the separation personnel fund was used to add a little bit of extra income to the pastors, now it must become the major source for all of their salaries (81,5% of the restitution payments goes into the fund)

Payment for one pastor position will be increasing by roughly 8%/year till 2025 when it should cover roughly 50% of their salary (payments after 2025 have not been decided yet)

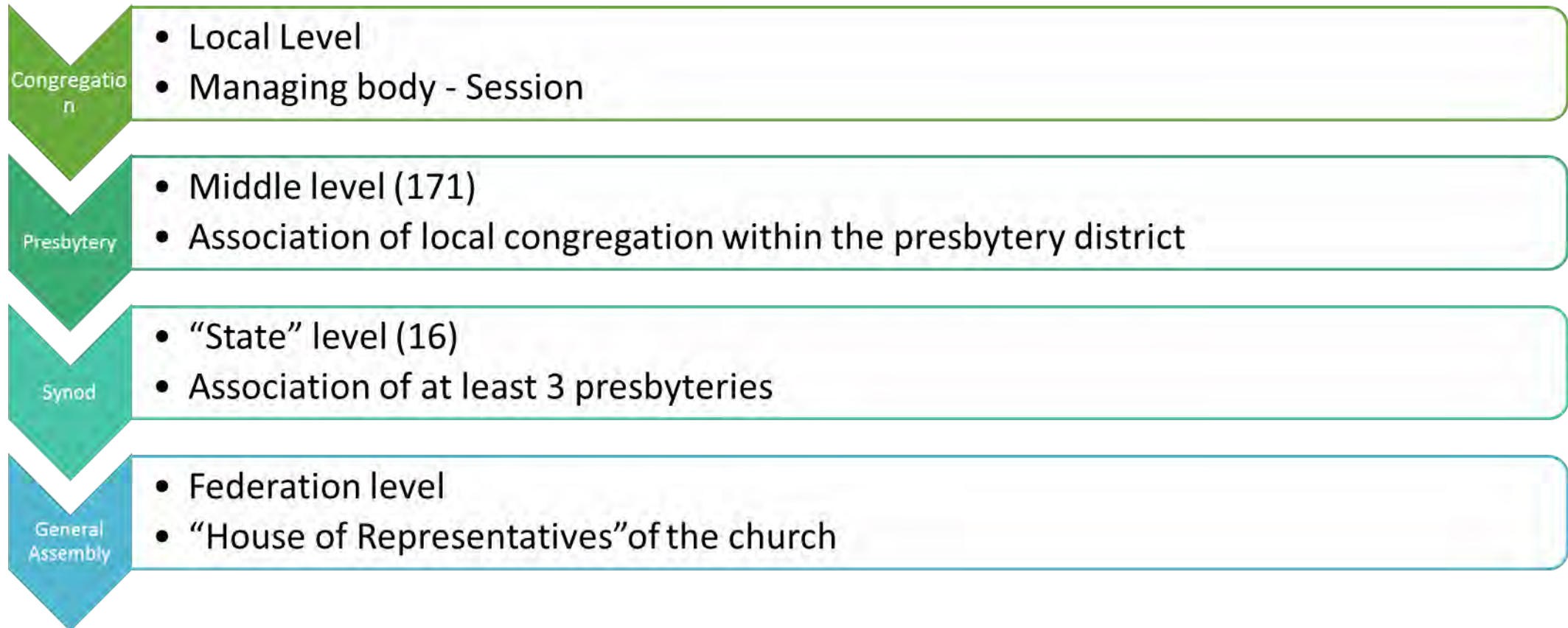
Property Income & Congregations' contributions

General Assembly owns 6 retreat centers and several buildings/apartments mostly in Prague which generates income of roughly 12 million CZK/year (487,000 USD)

General Assembly has not received any property from the government as part of the restitution (the property was returned to the congregations)

General assembly decides the full amount of contribution from congregations however presbyteries will define how much will each congregation pay (mostly it's a mix of number of members and financial strength of the congregation)

Who decides what? – PC

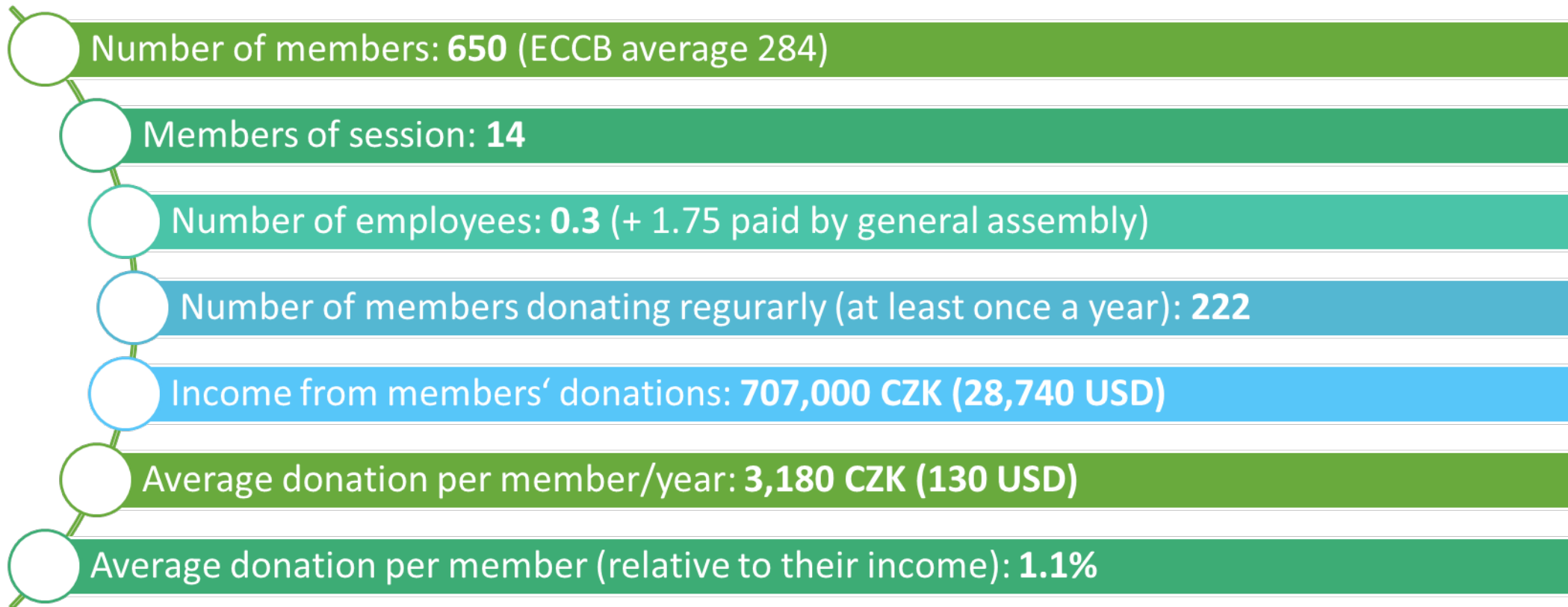


Who pays the bill?

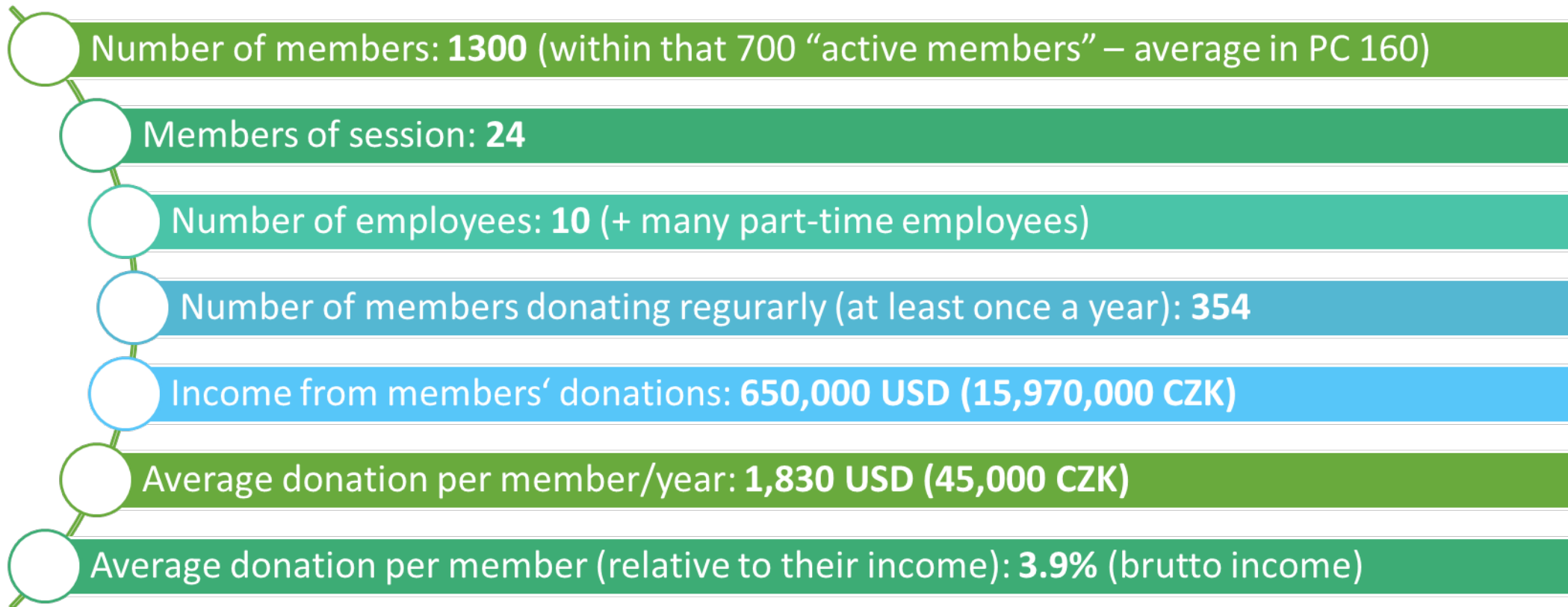
“Per Capita” – each member of the church pays a lump sum of 10-30 USD to cover the expenses of their Presbytery, Synod, and the General Assembly (Congregation is responsible for the payments, not each individual)

Funds which are created by the gifts of donors over last 200 years

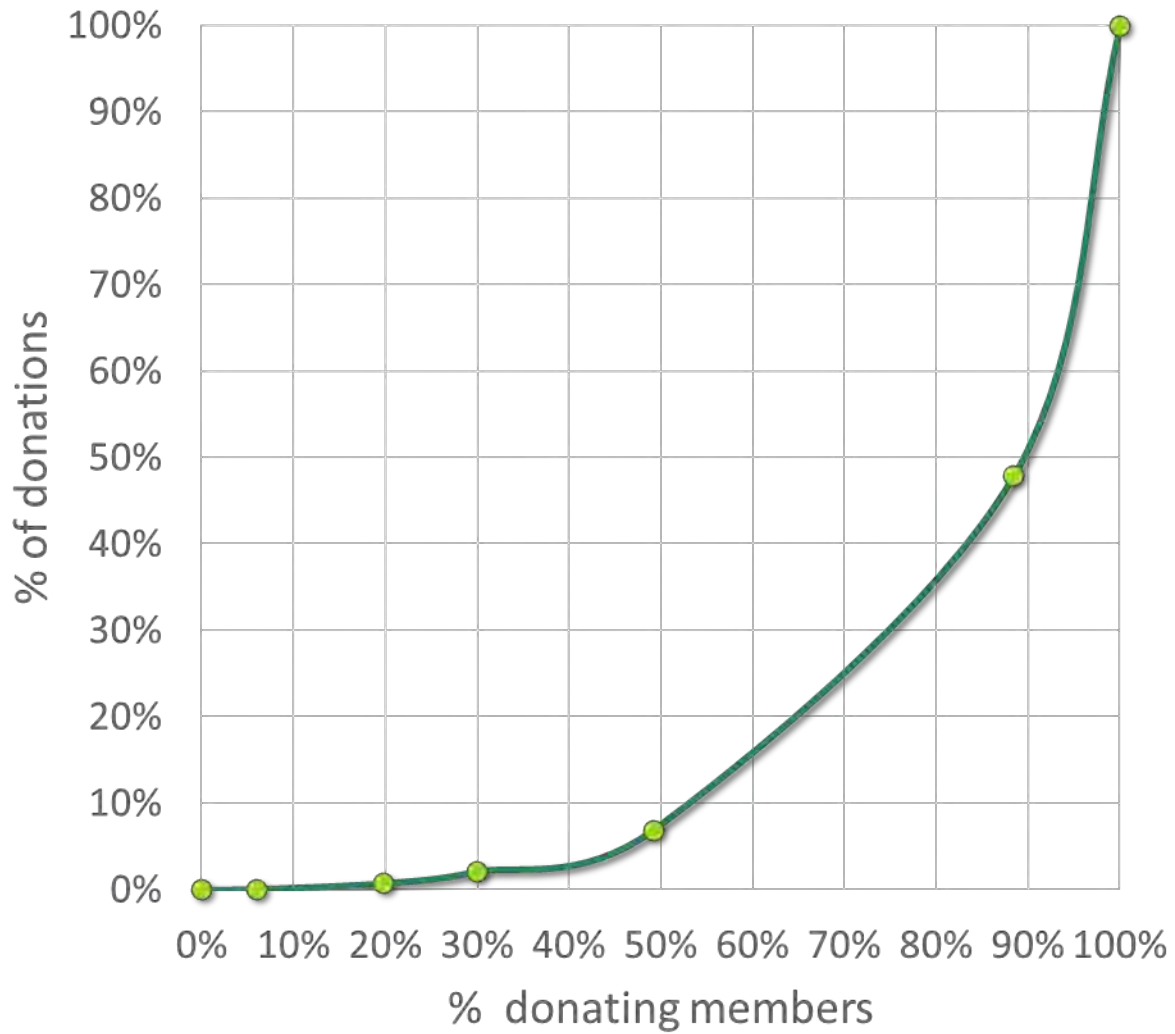
A random congregation - ECCCB



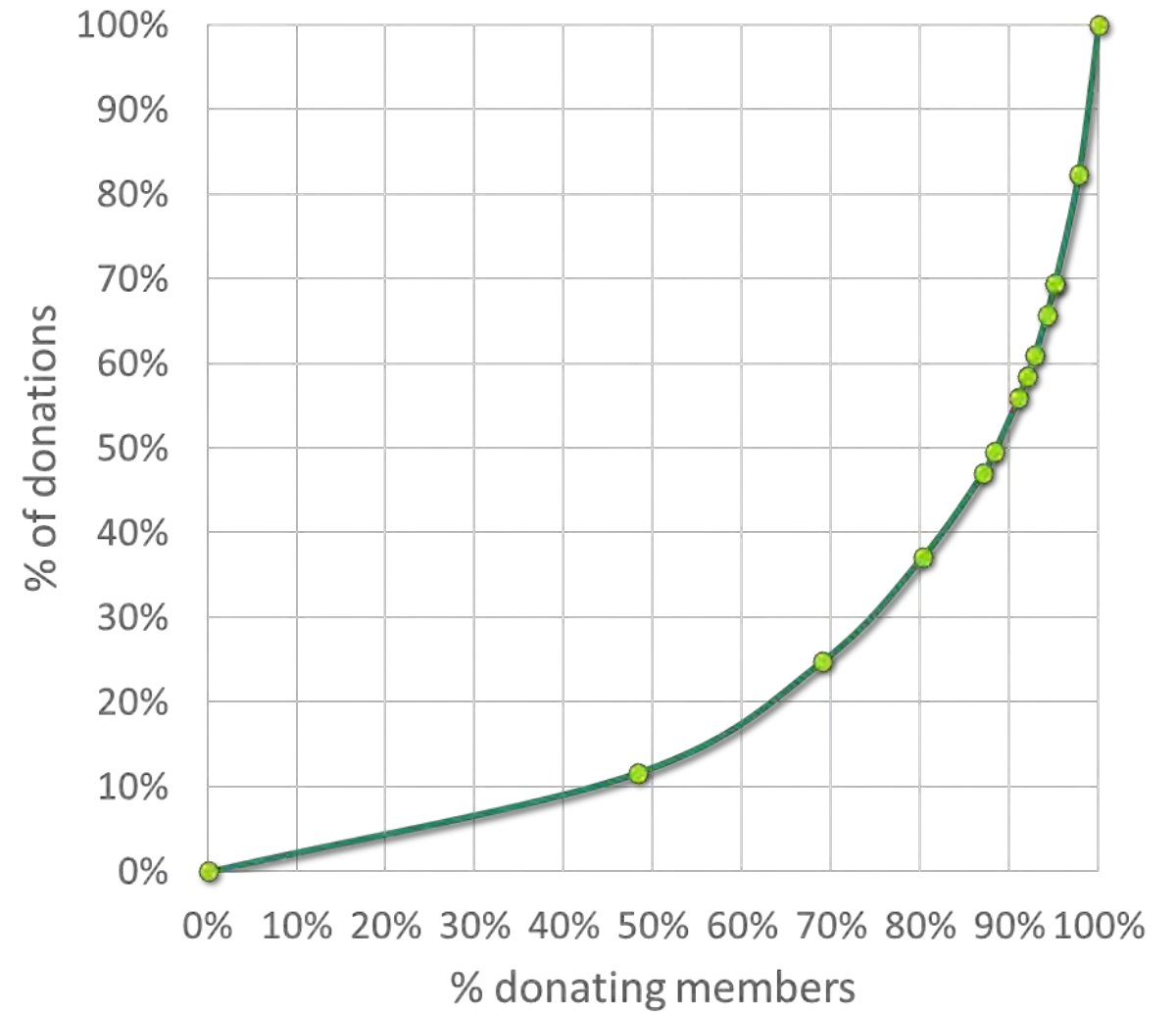
A random congregation - PC



Lorenz curve - PC

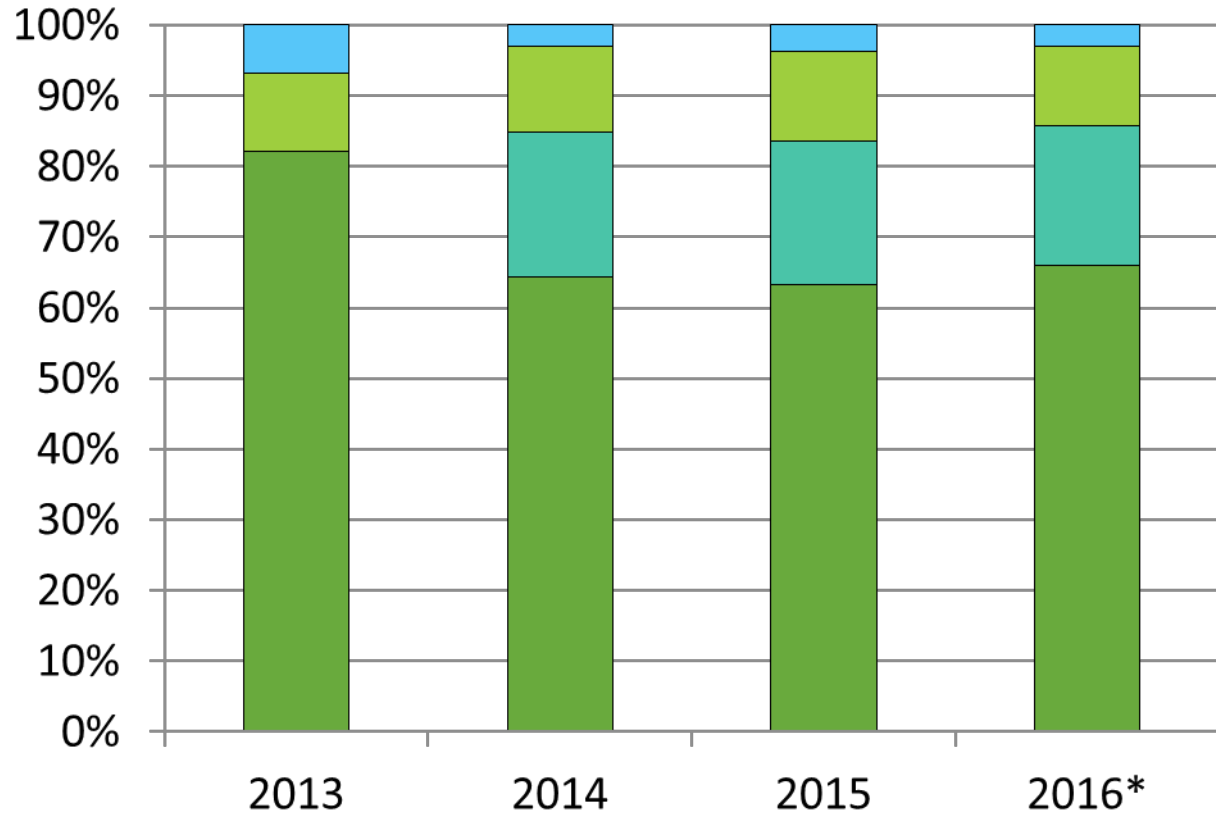


Lorenz curve - ECCB



Congregation Incomes - PC

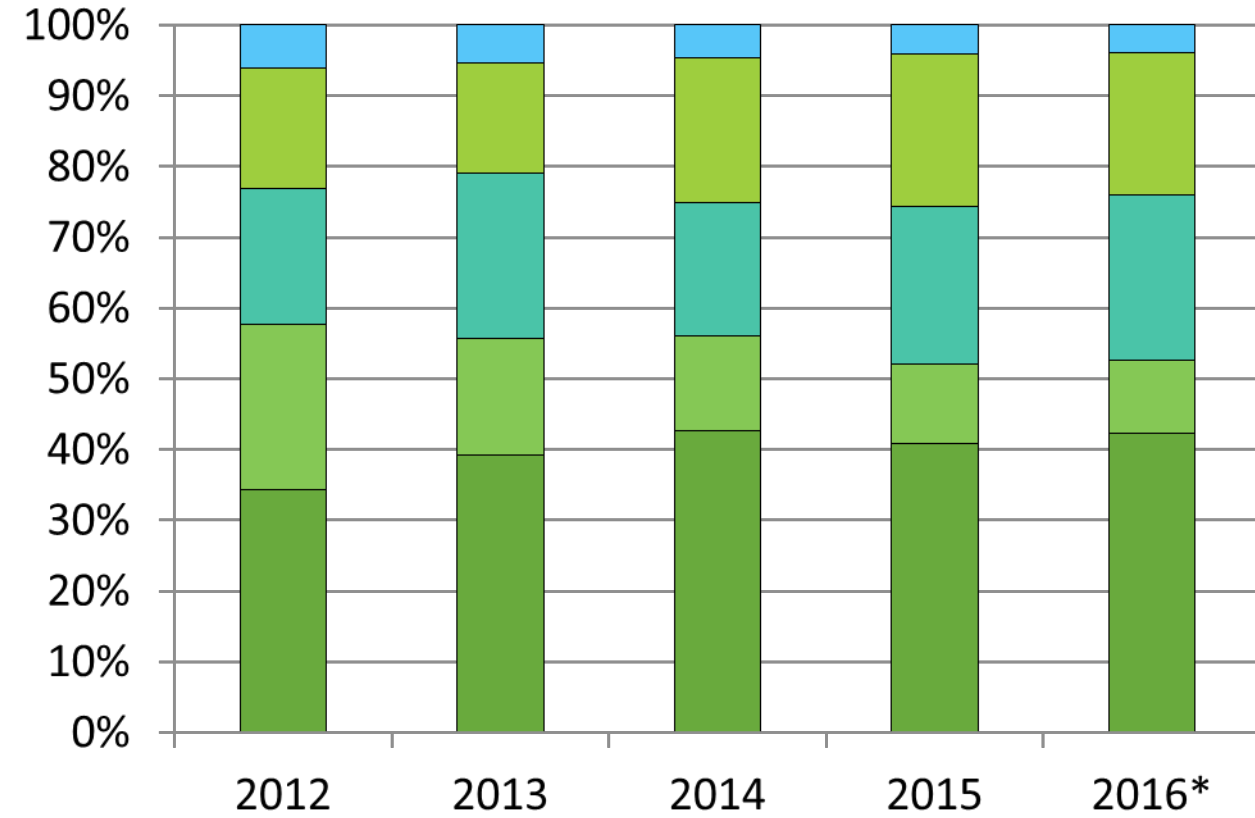
Kateřina and Ondřej Erbov



- Other incomes
- Endowment fund revenues
- Offerings
- Pledges

Congregation Incomes - ECCB

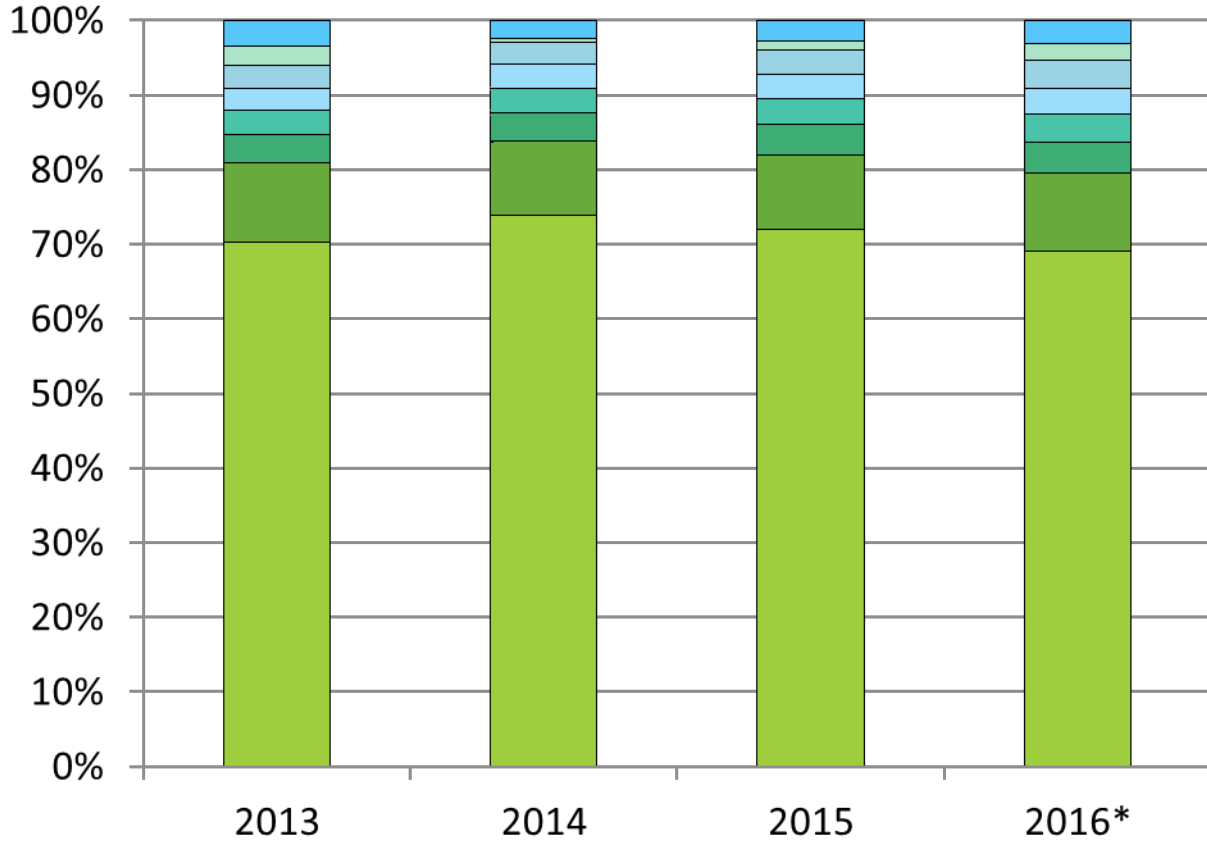
Analysis of the Churn Financing



- Other incomes
- Property income
- Offerings
- Donations to a construction fund
- Donations

Congregation Expensis - PC

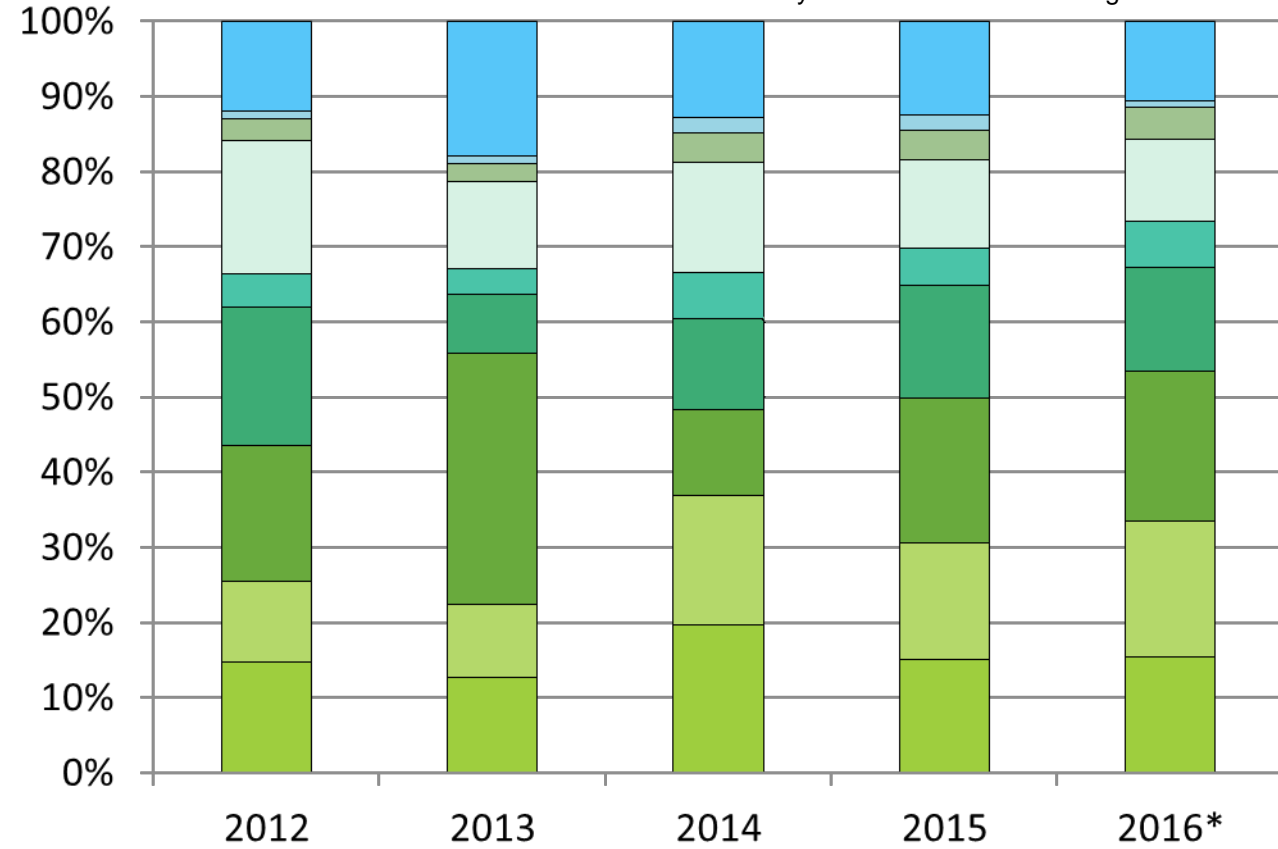
Kateřina and Ondřej Srbovi



- Personnel
- Administration
- Insurance
- Mission
- Property
- Per Capita
- Music and Education
- Other expenses

Congregation Expensis - ECCB

Analysis of the Churn Financing



- Personnel
- Property
- Congregation contribution
- Travel expenses
- Other Expenses
- Payment to the Personnel fund
- Administration
- Power consumption
- Donations to charity

What to think of all of this?

You can almost “see” the difference of 200 years of self-financing vs 70 years of government funding – the structure of and support from General Assembly of PC “dropped our jaws”.

If doing nothing, ECCB has still 30 years of very comfortable living ahead of it (due to generous restitutions from the government). We are not exactly sure whether this is a good thing or bad thing regarding what has happened or rather not happened in last 3 years.

There is no easy way out of this. The deficit in experience cannot be overcome during short period of time. Mistakes will be made and we have to learn to live with them and grow wiser because of them.

The congregation will not last unless members realize that it has to be their money to keep the church going, general assembly needs to realize there will not be much to do if there are no congregations left.

It is probably not as bad, after all we do not have much experience ourselves, but the numbers are pretty clear and this is the message they are telling us.

What would we advice to do?

Talk to the members about donations and when you are done talk to them about it again. Rinse and repeat.

Congregations and general assembly need to cooperate especially focusing on the economics issue, GA has a lot of money coming in near future some of which the congregation could use and in the far future GA will need support from the congregations.

Be ready to lose some money in bad investments so that good investments can occur.

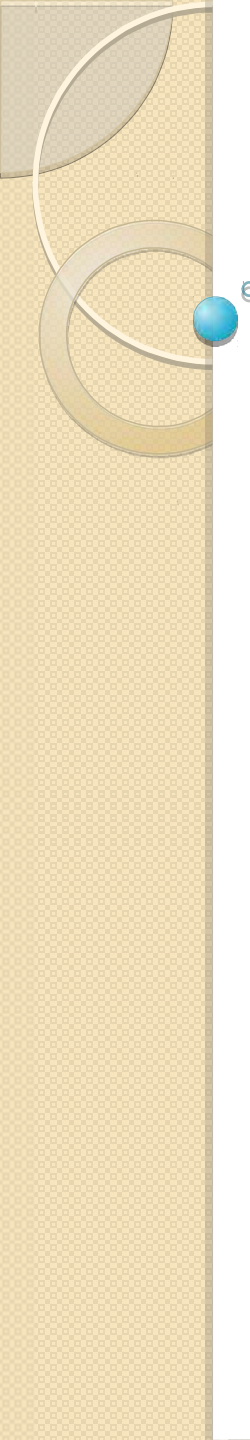
Ask experienced brothers and sisters around the world for help. PC, help please 😊

Pray for miracles and right after you are done praying start working on one.

Thank you for your attention 😊

**Special thanks to the people providing
the data and answering all the emails.**

Q&A time...



Development of Partnership between Annapolis and Letohrad Parishes

Aleš Pomikálek

ales.pomikalek@gmail.com

Prague - April 21, 2016

The First Visit –1999

19 people from Annapolis and the U.S.



The Second Group - 2001

18 people from Annapolis



New Church under Construction



New Church under Construction



Youth Mission Trip - 2005



Youth Mission Trip - 2005



Youth Mission Trip - 2005



Youth Mission Trip - 2005



English Lessons for Adults

- Since 2003
- 12 courses



English Lessons for Adults



English Lessons for Adults



English Lessons for Adults



A Great Trip to Annapolis 2007



A Great Trip to Annapolis 2007



Czech Youths Holidays in Annapolis

- Every year since 2002



English Camps for Children

- Since 2011



English Camps for Children

- Worship



English Camps for Children

- Music



English Camps for Children

- Games



English Camps for Children

- Arts



English Camps for Children

- English Lesson



English Camps for Children

- Show for Parents



Our Tips for Partnership

- Czech – American Committee
 - Share responsibility to members of church
 - One channel for official communication

Our Tips for Partnership

Visits in Czech Rep. have similar structure:

- 2 – 3 days visiting Prague
- SAT / SUN coming to Letohrad
- MON – FRI – lessons
- Friday night – party
- Saturday – trip
- Sunday – church, common lunch, leaving

Our Tips for Partnership

- Party



Our Tips for Partnership

- Party



Statistics

- Between 1999 – 2016 there were:
 - 202 people from Annapolis parish in Letohrad – usually tutors and workers on church building
 - 48 people from Letohrad in Annapolis – usually longer visitors

A Partnership of Faith and Friendship

**Southminster Presbyterian Church,
Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania, USA
&
Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren,
Kateřinice and Ratiboř, CZ**

Kateřinice

Kateřinice, Ratiboř and Southminster



Southminster Ringer Tours

The Southminster Ringers have been touring since 1969. During those years they have focused on countries and areas where handbells are relatively unknown. While sharing our music with the communities, we have always tried to identify congregations that would have a need, an interest and resources to build a musical program to encourage and engage youth in the church.

Identify
Potential New
Groups

New Ringer
Recruitment

Help Purchase
Bells/Gifts

Once we have found a person with a similar passion, the Southminster Ringers try to support the program with handbells, music and return visits to help the program grow and flourish.

Southminster Ringers Tour

Katefinice, Ratibof and Southminster





Following all of our concerts, the audience is invited to come and meet the ringers and ring the bells. This is one way that we can gauge the community interest.

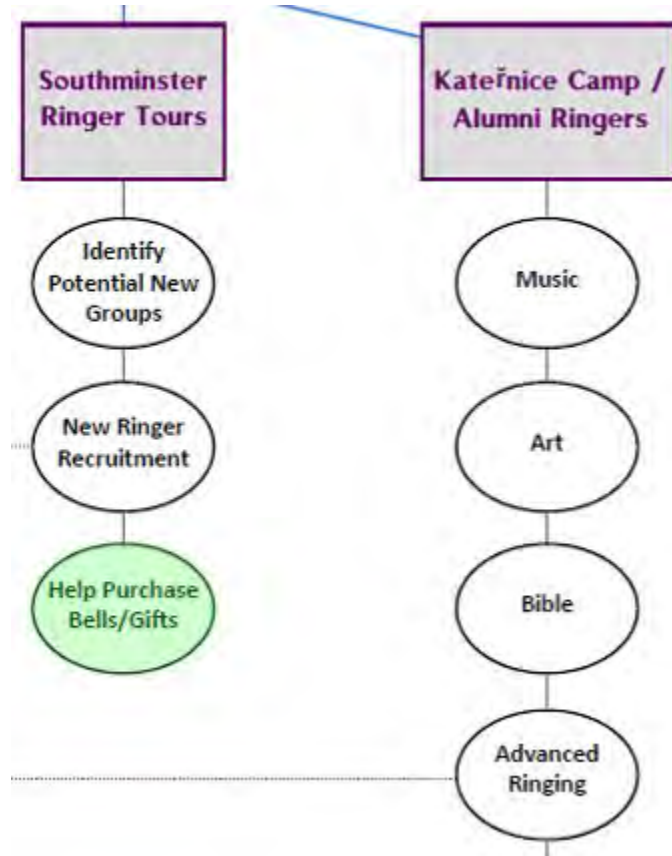


Kateřinice, Ratiboř and Southminster

When we return to our “ringing offspring” we ring together to learn new music and to share our joy of ringing in the community. Here, the ringers of Kateřinice and Southminster ring for the elderly in Ostrava.



Two of the finest success stories of our “ringing offspring” are found in Kateřnice (Czech) and in Zelow (Poland). Some of our Southminster Ringer Alumni spend a week of their summer vacation returning to these communities to work with the upcoming ringers, teaching handbells, English and incorporating Bible stories into musical dramas. The alumni AND the local ringers look forward to this time every year!



Both Kateřnice and Zelow now have three groups of ringers. Their oldest ringers frequently perform in the local community and take tours to other countries spreading the Gospel through their music.

Camp Week

Kateřnice, Ratiboř and Southminster

The friendships that have been built through the six years of camp in Kateřnice are strong! Thanks to Facebook and other social media, the children communicate regularly and share their highs and lows throughout the year.







Bells

Kateřnice, Ratiboř and Southminster



Singing, Art and Drama



307



Kateřinice, Ratiboř and Southminster



English at Camp

The importance of English fluency cannot be overstated. More doors are open to those with language skills.



Kateřinice, Ratiboř and Southminster



Sharing our Music

Kateřinice, Ratiboř and Southminster



BELLS

ENGLISH

Kateřnice, Ratiboř and Southminster

**Southminster
Ringer Tours**

**Kateřnice Camp /
Alumni Ringers**

Teachers

Identify
Potential New
Groups

Music

Recruitment
• Month
• Semester
• Year
• Summer

New Ringer
Recruitment

Art

Support
Materials

Help Purchase
Bells/Gifts

Bible

ESL
Training

Advanced
Ringing

Fun with English

Kateřnice, Ratibor and Southminster





Kateřinice, Ratiboř and Southminster
After establishing our relationship within the community, we were asked to send English teachers for the children in the Kateřinice elementary school. So far we have sent 4 different teachers to work with the children. Some stayed for a few weeks and one stayed for an entire school year.

In addition to the elementary students, there were adult classes divided by fluency. The church reaches out to the entire community in this way, making the church a central and vital part of the community.



Adults Share in the Partnership

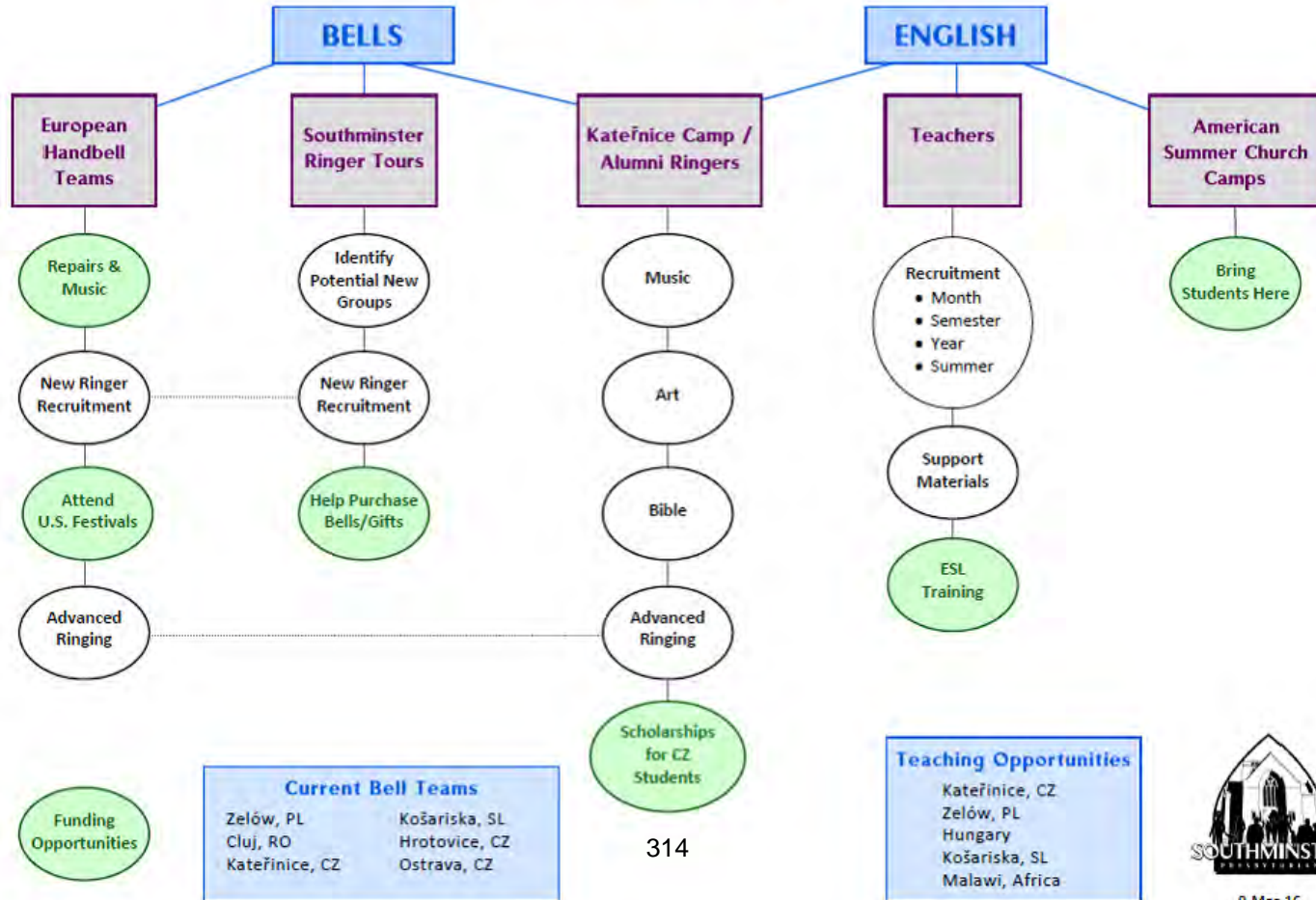
After several successful years of sending youth and alumni to Kateřinice we took a trip with our adults (parents) who now have a broader understanding of this vital mission of Southminster.

Kateřinice, Ratiboř and Southminster

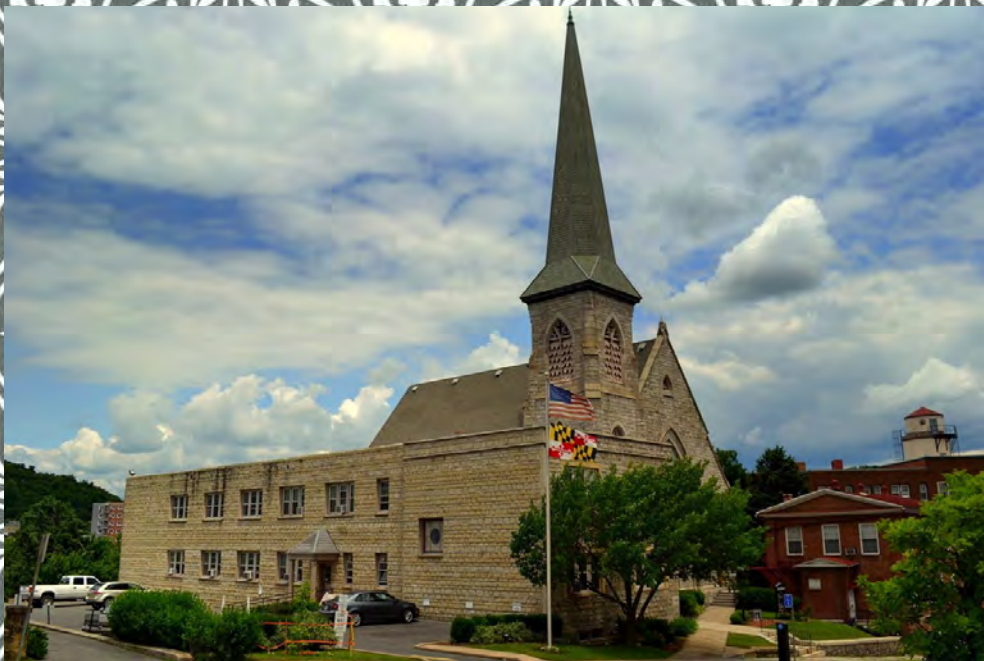


Southminster Music Mission

Kateřnice, Ratiboř and Southminster







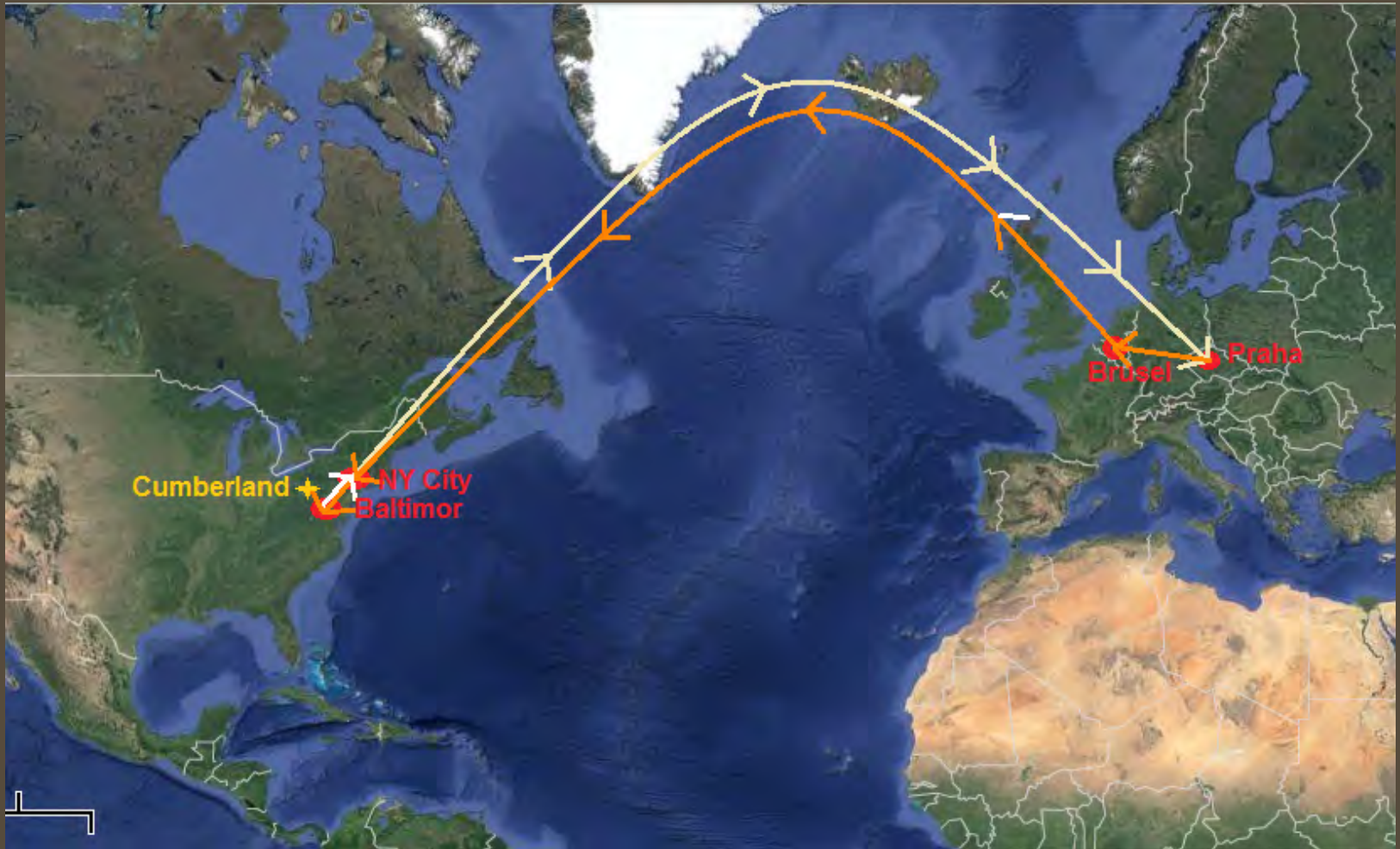
PARTNERSHIP CUMBERLAND-VSETÍN

Sára Fojtů
Partnership Conference
Praha, April 21st, 2016
sara.fojtu@seznam.cz

MAIN IDEAS OF OUR PARTNERSHIP

- Listening to other people, hearing their stories of struggles and faith
- Praying
- Developing lasting friendships
- Experiencing and offering other ways to worship
- Working together with a Partner church on a mutually decided mission project
- Visiting

INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS



DAN ŽÁRSKÝ IN CUMBERLAND NOVEMBER 12 – 14, 2011



Sára Fořtu



Cumberland and Vsetín



LUCIE ŠIMKOVÁ & SÁRA FOJTŮ IN CUMBERLAND

JUNE 26 – JULY 29 2013



Sára Fojtů



Cumberland and Vsetin



PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH TRIENNIUM JULY 16-20, 20



JOINED WORSHIP

- The same text from the Scripture
- The same sermons
- The same songs
- Online sharing

PARTNERSHIP VISION

„HE IS LIKE A TREE PLANTED BY STREAMS OF WATER THAT YIELDS ITS FRUIT IN ITS SEASON, AND ITS LEAF DOES NOT WITHER. IN ALL THAT HE DOES, HE PROSPERS.“

PSALM 1, 3



*WE KNOW THAT A GOOD
PARTNERSHIP HAS A ROOT:*

„SOLI DEO GLORIA“



Thank you for you attention



VÍTEJTE

OLOMOUC & ATHENS

Partnerství napříč kontinenty

By Susan Rathbun, Athens, Ga

irish_2242@yahoo.com



Partnerships are an expression of the love of God, the unity of the Body of Christ and the hope of the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. A partnership across denominational, cultural and national lines provides a witness to the unity of the church of Jesus Christ and an expression of hope within a fractured world. Partners explore the wonderful diversity of the church, and assume a status of equality before God (thereby reject patriarchal and patronizing structures prevalent within the history of the church.)

2008 – Laurie Anderson & Helen Epps in Olomouc



"Our introduction to and experiences with the congregation were very warm and welcoming and revealed just how eager they are to proceed with further partnership contact, whatever that might be..." ***Laurie Anderson for the Witness Ministry Team- 2008***

2009 - Lara Silver in Olomouc

In the spring of 2009, Lara Silver, daughter of Kent and Rebecca Silver, was studying abroad in Prague and had the chance to visit Olomouc.



My weekend in Olomouc was fantastic! Everybody was so friendly and made me feel very welcome. I would love to have the opportunity to go back and spend more time with the congregation. Lara³³⁰

2011 – Ivana Markova in Athens

In the autumn of 2011 Ivana Markova visited the partner-PCUSA congregation in Athens.



*“No wonder we in Olomouc were matched with Covenant based on the congregation profiles. Two university towns, about the same size, similar congregations. So it was written in the preliminary materials, which we could read before looking at the map, before meeting the two first pioneers, Laurie Anderson and Helen Epps who came to visit and explore. **But reading is not seeing with one’s own eyes.**”* –³³**Ivana Markova, December 12, 2011**

2012 — Barbora Nohavicova in Athens

Suzan Rathbun

Athens and Olomouc

Barbora Nohavicova visited this summer in Athens from May 30 to July 1, 2012.



“I am so glad that I met so many nice people in Athens. I am returning home with wonderful memories and new friendships. I found a new family in your church. You are a great community, and lovely place full of life and love! I look forward to sharing with my community. I will miss you!” - **Barbora Nohavicova, June 31, 2012**

2012 - Pastor Mark Harper & Gabe Harper in Olomouc

Mark Harper, Covenant's pastor and his son Gabe visited Olomouc from July 2 to 12 2012



“Thank you for the hospitality and the warm welcome you have already, all week, extended to me and my son Gabe. It is a gift of amazing grace to experience, to be a part of God’s extended family” - Mark Harper- Olomouc – July 12, 2012

2012 September – Rev. Dr. Karen R. Moritz visits

Suzanne Rathbun

Olomouc and Olomouc

Covenant & Laurie Anderson & Sue Rathbun attend Partnership Conference Annapolis

In September 2012, Rev. Dr. Karen R. Moritz, Mission Co-worker, visited Covenant before traveling to the partnership conference. Karen serves as a bridge between the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren and the PC (USA).

Laurie Anderson and Sue Rathbun, attended a partnership conference. The Walking Together conference took place in September of 2012 in Annapolis, Maryland USA. The 3-day event included participants from several PCUSA Churches throughout the United States as well as pastors and leaders within the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren (ECCB) traveling from the Czech Republic for this event.



I think that the friendship with the American Presbyterians can bring our parishes inspiration and stimulation. They are Americans - active and optimistic. They like to define things as a "project" - and after having done that; they will not rest until they have realized it. They are not just coming for a trip; rather our parishes are set in motion by the question of what we can do together. - Petr Sláma/Karen Moritz

2013 - July 8-12 - First Olomouc English Camp - 6

Travel from Covenant

In the summer of 2013, Shari and Anna Cobb, Linda Rogers, Rebecca Silver and Sue and Steve Rathbun traveled to Olomouc for the first Olomouc English Camp.





Going to Olomouc was a great experience. Learning about members of the congregation and making so many new friendships was amazing. I think that teaching them was as rewarding for us as it was for them.

Anna Cobb

I left the Czech Republic with a love for the old world beauty of the cities we visited, but more importantly, I feel a special love and bond with the people we met. Learning English as a second language is vital to the growth and success of the people of the Czech Republic. I feel very blessed that I was able to help them, just a little bit, to accomplish this goal. I am thankful for the friendships made with the people of our partner church and for the companionship and deepening friendships I have made with the other Church members who accompanied me. -

Shari Cobb

2014 – Covenant welcomed 5 visitors from our friends from the E.C.C.B.

In May of 2014, our dear friend Iva Markova visited us again for a short time after visiting family in Boston.



While in Athens, the most important thing to me was meeting with people and seeing friends. - Ivana

2014 – July/August – Jana Vrajova and Vera Schnaubeltova.



It is true, that the best thing for our partnership is meeting each other. For me your congregation now are not only "some people at the other side of the word", but friends. - Vera

Isn't it a kind of a miracle, that we from the both sides now know so many people from our congregations? A fellowship of love... Jana

2014 September – Daniel Batla



I want to thank you again for all you have done for me while I was there!! This summer has been an amazing experience that ended in Athens! I thank all of you for an incredible week, meeting wonderful people and eating delicious food!! - Daniel

2014 October - Pastor Daniel Zenaty

Suzanne Ratibour

Athens and Olomouc

Daniel is the pastor of a church in Pardubice, Czech Republic. During his 2-month stay in the US to learn about the PCUSA, Daniel spent a week with us in Athens.



God bless you and all people in Athens! – Daniel

Update: Rev. Daniel Ženatý is now the Moderator of the ECCB, Head of the Synodal Council in Prague.

2015 – Linda and Phil Koehler in Olomouc

Suzanne Rathbun

Athens and Olomouc

Linda and Phil were traveling in Europe and extended their stay with a visit to our Olomouc friends.



Staying with Ivana and being guided around the countryside with Vera was like visiting family. It was the highlight of our entire trip. We are grateful to be part of their church family. - **Philip and Linda Koehler**

2015 - July 13-17 - 2nd Olomouc English Camp – 13 from Covenant

Suzan Rathbun

Amanda G. Olomouc

The summer of 2015, Joan Prittie, Tommy Ward, Hanna Harper, Susan Harper, Helen Epps, Pam Knox, Linda Rogers, Steve Rathbun, Jim Anderson, Ginger Davis-Beck, Adam Brooks, Kay Brooks and Sue Rathbun, traveled to Olomouc for the second Olomouc English Camp.



Suzan Rathbun



Athens and Olomouc



It was great to get to know all of our new friends in Olomouc and we hope that we will be able to have this experience again. - Adam and Kay Brooks

Our trip to Olomouc this summer was one of the richest experiences of my life. – Susan Harper

Eva is a wonderful example of those at the ECCB Church in Olomouc who don't say, "I am too old to learn another language," or "I am embarrassed to speak to anyone in English." I think of Eva each time I struggle to be understood, and know that I can do it too! - Ginger Davis-Beck

The genuine warmth and hospitality of our Czech brothers and sisters in Christ defies description. They made us feel right at home, and they clearly appreciated our efforts to help them with the English Camp, but they may in fact have given us a greater blessing than we gave them. It was a particular thrill for me to be there, given that the church partnership was very much a passion of my beloved late wife Laurie, who helped to forge the connection seven years ago. It was wonderful to see the partnership bearing such splendid fruit. – Jim Anderson

Olomouc Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren

Blahoslavova 916/1

779 00 Olomouc, Czech Republic

Olomouc ECCB minister

Official website of the church: <http://olomouc.evangnet.cz/>

Barbora Nohavicova partnership website:

<https://sites.google.com/site/olomoucathens/home>

Covenant Presbyterian Church

1065 Gaines School Road

Athens, Georgia 30605

Mark C. Harper, Pastor; Mary Beecher Mathes, Associate Pastor

Official website of the church: <http://www.covpresathens.org>

2013 Olomouc trip pictures:

<https://olomoucathenspartnership.shutterfly.com>

Who we are ...

Athens and Olomouc

- We are Christians.
- We believe in Jesus Christ, crucified and risen.
- We belong to the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren; we endorse the Czech and European Reformation.
- We are open to other religions.
- We read the Bible; we turn the word of the Gospel, which gets us His grace and strength.
- We respect the mystery of God. His life is understood as a gift, we try to live it well. Enjoy the freedom of people and the rest of creation.
- We are dedicated to children and adults, young and old men. We support the work of Diakonia and other charitable events.



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Covenant's Mission Statement: Covenant Presbyterian Church as a community of disciples of Jesus Christ is to exhibit the presence of the risen Christ in its life as a community and as individuals. When Christ says, "You shall be my witness when the Holy Spirit comes upon you," God calls the whole church to ministry, as stewards of creation through the giving of ourselves. In continuing Christ's ministry, Covenant reflects the "good news" of God's grace through public worship, education, fellowship, and outreach in and with the Athens community and the world. Covenant tries to achieve balance between profession and practice of the Christian faith, between word and deed, and between self-nurture and outreach to others



English Conversation Camp Music

Linda S. Rogers, Covenant Presbyterian Church (PCUSA)
lrogers@uga.edu

April 10, 2016



In July 2013 and July 2015, members of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Athens, Georgia, USA (part of the PCUSA) went to their sister church in Olomouc, Czech Republic (part of the ECCB) to run a five day English Conversation Camp (hereafter abbreviated as ECC). This write-up discusses the music portion of the two camps and provides tips for selecting music used in this type of setting.

Music is a universal language. It enhances all aspects of life and is an extremely important component of any type of camp experience. For the ECC setting between churches joined in partnership, music is important not only for learning English but also for sharing the gospel of Christ. To assist in understanding this write-up, it is important to know that each ECC met twice a day (in the morning and in the late afternoon) for approximately two-and-a-half hours each time. The

camp lasted for five days, Monday through Friday. With the exception of Friday afternoon, the morning and afternoon blocks were (mostly) subdivided into five parts – a brief gathering of all participants, a class, a quick break (maybe with food), a second class, then another gathering to conclude that portion of the camp. Friday afternoon's camp time was devoted to a coffeehouse style gathering, where camp participants would share their talents (skits, music, readings, etc.) of which some portion had to be presented in English. During both ECCs, music was prepared for two types of settings -- the group setting and the class setting.

Group Setting

Group music occurred when all camp participants were together, typically at the beginning and end of each camp session, and was used to help set an upbeat mood for the camp experience. At the first ECC, twenty different sacred songs were selected for group music time – two for each of the anticipated ten camp sessions. For instance, one song would be used to open the morning camp session, another to close the morning camp session, a third to open the afternoon camp session, and a fourth to close the afternoon camp session. In the camp booklet, only the words to these songs were provided (no music). Accompaniment was provided by members of the Olomouc church. The actual music was emailed well in advance and group singing was accompanied by a keyboard and, sometimes, a cello and a recorder!

At the second ECC, fewer songs were used for group music. Feedback from the first camp indicated that camp participants would like to spend more time on a song so it could be learned

better. Also, just using words without the actual music made it more difficult to learn the songs. So, this time only five group songs were selected, one for each day of the camp and music was included in the camp booklet. In an effort to add a touch of interest, the songs chosen either had hand movements or could be done in two, three, or four part rounds. Unfortunately, those who had provided accompaniment at the first ECC were not available this time, so the music was done with minimal keyboard accompaniment.

Class Setting

Class music occurred when all camp participants had disbursed to their classes. In this context, class music refers to a class time that concentrated only on music, versus one where music was used as part of the teaching technique (for instance, using Old McDonald Had a Farm to help teach the names of animals).

At the first ECC, there were three classes – children, beginning adults, and intermediate / advanced adults. Thirty different songs, in addition to the twenty used for group singing, were selected for the class music times. These songs were a combination of sacred and secular, with some songs culled from church vacation school settings. Not knowing in advance what type of music would work for each class level, it was possible to just pick from this larger list as the class was starting. For instance, the children's class enjoyed Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes; the beginning adult class enjoyed Row, Row, Row Your Boat (in a four part round); and the intermediate/advanced adult class enjoyed Fish & Chips & Vinegar (a song in three equal parts). As done with the group music, only the words were printed in the camp booklet (no music). All class music was done acapella. During the course of the week, music was done twice with each of the three class levels.

At the second ECC, there were now six classes – beginning children, intermediate children / teenagers, advanced teenagers, beginning adults, intermediate adults, and advanced adults. Fewer songs were also used for class music (for the same reasons as mentioned with group music earlier). So, this time only eleven songs were selected and music was included in the camp booklet. As with the group music chosen for the second ECC, most could be done as rounds. Eleven songs turned out to be too few for some of the classes so some of the music used at the first ECC was also used at the second ECC. As before, all class music was done acapella. During the course of the week, music was done (on average) just once with each of the six class levels. Also, the intermediate and advanced teenager classes were asked to share some of their favorite Czech camp songs during class time.

Music Selection Tips

- Select a wide variety of music, sacred and secular, that can be sung easily
- Select music that will be of interest to all ages – children to senior adults
- Provide music (in accordance with copyright laws) versus just words
- Select music that can be sung acapella, since logistics are much more difficult when accompanists are needed
- Select music that can stand on its own but also be made more interesting with hand motions or by singing in rounds
- Select more songs than could possibly be needed, just in case some songs aren't well received

For more information, contact Linda Rogers (Covenant Presbyterian Church) at lrogers@uga.edu.

How I have encountered the ECCB

Rev. Dr. **Karen R. Moritz**,
mission co-worker at the ECCB central church office
revkarenmoritz@gmail.com



“Why do we have a Mission Coworker in the Czech Republic?”

Our partners the ECCB have asked us to help them and stand with them as they strive to spread the Good News of the Gospel.

Partnership

- **A core value for us is doing ministry together in Partnership.**

**I understand my ministry as a
Bridge**



- **Between the PCUSA and the ECCB**
- **Between partner congregations**
- **This is the heart of my ministry.**

Relationship

- **The heart of partnership is Relationship**
 - **We all work as a team**
 - **We are all connected, with God and one another**
 - **The bring encouragement to one another.**
 - **Partnership makes the Gospel real in word and deed**

A Bridge

- **I get to be the bridge between our partnership**
- **Upon arrival in 2010 I met our partners in Letohrad and Annapolis when the latter group came to the Czech Republic. We all travelled to Karlovy Vary.**
- **I probably didn't make a good impression-I was still pretty shell shocked.**



In 2011 I made my first foray into English Camp, I spent a week in Ratiboř and Kateřinice.

- Thrown in the deep end- 6 hours a day. Wow!
- Learned an important part of Czech life- Slivovice.

Sloupnice

- Then I got to go to Sloupnice.



Olomouc

- In the winter of 2012 I went to Olomouc
 - gave greetings from partners in Athens.
 - Preached in Czech.
 - Proof that the Czechs are truly gracious



Athens Group

- Met with Covenant partners while in the Czech Republic. We always had way too much fun.



Letohrad



**I also got
to go to
Letohrad .**

Boskovice

- **Made a trip to Boskovice. Wow, are some of pulpits high**



Partnership Conference 2012

- **We had our big partnership meeting in 2012 in Annapolis, Maryland.**
 - **Also took a coworker to my Alma Mater Princeton Theological Seminary. It probably explained a lot to my coworker about me.**



Vsetín

- Then there was a visit to Horní Sbor in Vsetín. You can see the other church from the sanctuary, Dolní Sbor.



Orlová

- Got a wee visit to Scotland as well, sort of, went to Orlová
- Sometime Scotland came to us



Milič z Kroměříž

- Once in while the trip was closer to home, one Sunday I made a trip to the southern part of Prague, Milič z Kroměříž. (Say that one fast)



Olomouc again

- On a second trip to Olomouc I learned two important things
 - I learned the Czech word Pohodě
 - I found out I speak Czech with a Russian accent



PTF and CTS

- **In addition to congregational partnerships we have long-standing ones between the Protestant Theological Faculty and U.S. Seminaries like Columbia Theological Seminary.**
 - **I got to go on some trips with them when visiting**
 - **I got to know 2 women who came to Prague to study**



Athens, Georgia

- Visits to U.S. Partners during Itineration were fun. I went to the Chenille capital of the U.S. Athen, Georgia



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The BigTent

- Also represented the Czech Mission Network at the Big Tent and other events while in the U.S.



Geneva

Attended several International events

Kirchentag-twice

Day of meetings in Wroclaw, Poland

Trip to Geneva

Mission Coworker retreats in Turkey and Hungary



Guests for Synod

- Helped host guests in the Central Church Office.
- Annual Synod meeting



Reformation Tour

- Led a Reformation Tour in Czech Republic and Germany



ECCB Central Church Office

- Got to participate in the life of the Central Church Office
 - Worked with Gerhard
 - Was a part of the staff



Worked at Hus House



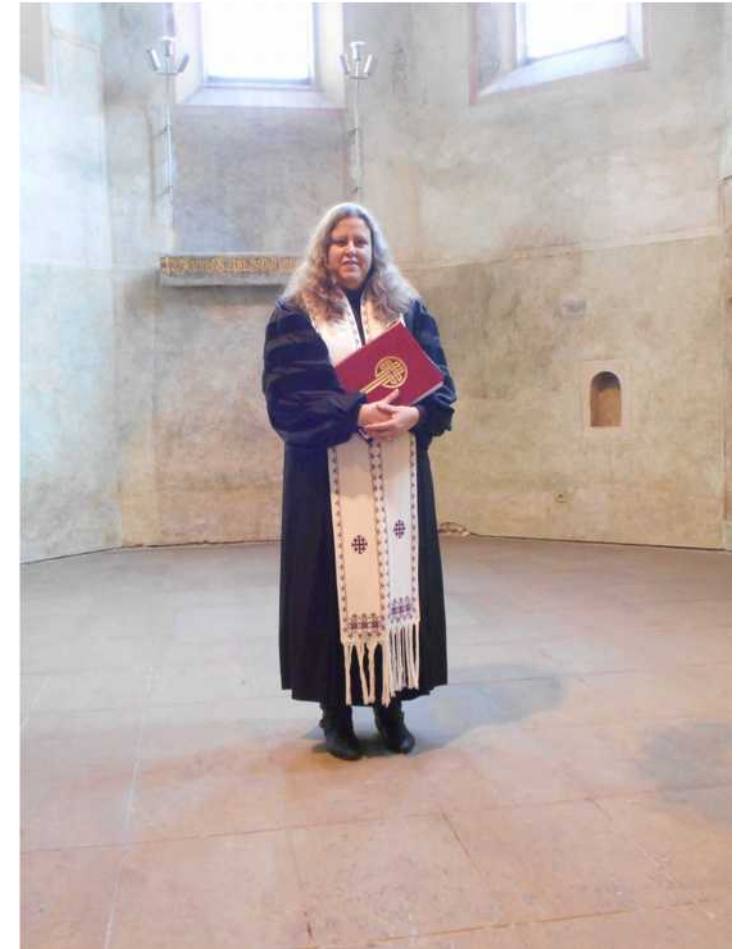
Stoles all around

- Had fun with my colleagues



My preacher look

- **Got to preach in English too, at**
St. Clement's
Anglican/Episcopal Church



Here for big events
When Vaclav Havel died
Remembering Jan Hus



It's been an amazing experience

- **I've learned a lot.**

About the Universal Church

About faithfulness in the midst of adversity.

That we are more alike than different

That we have some fun differences.

Mostly seen in worship

What am I supposed to do?

- **Do we stand to pray and sit to sing, or is it the other way around?**
- **Gathering in the Chancel for Communion is incredibly moving, especially when we sing.**
- **The Czech hymnal has some really long hymns. My former parishioners would probably faint.**
- **Hymn written by Jan Hus and the Psalms are not only a part of the hymnal, they're actually sung.**
- **You have to know the order and parts of the service, there's no bulletin.**

ECCB and PCUSA

- **I'm really going to miss it all.**
- **Thanks for letting me be a bridge, joining many of us together.**



My prayers and hopes

I wish you well as you continue the journey, you are all now the bridges.

I hope you'll continue...

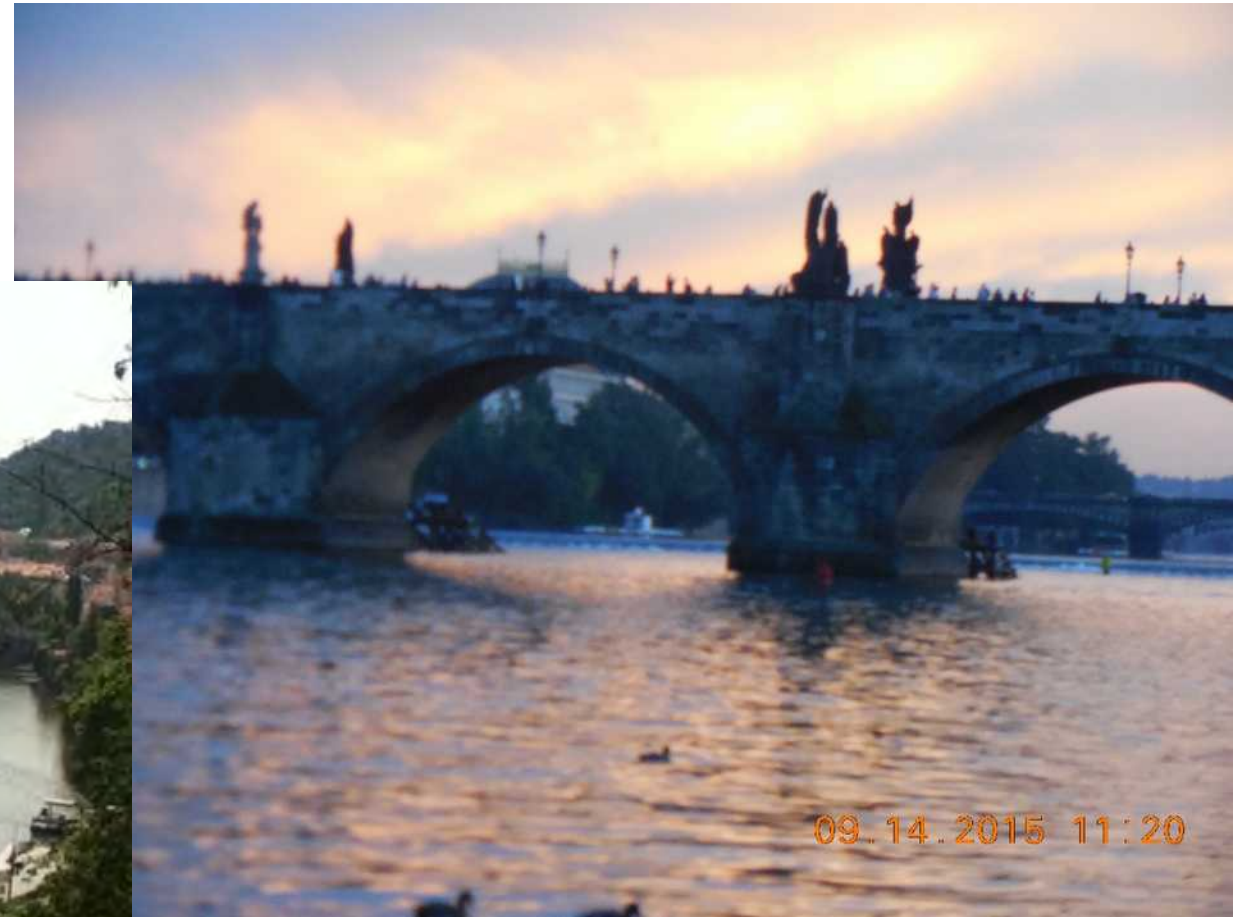
praying for one another, in the Czech Republic and in the US.

learning more about each other.

encouraging each other as you strive to be faithful to God's call and mission.

engaging with one another as you strive to serve God faithfully by sharing the Good News.

Bridges



Děkuju mockrát

- **Thank you, especially to Gerhard and the Central Church office, for allowing me to share in ministry.**
- **Děkuju za všechno a Přeju Vám Boží požehnání.**

Help has many faces

www.diakonie.cz





Content

1. Who we are
2. Our mission
3. History
4. Position in the Czech society
5. Structure
6. Our services
7. Financing
8. The end

1. WHO WE ARE

**Christian non-profit organization
offering help and support
for living a dignified, valuable life
addressed to people
in difficult life situation**

2. OUR MISSION

**Our services are based
on Gospel tidings of God's Love
and on the example of Jesus
Christ's service**

OUR MISSION

**We approach everybody
regardless of religious, ethnical
and political belongings
or sexual orientation.**



3. HISTORY

In 2016 we celebrate
27 years of the “new”
Diaconia



Diaconia ECCB

carries on the activity of the former Czech Diaconia, established in 1903 and continuing its activities until 1952.

Beginnings of diaconal work in late 19th century: First parish care center for children opened in Krabcice in 1864.

4. POSITION IN THE CZECH SOCIETY

**Diaconia ECCB is
the 2nd biggest
nongovernmental provider
of social services
and civic assistance**

**90 % of our
employees and clients are
unreligious**

5. STRUCTURE

**Diaconia ECCB was founded
by Evangelical Church of
Czech Brethren.**

**Diaconia is a legal entity and
its centres and schools are
legal entities too.**

**26 centers (24 regional,
1 nationwide and 1 worldwide)
7 special schools
1 kindergarden**

**129 registered social services
1500 employees**

6. TYPES OF SERVICES

Services for elderly people

Services for people with disabilities

Help for people in difficult life situations and people at risk of social exclusion

Help for migrants

Humanitarian and development aid

Projects and awareness campaigns

THE ELDERLY

Home care and nursing

Daily care centers

Daily & week social
welfare institutions

Respite services

Care homes for elderly

Dementia nursing homes

Hospice care etc.



PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

- Early intervention care
- Social welfare institutions
- Daily care centers
- Residential homes,
sheltered housing
- Sheltered and social
therapeutic workshops
- Sheltered workplaces
etc.



Services for people in difficult life situations

DIFFICULT LIFE SITUATION (LIFE CRISIS)

Ambulant services
in SOS - centers

Sanctuary homes

Transition halfway houses

Low-threshold centers

Social empowerment
services

Counseling & crisis
intervention etc.





Special schools

SPECIAL SCHOOLS & STATIONARIES

for children and youth with disabilities, mental handicap, autism and combined diseases

Education, development of clients skills and rehabilitation

Sports, art therapy, swimming, canistherapy, hippotherapy, ...

Outdoor stays

Respite care etc.



HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT AID

Center of Relief and
Development established
in 2011.

Flood assistance since
1997. Member of
Integrated Rescue
Service

Development projects in
Moldavia, Georgia, the
Ukraine, Ethiopia, Syria
(Jordan), Mali, Burma,
Cambodia etc.

OUR PROJECTS

**„Be a Neighbor“
for refugees**

**(accommodative program
for foreigners)**

OUR PROJECTS

**„Combat Violence“
for victims of crime**

(exploitation and human trafficking)



OUR PROJECTS

“I nurse at home”

Comprehensive project to support care-giving family members.

Project goals - to assist caregivers in their families, who are caring especially for seniors, by establishing free of charge consulting and education services.

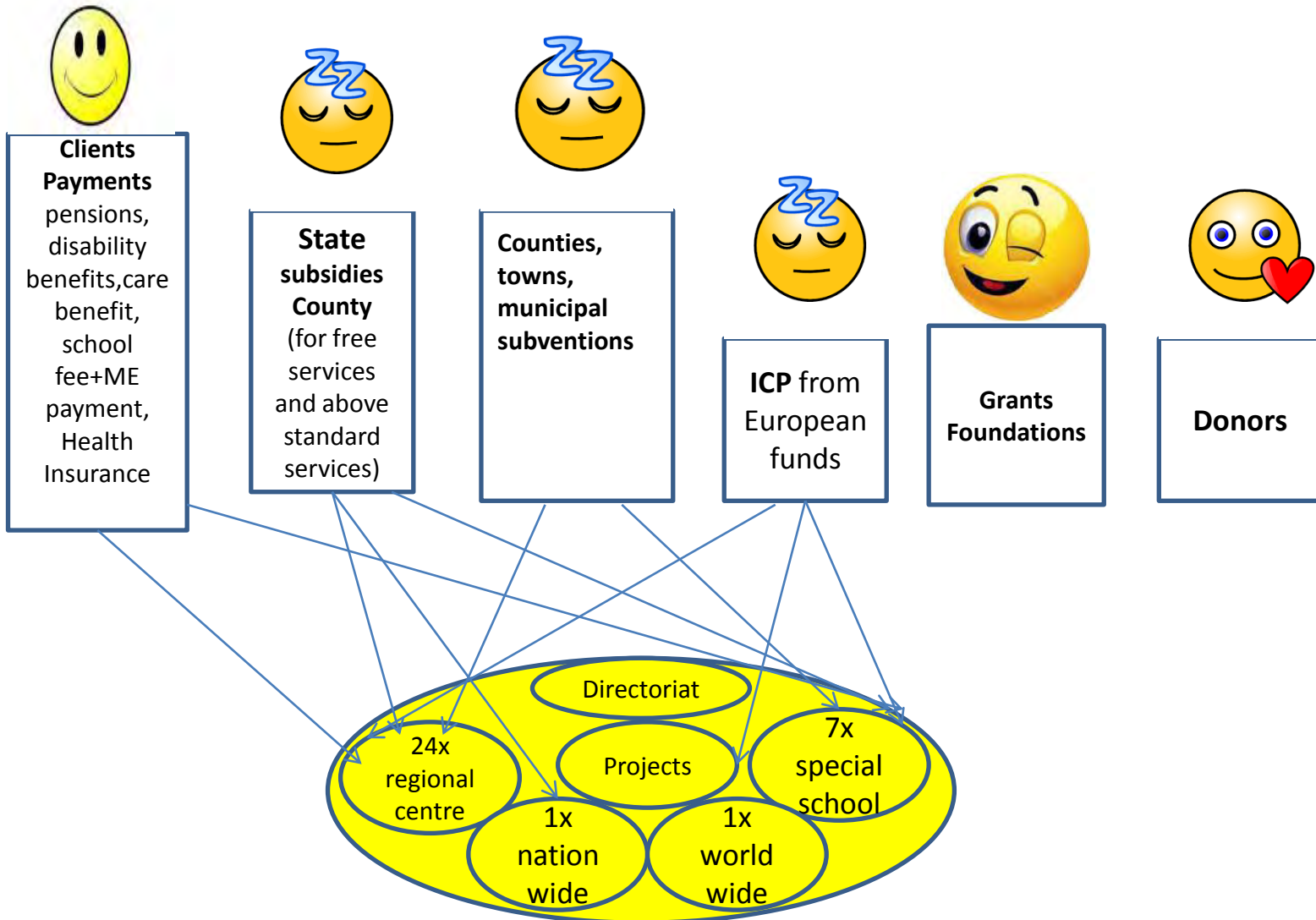
OUR PROJECTS

“Institute for Ageing with Dignity”

Project responds to the identified problems and, taboo issues, namely problematic public attitude to ageing and dying, unbundling of areas of care and emerging gaps, unclear terms, the lack of information for the public..



7. FINANCING



8. The End

**During each regular week
day, we are providing help
(service, caretaking) for
2,200 clients at once!**

www.diakonie.cz



facebook.com/diakoniecce



twitter.com/diakoniecce



youtube.com/DiakonieCZ

Thanks for attention!

svobodova@diakonie.cz



Concluding Remarks: Faith, Fear, and Trust

Rev. Dr. William L. Hathaway

Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Annapolis, Maryland USA

bill@annapolis-presbyterian.com

Note: the summary came in two parts. The first was time for personal reflection and discussion in small groups beginning with the question “Where or how have you experienced the hand of God this week?” The second part includes my observations of the plenary sessions, as follows.

Thank you for a wonderful, engaging week. My observations of our time of reflection fall into the categories of faith, fear and trust.

FAITH

All of us within the ECCB and PCUSA share a Christian faith and, within the Christian experience, we share a particular and important tradition – the Reformed tradition. In different settings we both claim, embrace and guard this Reformed tradition with its fundamental call to tell the truth – the truth of God and the truth of the human condition. Our deep urging of truth telling connects us to a



long stream of reformers including Jan Hus. As Petr Slama noted we are “guardians of the Reformed heritage.” (April 19 lecture)

Even though we are in very different cultural settings both the ECCB and PCUSA share a sense of being small in numbers. Our Czech friends live within one of the most (if not the most) secular societies on the planet. Being Christian, let alone, Protestant is to live within a small minority of the population.

American Presbyterians, on the other hand, live within one of the most active and religiously engaged countries on the planet and often function under the attitude of being a “Christian nation” even though our laws and founding fathers (and mothers) formed a society for the freedom of religion and separation of church and state. We live within a plethora of religious expressions and the Christian portion of the States is divided into often competing “camps” of Roman Catholics and a wide variety of Protestants from Pentecostals, to fundamentalists to those of historic “main-line” denominations, like Presbyterians. In this mix the PCUSA is small in numbers.

As the ECCB lives within a secular society the PCUSA exists within what Mark Douglas calls a post-secular society of a large range of religious voices (including the growing secular voice). For example, current actions by State legislatures and our Supreme Court include a host of religious topics (often defined in terms of religious rights vis-a-vie the majority). Religion is in the midst of public life.

The multiplicity of religious voices is also seen in what I describe as the maturing of ecumenical and interfaith movements. In the 70’s and 80’s it was common for interfaith groups to encourage a shared and common language that often meant a reduction to the lowest common denominator, something that ended up being unsatisfactory for all and simply boring. In more recent years interfaith groups now ask that Christians sound like Christians, Jews like Jews and Muslims like Muslims (albeit with an assumption of mutual respect). The recent movement of interfaith “Scriptural Reasoning” is founded on the principle of hearing the text from a variety of perspectives for the end of understanding not uniformity or conversions. For example, my home congregation in Annapolis participates in an annual spring “Earth-Water-Faith” festival that intentionally includes prayer in English, Hebrew and Arabic, all standing as neighbors.

Within the mix of cultures both the ECCB and the PCUSA suffer from the problem that we are clear about who we are **not** but not so clear about who we are. Pavel Pokorny

notes that Czechs are post-totalitarian, post-modern and post-Christian but “we do not know who we would or should be.” (April 20 lecture) Many American Presbyterians are clear that we are not Catholics, not fundamentalists, not Pentecostal (or arm wavers!) but we become tongue tied when it comes to expressing who we are.

Who are we? We are Christian and Reformed:

- Focused on the sovereignty of God
- Mindful of the abuse of power (sin)
- Grounded in Scripture
- Understanding that reason and the intellectual pursuits of the mind are God’s gifts and that truth is one (science and faith are not in conflict)
- Called to witness to the justice and peace of the Kingdom of God on earth
- Acting as the hands of Christ in the world (Therefore we embrace the Diakonie of the ECCB and the social justice and service ministries of the PCUSA to be essential to the faith. (As a result, pastors have the “job” of connecting the dots between worship and service; between prayer and social justice.)

We are “guardians of the Reformed heritage.”

FEAR

We also know of apprehension and fear.

Numbers scare us. We wonder about the number of members within both churches. Who will follow us?

We worry about money. The ECCB faces a significant financial challenge as government funding ends and the retribution funds are allocated for current expenses. Can and will the ECCB members shift to a very new way of funding ministry?

While a good number of your PCUSA partners are from large and strong congregations, the truth of the matter is that many PCUSA congregations are small (under 150 members) and many struggle to pay a pastor’s salary. Congregations close or merge.

And, most notably, we live in a time of growing anxiety and fear on account of

- The rapid pace of change
- Growing disparity between rich and poor
- Fear of immigrants, refugees and any understood to be the “other”
- The fear of many white men of losing power within the American setting as women have risen in leadership and, soon, the cumulative number of minority groups will exceed 50% of the total population.

As a result, both of our societies are experiencing the rise in xenophobia, hate language and political manipulation, most vividly seen in Donald Trump in the States and President Milos Zeman in the Czech Republic.

In the face of these fears the church encounters what Mark Douglas calls an “inarticulate stage fright” where there are “mumblers,” “screamers,” and “repeaters” but few articulate voices of the gospel (April 20 lecture).

At a practical level, pastors in the States walk the fine, historic line of not endorsing candidates for political office from the pulpit yet, at same time, providing a prophetic voice on contemporary social and religious issues. (An example of this is the current theological statement “An Appeal to Christians in the United States” that calls the church to oppose the manipulation of fear and the growing language of hate. The document does not name Trump but in language akin to the Barmen Declaration denounces hate-language and the xenophobia that fills our airwaves. See <http://action.goundswell-mvmt.org/petitions/an-appeal-to-christians-in-the-united-states>.) In Annapolis, after a number of State governors announced opposition to Syrian refugees, our Session sent a letter of concern to our Governor, agreed to host a refugee family and, last month, welcomed a Shia Muslim family of five to our community. I learned that, this morning, your Diaknoie office that has posted a sign as a “hate free zone” was struck by persons who defaced the sign leaving a note “death to the hate free zone.”

We face societies of growing fear and hate.

TRUST

In response, we trust.

We trust in God so we are committed to worship.

We trust in the body of Christ. The friendships we share within these partnerships provide real support. When I return home from time with you I am determined to be a more faithful pastor and Christian because of your witness. “dekuii”

And we trust our calling.

Reflecting on Genesis 18:1-19:38 Petr Slama reminded us of both the power of hospitality (Sarah, Abraham and the three angels) and the destructiveness of making choices out of fear (Lot and his daughters). He spoke of the church being an “alternative community,” and a network of “positive deviations.” In the face of fear we are called to be positive deviants.

Pavel Pokorny shared a wonderful dream for the ECCB with a vision of the church not as an old, worn woman but as a wise, strong, middle aged woman facing the sun. He called us to be a “colorful community of pilgrims.”

I'd like to put these together, envisioning the church as a colorful community of positive deviants. In the face of the fear within the church and the greater fears within society being exploited by some politicians, we trust that the positive deviants will keep alive the dream of serving as a colorful community of pilgrims. Thank God for the colorful community of positive deviants.

If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together

Rev. Kenneth W. White

Southminster Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh

kwredwhite50@gmail.com

Romans 1:8-12

The story of creation revealed in the Book of Genesis is so beautiful that God tells the story twice. In the first chapter of Genesis the first words that God speaks are “Let there be light”, and the darkness of the world is rolled back. God’s order is given to the chaos of a dark and stormy world. When we hear those words shared even now we know that we need not fear the world’s darkness and chaos. For God’s first word will also be the last word. “The light shines in the darkness and the darkness will not overcome it.”

In the second chapter of Genesis the first words that god speaks are, “It is not good that the man should be alone.” From the beginning of time God tells us that we were created to be in community and in relationship. A life the shared is a life that is rich. As the story is told the whole world has been given to the man as a gift. The moon, the stars, and the sun are his, as is everything that moves upon the face of the earth. But without someone to share the gift with there is a lack of completeness. There is no wholeness.

In our own lives we know this to be true as well. When we laugh with someone rather than when we laugh alone, that the laughter is richer and fills our souls with delight. And is it not also true that when another shares our tears in times of sadness that the pain that has caused the tears is more bearable than when we suffer alone.

From the beginning of time the greatest gift that God has given us is the gift of community and relationship. To come near to one another and to come close to God. I know this to be true, not because my mind tells me it is true, but because my heart knows that it is true.



I believe that you know this to be true as well. All of us have had those in our lives that have loved us into being. So many who have helped us to become the persons that we are today. Some are near and may be in this room, some may now be far away, and some may even be in heaven.

In just a moment I am going to ask us all to take 15 seconds of silence to think about those persons who have cared about us and wanted what was best in this life for us. Let us take a few moments now to think about those people who have made our lives richer.

Whoever you have been thinking about, how pleased they must be to know that you believe that they have made a difference in your life. If you see them today or some time soon you might want to tell them, and if you will not see them anytime soon you might want to write them or call them on the phone to tell them. And if they have gone before you from this life, you might want to offer a prayer of thanksgiving to God for them.

I believe that what is true for us as individuals is also true for us as communities of people. I think that it is true for the church, whether it be congregations or denominations. In fact that is why those of us who are from the Southminster Presbyterian church are visiting with you today. We are here because we believe that being with you allows our faith and our mission to be richer and fuller. We are here because we need you to help us to be the people that God calls us to be.

In my 40 years of ministry I have been strengthened and comforted by the understanding that as God's people we are better together than we are separately. In my work in partnership with the church in Africa I have encountered two proverbs that give me guidance. The first is, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far go together."

The second is, "When we walk with others we gather wisdom". Today the church faces many challenges in an increasingly secular world, where God is forgotten and the church is not wanted. Today we need each other more than ever, because alone we cannot always be faithful enough.

Alone we cannot always be strong enough.
Alone we cannot always be brave enough.
Alone we cannot always be wise enough.

In our scripture reading today, we heard the Apostle Paul say, "I am longing to be with you s that we might be mutually encouraged by each others faith, both yours and mine." It is easy to become discouraged, but God intends that together we are able to be encouraged.

So that from each other we can receive the faith we need.
So that from each other we can receive the strength we need .
So that from each other we can receive the courage we need .
So that from each other we receive the wisdom that we need.

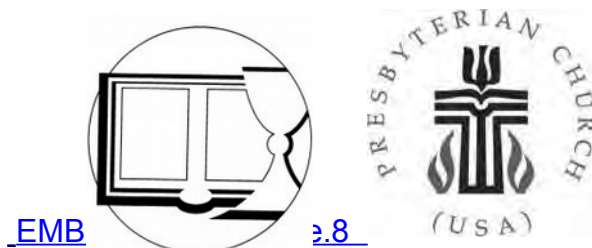
Dear friends, please know that is why Rich and Essi continue to return to be with you. That is why Karen, Chris and I were so anxious to be able to come back to be with you again. We are here because we believe that we are better together than we are alone. We are here because we want to be able to

travel far together in service of God's Kingdom . We are here because when we walk together we gather wisdom. Amen.

(The sermon held in Kateřinice and Ratiboř on Sunday April 24, 2016. The next evening Ken White preached at the closing service at St Clement's church in Prague, empowered by Holy Spirit and ad-lib. There are testimonies that in content the two sermons have had much in common.)

Sharing Together

Our Mission in a Secular Society



The PC USA and ECCB
Partnership Conference

organized by
the American Working group of the ECCB in Prague
and by the Czech Mission Network in the US

Prague, April 19-26, 2016

Dear friends,
we welcome You to the PC USA and ECCB Partnership conference, organized by the American Working group of the ECCB in Prague and by the Czech Mission Network in the US. This conference follows conferences in 2008 in Prague and the one in 2012 in Annapolis. The goals of this conference are to foster:

- the existing partnerships between Czech and US congregations
- the mission of the churches carried out by Diakonie and by other outreach projects
- the theological exchange in the common quest for appropriate forms of our witness
- seeking new ways of doing things together and starting new partnerships

There will be reflection and appreciation of the past 25 years of the various forms of the partnership as well as sharing recent experiences. There will be theological reflection of both the partnership and the present situation of our churches. There will be opportunities to share our concerns and dreams with our overseas partners. There will also be opportunities to worship together, to enjoy the beauty of Prague and its culture, as well as to visit congregations outside Prague involved in partnerships.

Enjoy the conference!

Renata Popelářová renata.reborn@yahoo.com

SCHEDULE

Tuesday 19 April

- 15:30 registration
17:30 welcome address
(Gerhard Reininghaus, Betty McGinnis)
18:00 opening worship in Martin
(syn. senior Daniel Ženatý)
19:30 opening dinner

Wednesday 20 April

- 8:50 devotion (Petr Sláma)
9:00 Biblical reflection on partnership (Petr Sláma)
9:45 Witnessing the Gospel in a Secular society (Mark Douglas)
11:00 discussion
12:30 lunch
14:00 The dream I have for the ECCB and Protestants in our society (Pavel Pokorný)
14:45 Scottish voice (Carol Finley)
16:00 Reformation tour
18:00 dinner
19:30 Its all Bohemian village to me
(Ivana Adámková, Ivana Marková)
20:30 „Forgotten light“ (movie)

Thursday 21 April

- 8:50 devotion
9:00 In the beginning there was...
(Betty McGinnis, Pavel Ruml, Jan Sláma)
10:45 What turned out well
(Rich Pinkerton, Wiera Jelinek, Ivana Marková, Aleš Pomikálek, Hana Sívková)
13:00 lunch
14:00 Out of pocket or On a stewardship
(Mark Harper, Kateřina Srbová)
15:30 free time
17:30 dinner
19:00 Don Giovanni by W.A. Mozart
(the Estates' Theatre)

Friday 22 April

- 8:50 devotion (Petr Peňáz)

9:00	Typology of ECCB congregations	(Marek
Horák)		
10:00	Other partnerships: Faculty PFT / CTS, PTS * Diacony (Jan Roskovec, Kateřina Svobodová)	
11:45	How I have encountered the ECCB	(Karen Moritz)
13:00	lunch	
14:00	leaving for hosting congregations	

Sunday 24 April

19:00	dinner
20:00	Czech Mission Network session

Monday 25 April

8:50	devotion
9:00	What we have learned (all)
11:00	How to make a partnership (all)
12:00	Concluding session (William Hatheway)
13:00	no organized lunch
14:00	Free afternoon
18:00	Worship with the Lord's supper (Karen Moritz)
19:30	dinner

Biblical reflection on partnership (Petr Sláma)

Frozen chosen trying to warm up mutually or Why to foster partnership...

Meditation on Biblical tendency to pull people out from their habit(at)s to new encounters, enriched by a preliminary sevenfold characteristics of the ECCB, showing how badly we need one another to fulfill our mission in our societies.

Witnessing the Gospel in a Secular society (Mark Douglas)

For several decades, Columbia Theological Seminary has brought students to central Europe, including Prague, as part of a yearly course entitled, "Explorations." This course is designed to help students gain a greater understanding of the global church while also advancing their capacities to do cultural analysis and work with others in learning-intensive contexts. Recognizing that the purposes of a particular course in a particular PC(USA)-related seminary are not universal, I nevertheless want to build on my experiences in teaching this course to explore the complexity and promise of creating systems in which small groups of persons might engage in new settings with a majority population whose languages, ecclesiologies, and cultures both overlap with and differ from their own.

The dream I have for the ECCB and Protestants in our society (Pavel Pokorný)

Pavel in his speech The dream I have for the ECCB and Protestants in our society, would like to reflect upon spiritual, societal, and political context of our way to the future. He will also share the vision of the Synodal Council, the leading body of ECCB elected in 2015 for next 6 years. What is or will be our mission and what is the role of partnership in it?

Scottish voice (Carol Finley)

One large piece of Carol Finley work over the last 15 years has been the development of The Twinning Programme which has been successful at connecting people at local congregational level across the world. She hope to share some of this work with you.

Its all Bohemian village to me (Ivana Adámková, Ivana Marková)

An Unorthodox Lesson of Czech. You may learn or hear about some basic phrases, important differences between Czech and English, rules and exceptions. Simple biblical citation will be used to teach you or demonstrate important biblical vocabulary and fundamentals of unusual and difficult Czech pronunciation.

In the beginning there was... (Betty McGinnis, Pavel Ruml, Jan Sláma)

In the beginning, a new horizon in our vast world ...the possibility of knowing an unknown family in a strange land that most Westerners did not know. How? Waiting ? Preparing? Can

our faith lead us to this reality? What can we learn from Christians who kept the faith over their history?

Over the horizon, we are surprised continuously by the joys of walking, sharing, serving, worshipping together with the family of God. More has transpired than one could imagine from the humble, simple, quiet beginnings: diakonia.. service and ministry together with rich exchanges, service, music., pastors; co-workers learning from and with one another; beautiful and strong ties of friendship, fellowship, and love binding hearts together; God uniting the human family. And over the horizon, the transforming journey continues as we share together today toward the fullness of God's love.

What turned out well – our partnerships

Partnerships are an expression of the love of God, the unity of the Body of Christ and the hope of the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. A partnership across denominational, cultural and national lines provides a witness to the unity of the church of Jesus Christ and an expression of hope within a fractured world. Partners explore the wonderful diversity of the church, and assume a status of equality before God (thereby reject patriarchal and patronizing structures prevalent within the history of the church.)

Horní sbor CCE Vsetín – FPC in Cumberland, Maryland

Horní sbor CCE Vsetín consists of 1798 members (as of the end of 2010). The average number of people attending Sunday's service is 125. The sanctuary was built in 1827 and the education building was constructed in 1982. They are located in one of the most beautiful parts of the Town of Vsetín.

The congregation is very active in Christian education, there are group of kids, youth and adults who have their regular meeting over the Bible. Outside of the community there are activities with disabled children. Special attention receives „Fusion“ – a youth music group, and „Puppets“, a group focused on the Bible message to non-church children.

First Presbyterian Church in Cumberland is an established congregation; it has roots in the community that can be traced to 1802. There is a beautiful sanctuary, constructed in 1870, and a more modern education building built in the 1950's. It is located in a National Historic District.

The membership consists of well-educated people from a variety of backgrounds, including medical, legal and academic professionals, government employees, artists, musicians, computer experts, home schooling parents, and active retirees. About half of our members are local natives. As of the end of 2010, there are 279 members. The church provide a lot of activities for public like administrative/funding support for “NAILS,” a local housing modernization program for low-income families; created “Special Ministries”, a program that aids local families and individuals experiencing short-term financial hardships (ongoing). First Presbyterian Church of Cumberland, MD has also been involved in the Cumberland community for many years and remains very active in many local organizations.

FS CCE Letohrad – FPC in Annapolis, Maryland

Letohrad congregation is open and active diaspora protestant community with 200 members in East Bohemia. About 40 people in the whole spectrum of the age from nearby area comes every Sunday for the service and during week for regular meetings: there are three kids group and one adult coming for a Bible study, seniors coming for their „Caffeteria“, people 30+ and 50+ having their monthly meeting over interesting topics and youth sticking together in every occasion. People also gather for Bible study at nearby villages where Letohrad minister come to lead the hour. In 2003 the congregation opened a new red-brick church which was built with a support of the whole ECCB and friends from abroad. Special thanks to our friends in FPC in Annapolis, this partnership is a very important part of the congregational life.

Founded in 1846, First Presbyterian Church of Annapolis, Maryland has a deep history of Reformed theology and advocacy for human rights in Maryland's capital city. Founding members were engaged in the abolitionist movement and in the late 19th Century the congregation sponsored the first public school for girls while maintaining close ties with the United States Naval Academy. To this day the church seeks to provide a public space for a witness to the justice and peace of Jesus Christ. It has been the host of Alcoholics Anonymous for over 50 years, founded a tutoring program for children in the public schools (STAIR), works with local programs for the homeless and has a history of sponsoring refugees from various places in the world, including a Muslim family from Bagdad who arrived in March of this year. In addition to the long term partnership with the Letohrad Parish of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren, the congregation is a Covenant Church with the Haiti Fund (supporting reforestation and sustainable agriculture in rural Haiti) and is an Earth Care Congregation within the PCUSA. The 700 member congregation enjoys an excellent musical ministry and values serious adult education as it pursues its vision “to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God.”

FS CCE Olomouc – Covenant in Athens, Georgia

Olomouc is a historical town situated about 200 km to the east of Prague. It is home to the second oldest University in the country, founded in 1574. The creation of a separate Evangelical congregation in Olomouc was agreed in 1906. Not being allowed to worship in the new German Evangelical church they had to build their own building, which was opened in 1920. It is located near the center of town. The congregation has a membership of 675. They come from all social groups. Besides Sunday services, various groups meet during the week: Sunday School children, Youth group, Club of Good News, Middle Generation “Getting together” (Sešlost), Club of senior members, Bible study group. Music is an integral part of the worship. We have 4 alternating organ players, a trombone group, a band (keyboard, guitars, cello, violins and singers).

One of Athens' youngest Presbyterian Churches, Covenant was officially established in May 1966, with 33 members. Since the early days of organization, the membership has grown to over 300 confirmed members. The program of the church includes many aspects of worship, study, outreach, and fellowship. A new outreach program that was started this past year in

collaboration with 4 other churches is called FEAST - a mobile food pantry. Covenant also shares the facility with many groups and organizations in the Athens community, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Athens Mother Center, Project Safe, and residential community associations. Covenant supports ministry to students through the Presbyterian Student Center at the University of Georgia. Covenant Church is a member of the Northeast Georgia Presbytery, Synod of the South Atlantic, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA). The congregation reflects the rich diversity of the Athens community and all members are given an opportunity to share their gifts in Christian ministry. On May 1, 2016 we at Covenant Presbyterian Church will celebrate our 50th Anniversary as a church family!

FS Ratiboř – Southminster Pittsburg, Pennsylvania

Ratiboř/Kateřinice is located in Moravia close to Vsetin. The protestant tradition reaches here to hussite era. Till the end of the 18th century, when there were either lutheran or reform churches allowed, the people of Ratiboř took secret protestant sermons in houses. In 1781 nearly whole village declared their membership of a new protestant church. First they met at the wooden church, later they have built a new red brick one designed by famous Wien architect Franz Foster. Last year the building was completely renewed.

The congregation has a lot of meetings apart the Sunday service – Bible study for both adults and kids, meetings of mother with little kids and the famous bell musician group „Good News Bells“. The congregation is quite open and propose to public concerts or exhibitions. The congegation has about 800 members.

Southminster is a 1300 member congregation located in suburban Pittsburgh, PA. Our ministries include a strong youth program and a strong interest in mission. Southminster has partnered with the St. Andrew's Church of Central Africa Presbyterian in Mulanje, Malawi to build a secondary school. The school opened in 2012 with 100 students and attendance has now reached maximum capacity of 200 students. Southminster is in the process of building dormitories for the students and providing lunches for the students in order to rid hunger as an obstacle to learning. The partnership continues as we send teachers to help in the school.

Out of pocket or On a stewardship (Mark Harper)

The presentation on stewardship will focus on ways that Covenant Presbyterian Church in Athens, Georgia and other Protestant congregations in the United States conduct stewardship campaigns or pledge-drives. A theological basis for stewardship along with some sample materials will be offered that could be useful as the ECCB transitions away from state funding.

Analysis of Church Financing – ECCB and PC USA (Kateřina Srbová and Ondřej Srb)

The presentation compares differences in church financing in ECCB and PC USA. Current state will be described as well as the transition to self-financing in Czech. Current situation at one American and one Czech congregation will be described.

Other partnerships: Faculty PFT / CTS, PTS * Diacony (Jan Roskovec, Kateřina Svobodová)

Jan Roskovec will introduce Faculty PFT, both the history and the present with focus on international and ecumenical relations and will be ready to answer questions.

Kateřina Svobodová will introduce ECCB Diacony: who we are, mission, values, structure, main tasks, services, projects, support (finances), services in numbers.

How I have encountered the ECCB (Karen Moritz)

Karen will share her fun, and often humorous, journey with the ECCB and the PCUSA over the past 5+ years. How are we alike and what can our differences teach us about ourselves and each other?

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Mark Douglas

Professor of Christian Ethics at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA, where he teaches a wide variety of classes and directs the Masters of Divinity degree program. He is also the founding editor of *@ this point: theological reflections on church and culture*, the seminary's online journal and the current chairman of the board of Georgia Interfaith Power & Light, the largest faith-based environmental organization in Georgia. He holds degrees from Colorado College (B.A.), Princeton Theological Seminary (M.Div., Th.M.), and The University of Virginia (Ph.D.). He is an ordained Presbyterian minister and is married to Lindsay Armstrong, who is also a Presbyterian minister. They have one child, their daughter, Logan. His most recent book is *Believing Aloud: Reflections on Being Religious in the Public Sphere* (Cascade, 2010). He is currently working on a book about the impact of climate change on war.

Carol Finlay

She has worked for the Church since 1990, first as a volunteer in Pakistan and India and then for 10 years as a Nurse Teacher in Malawi. On returning to Scotland, she took up a position in the Church Offices, within the World Mission Department. Her main role is to engage the Church in Scotland with the challenges and opportunities of our International Partners and to seek areas of mutual learning and support.

Mark Harper

He is in his 12th year as pastor of Covenant Presbyterian Church in Athens, GA. A native of North Carolina and a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary, He has served churches in Pennsylvania and Georgia, while also working with people who are homeless and in prison. He is married to Susan Harper, and together they have three children: Chris, Gabe, and Hanna. Susan, Gabe, and Hanna have all traveled to the Czech Republic with earlier delegations from Covenant.

„We deeply value our friendship with our sisters and brothers in the ECCB and especially the congregation at Olomouc.“

Martin Horák

Pastor of the ECCB.

Ministered in ECCB Jilemnice, Potters Bar and Brookmans Park United Reformed Church (United Kingdom), now in ECCB Brno II.

Betty McGinnis

is an Elder in the Presbyterian Church USA and has served on numerous Local Church, Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly Committees, as well as serving as Moderator of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic and organizing the international part of the Presbyterian Church Youth Triennium in its origin. As well, Betty has served as a consultant with numerous

embassies and non-profits to set vision and organize projects. She worked in both public school and University settings in the fields of science and education. Presently, she chairs the PCUSA Czech Mission Network Steering Team, serves as the director of World Artists Experiences which bridges cultures and people across the continents in communities, colleges and schools. She is married to John McGinnis and has four children, all who have wonderful memories of serving along side members of the ECCB on Dlaconie projects, in Brno, Belech, Klobouky, etc. She is a grandmother of seven grandchildren.

Karen Moritz

The Rev. Dr. Karen R. Moritz is a PCUSA Mission Coworker in Prague, Czech Republic. She was born in Sanford, Florida and ordained in Jacksonville. As a “Navy Brat” and minister she has lived all over the US in the South, East, and Midwest and now resides in Prague. Her mother, brother, nieces and nephews currently reside in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Karen is currently a minister member of Homestead Presbytery and has served as a hospital chaplain, parish pastor and university chaplain in various places around the country. She has completed almost six years of service as a mission coworker. She works with our partner denomination the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren as a bridge between ECCB and PCUSA congregations and individuals. She also works with English speaking individuals and groups travelling to the Czech Republic. You can learn more about her and her ministry at www.pcusa.org/karen-moritz or contact her at moritz@e-cirkev.cz or karen.moritz@pcusa.org.

Pavel Pokorný

First Deputy of the Moderator and Pastor of the Congregation Prague – Střešovice. Hospital chaplain of mobile hospice. Married, four children and one grandchild. My wife Daniela is a school psychologist.

Jan Roskovec

Graduated as Th.M. from ETF UK in 1990, between 1990-1999 a minister of ECCB congregation in Nymburk. In 2003 received PhD degree from ETF UK. At present Director of the Center for Biblical Studies, Associate Dean for international and ecumenical relations in ETF UK, Assistant Professor of the Department of New Testament in ETF UK.

Pavel Ruml

Chaplain of Personnel Agency of Army of Czech Rep., deputy Chief Chaplain.

The pastor of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren, studied Comenius theological faculty of Charles University in Prague and University of Aberdeen, Scotland.

1984 - 1999 pastor in the church, since 1999 military chaplain.

He served in the 4th brigade of rapid deployment in Havlíčkův Brod, in the Joint Forces Command in Olomouc and in the Central Military Hospital in Prague. Since 2013 chaplain of Personnel Agency of Army in Prague.

Missions abroad : SFOR (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Enduring Freedom (Kuwait / Iraq), Tunisia (Tobruk), KFOR (Kosovo).

Jan Sláma

A civil engineer. Since 1990s he has been working for Diakonie in Klobouky, Synodical council of the ECCB and Naděje charity as a building and management deputy. Retired and living in Brno with his wife Jana, he volunteers for various charity projects. He is member of the 1st Brno congregation of the ECCB. Since 1992 Jan Slama had been co-organizing meetings of the ECCB and PC USA members, based on common manual work, sharing and visiting historical sites.

Petr Sláma

Ordained minister of the ECCB. Reads the Old Testament at the Protestant Faculty of Theology of the Charles University in Prague. With his wife Lucie and three daughters they are members of the congregation in Brandýs nad Labem.

Kateřina Srbová

Senior at Faculty of Economics and Administration at the University of Pardubice and a member of Pardubice congregation. As her master thesis Analysis of Church Financing – International Comparison.

Ondřej Srb

Graduated from Economics and Administration faculty at Masaryk University in Brno. Currently working at the Office of International Affairs and Development at the University of Pardubice. Member of Pardubice congregation.

Kateřina Svobodová

Graduated as a Doctor of Law from Charles University in Prague in 1989. Graduated as a teacher in a lifelong learning programme from Charles University in Prague 2009. Worked in a commercial sector in many positions, as a teacher at a lower secondary school, as a gateway assessor at the Citizens Advice Bureau in the UK. Currently employed as a worker for foreign relationships at the Diaconia ECCB in Prague. Member of Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren since she was born, active in Church of England during her stay in England, East Sussex 2011-2015. Member of Modrany congregation in Prague. Married since 1986, mother of three.