

Glorious Hope Slavná naděje

Vol. 35 N° 1 2009

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The Centennial Celebration



The Mission Today and Always

As my Father has sent me, I am sending you

John 20:21b

Convention Mission Statement

The Czechoslovak Baptist Convention of USA and Canada exists 1) to assist in extending the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in lands of central and eastern Europe, particularly the Czech and Slovak Republics; 2) to support the work of Baptists and other evangelical churches in North America that minister to persons of Czech and Slovak descent, and 3) to provide a Christian context for worship, fellowship, teaching, and appreciation of heritage among those in the United States and Canada who bear interest in the nationalities we represent.

Misijsní poslání konvence

Československá baptistická konvence Spojených států a Kanady byla ustanovena za účelem: 1) napomáhat v šíření evangelia našeho Pána Ježíše Krista v zemích střední a východní Evropy, zvláště v České a Slovenské republice; 2) podporovat práci baptistů a jiných evangelikálních církví v severní Americe, které slouží českým a slovenským potomkům; 3) předložit formu bohoslužby, obecnství a učení, vážit si dědictví těch, ve Spojených státech a v Kanadě, kterým leží na srdci národy, které reprezentujeme.

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Editorial



The Copper Teapot
Copper dishes have been used in the kitchen since ancient times. Due to certain characteristics of this metal, dishes made of copper are a favourite among kitchen accessories. Copper has a high heat conductivity which causes high thermal power. So that it doesn't lose its quality and attributes, every metal needs to be

cleaned and polished once in a while. The cleaning of a copper teapot invoked a train of thought with regards to dishes.

Dishes are made out of varying types of material, from wood, clay, iron and precious metals, to glass and even porcelain. Every material is distinguished by a set of unique characteristics which determine its use. All dishes have one thing in common: with time, every one of them becomes dirty and needs to be cleaned for its beauty and luster to shine once more.

The Bible also makes a comparison between a person and a vessel. The Lord points out to Ananias that Saul (later known as the apostle Paul) is God's chosen vessel (Acts 9:15). In this comparison the vessel represents the inner person, or the heart.

A person's lifestyle corresponds directly to the state of that person's heart. It affects his or her thoughts, perceptions and

Continues on page 20

Měděný čajník.
Měděné nádoby se v domácnostech používaly od pradávna. Měděné nádobí patří mezi oblíbené vybavení kuchyně. Je to díky specifickým vlastnostem tohoto kovu. Měď má vysokou tepelnou vodivost, která způsobuje vysokou výhřevnost. Každý kov potřebuje občas vyčistit a přeleštit, aby neztratil své vlastnosti a využití. Čištění měděného čajníku vyvolalo proud myšlenek souvisejících s nádobami.

Nádoby jsou vyráběny z různých materiálů—od dřeva, hlíny, železa a ušlechtilé kovy až ke sklu a porcelánu. Každý materiál se vyznačuje zvláštními vlastnostmi, které také určují jeho použití. Jedno však mají všechny nádoby společné. Časem dojde k znečištění nádoby a je potřeba ji vyčistit. Potom opět vynikne její krása a lesk.

V Bibli se setkáváme s přirovnáním nádoby k člověku. Ananiáš byl Pánem upozorněn na to, že Saul (později apoštol Pavel) je Boží vyvolená nádoba (Skutkové 9:15). V tomto přirovnání je nádobou myšleno nitro člověka.

Pokračování na straně 11



OOOpppss!!

On the cover of last issue of *Glorious Hope* was omitted caption, describing the picture. It should read:

Members at the meeting of the General Board at Christ Community Church, Campbell, Ohio on October 25, 2008.

We are very sorry. Editors.



Front Cover: Centennial Logo - G. Sommer, V. Malek
Back Cover: Photo - Eva Řeháková





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It is with a deep sense of honor and blessing that I welcome members and friends of the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention to their Centennial Celebration on the campus of Alderson-Broaddus College in Philippi, WV.

What a wonderful ministry and history we have in this beautiful partnership between the Convention and the College! For 20 years, the Convention has brought its annual meeting to a place of peace and spiritual hope on our campus. I am grateful for every convention participant who has walked through our buildings and strolled across our grounds. The spirit of this wonderful association remains with us.

As we feature a notable "covered bridge" in Philippi, West Virginia, there is a special "bridge" which has connected the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention with Alderson-Broaddus College. It is a partnership maintained by the diligence and faith of George and Marija Sommer, who have been valued members of the A-B College family for 40 years.

What a joy for A-B College to welcome this important gathering on a West Virginia mountain! Our campus community will be blessed by the presence and ministry of Convention leaders and representatives of the Czech Baptist Union.

July 9–12, 2009, will be a special moment in the history of Alderson-Broaddus College, and a unique opportunity to "roll out the red carpet" and welcome our friends, brothers, and sisters of the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention. I believe that everyone will benefit from a rich opportunity of remembrance and spiritual renewal.

May God richly bless you as you prepare to receive the warm welcome of our College and the vibrant fellowship of friends and family in an outstanding Centennial Celebration.
With glorious hope,

J. Michael Clyburn, President
Alderson-Broaddus College
Philippi, West Virginia

The Beginning of Wisdom, Part 2

Rev. Stan Mantle

Job 28:20, 23–28

I haven't seen yet the movie *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*, the latest adventure of the globe-trotting archeologist played by Harrison Ford. If it is true to formula, however, it should go something like this. News is received of an archeological treasure of great worth and an expedition is mounted to find and retrieve it. Getting there requires someone with special knowledge: a guide, a scholar, a priest; someone steeped in the ancient practices and forgotten rituals who knows the way to the hidden treasure and how to escape the deadly dangers along the way. With the help of this leader, after numerous plot twists, explosions, secret chambers and heart-pounding escapes, the good guys prevail and the bad guys are thwarted. The fate of the treasure itself is somewhat variable. It may be gained, returned to its proper custodians or lost once more in the mists of time. Someone who has seen the movie I am sure will let me know if I am even close.

In any case the significant point is that hidden treasure, especially the priceless treasure of wisdom, requires a guide to reveal to those who are searching for it where it may be found. And interestingly, the book of Job mentions such a guide. God understands the way to wisdom, we are told: and he alone knows where it dwells. (Job 28:23b)

This only makes sense. How could we know the mind of God, the way He has made things fit and work together, the principles built not only into the fabric of the cosmos but into the fine lacework of our souls, unless He chose to reveal these to us? Could we invade the precincts of heaven and force God's secrets from Him? Hardly. And even if the Creator were to open His heart and mind to us with fact and detail and explanation, how would we even begin to understand? The limits of our comprehension are quickly apparent when we are confronted with someone speaking a language we have never learned, and this is with human languages. To crack the code of Divine speech is for mere mortals beyond our reach.

But Divine willingness is there, Divine condescension desires that wisdom should be apprehended by us and so God calls to those who will to come with Him, follow Him back, back, far back to the bubbling fountain of creation. The hidden path He leads along goes past the workshop where the force of the wind was engineered, where its effects from slightest breeze to sheering hurricane force were carefully designed with weather, bird soaring, seed scattering and myriad other applications in view. A bend in the trail takes us by the great flask where the waters were measured to be poured out in specific quantity respectively, upon river and lake and ocean. Nearby, the origin of the rain



and thunderstorm may be seen.

Storm declarative rising,
Drops definitive falling,
Dark clouds streaming
Lightning flashing,
Thunder booming
Loosed to the path assigned.

Taken back to the infancy of the world, granted a glimpse of the beginning of things, we find at the commencement of the wind and the water, at the introduction of the rain and thunderstorm, something else:

"... then he looked at wisdom and appraised it; he confirmed it and tested it,"

(Job 28:27)

the record in Job declares. This report that wisdom was present at the Beginning is confirmed and beautifully expanded by a portion of Proverbs 8, where Wisdom gives eloquent testimony on its own behalf:

"The Lord brought me forth as the first of his works, before his deeds of old; I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began. When there were no oceans, I was given birth, when there were no springs abounding with water; before the mountains were settled in place, before the hills, I was given birth, before he made the earth or its fields or any of the dust of the world. I was there when he set the heavens in place, when he marked out the horizon on the face of the deep, when he established the clouds above and fixed securely the fountains of the deep, when he gave the sea its boundary so the waters would not overstep his command, and when he marked out the foundations of the earth. Then I was the craftsman at his side. I was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in his presence, rejoicing in his whole world and delighting in mankind." (Proverbs 8:22–31)

Deeper than the deepest mine shaft or the depths of the sea, our dark-cloaked guide has brought us to the edge of existence to show us treasure - Wisdom. But it is not a shiny principle, a glittering proposition or even a scintillating aggregate of knowledge. Heart racing, palms sweating, breath gasping, we realize that Wisdom is not a what but a Who, before Whom we are standing.

To dig down through the bedrock, to dangle and sway in dark narrow shafts, to crawl through underground tunnels after the treasures of the earth, silver and gold and precious stones, is something to challenge the bravery and courage of the most stalwart of seekers of worldly wealth. But to mount an expedition and follow the course over steep mountain paths and along meandering valleys until in the black recesses of an endless looming cave at last your eyes regard your goal Wisdom, and Wisdom with burning, glowing eyes regards you back—this is frightening,

fearsome, awful. The Scripture teaches:

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom..."

(Prov. 9:10a)

It is no shame to be careful with what is mysterious, to respect what is powerful, to be wary around what is dangerous, to hold in awe and reverence what is glorious, unblemished, holy, separate. In an age where the ancient fences are over-run and crowds trample sacred vineyards, the fear of the Lord is sorely missing. God is mysterious, powerful, dangerous, glorious, holy, and separate. And fear, reverence, respect are the rightful beginning responses of recognizing this.

This fear note clearly is the beginning and not the end of wisdom. There is much more the Scriptures would teach us of the One who was present at Creation, who in the beginning was with God and was God, and through whom everything was made that has been made. They would introduce us to a Person and lead us into a relationship which embodies all the benefits of wisdom - good choices, right decisions, successful living, rich fulfilment, lasting peace, eternal life. But the starting place and entry point is still the appropriate attitude of respect and reverence encompassed by the time-honoured phrase the fear of the Lord.

When Heather and I were young parents in Toronto, I had a desire to move out of the city and buy some land in the country, but whenever I suggested it, Heather would raise all sort of objections—there would be a long commute to work, it was too expensive, it wasn't practical. About that time I had a sense that something was coming. I was serving on the Deacon's Board at our church and I thought that this sense might be related to an evangelistic training event we were planning with a guest speaker: the principal of Acadia Divinity College in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Dr. Andrew McCrae, coming to lead it. Well the event came and went, and it was a blessing. Shortly afterwards, a thought popped into my mind about going to seminary in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. It was not a thought I wanted to nourish, and so I quickly dismissed it. After all I enjoyed my job as a programmer/analyst for the Bank of Nova Scotia, while Heather was a busy mom as well as the supervisor of the daycare centre at our church. She had worked to support us when we were first married while I finished my last couple of years of university and was now quite happy to have my income as well as hers to support the family. So the idea of moving to the other side of the country and going back to life as a student, this time with two young children in tow - actually it would turn out to be three children but this was a surprise the Lord hadn't revealed to us yet—this crazy idea of going to seminary was not something I was interested in nourishing. So I quickly dismissed it. Somehow or other, however, Heather sensed that something was on my mind, and so she asked me, as wives do sometimes: "What are you thinking about?"

I didn't want to talk about it and so I put her off. That evening she asked again and so, feeling rather foolish, I told her, "I had this thought about going to study at Acadia."

As far as I was concerned, this was her cue to jump in with all her objections about economics, and distance and practicality, as she had done with my more modest proposal of moving 30 miles out of the city to buy a house in the country with a

little land. But she didn't do this. Instead she simply responded: "Oh, I have thought about that too."

And then I was afraid, really afraid, because if Heather was thinking about this too, and was open to this crazy idea with all the risks and uncertainties it involved, open in a way she had never been to a comparatively simple move to the country, then that must mean... that must mean God was involved. And if this was God's idea, how do you dismiss it, how do you ignore it, how do you slip out of His grasp? And so I was afraid. And do you know something... twenty-five years later I can tell you it was right to be afraid, for we were about to be caught up in the plans of the living God, and that is an awesome thing. Did He care for us? Yes. Did He provide for us? Yes. Did He go before us and wonderfully find the way? Yes. Did He help us and bless us beyond our imagining? Yes. But that doesn't mean the prospect of turning over the reins and letting the Creator of the Universe drive for You shouldn't fill You with fear. It should. It had better, because *"He makes the clouds his chariot and rides on the wings of the wind. He makes winds his messengers and flames of fire his servants."* (Psalm 104:3b-4)

A ride with this Driver can raise the hair on the back of your neck. A trip with Him behind the wheel can have you, eyes popping and white-knuckled, hanging on for your life. When You notice His glance, see Him kicking the tires of Your car or motorcycle, it is good to be afraid. It means you have an idea at least of Who He is, and what He can do.

In C.S. Lewis' classic children's tale, *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe*, four children find their way into the magical land of Narnia, which is ruled over by the wicked white witch. In the tale the rightful king of Narnia is Aslan, a great lion, for whose return the loyal subjects of Narnia longingly wish. In fact, a rumour is about that "Aslan's on the move," something which excites the hearts of the loyal Narnians. Lucy, one of the children, converses in this wise with a pair of beavers about Aslan, who is a figure for Christ.

"Is—is he a man?" asked Lucy. "Aslan a man!" said Mr. Beaver sternly. "Certainly not. I tell you he is the King of the wood and the son of the Great Emperor-Beyond-the-Sea. Don't you know he is the King of Beasts? Aslan is a lion—the Lion, the great Lion." "Ooh, said Susan, "I thought he was a man. Is he—quite safe? I shall feel rather nervous about meeting a lion." "That you will, dearie, and no mistake," said Mrs. Beaver; "If there's anyone who can appear before Aslan without their knees knocking, they're either braver than most or else just silly."

"Then he isn't safe?" said

Lucy. "Safe?" said Mr. Beaver; "Don't you hear what Mrs. Beaver tells you? Who said anything about safe? 'Course he isn't safe. But he's good..."

This is it, the place to start, the place to begin to build, the first rare jewel in a deep, rich mine with many more:

"Truly, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom..." (Job 28:28)
Amen.

This message was presented on Thursday, July 10, 2008, during the 99th Annual Convention in Philippi, West Virginia



Connecting With the Unchurched Through Sports Evangelism

Dr. Josef Solc

Introduction

One of the greatest problems the church is facing in the 21st century is the lack of interest among secular people to listen to the gospel message. 95% of them do not visit a church of their own volition. When Christians try to visit them in their houses, they encounter a cold reception. The loss of Christendom in the Western world is undeniable. Unless we find new ways to attract the secular people around us, we will not fulfill the Great Commission that Christ gave us.

I want to prove that Christianity can find a way to open the door to secular people by joining them in sports activities. This is an indirect approach that can build a foundation for building relationships with non-Christians. Sports provide a universal language that is understood all over the world. Such communication is available in spite of cultural, social, political, religious, and linguistic barriers.

Unless we find new ways to attract the secular people around us, we will not fulfill the Great Commission that Christ gave us. Sports provide a universal language that is understood all over the world..

Sports can open the door to individual encounters that are so important for Christians who desire to share their faith. These encounters are limitless. Two skiers can meet on the chair lift and will spend the rest of the day skiing together and enjoying the day of healthy activity. A group of ice hockey players can play for fun and after the game will go to relax over a meal in a restaurant with an opportunity to discuss their scoring chances and future plans. And who would challenge the fact that some people play golf just to socialize with others in the beautiful environment of a well-groomed golf course. These examples could go on and on, but it will suffice to say that in a world that is as impersonal as ours, sports bring individuals together.

Sports can also engage nearly all nations of the world in the unified sports experience we call the Olympic Games. The world stops for two weeks every other year when all sports-minded



people, about 95% of all people living in our world, are interested in the results of worldwide competition. They cheer the athletes from their respective countries and are elated when they win medals, or they are saddened when they lose. Yet, in spite of the joy of victory and the despair of defeat, the world gets together over and over again to compete in sports. This achievement is unparalleled in relationships among people and nations.

There is a yearning in the hearts of Christians to bring the world together through faith in Jesus Christ, who is the Savior of the world and who is capable of improving life here on

earth and who offers eternal life with him in heaven. But the truth of the matter is that some nations will not even allow Christians to present the Good News in their lands. This is also true about secular individuals who reject or are not interested in anything Christians do or say. This fact looms as an enormous obstacle for the evangelization of the world. Our traditional ways of doing evangelism have not been producing desired results; therefore, we must discover ways that would open the doors for renewed efforts to reach all nations.

One way to influence people around us is through sports. Many people either play sports or love to watch them. Christians can join them in a non-threatening way and can establish relationships with them. An invitation to attend a church service may go unheeded, but an offer to play sports will be joyfully accepted. Strangers will speak the same language. They can engage in an activity that is good for their physical and emotional wellness. Before long they are not strangers, but friends.

About 95% of all people living in our world, are interested in the results of worldwide competition. Our traditional ways of doing evangelism have not been producing desired results; The sport they love will provide a common ground that will facilitate opportunities that did not even exist before

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As a pastor, I did my share of outreach in the community around my church. I knocked on thousands of doors, but only seldom felt welcome, as if I were an intruder who encroached on people's time they didn't want to give. I was convinced of the urgency to proclaim the gospel and at the same time I questioned the way I went about it. Then our church moved to a new location when we bought a Racquet Club with 12 tennis courts, a large swimming pool, a soccer field, and a clubhouse. We invited the people of our community to enjoy our facility. We organized tennis clinics and offered swimming lessons. Non-Christians, who would never have thought of rubbing shoulders with Christians before, participated gladly. I remember especially one tennis player who loved to play tennis but showed no interest in spiritual things. First, I just played tennis with him, but later on he started asking questions about things concerning God and heaven. I was able to answer some questions he had, and then he was willing to hear more. Eventually, I presented the gospel to him and he became a Christian. I baptized him and taught him in a Sunday school class while we continued playing tennis as well. A similar scenario happened with others who came to swim or to play tennis.

Christianity and Sports

Sport and religion have existed together from ancient times. The Egyptians worshiped the goddess Sehet as the goddess of sport. The Greeks held the ancient Olympic Games for the first time in 776 BC, on Olympia, known for its magnificent temple to Zeus. They honored Zeus through the Olympic Games every four years. These games were so important that the Greeks counted their time in Olympiads rather than by years. Olympia became the very center of the religious, sporting, and cultural events in Ancient Greece. Those who participated in the Olympic Games did so as unto their gods. The religious element could not be denied. Since these events became a celebration of pagan religiosity, the emperor Theodosius ordered the end of the Olympic Games in 393 AD. He considered the games to be in competition with Christianity. He would not tolerate other activities that would challenge the supreme position of the official Christian religion of the Roman Empire. Here was the very first conflict between sports and Christianity. Theodosius' defense of Christianity was alien to the approach the apostle Paul would have taken. Paul had no problem comparing athletes to Christians since both were examples of striving to win a race. He wrote, *"Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize?"*

Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize," (1 Cor. 9:24-27). Paul probably watched the Isthmus games in Corinth while he stayed there and was sufficiently impressed with those athletes to make comparisons between their effort and that of Christians. He realized that in order to reach the masses of the first century, he could not overlook the appeal of sports. He familiarized himself with sports and contextualized his approach so that he would reach all men.

Early Christian leaders did not follow Paul's example. They did not catch up with the masses as is evident in Chrysostom's statement, "If you ask Christians who is Amos or Obadiah, how many apostles there were or prophets, they stand mute; but if you ask them about the horses or drivers they answer with more solemnity than rhetors [orators]."¹ No matter how much the Christian leaders disliked sports, they did not prevent Christians from being enchanted by them. And when the idolatrous elements of sports were removed, the tide could not be stopped. When Christianity became the empire's religion, Christians participated in their culture and embraced sports, but they did not forget to be constantly critical of possible abuses connected with sports. Their involvement was not overwhelming because of the lack of leisure time. People in general

Here was the very first conflict between sports and Christianity. The Puritans objected to playing sports on Sundays in spite of the permission spelled out in The Book of Sports in 1617, which allowed games to be played after worship services. Some Christians seized this opportunity to reconsider the relationship between Christianity and sports.

did not have much time left after working each day to provide for the basic necessities of life. The military provided more leisure for soldiers in times of peace to engage in sports like fencing and archery. These sports became part of festivities enjoyed by many spectators.

Moving on to the Reformation period, some reduction of the Roman Catholic influence opened the door to secularization and more activity in sports. The Puritans objected to playing sports on Sundays in spite of the permission spelled out in The Book of Sports in 1617, which allowed games to be played after worship services. This decision only increased the friction between sports and Christianity. Sports then flourished on their own, offering a new variety of sports such as boxing, soccer, and cricket. But it was not until the Industrial Revolution that sports grew in numbers and that spectators were willing and able to pay to watch their favorite teams.

The church tried to regain its position in the progressively

¹ Gregory Baum and John Coleman, *Concilium: Religion in the Eighties: Sport* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1989), 93.

**Mark & Gretchen Potma
Church Planting
through Evangelism
February 2009**



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***What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses
entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.
– 2 Timothy 2:2***

What you have heard from me...

It's been almost 13 years since we began our ministry of church planting through evangelism in the Czech Republic. From the start, we have taken a three-pronged approach: **evangelism, discipleship, and leadership training**. At various stages of church planting, the focus has been more on one of these three prongs, but our goal is to keep these three areas of ministry in balance as we work together with Czech believers to establish reproducing churches.

As many of you have been praying for the four "P"s of the CB Skalka church plant (people, place, provision, pastor), you have seen God answer these prayers in many amazing ways. Now as we focus on the 4th "P", pastor, we see that this prayer is also being answered, perhaps in ways that we would not have expected.

...in the presence of many witnesses...

"How can I most capably and effectively train young Czech leaders in church planting and pastoral ministry?" has been the question that Mark has been mulling over for the past few years. Many of the young pastoral interns and mission workers are now 20 years younger than us (no, we're not getting any younger!). Pastors have the responsibility and authority to take on pastoral interns, so what better way to train and mentor pastoral interns than to actually become a Czech pastor?

So in September, Mark was accepted as a pastoral intern of the Church of the Brethren (CB) with the direct spiritual oversight of the CB Skalka church plant. This was not the answer to the 4th "P" that we had expected! In fact, our goal has never been that Mark would become the pastor of a Czech church, and it still isn't. But going through the ordination process has given Mark an insight into the way that pastors are trained within *Církev bratrská* (Church of the Brethren), which at 6500 members is the largest and strongest evangelical denomination in the Czech Republic. More importantly, after becoming a pastor, Mark will be able to officially train and mentor Czech pastoral interns and future church planters.

Pastoral internship training sessions

Dec 1-3, 2008	Preaching and teaching
Feb 9-11, 2009	Leadership and administration
Mar 9-11, 2009	Pastoral care and counseling
Apr 20-22, 2009	Evangelism and missions

The denominational leaders heading up the training commented on how they have never had such a mature and experienced group of pastoral interns. At our first meeting in December we had an opportunity to



2008-09 pastoral interns at our December training

introduce ourselves in detail, and it was encouraging to see how the Lord had called these men from various professions and from other spheres of ministry to pursue full-time pastoral ministry.

The 3-day training sessions are conducted at a conference center 350 km from Prague, so it is an extra responsibility for Gretchen at home with the children during those three-day stretches. In addition, there are pastoral conferences to attend in January, May, September, and November, plus church-planter training during the year.

...entrust to faithful men...

The baton of leadership is being passed on to the next generation in all three ministry initiatives where we have been serving with TEAM over the past 13 years:

CB Skalka: Petr Šedý – part-time outreach worker
CB South City: Marek Markov – full-time youth worker
CB Šeberov: Matěj Hájek – full-time associate pastor



Petr Šedý with Mirka

Allow us to introduce these three young men to you:

Petr and Mirka are engaged to be married in August. Mirka is moving to Prague and they plan to look for an

apartment in the area around Skalka. Both of them have a few years of schooling ahead of them—Petr in theology and religious education and Mirka in social work. They both have a burden for the salvation of their families and are eager to dialogue with unbelievers. Petr has taken on English and Bible classes and co-leadership of the young adults group at CB Skalka, with his responsibilities expected to expand in the fall as our co-worker, Pat, goes on home ministry assignment.



Marek and Věra have been married 2 ½ years. They spent the first year of their marriage in Ireland, depending on God and their musical gifts to get by. They lead worship together and Marek is a gifted Bible study leader. Marek is currently taking on the leadership of the

Marek and Věra Markov youth group at South City Church as well as gaining experience in preaching and leading worship. He hopes to become a pastoral intern under Robert Filip starting in September.

Matěj Hájek was installed as the associate pastor at CB Šeberov in October. We remember when Matěj was invited to the Šeberov church as an unbeliever by a



Matěj Hájek (2nd from left) ordained for ministry

schoolmate nine years ago, back when the church was still meeting in a school gym. He became a believer shortly after and began serving youth in the church and the community. He is married to **Eva**.

...who will be able to teach others also.

Meanwhile, the ministry of evangelism, discipleship and leadership training is continuing at **CB Skalka**. We are in the middle of our second **Marriage Course** outreach, with six couples participating. The **young adults' small group** is working its way through the book of **Romans**, and the **Seniors' Club** is studying the **Lord's Prayer**. The fall **Alpha Course** finished up with a Christmas banquet with 25 people in attendance, and Petr Šedý will head up the next Alpha Course, which begins in March.



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Being and Building the Body of Christ – Wherever the Most People Have the Greatest Need

Our next generation

Luke, Noemi, Ben and Elise are doing well in school and are enjoying plenty of extracurricular activities, including playing a jazz improv with the piano teacher and attending Swan Lake ballet at Christmas.



Prayer Points:

1. Pray for healthy marriages for each of these three couples, Petr & Mirka, Marek & Věra, Matěj & Eva. Pray that God would continue to confirm their call to pastoral ministry at their varied stages of service.
2. Pray for Mark as he fulfills the requirements involved in being a pastoral intern, which will culminate with submitting a 50-page paper written in Czech by the end of 2009.
3. Pray for us as the 2 Timothy 2:2 process goes on in our family as well in the church.
4. Pray for opportunities to share the gospel through ongoing outreach activities—English and Bible classes, the Marriage Course and clubs—and for the Sunday Services each 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month.

Listening, entrusting, and teaching,

*Mark & Gretchen
Luke Noemi BEN ELISE*



Ruby Mikulencak
December 2008

Six degrees F., a cold north wind and Dec 2nd have me thinking about a return to warmer weather. It is hard to believe that I only have a month left before I return to Ghana. I have had a great home assignment, which might explain my reluctance to return to Ghana but oh... the weather - how it can change your mind in a hurry!!

Last week was Thanksgiving, which always makes us think of how thankful we should be for God's bountiful blessings. First of all God has been so gracious in giving good health and safety in travel these past eight months. I am also grateful for a vehicle that runs well and takes me safely on long journeys. I am thankful for the chance to reconnect with my dad. I also am thankful for many of you who have hosted me and made my time with you so enjoyable. Your interest in and concern about God's work in Ghana always makes the sharing so special. So many of you have graciously listened and responded with concern, and have given to projects and promised to pray for the work in Ghana. Lastly I am thankful for my family! Both my primary and extended family have made my time something I will not forget for a long time. God has blessed us with such a wonderful Christian heritage. My Aunt Mary at 86 years of age put on such a wonderful meal for my birthday. I was so impressed by her labor of love.

You too have impressed me by your faithfulness in giving and praying these past 35 years. Through the years the Lord has always provided for the support I needed, but this time I am short \$150 a month. Join me in prayer that this amount will be met so that I can return to Ghana on January 2nd, 2009. There is a response card at the end of this letter should the Lord lay it on your heart to help meet this need.

My last thank-you goes to all of you who have faithfully given so that I can serve the Lord in Ghana. It is my prayer that in this holiday season you will experience the joy and gladness that the shepherds did many years ago when the angels told them about a Savior who was born in Bethlehem. Warmest Christmas greetings to you,

Ruby Mikulencak



Ruby Mikulencak

March 2009

After a journey of almost 24 hours traveling by vehicle and air, I stepped out into the hot, humid air of Accra. I finally felt warm again! How wonderful to see green and not white! The first time I left my house I looked for my coat, and then remembered I didn't need one. Ahhh...it was good to be back in Ghana. I did struggle with the time adjustment, and found it took me longer to work my way back into the routine of life. Is this an age factor?



Two days after I arrived, I witnessed the swearing in of the new president of Ghana! It is hard to imagine that there was no strife or bloodshed when only 40,000 votes separated him from the loser. It is almost unheard of in Africa to have such a close contest without violence! As a TV commentator said, "Ghana is now the pace-setter for the rest of Africa in showing that a pure multiparty democracy is possible in Africa." The other really cool thing is that the Speaker of Parliament is a woman, the first one in Ghana.

The Chief Justice is also a woman, and this too is historic for Ghana. It was wonderful to be here during this momentous, unprecedented event!

Three weeks after I arrived I had the privilege of attending three workshops on the subjects of theological education, church planting and new initiatives in mission. It was wonderful to interact with people of many different nationalities to discuss the task of mission in our world today. The exciting part is that with Western missions in decline, the rest of the world has taken up the slack and is sending out missionaries by the hundreds. It was thrilling to hear of goals that nations like Nigeria have, to send 50,000 missionaries by 2015. The excitement and passion for missions is contagious. What an exciting time to be involved in God's program for accomplishing the Great Commission.

With your participation in the ministry here through prayer and finances, you too are involved in this exciting adventure of God's plan of reaching the world with the Good News. I am grateful for your faithfulness. I trust and pray that the Lord will give you a sense of excitement at being part of what He is accomplishing!!

Jesus said to go and make disciples of all nations. Those who have gone before us have planted the seed that has grown into a Church that is expanding and becoming more mission-minded. Their faithfulness to the task is a reminder and challenge I have taken personally, and I pray that you will join me in being faithful to this important task as well.

Serving together,

Ruby Mikulencak

Email: ruby.mikulencak@sim.org

Field address: PO Box 9962 KIA, Accra Ghana;

Home: SIM USA PO Box 7900, Charlotte, NC 28241-7900



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secularized world. The revivals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, both in England and America, propelled the church onto the stage of a cultural environment that included sports. Some Christians seized this opportunity to reconsider the relationship between Christianity and sports. They introduced sports into Christian schools as part of a permanent curriculum and promoted sports as preparation for life. They believed that sports would enhance discipline, teamwork, courage, and determination. The positive outcome of this approach resulted in graduates who lived the Christian principles at home and on the foreign mission field. They



showed Christian perseverance and skills that made a difference in the world.

The next period of significant progress in sports relating to Christianity was "muscular Christianity." The term appeared first in a review of Charles Kingsley's book *Two Years Ago* in the February 21, 1857, issue of *Saturday Review*. Thomas Hughes,

a personal friend of Kingsley, developed the concept of "muscular Christianity." He compared muscular Christians in 1860 with "musclemen" in his book *Tom Brown at Oxford*. He wrote, "The only point in common between the two being, that both hold it to be a good thing to have strong and well-exercised bodies.... Here all likeness ends...The least of the muscular Christians has hold of the old chivalrous and Christian belief, that a man's body is given to be trained and brought into subjection, and then used for the protection of the weak, the advancement of all righteous causes, and the subduing of the earth which God has given to the children of men."² Kingsley and Hughes provided an impetus for other scholars such as Gerald Redmont, Peter McIntosh, Andrew Miracle, Roger Rees, and Michael Oriard, to pursue the theme of muscular Christianity. Their definitions varied but the four main characteristics could be summed up as "manliness, health, morality, and patriotism."³ This core ideology was not always interpreted unanimously. It meant different things to different evangelical Christians like Amos Alfonso Stagg, Dwight L. Moody, Charles T. Studd, and Luther Gulick. These small variations did not keep them, however, from affecting significantly the relationship of sports and Christianity within the larger context of society.

(To be continued)

² Thomas Hughes, *Tom Brown at Oxford* (London: Macmillan, 1861), 83.

³ Tony Ladd and James A. Mathisen, *Muscular Christianity. Evangelical Protestants and the Development of American Sport* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 16.

Způsob života koresponduje s vnitřním stavem člověka. Ovlivňuje jeho myšlení, vnímání i činnost. To všechno potom zanechává své stopy v nitru člověka. Proto je důležité dbát o své vlastní nitro a různé nánosy odstraňovat. Jedině tak vynikne krása, která byla do každého jedince vložena Stvořitelem.

Úvaha na toto téma by se jistě mohla rozvinout na několik stran. Mne však zaujaly jiné souvislosti s nádobami. Není to jen materiál, ze které je vytvořena, nebo její krása, ale také tvar a hlavně její využití. Ne každá nádoba je použitelná a ne každá se líbí.

To záleží na vkusu nebo názoru.

Letos si konvence připomíná sto let svého trvání. V průběhu těchto let prošlo konvencí ohromné množství lidí. Každý z nich nějakým způsobem existenci konvence ovlivnil. Jsme svědky jejího současného složení. Naskytuje se nám obraz směsice nádob různých tvarů a funkcí tvořící celek. Spočívá v tom unikátnost tohoto tělesa. Směsice národností a denominací ubírající se k jednomu cíli. Společenství lidí následujících příkladu Ježíše Krista.

V následování je potřeba dbát na čistotu vlastního nitra. Proto žalmista David prosil o čisté srdce (žalm 51;12). Byl si vědom toho, jak velice snadno člověk podlehe okolním vlivům. Vnitřní stav ovlivňuje vlastnosti člověka a určuje jeho charakter. David tyto souvislosti vnímal. Jen z čistého srdce mohou vyzařovat paprsky Boží lásky.

„Kdo se tedy od těchto věcí očistil, bude nádobou ke cti, posvěcenou a velmi užitečnou pro Pána, připravenou pro každé dobré dílo.“
(2. Timoteova, 2; 21 NBK)

Šéfredaktorka Nataša Laurincová



Good News!

In a generous gesture to the convention as we prepare to celebrate our centennial on the campus of Alderson-Broadus College, the school has offered reduced housing charge on campus as follows: \$12.00 per person or bed each night in Benedum Hall, or \$15.00/person/bed each night in Kincaid and Priestley Halls. Please take advantage of this discount and COME!

We are thankful to Alderson-Broadus College for the gift of price reduction at this convention.

Check our NEW Convention Web pages:

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Part 2

Have you been thinking about heaven since yesterday? Any questions?

Until I began to read Alcorn's book, I did not understand, although it seems to be plain in Scripture, that there is a distinction between the eternal heaven and the present heaven. If we do not separate these two heavens, it makes it difficult to understand the many scriptures that describe heaven. We become discouraged and don't try to learn more about heaven. They do not seem to fit together well until you realize there is actually a temporary heaven and a permanent forever heaven.

Today I hope some of the confusion will be lifted as we talk about the present heaven, the heaven where our loved ones who have died in Christ are waiting for Christ to return and for their spirits to be united with their bodies. Let's remind ourselves of 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. This scripture is our hope to be one day with Christ forever. The physical part of us sleeps but the spiritual part relocates to a conscious state in heaven. (Dan 12:2-3 and 2 Cor. 5:8)

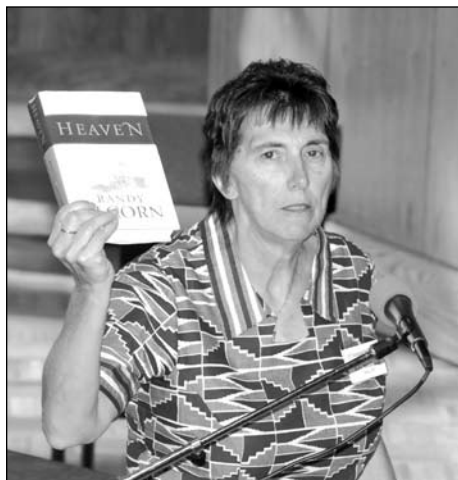
When Christians die, we enter into what is referred to in theology as the intermediate, or temporary, state of heaven. It is temporary because it is not our final destination. It is temporary because we are waiting for Christ's return and the reuniting of our bodies with our spirits.

Maybe you are thinking, what are you talking about Ruby? I don't remember anything in the Scriptures that says there is a temporary heaven. Remember Revelation 21:1-3 says there is going to be a new heaven and a new earth and that will be the permanent residence of our eternal home. Let's read it:

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, New

Bible Study on Heaven

Ruby Mikulencak



Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

These verses seem to indicate strongly that there will be a new heaven. So the place where our loved ones who have died are must be temporary. This present heaven is a place where our loved ones are in God's presence but is not where they will live forever.

Last week when I went to visit my dad, I could tell he was very discouraged. I tried to cheer him up but was not very successful. Then he said, "I want to see my wife." When I heard those words, I cried inside but started to quote Scripture to him. He joined in and then we sang some songs. After that he said to me, "I wonder where Helen is in all this?" It is a question we all ask. What do our loved ones who have died in the Lord know and do while waiting for their resurrected bodies?

Are our loved ones who have died and gone to this temporary heaven conscious of what is happening to them? Listen to 1 John 3:2: "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it never yet was manifested what we shall be; but if it should be manifested, we know that we shall be like him: for we

shall see him as he is."

This verse shows us that there is a conscious existence in the presence of Christ. The moment a Christian's spirit is released from the body, it enters into the presence of our Blessed Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. This information, along with the phrase that we shall be like Him, like Christ, because we shall see Him as He is, can only mean we will know Jesus. The sight of our Lord will be enjoyed by the Christian's spirit on its release from the body. Best of all, we will be perfect just like Him. In order to see and know Jesus, one needs to be conscious. Do you have trouble believing this? Are you doubtful? Believe it, my brothers and sisters!

I find comfort in the fact that God understands us far better than we do ourselves. Even with just a little faith, we need never fear for the moment we depart from our body. It puts an end to this imperfect, struggling state of faith and doubt. The spirit that leaves the well-known, familiar tabernacle of the body is with the Lord. All doubt, all misgiving, is at an end. The bliss of the moment of death consists of being in the presence of Christ.

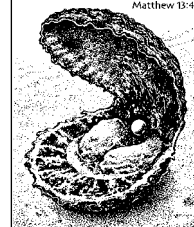
Some of us were saying yesterday that we want to go to heaven but the transport to get there is an unknown. We want to go there but it is a bit scary to think we must die in order to do that. What that will be like and how we will get there is a concern.

My sister Rachel found comfort in Luke 16:22 when our mom died: The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to heaven. God sends his angels to take believers to Paradise. Oh how comforting to know that this journey we will take on dying will not be taken alone!! The angels will accompany us to heaven! Do you think you will be alone when you die and therefore you might lose your way to heaven? Do not lose heart, for the angels are sent to help us on this journey of a lifetime!

In the words of Max Lucado, "Heaven unplugged the grave's power cord, and

The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden.

Matthew 13:44



you and I have nothing to fear. Death is disabled."

Do you and I truly believe this? Is it better to die and be with Jesus? Recently a friend of mine said, "Well, it is better to suffer the pain of arthritis and other ailments than to die." I am not so sure I agree with him, but it does indicate an attitude that we may have, that to die is not a good thing. As I said yesterday, Christians are sometimes fearful of dying, and yet this verse says it will be far better to be with Jesus.

I will say more about this later, but let's get back to those who have already died, as to where they are. Wherever they are, they will be rejoicing at being in Jesus' presence but also looking forward to their bodily resurrection and permanent relocation to the new earth.

We have already looked at one verse, Luke 16:22. Now let's take a deeper look, in Luke 16:19-31. These next thoughts are not my own but what I gleaned from Dr. David Jeremiah. There are some amazing truths here that have been such a balm to my inquisitive mind. I don't ask you to believe all I may say. I only challenge you to consider a different view of heaven than perhaps you have had.

First of all, this passage is not a parable but a story, because of the personal name added to it. It is highly likely that this is a story about people who Jesus knew personally. And I think Jesus tells us this story to help us understand more about heaven. He wants to encourage us not to fear and to look forward with anticipation to this journey to heaven.

We know the story. Lazarus was poor and hungry while the rich man was rich and had scrumptious meals every day. Then they both died. It is highly likely Lazarus did not have a funeral and was not even buried; his body was probably dumped outside the city. In the meantime the rich man had a lavish funeral with lengthy eulogies. This reminds me so much of Ghana.

In Ghana, the more people that come to your funeral, the more important you are. Funerals are huge in Ghana. Sometimes more money is spent on the funeral than on the medical care needed before the loved one dies. But notice that no matter how rich and lavish your life or how many people come to your funeral, if you don't

know Christ, none of those good things follow you to heaven

Notice the contrast between the two men, on earth and after they died. Lazarus' real self was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. Notice that each man knew the other, and there was recognition and a remembrance of those left behind. So people who have died are aware; there is not "soul sleep," as some have led us to believe. Our loved ones who have died are not disembodied spirits just waiting to be reunited with their bodies. They recognize people, they remember their loved ones back home, and there is an eternal place of bliss and of hell.



Lazarus was in Abraham's bosom, but what in the world is Abraham's bosom? In the Old Testament it was the place where the soul and spirit of people went. To lie in Abraham's bosom, then, was a metaphor used by the Jews to denote a condition after death of perfect happiness and rest at the banquet in Paradise. Jesus told this story before he died and rose again, but I wanted you to understand what he was saying here.

What does Ephesians 4:8-10 mean? All those Old Testament people in Abraham's bosom were taken to the third heaven that we talked about yesterday (2 Cor 12:2-4). It seems Jesus entered Paradise and took the saints with him to heaven. When Jesus ascended, he also took Paradise captive and took it to the third heaven.

I want to diverge a bit from Luke and ask, what is Paradise, and is it an actual physical place? Paradise was not generally considered an allegory with a spiritual

meaning, but an actual physical place where God and his people live together (Rev. 2:7, Gen. 2:9, and Rev. 22:2).

The Greek word signifies a park, or garden with trees. The Hebrew word *gan*, garden, is used in a similar way, in the Song of Solomon 4:13, where it is translated as "orchard"; in Nehemiah 2:8, where it is translated as "forest" (the Revised Version margin "park"); and in Ecclesiastes 2:5, where it is in the plural number (the King James Version "orchards," the Revised Version (British and American) "parks").

I began to understand something I did not know until I started to prepare for these studies. The garden of Eden was not destroyed. What was destroyed was mankind's ability to live in Eden. There is no indication that Eden was stripped of its physicality and transformed into a spiritual reality. It appears to have remained just as it was, a physical paradise removed to a realm we can't gain access to, most likely to the present heaven because we know for certain that's where the tree of life now is (Rev. 2:7). And we all know that the tree of life was in Adam and Eve's garden.

The New Testament uses it for the place where the souls of the blessed enjoy happiness. Thus our Savior tells the penitent thief on the cross, "Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise," that is, in the state of the blessed (Luke 23:43). So in the New Testament it denotes some place of happiness and blessing in the heavens.

We should not be so surprised about this because, remember, God came down to talk to Adam and Eve when he could have taken them up to heaven. His original plan was that He would dwell with His people on the earth in this beautiful setting of the garden of Eden, but all that was spoiled by sin. Still, Scripture seems to indicate here that Jesus took Paradise, with all the Old Testament saints, to heaven after he died and before he arose.

When I realized that Paradise, the garden of Eden, was taken to heaven, what comfort it brought to my heart. Mom was sitting in a park in a beautiful forest or orchard, enjoying her Savior. After realizing this, I took Dad to a park close to the nursing home he stays at. As we sat by the river, I shared these thoughts with Dad. I said, "Mom is enjoying her heavenly park just like we are enjoying this earthly park."

(To be continued)





Časť 2

Podľa jeho zaslúbenia, očakávame nové nebesá ...

2 Pet. 3:13

Rev. Jan Franka

Dolina tône smrti a nebeské brány
*„I keby som išiel dolinou tône smrti,-
 nebudem sa báť zlého, lebo Ty si so
 mnou“ Žalm 23:4a*

*„Ale Štefan plný Ducha Svätého vzhliadol
 k nebesám, videl slávu Božiu a Ježiša stát na
 pravici Božej, i riekol: Ajhľa, vidím nebesá
 otvorené a Syna človeka stát na pravici Božej.“
 Sk 7:55-56*

V Kresťanských kruhoch sa často hovorí
 o nebi a to vždy v superlatívoch. Pavel to
 opisuje slovami „čo oko nevidelo a ucho
 nepočulo, to pripravil Boh pre verných“, Ján
 hovorí o zlatých uliciach a Ezechiel opisuje
 Nový Jeruzalem a chrám, podobne aj kniha
 Zjavenia Jána. Zvestujeme, že Ježiš pripravil
 pre nás to najlepšie, čo si môžeme iba zamys-
 lieť. Keď takto hovoríme, máme dojem že
 všetci kresťania by chceli byť hneď v tomto
 momente prenesení do neba, ale to nie je
 tak.

Prečo sa mnohí pripravujú, ale nenáhli
 do neba? Odpoveď je jednoduchá: Smrť!
 Raz keď hovorili v nedeľnej škole o nebi,
 jeden chlapec bol úprimný: „Ja nechcem ísť
 do neba, povedal, nechcem sa stať kostrou“. Podobne jeden brat sa sťažoval na svoju cho-
 robu: „minulej noci som bol veľmi nemocný,
 skoro som odišiel k Pánovi, ale modlil som
 sa a Pán sa zmiloval“. Nasmejeme sa, ale
 súhlasíme že je tak. Smrť je ten naväčší
 nepriateľ človeka a strach zo smrti je silnejší
 ako nebeská nádej. Veríme, že smrť nie je
 koniec života, ale jeho súčasť alebo brána,
 ktorou všetci prechádzajú do posmrtného
 života a nevracajú sa viac späť.

Všetci ľudia prechádzajú bránou smrti iba
 v jednom smere, a jediný Pán Ježiš prešiel
 touto bránou tam, ale aj späť. Chceme túto
 biblickú hodinu venovať bráne smrti ktorou
 sa vchádza do večnosti. Naša autorita pre
 skúmanie tejto témy je šesťdesiat šesť kníh
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 základom viery v očistec) a selektované
 svedectvá niektorých zomierajúcich budú iba



ako príklady toho, čo bolo zapísané v Písme,
 bez toho, že samé o sebe niečo dokazujú.

Biblická báza

V úvode som uviedol dve biblické situácie:
 žalmista hovorí o doline tône smrti a kniha
 Skutky apoštolov uvádza Štefanovo kame-
 ňovanie. Obidve situácie svedčia, že smrť je
 bolesť. Predtým ako človek zomrie, zvyčajne
 prejde cez mnohé bolesti. Keďže starozá-
 konní svätí nevedeli mnoho o posmrtnom
 živote, ktorý Boh pripravil pre nich, o toľko
 ťažšie bolo pre nich zomieranie, ako pre
 novozákonných veriacich. Keď Starý Zákon
 hovorí o smrti, používa slovo „zostupovanie
 do jamy“, tu sa používa slovo „údolie“, a
 aby sa dokreslila hrôza, žalmista to opísal
 slovom „tmavé údolie“ (podľa Roháčka)
 alebo „dolina tône smrti“ (podľa Evanjelic-
 kého prekladu).

Štefan nebol apoštolom, ale Boh si ho
 silne použil pre svedectvo v Jeruzaleme,
 ako s presvedčaním Židov, tak aj činom
 veľkých divov a zázakov. V apologetickej
 reči pred staršími Izraela vyzdvihol ich tvr-
 dosť voči Duchu Svätému, čo ich smrteľne
 urazilo, až škripali zubami. Falošne bol
 obžalovaný a podľa Božej prozreteľnosti
 mal sa stať prvým martýrom. Nachádzal sa v
 „tmavom údolí“ a vidiac, že jediná pomoc je
 od Hospodina, „plný Ducha Svätého vzhliadol
 k nebesám a videl slávu Božiu a Ježiša stát
 (pripraveného prijať Štefana), na pravici
 Božej“. Štefan nebol nemocný, aby mal halu-

cinácie, ale pri plnom vedomí a fyzickými
 očami Boh mu dovolil vidieť jeho nebeskú
 slávu a Ježišovu tvár. Potom, keď bol Štefan
 zasypaný kameňmi, aj keď to Písmo expli-
 citne nehovorí, máme dojem, že ešte stále
 fyzicky komunikuje s Ježišom, ktorý sa mu
 zjavil, lebo sa modlí: „Pane Ježišu, prijmi
 môjho Ducha“, podobne: „Pane, nepočítaj
 im tento hriech“. Tesne pred smrťou, mnohí
 svedčili, že Boh im otvoril duchovné oči
 a mohli vidieť veci, ktoré iní ľudia nemôžu.
 Tieto dve vety, ktoré povedal Štefan, hovoria
 o našom Bohu, ktorý sprevádza veriaceho aj
 cez dolinu tône smrti. Predtým ako spadol
 na Štefana prvý kameň, on už videl kam
 odchádza.

Toto je oblasť kde nebudeme špekulovať,
 ale pozrieme sa na nasledovnú časť Písma
 o Lazarovi, a potom aj iné časti Písma: „*Ten
 chudák umrel a anjeli zanesli ho do lona Abra-
 hámovho. Umrel aj boháč a pochovali ho*“ Luk
 16:22. Spoločné pre týchto dvoch mužoch
 je to, že obidvaja zomreli a nemali viacej
 kontrolu nad situáciou. Prvý bol zanesený
 anjelmi a druhý pochyovaný. Tento príbeh
 povedal Ježiš, takže má maximálnu auto-
 ritu. Nemôžeme s istotou povedať, či Ježiš
 hovorí podobenstvo alebo skutočnú uda-
 losť, no máme istotu v pravdivosti princípu.
 Keď zomieral Lazar, prišli pre neho anjeli,
 ktorí ho zanesli do lona Abrahámovho.
 Nevieme, či Lazar videl aj Ježiša, podobne
 ako Štefan.

Keď sa Lazarovi otvorili duchovné
 oči, videl duchovné bytosti ako ho uná-
 šajú. Neskôr uvediem príklady niektorých
 veriacich čo umierali, ako svedčili, že vidia
 anjelov, ktorí boli pripravení ich odniesť.
 Apoštol Júda vo verši 9 cituje apokryfnú
 knihu Mojžišovo vystúpenie: „*Keďže ani
 archanjel Michal, keď bojujúc s diablom hádal
 sa o telo Mojžišovo, neodvážil sa vyniesť nad
 ním potupný súd; povedal len: Nech tá Pán
 škára*“. Vedľa celej polemiky o tom, či je
 List Judov inšpirovaná novozmluvná kniha,
 lebo cituje apokryfnú knihu, nás zaujíma to,
 že okolo Mojžiša sa viedol duchovný boj.

Mojžišov duch bol už unesený; zostalo telo, o ktorom sa píše, že ho Hospodín pochoval. V momente, keď Mojžišov duch opúšťal telo, prítomný bol Boží anjel Michael (alebo aj iní anjeli) a sám diabol osobne. Aj keď nám Písmo o tom nehovorí, verím, že Mojžiš pri svojom zomieraní videl tieto duchovné bytosti. Keď Ježiš oslovil Natanaela, tento sa zadivil ako ho Ježiš pozná keď sa ešte nestretli. Ježiš mu povedal: „*Uvidíš ešte väčšie veci ako tieto. Potom mu riekol: Uvidíte nebo otvorené a anjelov Božích vystupovať a zostupovať na Syna človeka*“ Ev. Jána 1:50–51. Podobné vyjadrenie Božej prítomnosti zažil aj patriarcha Jakob vo sne, keď cestoval k Lábanovi: „*Anjeli Boží vystupovali a zostupovali*“ 1Moj 28:12. Z uvedených oddielov Písma vidno, že Boh niekedy, aby uistil veriaceho, dá vidieť anjelské bytosti, osobitne, keď veriaci prechádza cez „*dolinu tône smrti*“.

Osobitný oddiel Písma v tejto téme je List Židom 12:18–23:

„*Neprišli ste zaiste k hmatateľnému vrchu, ani k horiacemu ohňu, ani k oblaku, ani ku tme, ani k búrke, ani k hučaniu trúby a hrmotu slov také strašné videnie bolo, že Mojžiš povedal: Zlakol som sa a trasiem sa. – Ale pristúpili ste k vrchu Sionu a k mestu živého Boha, nebeskému Jeruzalemu a k desaťtisícim anjelov, k slávnostnému zhromaždeniu a k zboru prvorođených, ktorí sú zapísaní v nebesiach.*“ V minulej biblickej hodine som hovoril o tom, že nebeské priestory nemôžeme určiť vzdialenosťou od nás, ale inou dimenziou. Božia transcendentnosť nám to potvrdzuje, lebo nakoľko Božie Slovo zdôrazňuje jeho blízkosť, nakoľko aj jeho ďalekosť. Veríme, že duchovné bytosti vidia nás, ale my nevidíme ich, nie pre diaľku, ale pre inú dimeziu. Iba keď Boh človekovi otvorí duchovné oči, schopný je vidieť „*neviditeľné*“.

Štefan pozdvihol oči a videl Božiu slávu, Ježiš bol pred učeníkmi unesený na oblakoch, Nový Jeruzalem zostúpi na zem, anjelovi bránilo perzské knieža dvadsať jeden dní priniesť odpoveď na Danielove modlitby, nie žeby cestoval tak dlho, ale prekážka bola veľká a mnohé podobné prípady. Starozákonné vyjadrenie Božej prítomnosti bolo cez hmatateľné veci a novozmluvné vyjadrenie je cez duchovnú spolupatričnosť s Kristom. V Kristovi sa spojilo všetko, On je uholný kameň. V ňom sa spojilo pozemské a ponebeské. Tak v Kristu sme spojení s anjelskými bytosťami a aj s obyvateľmi

nebeských priestorov. Neskôr uvediem niektoré zážitky veriacich, ktorí keď zomierali, videli svojich zosnulých príbuzných ako ich vítajú vo večnosti. Niektorý vykladači Písma opodstatňujú tieto zážitky ako pravdivé práve s textom zo Židom 12:18–23.

Mohli by sme uviesť možno ešte niektoré časti Písma, ktoré by nám dali náznak toho, čo sa deje, keď človekova duša opúšťa telo, ale koniec koncov, musíme priznať že Písmo o tejto oblasti viacej mlčí ako hovorí a každé radikálne vyhlásenie by bolo veľmi nebezpečné. Hlavne, Písmo dáva náznaky že keď človek zomiera, otvárajú sa mu duchovné oči a on je schopný vidieť veci a osoby, ktoré počas svojho života nevidel, lebo boli duchovnej prirodzenosti.

Zážitky zomierajúcich

Čo sa deje v tom momente, keď človek naposledy vydýchne? Aké boli posledné slová zomierajúceho, keď sa mu už dobre nerozumelo? Mnohí boli presvedčení, že im zomierajúci chcel niečo povedať, čo preživa, alebo vidí. My, ktorí vypravádzame zomierajúceho, by sme sa radi pozreli za oponu, cez ktorú náš milý zomierajúci práve prechádza, no Boh to tak neurčil. Jedno menšie percento zomierajúcich, ešte pokiaľ boli pri plnom vedomí, hovorili svojim blízkym o tom, čo vidia.

Znovu opakujem, autorita týchto zážitkov nie je na úrovni Písma, ani zážitkami nechceme potvrdzovať biblické pravdy, lebo možno pre niektorú biblickú pravdu by sa nenašiel priliehavý zážitok, čo by potom znamenalo že Písmo nemá pravdu, lebo to nikto nezažil. Takže Písmo stojí na Božskej autorite a výpovede zomierajúcich porovnávame s tým, čo nachádzame v Písme. V oblasti zážitkov nachádzame opačný problém ako s údajmi s Písma. Keďže Písmo mlčí o tejto téme, toľko sme zaplavení so zážitkami zomierajúcich. Najväčší problém je v tom, že sa zážitky rôznia, niekedy až opačne hovoria o podobnej situácii a ťažko sa posudzujú s Písmom, ktoré skoro mlčí o tom.

Jedna z najčastejších kníh, ktoré sa čítajú pri tejto tematike, je „*Life after Life*“ od R. Moodyho. Moody bol sekulárny vedec a zozbieral zážitky ľudí, čo prežili klinickú smrť, a na základe týchto skúseností prišiel k záveru, že peklo neexistuje, lebo sa nikto nesťažoval na neprijemný zážitok, všetci hovorili iba o láske, prijatí a porozumení od tzv. svetelnej bytosti. Mnohí mu svedčili,

že im táto svetelná bytosť povedala, aby sa vrátili naspäť do života a boli lepšie osoby, no nikde sa nehovorí o hriechu a pokání. Tu sú taktiež zážitky okultistov, ktorí majú silu opustiť svoje telo a lietať priestranstvami. Písmo nám výlučne zakazuje pýtať sa na názor okultnej osoby, preto tento prameň vôbec nebudeme uvažovať. Ďalší prameň zážitkov je od ľudí, ktorí veria v reinkarnáciu a tvrdia že prešli cez život a smrť už niekoľkokrát. Veríme podľa Písma, že raz žijeme a raz zomrieme, preto tieto zážitky tiež odmietame. Chceme uviesť zážitky niektorých veriacich ľudí, ktorých si kresťanská spoločnosť cení ako duchovné autority, taktiež zážitky niektorých neveriacich, ktorí vynikli svojou bezbožnosťou.

(Pokračovanie príště)



From Executive Secretary

... Continues from page 22

Saturday July 11 — **Passing the Traditions of Eternal Life** (Deuteronomy 6:4–9) Barry Moore

Sunday July 12 — **Proclaiming Christ** (Colossians 1:27–29) Denton Lotz

Monday July 13 — Picnic and obecnstvi — fellowship at Blackwater Falls State Park, West Virginia. Plan to stay one extra day and enjoy the beauty of West Virginia.

So register early— your payment checks will not be deposited until July 2009 (the registration form is included) and do not miss this opportunity to have a fellowship or, as Henry Boubelik was saying, “obecnstvi” with brothers and sisters in Christ.

More information and Registration Form can be found and downloaded on the convention web pages: www.czskbc.org www.czskbc100.info or www.glorioushope.info

George Sommer
Executive Secretary



Ruby Mikulencak

Part 1

It is wonderful to be with you ladies and sisters once again! As many of you know, I have been a missionary for over 35 years, and when I return from Africa on furlough I share here with you. During those many years of sharing, people have come and gone. Leadership has changed, but through it all as a concerned group of women you have been faithfully involved in my ministry. I am so grateful that I can personally thank you once again for your partnership with the Bible Church of Africa (BCA) and SIM in Ghana through my service there.

The words of Paul in Philippians 1:3–11 seem to express my heart so perfectly that I thought it would be good to start with reading this passage:

I give praise to my God at every memory of you, And in all my prayers for you all, I always pray with joy, Because of your help/partnership in giving the good news from the first day till now; For I am certain of this very thing, that he who began a good work in you will make it complete till the day of Jesus Christ: So it is right for me to take thought of you all, because I have you in my heart; for in my chains, and in my arguments before the judges in support of the good news, making clear that it is true, you all have your part with me in grace. For God is my witness, how my love goes out to you all in the loving mercies of Christ Jesus. And my prayer is that you may be increased more and more in knowledge and experience; So that you may give your approval to the best things; that you may be true and without wrongdoing till the day of Christ; Being full of the fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

My heart is truly grateful for your partnership with me in the gospel in Ghana. This participation all these years I have served in Ghana makes us partners, and together we partner with God in His world evangelization program of missions.

But like everything else in this world, things change; in fact, in the last 30 to 50 years things have been changing so rapidly it is hard to comprehend it all. For example, it used to be that Africa, Asia, and Latin America were considered the mission field. This is no longer true, because Europe and North America is also a mission field. It is amazing to see many African pastors working in mega-churches in Europe and North America. Christian Europe and North America used to reach Africa, Latin America, and Asia. Now it is Africans reaching out. Pastors and missionaries are now coming from what were traditionally mission fields.

As missionaries from outside of Ghana, my co-workers and I need now to partner with host Christians who are no longer “the work,” but part of the work force themselves. They are now partners, co-workers, and not just “the work.”

Maybe you are thinking, “Well, if Africa is now evangelizing Europe and North America, why do you, Ruby, still need to be there? If the Bible Church of Africa is now partners with you, can they not carry on by themselves and you come home to America?”

That is a good question, and one we asked ourselves as a field. Just before I left we did a country review. It was like an audit, not a financial audit but a ministry audit. We brought in people from outside and inside Ghana to evaluate whether or not SIM still had a job to do in Ghana. We discovered that there is still work there to do.

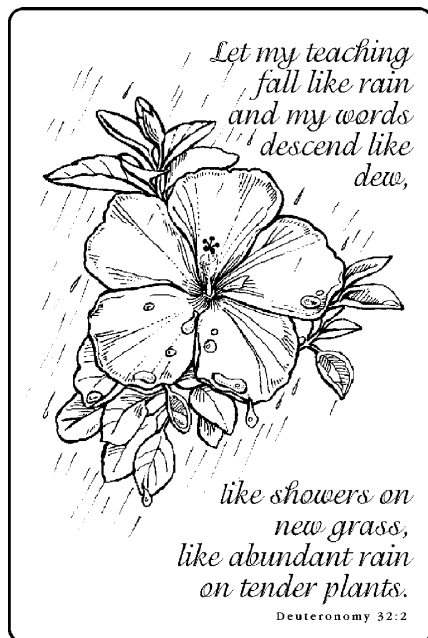
For example, Islam is on the move in Africa. Despite the rapid growth of Christianity in Africa (60 percent of Ghana’s population would say they are Christian), in a few short years Christianity could be in the minority, because of the fast growth rate of Islam. Islam is following very closely the pattern of the colonialist way back in the 1800s and 1900s. They transplant their culture, religion and education, and as they do, more and more people are converting to Islam.

This is so true in northern Ghana. Just over 100 years ago the whole of northern Ghana, which now covers the three regions in the north, was Moslem. In the early 1900s Christianity entered Ghana through the north via the “white fathers.” From there, Christianity spread to most of the north, but now Islam is out to claim it all back.

They have a definite strategy! They want to build a mosque in every village. All you have to do is start building the mosque, and Saudi Arabia provides the rest of the money for villages that want to build a mosque. It doesn’t matter if there is only one Moslem in the village. For, you see, buildings in Africa are not just a structure but have greater significance than here, because they indicate presence. So the presence of a mosque means Islam is in this particular village.

They also give out money to help people farm by buying tractors and providing seed and other farming necessities. In addition to that they offer free education. People know that if they want to get ahead in Ghana they will need education, but it is very expensive. If someone offers to pay for it, naturally they will accept it. They are given the money but also expected to listen to the religion.

I think to me the most serious plan they have is that they encourage their young men to marry young Christian girls as a means



of making them Moslem. My Kasena family has a daughter who grew up knowing the Bible and had a wonderful gift of composing songs in Kasem. But she converted to Islam after the man offered her so many things she never had and she could not resist the material wealth he offered her. It was a huge blow to the church and to me, but it is a good illustration of how serious Islam is to make the north Moslem again.

What can we do to help people understand this strategy? This is where SIM still has a job in Ghana, and where we have mounted two new programs and continue with a project we have already established.

The first new program is called The Way of Righteousness (TWOR). I am really excited about this project. TWOR is a book of 100 fifteen-minute radio programs that talk about how a person can become right with God. It is special because it uses the holy books of Islam and uses a chronological approach to teaching the Good News of the gospel. The holy books of Islam include the first five books of the Bible, the Psalms, Proverbs and Prophets as well as the Gospels. It is a very non-confrontational approach to sharing the gospel. We hope to translate this book into four languages and then air it on radio. Of the four language groups, people in three of these groups are strong Moslems. The other language group is the one in which Christianity first had an impact in the north, back in the early 1900s. This is a huge task, and we ask you to join us in prayer for it to successfully reach many people with the gospel.

The other new program is our Short Term Associates Missions Program. We are trusting that this will encourage people to become long-term workers by allowing them to come and check things out for a few weeks or months, or for one to two years. We trust that after this experience they will decide to commit to missions long-term. We are asking young people to give one year of their lives to help us in encouraging youth to understand and know their faith so they will not be deceived by false religions. Please join us in prayer for ten associates who could help do this strategic work.

This STA program also meets another very strong challenge for us as missionaries, and that is reaching the youth of Africa. In Ghana 45 percent of the population are less than 15 years of age. In 20 years they will be the future of the church and of the nation. The challenge for us is, how can we disciple this group of people?

I am sure you are aware that there is now a global youth culture—they listen to the same music, watch the same movies and through technology talk to each other via the internet using Skype or Facebook. We are hoping that we can connect these young people through this program that will bring glory to God and strengthen the church worldwide.

We also offer scholarships to local young people so they can go on and get theological training as well as vocational training. We

are looking to help young people have jobs by giving training in running businesses. We want to help the youth with establishing a stronger economic base so they can be involved in missions and in supporting the church.

For several years now we have encouraged congregations with financial help to build a church building. The church people provide for 40 percent of the construction costs, and the project raises the other 60 percent. Because of poverty, even with this help, congregations struggle to build a strong building. Remember I said that a building is not just a structure, but it indicates a presence. A church building indicates Christians are present in this village. We believe it is an important strategy to

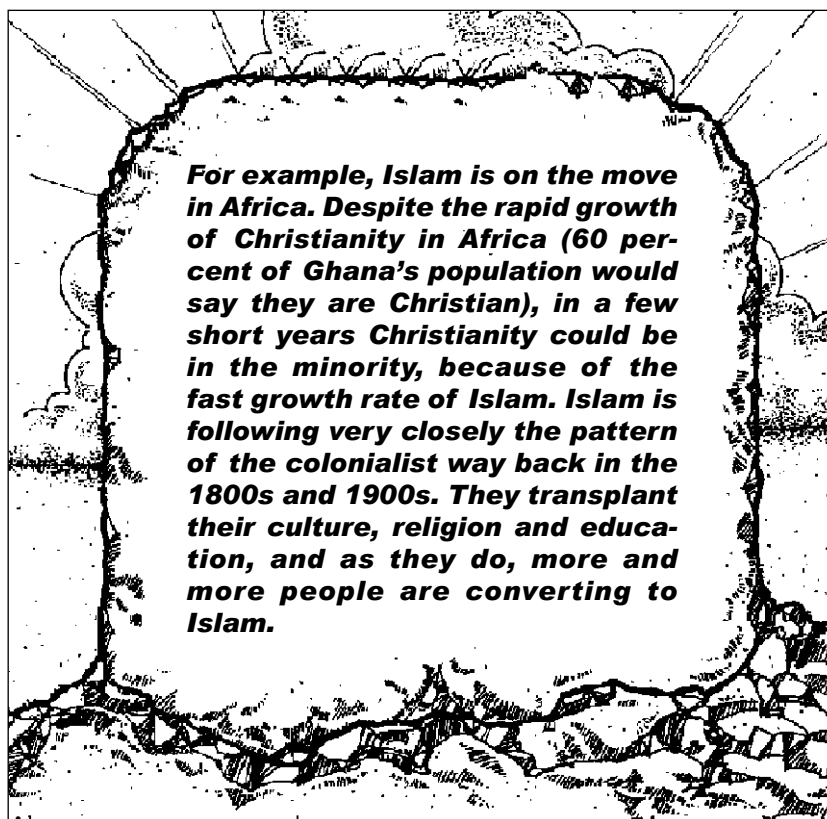
continue to help young churches erect their own buildings.

In addition to the above, there is also the fact that the Bible Church of Africa struggles with organization and running their church programs. This is where we from the West can help, because one of our strengths is administration and organization. So you see there is still work for us to do. It is just a bit different from the way we used to do missions.

(To be continued)

This message was delivered during the 99th annual convention on Saturday, July 12, 2008. [Editors]

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For example, Islam is on the move in Africa. Despite the rapid growth of Christianity in Africa (60 percent of Ghana's population would say they are Christian), in a few short years Christianity could be in the minority, because of the fast growth rate of Islam. Islam is following very closely the pattern of the colonialist way back in the 1800s and 1900s. They transplant their culture, religion and education, and as they do, more and more people are converting to Islam.

Stories Of Squirrel Suzy

A Cozy Home

Natasha Laurinc

The frost painted beautiful pictures on the windows with its invisible brush. It reminded Susan of frozen nature. She saw flowers, grass, ferns, trees and stars of all shapes and sizes. As soon as she scratched one picture off, the frost immediately drew another in its place. It was a peculiar white beauty. The young squirrel closed her eyes and imagined how she would colour the pictures she saw. Suddenly Susan noticed some colours - it was as if the lightest touch of a brush swept through, leaving behind dozens of shimmering sparkles. Susan shifted and the colours disappeared. Actually, they didn't disappear, they simply appeared in another place. Susan's nose tickled so that she sneezed. It was the sun with its rays that was playing with the colours!

Christmas was now long past, but Grandma and Grandpa had not yet left. Winter was really holding on. A ton of snow lay on the ground. Snowstorms, one after another, blew over, leaving broken trees and torn electrical lines in their wake. Many homes were without electricity. Grandma was a little concerned about the safety of their home, but Grandpa reassured her that there was nothing to fear. Both agreed that they hadn't experienced such a long winter in many years.

Susan was very glad that their massive, spreading oak provided a safe home. They didn't need to be afraid of any snowstorm. Of course Father diligently closed all the windows so that the wind couldn't find even one crack through which to get into the house. If it found a crack, the wind would extinguish every ounce of heat.

That reminded Susan of Rudolph, the young squirrel that Grandpa had recently spoken of. How was he doing? Was he warm in his home? Was he safe? She went to ask her Grandpa. He smiled and answered that although Rudolph had had a fine-looking home, it wasn't very safe, for he lived in a spruce tree. The spruce does not belong among strong, resilient trees. Rudolph had been living there for some time. He was feeling sad, because he was still alone. He visited his mother and father, and enjoyed playing chess with his little brother. He was embarrassed to admit that he had behaved rashly. He shouldn't have been in such a hurry to leave home. He was, of course, determined not to change his decision. Then one day, a huge storm blew in, and Rudolph's spruce tree could not bear the windy onslaught. It broke. Fortunately, Rudolph was not home, and so nothing

happened to him. He moved back in with his parents, and was very grateful that he had a place to live. His mother commended him for his courage. She knew that he had learned from this experience.

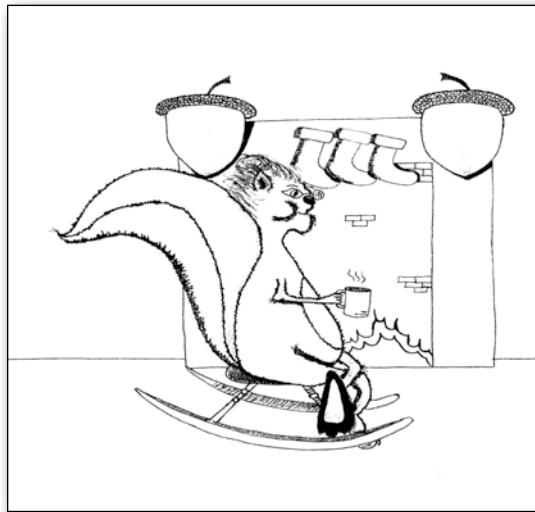
Grandpa gave Susan a long, searching look. He asked her if she knew what is most precious about a home. The young squirrel thought about it. There are many things that are special, but the most special? She didn't know. Grandpa let her think about it some more. He told her that he would give her the answer later that evening. With that, Grandpa lay down on the couch, adjusted his glasses, and began reading a large, thick book. "Just like Grandpa," sighed Susan. He could just calmly sit there, reading a book, while she could be agonizing over this question.

She was giving him a sulky look, when suddenly an idea came to her. She could ask her grandma! She would definitely know the answer. Susan ran into the kitchen where Grandma was baking some donuts. What a delicious scent! They were sure to be yummy in the tummy! Susan loved donuts with plum jam and whipped cream. She also really liked the ones with cottage cheese filling.

Grandma was just putting the donuts in the oven. She wiped her hands on her apron and sat down because her feet were hurting. Susan took the opportunity and asked her. "Oh, that's easy," answered Grandma, "It's the warmth and coziness of the house, of course." The warmth of the home? The coziness of

it? Susan hadn't thought of that. Their home was always cozy, and when it got a little cool, Mother heated up the fire.

Susan hurried to her grandpa. He had just finished a chapter and was turning the page. She wanted to tell him the answer right away. "It isn't evening yet," he protested. The little squirrel couldn't wait. She proudly announced: "The most precious thing is the cozy warmth of the home, especially when it is filled with the yummy smell of donuts that Grandma has just taken out of the oven!" Grandpa smiled. "Quite right, quite right, it is the warmth and coziness of the home. When evening comes, then, you will tell me on what this warmth depends." He winked meaningfully and plunged back into his reading. Grandpa knew that this was a tough question for her. He also knew, however, that it was very important to know the answer to this question. Like anyone who had experienced much, Grandpa wanted his



Continues on page 21

Příběhy veverky Zuzky Teplo domova

Nataša Laurincová

Mráz maloval neviditelným štětcem na okna překrásné obrazy. Zuzce to připomínalo zamrzlou přírodu. Viděla květy, trávu, kapradí, stromy a hvězdy různých tvarů. Sotva pacičkou jeden obraz seškrábala, už mráz maloval další. Byla to zvláštní, bílá krása. Veveruška přivřela oči a představovala si, jak by tyto obrazy vybarvila. Najednou si všimla barevných, třpytivých jiskřiček. Jakoby jemný dotek štětečku obraz poprášil. Zuzka se pohnula a barvy zmizely. Nezmizely, objevily se na jiném místě. Veveku zašimralo v čumáčku až z toho kýchla. To sluneční paprsek si pohrával s barvami!

Bylo již dávno po Vánocích. Babička s dědou ještě neodjeli. Zima byla opravdu tuhá. Napadalo velmi mnoho sněhu. Sněhové bouře se přeháněly jedna za druhou. Ponechávaly za sebou polámané stromy a přetrhané elektrické vedení. Mnoho domácností bylo bez proudu. Babička měla trochu obavy, jestli je jejich domeček v bezpečí. Dědeček ji ujišťoval, že není potřeba se bát. Oba se shodovali, že takovou zimu již hodně dlouho nezažili.

Zuzka byla moc ráda, že jejich mohutný, košatý dub jim poskytoval bezpečné obydlí. Nemuseli se víchřice bát. Však také tatínek pečlivě pozavíral okenice, aby vítr nenašel ani jednu skulinku do domečku. Všechno teplo by jim vyfoukal, kdyby nějakou našel.

Tu si veveruška vzpoměla na Rudolfa, o kterém nedávno vypravoval dědeček. Jak mu asi je? Má v domečku teplo? A je-li v bezpečí? Šla se zeptat. Dědeček se usmál a odpověděl, že Rudolf měl sice pěkný domeček, ale ne tak bezpečný. Bydlel ve smrku. Smrk nepatří mezi silné a odolné stromy. Nějakou dobu tam Rudolf bydlel. Bylo mu smutno, protože byl stále sám. Chodil navštěvovat maminku a tatínka, rád si zahrál šachy se svým mladším bratrem. Styděl se přiznat, že se unáhlil. Neměl z domova tak spěchat. Byl však odhodlaný své rozhodnutí nezměnit. Jednoho dne se přihnala veliká bouře. Rudoufův smrk nápor větru nevydržel a zlomil se. Naštěstí Rudolf nebyl doma, a tak nic se mu nestalo. Nastěhoval se zpátky k rodičům a byl velice vděčný za to, že má kde bydlet. Maminka ho pochválila, že je statečný. Věděla, že se ze své zkušenosti poučil.

Děda se dlouze zadíval na Zuzku. Zeptal se jí, jestlipak ví, co je na domově nejvzácnější. Veverka přemýšlela. Vzácného toho je hodně, ale nejvzácnější? Nevěděla. Dědeček ji tedy nechal přemýšlet. Může mu to povědět večer, řekl. Lehl si na gauč, nasadil si brýle a začel se do velké knihy. To je celý děda, povzddechla si Zuzka. Klidně si čte a ona aby se trápila s vymýšlením odpovědi. Mrzutě ho pozorovala. Vtom ji napadlo, že se může zeptat

babičky. Ta to bude určitě vědět. Přiběhla do kuchyně, kde babička pekla vdolky. To byla vůně! To bude pochoutka! Zuzka měla ráda vdolky s povídky a se šlehačkou. Tvarohové ji také chutnaly.

Babička právě dala vdolky do trouby. Utřela si ruce do zástěry a posadila se. Bolely ji nohy. Zuzka využila příležitosti a zeptala se. „To je jednoduché, teplo domova přece“, odpověděla babička. Teplo domova? Že ji to nenapadlo! Doma máme vždycky teplo, a když se ochladí, maminka zatopí v kamnech.

Zuzka spěchala za dědou. Právě dočetl kapitolu a obracel list. Chtěla mu honem říct odpověď. „Ještě není večer“, protestoval děda. Veveruška se nedala a hrdě prohlásila: „Nejvzácnější je

teplo domova, zvláště, když voní babiččiny vdolky, které právě vytáhla z trouby!“ Děda se rozesmál. „Dobře, dobře, teplo domova. Večer mi tedy povíš, v čem spočívá to teplo domova,“ významně zamrkal a pohroužil se zase do čtení. Věděl, že to je pro ni těžká otázka. Věděl však také, jak je velmi důležité znát odpověď na tuto otázku. Tak, jako každý, kdo mnoho prožil, přál si, aby si děti vážily všeho, co mají, zvláště domova.

Zuzka si lámala hlavu. Sluníčko svými paprsky vyhřeje domeček v létě, jinak se topí v kamnech nebo v krbu. Pije se teplý čaj, okenice se zabední a je teplo i v nejkřutějších mrazech. V tom spočívá teplo domova, že se dobře udržuje oheň. Tak, a už má odpověď. Radostí mrskla huňatým ocáskem a odhlopkala za vůni oblíbených vdolků. Však už byla povídla se smetanou připravená.

Večer, při velikém hrnku kakaa a mise vdolků, pověděla dědovi svou odpověď.

Děda pokýval hlavou. Odpověď dávala smysl. Podíval se na babičku a řekl: „Ještě se zeptáme babičky, zdalipak ví, v čem spočívá teplo domova,“ a zakousl se do koblížku.

Babička se laskavě podívala na Zuzku: „Milá děvenko, kromě ohně, který rozežhívá naše zkrhlé údy, potřebujeme ještě jiné teplo. Je to teplo našeho srdíčka. Jenom tam, kde se mají opravdu rádi, teplo vzájemné lásky rozežhřeje i zamrzlé srdce. Proto se celý život učíme vzájemné snášenlivosti a úcty jeden k druhému. Tam, kde je Boží láska, tam je vždycky teplo.“ Děda pokýval spokojeně hlavou a utřel si šlehačku, která mu uvízla ve vousích.

„Babičko, a jak se pozná Boží láska?“ zeptala se tiše Zuzka. „Slovo Boží nám říká: *Boha nikdy nikdo neviděl, ale jestliže milujeme jedni druhé, Bůh v nás přebývá a jeho láska je v nás...* podle toho, jak se máme rádi, děvenko,“ odpověděla babička a její oči byly plné něhy.

□



Czech, Moravian and Slovak Delicatessen Pochoutky české, moravské a slovenské kuchyně

This time we will go to Slovakia. The national dish of Slovakia is *bryndzové halušky spatzle*, or potato spatzle with sheep cheese (or feta cheese).

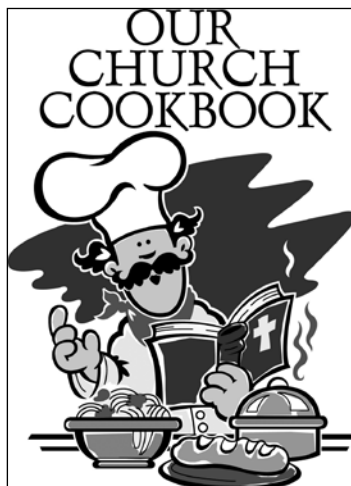
Pork, beef and poultry are the main meats consumed in Slovakia. Among poultry, chicken is most common, although duck, goose, and turkey are also well established. Lamb and goat are also available, but for the most part are not very popular.

Bryndzové halušky is a typical Slovak traditional dish. The most popular version of this hearty meal consists of halušky (boiled dumplings of potato dough, called spatzle) and bryndza (a soft cheese, made from sheep's milk), and frequently sprinkled with fried bits of smoked pork fat/bacon. Recipes vary from region to region.

Preparation time: 40 minutes
6 servings

Ingredients:

1 kg (about 2 lb) of potatoes
2 eggs beaten
200 g (1 cup) of flour
pinch of salt
1/2 tsp of baking powder (makes them fluffy)
a little water or milk to moisten
250 g of a soft cheese, made from sheep's milk (bryndza—or feta cheese)
smoked pork fat/ bacon



Shred peeled raw potatoes into a bowl. Add all other ingredients except the cheese and pork fat. Mix together to form a thick paste. Traditionally, no special instrument was used to form halušky. Instead, dough was spread in a thin layer on a wooden cutting board and scraped off in even pieces (using a knife), and then cast directly into boiling water. It is possible to form the spatzle as the batter is passed through a special perforated “halušky” strainer into boiling water forming small irregularly-shaped pieces. Boil for 6 minutes. Drain and run warm water thru. Then mix halušky with the bryndza and fried bits of bacon.

Suggestions:

- Add a handful of cooked potatoes cut into small pieces and mix them with the halušky.
- Use cheese or farmer's cheese or feta cheese (cottage cheese will work too) if you don't have bryndza.
- Instead of bryndza you can use cooked cabbage or sauerkraut (it is called strapačky.)
- A good quality of bacon (smoked pork fat called “špek”) gives just the perfect taste.

And don't forget: serve with a smile and lots of love (of course)

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Editorial... Continues from page 2

actions. All these then leave their mark on the heart. That is why it is imperative to pay careful attention to our own hearts, and get rid of all the debris. That is the only way that the beauty that was placed in every individual by the Creator can shine.

Reflections on this subject can branch out in many a direction. The other possible connections and comparisons one can make between person and vessel is what became of interest to me. It is not just the material or beauty of a vessel that makes it attractive, but its usefulness. Not every vessel can be used, and not every vessel is attractive. It depends largely on personal taste or opinion.

This year, the Convention is celebrating its 100th year of existence. Countless numbers of people have attended this convention during these past hundred years, and every one of them left their own mark. We are witnesses of its resulting make-up, presented in a medley of vessels of different shapes and functions, creating a whole, unique body: a mix of nationalities and denominations heading towards one goal: following the example of Jesus Christ.

In following, one must take care to maintain a clean heart. That is why the psalmist David asked for a clean heart (Psalm:51:10). He was aware of how easily one succumbs to outward influence. The state of the inner self influences a person's personality traits, and determines his or her character. David was aware of the connections between these things. The rays of God's wonderful love can penetrate only into the clean heart.

“So whoever cleanses himself [from what is ignoble and unclean, from contact with contaminating and corrupting influences] will be a vessel set apart and useful for honorable and noble purposes, consecrated and profitable to the Master, fit and ready for any good work,” (2 Timothy 2:21 AMP)

Editor In-Chief *Natasha Laurinc*
Translated by *Elizabeth J. Fields*

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Tribute to Marie Hynek... Continues from page 23

Wood, Massey Ferguson, and finally Oshawa Food Group. She very much enjoyed her career, but decided to retire early to spend time with her father, Karl, whose health was failing. He was able to live independently at home until he passed away at the wonderful age of 91.

Stan and Marie also loved to travel. As the children grew, there were many camping trips through Ontario, including many summers they enjoyed at Fair Havens Bible Camp with the large Hynek extended family. In later years, Stan and Marie enjoyed trips to many destinations, including the Czech Republic, Hong Kong, and the United States, especially many trips to Hawaii. These trips were made easy due to the fact that Linda worked for United Airlines for many years. Marie and Stan were married 54 years and were very sociable. As Marie's friends know, she loved to take pictures, and as you could see by her many photo albums, they were full of photos of their trips and many friends. Just about every Sunday afternoon after church, Marie and Stan opened up their home for dinner to family and especially to folks that were alone; at one time they helped many new immigrants trying to settle in Toronto.

Marie cared for Stan through his declining health until he passed away in July of 2000. She very much missed her soul mate and his passing took a great toll on her. She would quite often say that the nights were the worst. She said that she would sit and play through the whole hymn book on the organ, where the Lord would be her source of comfort. A few years after Stan's passing, her motor skills and speech began to decline, although she continued to persevere and had a very strong and positive attitude towards life. She last attended church on her 80th birthday, where she was very happy to be honored with a lovely tribute and then have a celebration with close friends and family. Recently, she became quite frail and was unable to walk and needed full assistance. However, she still loved to listen to

the old hymns and although she now could not communicate verbally, we could see by the sparkle in her eye and a nod that she was touched, and that she was blessed by the music.

Marie's wish was to be able to remain in the comfort of her own home as long as possible. She did so in the care of Linda, Richard and wonderful healthcare personnel with whom she was always happy to spend time until her brief time in hospital. Marie was a real testimony, even in her last moments, as the hospital staff remarked on how peaceful and strong her spirit was although she was very weak and couldn't speak. She passed away very quietly and peacefully in the early hours of December 1, 2008. The words of the scripture came to me as she even seemed to have a glow about her, *"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength and mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint,"* (Isaiah 40:31). We could almost see her rising up, free of pain and perfect again with the Lord. What a joy, blessing, and sense of reassurance for us that we were able to be there as she had completed her long journey and was safely home.

It is very hard to put a lifetime of memories into such a small space, but we are very thankful to Marie and Stan for our rich Christian heritage and upbringing, and sharing their many words of wisdom that we will always treasure. Looking back in retrospect, we can definitely see how God's plan unfolded in all of our lives to enable her to pass through this difficult time. Christmas this year had our Mom and friend painfully missing, but we can rejoice in knowing, on the other hand, that there was a great celebration in glory with the Lord, our dad, and Marie's family and friends. She was able once again to sing her praises to God, and they were all able to celebrate together her first CHRISTMAS IN HEAVEN!!

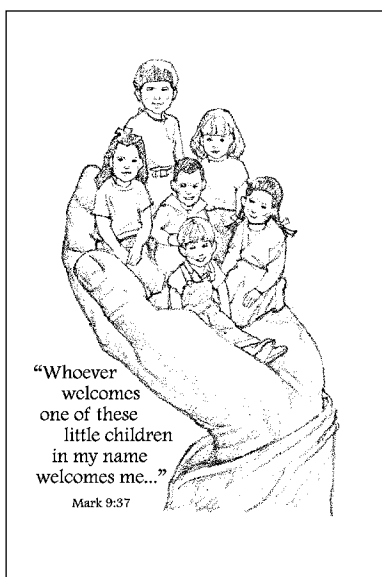
Until we meet again,
Linda and Richard Hynes, children
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Children's Corner... Continues from page 18

children to appreciate everything they had, particularly a home.

Susan racked her brain. The sun warmed up their home in the summer; otherwise the woodstove or fireplace was used to heat the house. Hot tea was sipped, the windows were boarded up, and then it was warm even in the cruelest, coldest weather. That was what the warmth of the home depended on! That the fire was tended and kept going. There, she had the answer. Susan swished her bushy tail with glee and hopped away in the direction of her favourite donuts. The plum jam and whipped cream were already out on the table, of course.

In the evening, while she sipped on a big cup of hot chocolate and ate donuts, Susan told her grandfather her answer. He nodded. Her answer made sense. He glanced at Grandma and said, "Let's ask Grandma if she knows what the cozy warmth of a home depends on," and bit



into a donut. Grandma looked kindly at Susan. "My dear child, besides the fire, which warms up our numb limbs, we are in need of yet another kind of warmth. That is the warmth of our hearts. There, where people truly love one another, even the numb heart is warmed. That is why we learn all our lives to get along and respect one another. Wherever God's love is, there is always warmth." Grandpa nodded his head, satisfied, and wiped off the whipped cream that had stuck to his beard.

"Grandma, how can you recognize God's love?" asked Susan quietly.

"The Word of God tell us: No one has ever seen God, but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is manifest in us ... it is shown in the way we care about and love each other, my dear," answered Grandma, and her eyes were full of tenderness.

Translated by *Elizabeth J. Fields*
□

From the President

What we get is who we are. Always. You may have wished from time to time to be someone else, but life does not work that way. And would you really want to adjust from your life story into another person's? You know at least what the pitfalls of current body and soul are. To switch places would be to take pot-luck.

Besides, God has had considerable hand in the manufacture of each one of our personalities and constitutions. Yes, we received genes and DNA inherited from a long line of parental ancestors, but where do you think the origin of all that was? Answer: the creator of heavens and earth—the Word by whom all things were made and without whom nothing exists that does exist (according to John 1), you and I included.

Each of us had a beginning, and an ending also awaits us. Neither is a surprise to God. We started, and we'll finish up—a fundamental law for occupying life on earth. This means many things, but not the least is that a lot of history preceded us, and quite a bit of time is likely to carry on after us (according to the Lord's own timetable, of course).

Whatever happened prior to our arrival we can do nothing about, yet ever so much of it has blessed our journey so far. We were born into a lot of things already prepared for us. Our job was to learn how to work our way into it all and make the most and the best of it. Then again, what follows our season of living we shall not have a hand in shaping either when that time comes, but we can certainly help get some things ready now, like an earth that is healthy, not on the way to complete spoilage; a church which Christ is pleased to own, not one simply going through old motions; a faith that is stretching to the uttermost ends of the world, not shrinking and sinking for lack of commitment; deep praying for next generations in family and church who are just starting out—that they may be preserved through most threatening years and grow in time into full maturity in Christ, using all their gifts in serving the Lord.



In our own convention we have a legacy that shaped and supported much of today. In all honesty, we do not think so much anymore about many personalities that populated our history, so long are they gone. And I am ashamed to say a lot of names are increasingly lost to our memory—we just cannot keep everything straight as the years go by. But all of those folk are well known to the Lord; Christ visits with them continually. They worked and prayed for this convention in the time of their flourishing here, but the time has come for them to let us go and trust our faithfulness to honor their purposes under God. We are doing our best to pick up on their strands, coordinating them with a world ever changing, yet knowing that we have to live the all-time truth of God in new environments.

So friends, our duty is to cherish the life and times we have walked into, then think through the calling that lies ahead. We are almost at the centennial convention, July 9–12, 2009. This 100th will be but a brief moment in time. We are aware that a lot of years of grace and godly mentoring have now gone away. As for what lies ahead... well, who really knows? Except this: there is no evidence that the world and the lands toward which we are most partisan are going to need less of the gospel of Jesus Christ than what was demanded in 1909.

We mean to take some notice at this convention of what came before us, as well as how we can approach the future as honest stewards of all that has been received and all that must be given. We will remember that everything about the future is in God's hands, and so are we. It is a good place to be.

Please come and help us see through some things concerning who we used to be and asking the Spirit what comes next.

Robert Dvorak

From the Executive Secretary



Our Centennial Convention gathering will be on July 9–12, 2009. Guest speakers will be former General Secretary of Baptist World Alliance, Dr. Denton Lotz, from Cape Cod, Massachusetts, and evangelist Dr. Barry Moore from London, Ontario. Also Jan Titera, General Secretary of Czech Baptist Union and Th.D. Darko Kraljik, President Elect of Slovak Baptist Union will be our guests. Friday night will be again Youth

Night and well known youth pastor, Tim Bailey, from London Ontario, will be our guest.

We urge you to attend this Centennial Convention, because

if you miss it, you will have to wait until next—Bi-Centennial Convention in 2109! So be there!!

We have received information that some family reunions will take place during the Centennial convention.

At the midyear meeting of General Board which was held on Saturday, October 25, 2008, in Christ Community Church, Campbell, Ohio, the following program was approved.

The theme is: **"The Mission Today and Always"** As my Father has sent me, I am sending you John 20:21b

Thursday July 9 — **Enlisting New Disciples (Acts 6:7)** Robert Dvorak

Friday July 10 — **Strengthening Brothers and Sisters in the Faith (Luke 22:31–32)** Tim Bailey

Continues on page 15

Tribute to Marie Hynek

August 13, 1925 – December 1, 2008



Marie Tucek (Miroslava) was born in Zelov, Poland, in 1925, the only daughter of Karl and Elizabeth Tucek. They left their homeland in 1929 and settled in their new home in Toronto.

Marie grew up attending the Polish and Russian Baptist churches with her family, until the Czechoslovak Baptist Church was established in Toronto over 60

years ago, in which Karl Tucek was one of the founding fathers. She took an active part not only by playing the piano for these congregations at a young age, but was also very active in the Young People's group.

Marie met her husband, Stan Hynek, on a trip to Manitoba. Stan lived in Dauphin, Manitoba, with his parents and four brothers. Marie had been scheduled to see a specialist there after she had broken her arm in a fall in Toronto at a church picnic just after her 16th birthday. She had been invited to the Hynek home when they heard that Pastor Dojacek, a Czechoslovak Church founding father, was visiting the area. They invited him to have a church service in their home. Stan and Marie were introduced, but were still quite young. They did not meet again until the Hynek family moved to Toronto, and were married shortly after at Beverly Baptist Church in 1946. They have both been very active in serving in the churches they attended. Stan served as a deacon, and also as treasurer for the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention. They always looked forward

to going to the Convention in Philippi to fellowship with old friends and give praise to the Lord in music.

Marie's musical heritage played a great part in her life. Her father played in the band in the Polish army. He also loved to sing, and in later years would bring us beautiful renditions of traditional hymns which he played on his musical saw. Marie always looked forward to singing in the Czechoslovak church choir and sang many solos, duets and trios. She also compiled song sheets for the church and the Czech ladies' group, which she enjoyed attending for many years. Marie also had a burden to spread the gospel through music ministry, and decided to contact many

of the former church members to return together to make a series of cassette tapes of the old faithful hymns of the church, containing many gospel solos, duets, and choir numbers, including many songs from the Jasavy Chvalozpev song book. She spent many hours on the arranging and making of these tapes. They have been a source of blessing and comfort to many, and have been widely distributed. Marie also noticed that the Chvalozpev in her church and various churches in the Czech Republic that they visited were badly in need of repair, and she decided to head up a project to reprint the books and distribute them where needed.

In the early 1950s, Marie's parents, former weavers, exchanged their profession for that of restaurant owners. Marie played the role of waitress while Stan, and Marie's mother, Elizabeth, were the cooks. One restaurant was open 24 hours.

The long hours proved burdensome, especially since they now had two small children, Linda and Richard, and it was decided the family would leave the business altogether. Shortly after that, Marie became an executive secretary at G.H.



Continues on page 21

Donations

All donation should be send in **enclosed envelope**.

The checks will be delivered to right financial secretaries. (Vera Dors, Henry Pojman, Marija Sommer or Donna Nesvadba.)

• **Gifts for Ladies' work**—make check payable to **Czechoslovak Baptist Women's Missionary Union**.

• **Gifts for Convention**—make check payable to **Czechoslovak Baptist Convention**. On the bottom of the check mark to what account you are sending your contribution: Convention, *Glorious Hope*, Trust Fund, or Scholarship Fund.

☞ You may send separate check (one for Ladies and one for convention accounts) in the same envelope.

☞ If you are sending contributions for **convention** (Convention, *Glorious Hope* etc., you may send only one check, and write on the bottom how you want to divide the amount (for example: Total \$150; \$100 Convention, \$50 *Glorious Hope* etc.) You do not have to send two separate checks.

For your information, financial secretaries' addresses are as follows:

USA:

Vera Dors
6621 Elmdale Rd.
Middleburg Hts, OH, 44130

Canada:

Henry Pojman
1305 Inglehart Dr
Burlington, ON L7M 4X6



No Other Rock

There is no other Rock!
I know of none
no God beside
no one to guide
no other one
none to compare
anywhere
no other Rock have I
in whom to hide.
There is no other Rock!
Secure I stand
no sinking sand
though storms may rage
on every hand
I'm anchored safe.
I praise my God
Who is my Rock
my refuge
from the swelling tide
in Him I will abide.

"...And you are My witnesses.
Is there any God beside me,
or is there any other Rock? I
know of none."
Is. 44;8b

Heaven and Nature Sing
by Leona Choy

Sníh

V pochmurném ránu
šedou barvu má i duše
povinnost nutí začít den
správně
dá-li se
minulost pohřbít nelze
vždy vypluje
vyplouvat bude
bloudící oči
hledající opěrný bod
vzhledly k oknu
velké sněhové vločky
lehce padají k zemi
sníh
sníh svou bělobou
přikryje nečistotu
nejtemnější černotu
zahalí krajinu
do nového kabátu
halí minulost
do nové podoby
život dostává roucho
nové
bílé
vzbuzuje sváteční náladu
hustý závoj vloček
požehnání
nové etapy života
šedá ustupuje
duše cítí posvátnost okamžiku

Klenba lásky
Nataša Legierská