

# Glorious Hope Slavná naděje

Vol. 40, N° 1, 2014

Ročník 40, číslo 1, 2014

**...Ježíš Kristus  
je Pán!**

Filipským 2; 11b

**...Jesus Christ  
is Lord!**

Philippians 2: 11b

**...Ježíš Kristus  
je Pánom!**

Filipským 2; 11b





# Contents

Editorial – Natasha Laurinc.....	3
From the President – Stan Mantle.....	4
Stránka prezidenta – Stan Mantle .....	5
From the Executive Secretary – Darko Siracki .....	6
From Our Library.....	7
Winning by Losing – Nico Mulder.....	8
Staré pravidlá pre novú generáciu – Ján Franka.....	10
Sharing One World – Rev. Neville Callam .....	11
The Toronto-Windsor-Kingsville Youth Reunion.....	12
Charles Spurgeon's Devotion .....	14
Ladies' Page – Helen Mikulencak.....	15
Ladies' Baptist Union, Slovakia – Ruth Maďarová .....	15
Bratská Jednota Baptistov, Odbor Sestier, Slovensko – Ruth Maďarová....	15
BWA News .....	16
In Memory – Anne Opocensky, Oliver M. Whitlow.....	17
Youth Page – Petar Vlasic.....	18
Children's Corner – Miss Pickles .....	19
Youth and Children Page – Miss Pickles.....	20
Ruby Mikulencak.....	20
The Poenarus.....	21
The Potmas.....	22
The Váhalas .....	23

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## 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.

## Misijní posláni 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) předkládat 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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## Whiteout

**T**rapped in the claustrophobic space of my car, I can't see a thing. I find myself in a whirlwind of snowflakes reflected in my headlights. I know that the road ahead veers to the right. I mustn't stop. I mustn't lose my sense of direction. I must move forward. I must stay focused. I simultaneously realize how easy it can be to give in to panic. Using all my senses to the max, I continue on the road. The strong wind assaulting in waves is deafening. I must move forward, I cannot stop. I ask the Almighty for help, move the steering wheel and try to spot some kind of landmark with my eyes. In a moment between gusts, as the storm draws breath for another assault, I glimpse a bit of pavement. That moment confirms to me that I am still on the road. I know that the edge of the shoulder is lined with tall trees. I was able to see their crowns. I must keep to the right and avoid crossing over to opposing traffic.

## Bílá tma

**U**zavřena v tísnivém prostoru malého osobního auta nevidím nic. Nacházím se uprostřed víru sněhových vloček třpytících se ve světle reflektorů. Víím, že se silnice stáčí doprava. Nesmím se zastavit. Nesmím ztratit směr. Musím vpřed. Musím se soustředit. Zároveň si uvědomuji, jak snadné je propadnout panice. S maximálním vypětím všech smyslů pokračuji v cestě. Nárazy silného hučícího větru mne ohlušují. Musím vpřed, nesmím zastavit. Prosím o pomoc Všemohoucího, svírám volant a očima hledám nějaký opěrný bod. V okamžiku, kdy se sněhová vichřice nadechuje k novému úderu, zahlédnu nástin vozovky. Ten moment mi přináší ujištění, že jsem stále na cestě. Víím, že kraje vozovky jsou lemovány vysokými stromy. Podařilo se mi zahlédnout jejich koruny. Musím se udržet na pravo a nejvet do protisměru. Pomalu pokračuji v

I continue slowly along the road. I can see perhaps a metre in front of me. Just enough, just what I need to stay the course. It is just like how God leads us along the path of life, I tell myself. This thought is calming. I know that I'm in his care.

This is how my rides to and from work are in these winter months. In life, we often get into situations that we don't know how to handle. Just like in the storm. Yes, we can depend on God in every situation.

Easter is soon approaching. We can take this opportunity to remember events that affected all mankind. Easter is a springtime holiday. Spring brings new life in nature. The resurrected Christ confirms the new life of every person that decides to follow him.

*"I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live. And whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"* (John 11:25–26)

Editor-in-Chief *Natasha Laurinc*  
Translated by *Elizabeth Jane Fields*

cestě. Již vidím asi tak metr před sebe. Právě tolik, kolik potřebuji, abych udržela správný směr. Je to přesně tak, jako Boží vedení po cestě života, říkám si. Tato myšlenka mne uklidňuje. Víím, že jsem v Jeho péči.

Takto probíhaly mé cesty do práce a z práce tyto zimní měsíce. V životě se častokrát dostaneme do situací, kdy si nevíme rady. Tak jako v té bouři. Ano, na Pána Boha se můžeme spoléhat v každé situaci.

Blíží se Velikonoce. Opět si můžeme připomínat události, které ovlivnily celé lidstvo. Velikonoce jsou jarní svátky. Jaro přináší obnovení života v přírodě. Zmrtvýchvstání Pána Ježíše Krista ujišťuje o novém životě každého, kdo se rozhodne k následování.

*„Já jsem vzkříšení i život. Kdo věří ve mě, i kdyby zemřel, bude žít. A každý, kdo žije a věří ve mě, nezemře navěky. Věříš tomu?“* (Jan 11; 25–26)

*Nataša Laurincová, šéfredaktorka*



# From the President



**T**he Easter letter is a wonderful Christian tradition. The New Testament contains a significant portion of letters written to young churches containing greetings, instruction, guidance, rebuke. How natural then for leaders, pastors, believers to write one another as Easter approaches. What is going on in our lives, what happy events are there to share, what sadness or disappointments? All that is happening takes place in a context, within a frame of reference.

It has been an especially severe winter. After a series of mild winters, this one has come upon us with snow and cold in quantity and frigidity I don't remember since I was a boy. I even heard that some birds, who used to migrate farther south but who had begun to shorten their annual journey to milder climes and stay with us for the winter, were especially suffering this year.

I wonder how the constituency of the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention are faring? It being mid-February, some of us, I expect, are experiencing "cabin fever," a longing for the light and warmth, beauty and freedom of spring. For those of you living in Florida and other sunny places, I will try to maintain happy, charitable thoughts.

No matter where we live, we all share a need and hunger, the meeting of which is beautifully expressed in the closing verses of Malachi, the last book of the Old Testament.

*"But to you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall."* Malachi 4:2

Easter is the amazing beginning of the fulfillment of this prophecy. Christ's death in our stead, bearing the vast, incomprehensible burden of sin, my sins and yours among them, His placement in the ultimate stall or confining place, the tomb, His coming forth on the third day and leaving the door forever ajar – a throng long imprisoned in the dark following Him out into the light – this is the glad news which Easter letters (this one included) joyfully proclaim.

Whatever the coldness of your winter, Easter announces something wonderfully unexpected and entirely new, Throw off the mittens, take off the grave clothes, irrepressible life in Jesus Christ is bursting forth.

This is our story. What a blessed privilege to share it with each other and the world.

Glad Easter greetings!

Stan Mantle

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Stan Mantle". The script is cursive and fluid.



**V**elikonoční pozdrav je pěknou křesťanskou tradicí. V Novém zákoně nacházíme řadu dopisů adresovaných novým sborům obsahující pozdravy, rady, poučení i výtky. Je tedy naprosto přirozené, že si lidé také před Velikonocemi vzájemně píší. Jak se máme, jaké radostné události nás potkaly, jaký zármutkek a zklamání. Všechno, co se děje, se odehrává v souvislostech, v určitém rámci.

Zima byla obzvláště krutá. Po několika předcházejících mírných zimách tato přišla s takovým množstvím sněhu a tak ukrutným mrazem, jaký si nepamatuji od dětství. Doslechl jsem se také, že stěhovaví ptáci, putující na jih do mírného podnebí, kteří si zkrátili cestu a zůstávali u nás přezimovat, letos obzvláště trpěli.

Zajímalo by mne, jak si stojí stoupenci Československé baptistické konvence? Předpokládám, že uprostřed února mnozí z nás trpí "ponorkovým syndromem", touhou po světle a teple, kráse a svobodě jara. Vy, kteří žijete na Floridě nebo jiných slunných krajích, užijte si bezstarostnosti.

Ať žijeme kdekoliv, všichni máme své potřeby a touhy,

které jsou překrásně vyjádřeny v závěrečných verších Malachiáše, poslední knihy Starého zákona:

*"Vám, ctitelům mého jména, však vyjde slunce spravedlnosti a v jeho paprscích bude uzdravení. Vyrážíte a budete dovádět jako telátka vypuštěná z maštale."*

Malachiáš 3;20

Velikonoce jsou počátkem naplnění tohoto proroctví. Kristova smrt namísto nás, kdy nesl těžké, nepochopitelné břemeno hříchu, spolu s mým i tvým hříchem; uložení Jeho těla na nejzazším místě, v hrobě; vyjití z hrobu třetího dne a ponechání dveří navždy pootevřených, aby Ho zástup dlouho vězňených v temnotě mohl následovat do světla – toto je radostná zvěst, kterou přinášejí velikonoční pozdravy (tento nevyjímaje).

Bez ohledu na chladné období Velikonoce oznamují něco zcela neočekávaného a nového. Odhoď rukavice, sundej si pohřební šat, život s Ježíšem Kristem začíná.

Toto je naší zvěstí. Jaká to požehnaná výsada ve sdílení se navzájem s celým světem.

Radostné Velikonoce!

Stan Mantle  
přeložila Nataša Laurincová



# From the Executive Secretary



## Mark Your Calendar

105<sup>th</sup> Czechoslovak Baptist Convention  
of USA and Canada

**July 10–13, 2014**

Allegheny College, Meadville, Pennsylvania

**E**aster weekend is quickly approaching and without any doubt, we will be reminded of the crucifixion and precious blood of Jesus in the upcoming weeks.

Yet so many people, even some born-again Christians, do not like to hear and sure do not like to talk much about the blood. Have you ever Googled the phrase, “Bloody Religion”? Page after page of the search results will not talk about wars caused by religious groups or even the conflicts fought in the name of Christianity. Almost every article points to Christianity as the “Bloody Religion” because of all the talk of blood and such grotesque detail of the crucifixion. It is not child-friendly, is the argument often heard. I would understand if these comments came from the secular society. After all, the society that we live in has forced some “Christians” to print gender-neutral and “politically correct” Bible versions. However, the term “Bloody Religion” can be heard even from some born-again Christians. Love and forgiveness should be the basis of Christian talk, perhaps would be their argument. On the other hand, It was very encouraging to read Charles Spurgeon’s devotion printed in this issue—please read it on page 5. After reading it yourself, would you join me in making an argument for the name change from “Bloody Religion” to a

### “Precious Blood Religion.”

Dear friend, do you find yourself “on the fence” and sometimes wish they talked less about the blood? Just remember the story of the Passover, this devotion and perhaps this one sentence in particular:

...The blood of Christ also is precious due to its preserving power, for under His sprinkled blood we are safe from the destroying angel. Remember—the actual reason we are spared is because God sees the blood...

It is my prayer that you have surrendered your life to Christ. His precious blood has washed your sins away and is protecting you through this short journey on earth.

Many blessings to you and your family this Easter Season.

In His service

*Darko Siracki*

Executive Secretary, Czechoslovak Baptist Convention  
darkosiracki@czskbc.org

# From Our Library

## Behind the Easter Story

Join hosts Mart De Haan and Jimmy De Young as they retrace the footsteps of Jesus from His triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday to His victorious resurrection on Easter morning. Using a remarkable limestone model of Jerusalem, they'll give you a unique look at the city as it was then. They'll also visit the actual locations in and around Jerusalem and follow the path of Jesus step by step.

"Behind the Easter Story"

Choose Slovak "voice over" translation or English version with Slovak subtitles

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8ZZ5Ec5R4g>

Zákulisie príbehu Veľkej noci, prvá časť

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GpxJeL5xPPQ>

Zákulisie príbehu Veľkej noci, druhá časť

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LfsckYgz58A>

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## Zákulisie príbehu Veľkej noci

Pripojte sa k Martovi DeHaanovi a Jimmymu DeYoungovi, keď pôjdu v Ježišových šlapajach od slávnostného vstupu do Jeruzalema na Kvetnú nedeľu až po Jeho víťazné vzkriesenie vo Veľkonočné ráno. Použitím makety Jeruzalema vám ukážu jedinečný pohľad na mesto v Ježišovej dobe. Taktiež vám ukážu aj historické miesta v súčasnosti, Olivovú horu a krok za krokom budú sledovať poslednú Ježišovú cestu.



# Winning by Losing

Nico Mulder



**I**t is sad to admit, but nobody likes losers. Today, “it’s not how you play the game, but whether you win or lose.”

In June 2013 Gloria MacKenzie, 84, bought the winning ticket at a supermarket in the small town of Zephyrhills, which is 30 miles north-east of Tampa. The \$590 million was the second largest lottery jackpot in history, behind a \$656 million Mega Millions prize in March 2012, but that sum was split, with three winning tickets.

In the world’s eyes: You either win or lose, you can’t do both. Everybody wants to win, but it’s so hard to lose. Some people win by losing, while others lose by winning.

What do you want to do? Can you really win by losing? Have you ever had to lose something in order to gain something else?

Nobody likes to lose. Probably the most famous saying in all of sports is “*Winning isn’t everything, it’s the only thing.*”

Yet with God, THE WAY TO WIN IS TO LOSE.

## **Mark 8:31–35:**

Instead of planning his coronation, Jesus insists that

- he must suffer,
- he will be rejected by the very people who should welcome him,
- he will be killed. But after three days he will rise again.

## **Peter wants to be a winner, not a loser.**

- Peter thinks this is wrong—How can Jesus be a winner by being rejected and killed?
- He isn’t following Jesus just to see him die.
- He is looking forward to making him king.
- When he presses this point, Jesus turns on him. Peter is talking like Satan when he urges Jesus to seize an earthly empire.

## **Jesus says that those who want to follow Him must lose to eventually win:**

- They will give up everything for the sake of Jesus and his gospel.
- They will be disgraced and condemned in the eyes of the world.
- It may look as though they are wasting their lives—but they will be rewarded with eternal life in the kingdom of God. <sup>1</sup>

## **The difference:**

- Winning earthly now, but losing eternally.
- Losing earthly now, but winning eternally.

A suffering Messiah had important implications for those who would follow Him (cf. Mark 8:34).

Jesus summoned the crowd, interested onlookers along with His disciples, and addressed them both.

“If anyone [not just the Twelve] would come after me...” He then stated two requirements:

**1. Deny Yourself**—saying no to selfish interests and earthly securities.

- a. The Greek words are *arneomai* and *aparneomai*.
  - i. Literally means “reject” or “unfaithfulness to,” or “abandoning the relationship.”
  - ii. Making decisions
- b. Not deny one’s personality, to die as a martyr, or to deny “things” (as in asceticism).
- c. But denial of self, turning away from self-centeredness and every attempt to orient one’s life by the dictates of self-interest.
- d. Reject the motives and desires that well up from our sin nature, and choose instead to follow Jesus completely.



e. When we take daily steps of obedience, we gradually become the new person that Christ died for us to become.

f. Self-denial, however, is only the negative side of the picture and is not done for its own sake alone.

## **2. Take Up His Cross:**

a. Cross-bearing—Roman-occupied Palestine—Roman metaphor.

i. Condemned man demonstrates his submission to Rome.

b. “To take up one’s cross”—public demonstration of submission/obedience to the authority against which he had previously rebelled.

c. Saying yes to God’s will and way—submit.

i. Jesus’ submission to God’s will—it meant death on the cross.

ii. This does not mean suffering as He did or being crucified as He was.

iii. Nor does it mean stoically bearing life’s troubles.

iv. Nor does it mean that I cannot have fun/pleasure.

v. It is obedience to God’s will.

vi. Accepting the consequences, without reservations, for Jesus’ sake and the gospel (cf. 8:35). For some this includes physical suffering and even death, as history has demonstrated (cf. 10:38–39).

## **Follow Me:**

Saying no to self and yes to God is to continue all through one’s following Jesus (cf. Rom. 13:14; Phil. 3:7–11).

To follow Him means:

- Jesus’ call asks for your response to follow.
- Decision: “yes” for Jesus’ route and “no” to my own.

- Keep your eyes on Jesus.
- Follow wherever Jesus leads.
- Listen to His voice.
- I can’t stay where I am, I have to move to follow—everything changes.

• Trust Jesus to take you wherever He wants you to go.

• You will only follow if you trust Him and have a relationship with Him.

• Following is going to make a difference in others’ lives.

• Jesus’ request in Mark 8:34 “Follow me” means to keep following Him.

## **But to follow Jesus: (Mark 8:35)**

Verses 35–38 explain Jesus’ requirements in verse 34, focusing on entrance into discipleship,

leaving one’s old allegiance to this life (the crowd), and pledging allegiance to Jesus as a disciple. Paradoxically, a person who wants to save (from *sōzō*, “preserve”) his life (*psychēn*, “soul, life”) will lose it; he will not be saved to eternal life. But a person who loses (lit., “will lose”) his life (*psychē*) for the sake of Jesus and the gospel (cf. 1:1) will save (from *sōzō*, “preserve”) it; he will be saved to eternal life (cf. comments on 10:26–27; 13:13).

Jesus made a word play on the terms “lose” and “life” (*psychē*). The *psychē* on one hand is one’s natural physical life but it also refers to one’s true self, the essential person that transcends the earthly sphere (cf. 8:36; Matt. 10:28). One who decides to maintain a self-centered life in this world by refusing Jesus’ requirements (Mark 8:34) will ultimately lose his life to eternal ruin. Conversely a person who will “lose” (give over, “deny himself”) his life (even literally, if necessary) in loyalty to Jesus and the gospel (cf. 10:29) by accepting His requirements (8:34) will actually preserve it forever. As a follower of Jesus, he is heir to eternal life forever with God (cf. 10:29–30; Rom. 8:16–17). <sup>2</sup>

## **Examples:**

- Jesus Christ: He wins eternally by losing earthly.

Died on the cross.

Breaks death’s power.

Breaks the power of Satan.

- Abraham
- Rich young ruler

Do you really want to win?

Do what seems to be losing now to win later:

- Give up your rights.
- Submit to Him—“Carry your cross.”
- Let the world go (lose in the world’s eyes)—

“Deny yourself.”

- “Follow Jesus.”
- And you will win eternally.

Did you make that choice?

Make it again.

1 Knowles, A. (2001). *The Bible guide* (1st Augsburg books ed.) (458). Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg.

2 Grassmick, J. D. (1985). *Mark*. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), . Vol. 2: *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck, Ed.) (139–141). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.



# Staré pravidlá pre novú generáciu

Ján Franka



**V** biblických dejinách sa možno nikdy neodohrала taká radikálna zmena generácií ako za čias Jozua a Káleba.

Generácia, ktorá zažila exodus, videla tie najväčšie Božie divy, a keď bolo treba uplatniť videnie a vieru úspešným obsadením krajiny, odmietli Hospodinov koncept a tým aj Hospodina. Neskôr sa predsa

len rozhodli krajinu obsadiť, nerešpektovali však staré pravidlá, čím sa pripravili o Božie požehnania. V tom je jasný rozdiel medzi cestou s Bohom a cestou bez Boha. Tá istá výprava s Mojžišom a truhlou zmluvy mala priniesť víťazstvo, radosť a prosperitu, namiesto toho však priniesla porážku, smútok, chudobu a hanbu.

Biblia jasne ukazuje princíp, že hriech vždy rodí iba hriech, nikdy život. Táto generácia zhrešila najprv neverou; nevera zrodila hriech odmietnutia; odmietnutie zrodilo tvrdohlavosť. Tieto hriechy spolu zrodili porážku od Kanańcov, čo vyvrcholilo v Kórachovej vzbuře a skončilo sa smrťou celej generácie na púšti. Jozua a Kaleb neboli teoretickí vizionári, ale muži viery. Uverili, že pravidlá, ktoré dal Boh, sú jediné funkčné pre obsadenie krajiny. Tieto pravidlá boli jednoduché: nechať Hospodina, aby viedol svoj ľud. Kresťania sú občas v pokušení vymyslieť nové pravidlá pre funkčný duchovný život. Ak je niečo nové, ešte to neznamena, že je to aj dobré. Staré pravidlo viery prežilo všetky zmluvy a je úplne spoľahlivé aj pre súčasného kresťana.

Prešlo štyridsať rokov od zlyhania pri Kádeš-Barney. Mojžiš priviedol ľud za Jordán, trochu severnejšie než prvý raz. Bol pripravený vstúpiť do krajiny. Mojžiš vedel, že nevstúpi do krajiny, neprejde Jordán a že tu je koniec jeho cesty. Zhromaždil ľud a dal mu posledné pokyny predtým, ako si ho Hospodin zobral. Celá 5. kniha Mojžišova sú slová vypovedané pri Jordáne tesne pred vstupom do krajiny. Táto kniha sa volá aj *Zopakovaný zákon* a bola určená novej generácii, ktorá má vojsť do novej krajiny.

Nová generácia vyrastala na púšti a bola čiastočne oddelená od skutkov a myslenia svojich rodičov. Videla, ako Hospodin priamo potrestal desiatich neverných vyzve-

dačov a ich stúpencov. Videla, ako prešiel Kórach so skupinou. Videla svojich rodičov ako v beznádeji blúdili po púšti. Pochopila, že hriech rodí smrť, a nie život. Po štyridsiatich rokoch nová generácia dostala príležitosť. Aké boli podmienky vstupu? Zmenili sa?

Vieme, že veci sa nerodia samy od seba, ale sú výsledkom práce, požehnania alebo Božieho divu. Ani nová generácia nebola necháná napospas. Mala nádej, že všetko dobre dopadne.

Mojžiš pripravoval novú generáciu na vstup. Najprv jej objasnil, prečo je tu a prečo musela stráviť štyridsať rokov na púšti. Tváriť sa, že sa nič nestalo, neprináša nijaké výsledky. Nová generácia má novú príležitosť vtedy, keď sa dokáže vysporiadať s minulosťou. A potom Mojžiš zopakoval zákon pre novú generáciu. Celá 5. kniha Mojžišova dostala názov *Zopakovaný zákon*, pretože sú v ňom zhrnuté dejiny východu a celý Hospodinov zákon. Mojžiš pripomenul princípy, na základe ktorých nová generácia vojde do krajiny. Pripomenul zmluvu, ktorá bola uzavretá medzi Hospodinom a ľudom, pretože zmluva zahŕňala aj novú generáciu. Rozlúčil sa s ňou a pripravil vodcov. Mojžiš rešpektoval Božie rozhodnutie a do krajiny nevošiel, na rozdiel od generácie, ktorá za každú cenu chcela vojsť napriek Hospodinovmu nesúhlasu. Mojžiš bol príkladom, ako akceptovať Hospodinovo tvrdé nie.

Jozua a Kaleb boli ustanovení Hospodinom novými vodcami. Obidvaja mali 80 rokov. Nejde však o vek, ale o to, že iba títo dvaja boli spoľahliví od samého začiatku. Jediní dvaja, ktorí vedeli, odkiaľ vyšli a kam idú. Keď bol Jozua vyzvaný prijať vedenie, prijal ho. Pre novú generáciu je to príklad, ako prijať zodpovednosť. Dnes je málokto ochotný ujať sa vedenia ako Jozua. Oveľa pohodlnejšie je z poslednej kostolnej lavice sledovať, čo sa deje. Jozua neposlal do Jericha dvanástich vyzvedáčov, ale iba dvoch. Nechcel za každú cenu reprezentovať všetky kmene. Vyzvedáči sa riadili Hospodinovým vedením a priniesli pravdivú správu o situácii.

Takto vošla nová generácia do krajiny. Nedostali nové pravidlá, zostali im tie isté, ako mali ich rodičia. V liste Židom čítame: „*Lebo evanjelium sa nám práve tak kázalo ako im. Ale počuté slovo nič im neosožilo, keďže nezrástlo mocou viery s tými, čo ho počuli... Keďže teda ostáva možnosť, aby niektorí vošli doň... určuje znovu istý deň: nové dnes... Snažme sa teda vojsť do toho odpočinku, aby nikto nepadol podľa toho istého príkladu neposlušnosti.*“ (Židom 4; 2–7)



# Sharing One World

Rev. Neville Callam

Within the church, much talk takes place on the relation of Christianity to other religions.

At one end of the theological spectrum, some regard dialogue between Christians and people of other faiths as a form of ecumenical dialogue. Of course, the various meanings of the term “ecumenical” sometimes do violence to a reader’s comprehension of a writer’s intention. At the other end of the spectrum, some believe Christians have only one primary responsibility to people of other faiths, namely, to lead them to faith in Jesus Christ.

Between these two poles is a third way, followed by Christians who are deeply convinced about the uniqueness of their faith and who proclaim Jesus Christ as the source of their salvation and their hope. At the same time, they affirm, without apology, that people are entitled to follow the religious path of their choice. Love and mutual respect, they explain, must mark the relationship between Christians and people who belong to other faith communities. Furthermore, they argue for collaboration by people of different faiths in all matters in which they can engage with good conscience.

Christians who follow this third way are ready and willing to listen to the testimony of each other as they pursue the Christian pilgrimage. Firm in their faith, they are also willing to listen to the testimonies of the spiritual journey of people following other faith traditions. In the act of mutual sharing of reflections on their spiritual pilgrimage, they believe they can learn from each other. They also believe that, from shared conversation around our various faith journeys, God may help participants learn lessons



that are vitally important.

Last year, I preached at a church where the members appear to espouse this third way. In the way they organize themselves for corporate worship, they signal three defensible convictions: first, that all human beings are created in the image of God; second, that all persons possess a God-given right to religious liberty; and third, that people of diverse faiths have a responsibility to contribute to the general welfare of the communities in which they live and serve. As a sign of these values, Christian congregations must select from among alternative forms of churchly existence.

The Columbia Baptist Fellowship is set in the city of Columbia, Maryland, which is usually described as an example of the New Town Movement in the United States. Reportedly designed by architects and engineers some 50 years ago, after consultations involving professionals in the fields of education, religion, recreation, transportation and sociology, Columbia was designed as an integrated community reflecting the multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious makeup of the USA.

Columbia was to be a city comprising

neighborhoods where families “can live and work and, above all else, grow — grow in character, in personality, in love of God and neighbor and in the capacity for joyous living,” as the city’s developer, James Rouse, once asserted. In the words of the proposal submitted for approval by the local Howard County authorities, Columbia was to be “economically diverse, polycultural, multi-faith and inter-racial.”

When my wife and I arrived at “The Meeting House,” otherwise called the Oakland Mills Interfaith Center, we entered into a sacred space in which several congregations belonging to different faith communities meet for worship and where offices are provided for the staff members serving these communities. The center’s mission is to be “a community of faith that seeks to make God present in our lives and to work together for that purpose. In this effort, we commit ourselves to mutual respect, dialogue, cooperation, and joint activities to achieve our goals.” This mission fits well with R. Kirby Godsey’s insistence, in *Centering Our Souls: Devotional Readings of a University President* (Mercer, 2005) that, “It is easy to become convinced that our beliefs are secure only if we can defeat those who have formed a different understanding of what it means to be present in the world.... The frantic push to make others conform to our affirmations of faith indicates, above all else, that we have failed to achieve a centering solace within our souls.”

Worship rooms at The Meeting House host several congregations such as Bet Aviv, a Reformed Jewish congregation; Columbia Jewish Congregation, which is associated with the Reconstructionist Movement in modern Judaism, and also three church congregations:

☞ Continues on page 20



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# Charles Spurgeon's Devotion

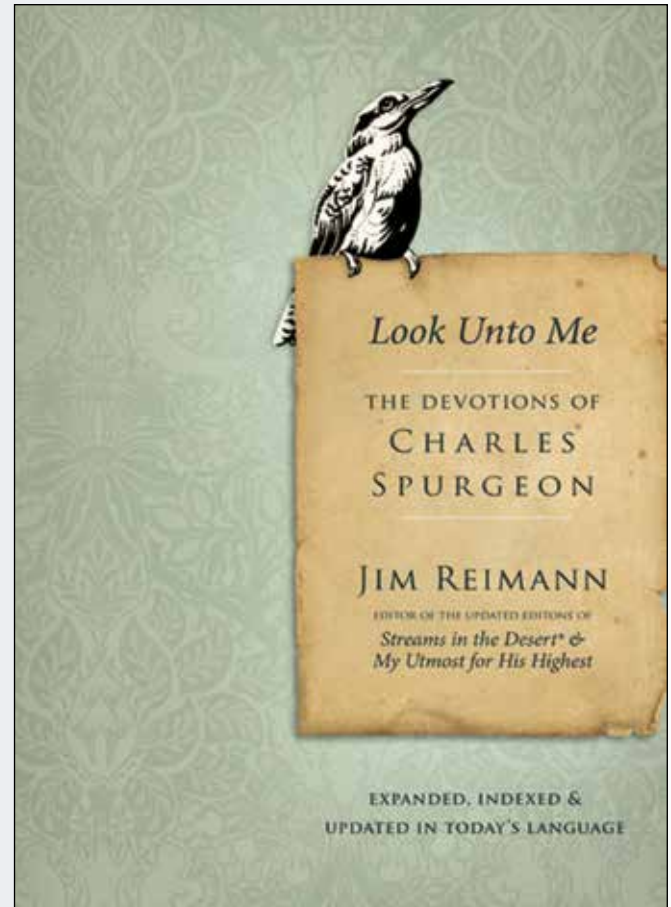


Charles Haddon Spurgeon  
by Alexander Melville

## The Precious Blood of Christ

1 Peter 1:19

When we stand at the foot of the cross, we see Christ's hands, feet, and side, all dripping into crimson streams of His precious blood. It is "precious blood" because of its redeeming and atoning effectiveness. Through it atonement is made for the sins of Christ's people: they are redeemed from under the law, and they are reconciled to God—made one with Him. His blood also is precious due to its cleansing power: it "*cleanses us from all sin*," (1 John 1:7 ESV). "*Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow*," (Isa. 1:18). Through Jesus' blood no spot whatsoever is left on any believer. We are "*without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish*," (Eph. 5:27). Oh, precious blood—that makes us clean, removing the stains of our countless sins, and permitting us to stand accepted in Jesus in spite of the many ways we have rebelled against our God! The blood of Christ also is precious due to its preserving power, for under His sprinkled blood we are safe from the destroying angel. Remember—the actual reason we are spared is because God sees the blood. This should be comforting to us, for even when our eyes of faith grow dim, God's eyes remain strong. Jesus' blood also is precious due to its sanctifying power and influence in our lives. The very same blood that justifies us by taking away our sin at salvation continues to work, bringing life to our new nature and moving us forward in suppressing sin and obeying the commands of God. There could never be a greater motivation to holiness than that which streamed from the veins of Jesus. And, how precious—unspeakably precious—is His blood because it has overcoming power: "*They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb*," (Rev. 12:11). How could they do otherwise! Whoever fights using the precious blood of Jesus uses a weapon that can never know defeat. The blood of Jesus! Sin dies in its presence and death ceases to be death, for it opens the gates of heaven. The blood of Jesus! We shall march on to victory, ever conquering, as long as we trust in its power!



*Charles Haddon (C.H.) Spurgeon* (19 June 1834–31 January 1892) was a British Baptist preacher. Spurgeon remains highly influential among Christians of different denominations, among whom he is known as the "Prince of Preachers." He was a strong figure in the Reformed Baptist tradition, defending the Church in agreement with the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith, and understanding and opposing the liberal and pragmatic theological tendencies in the Church of his day.

Spurgeon was pastor of the congregation of the New Park Street Chapel (later the Metropolitan Tabernacle) in London for 38 years. He was a prolific author of many types of works, including sermons, an autobiography, commentaries, books on prayer, devotionals, magazines, poetry, hymns and more. In his lifetime, Spurgeon preached to around 10,000,000 people.

*Look Unto Me* represents some of Spurgeon's most powerful devotions.



## Following Jesus

Helen Mikulencak



*"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Mark 8:34*

The famed conductor Leonard Bernstein was once asked: "Mr. Bernstein, what is the most difficult instrument to play?" Bernstein responded with quick wit: "Second fiddle. I can get plenty of first violinists, but to find

one who plays second fiddle with as much enthusiasm or second French horn or second flute, now that's a problem."

What's true with an orchestra is also true in life. It's often taught today that people should assert themselves and dominate others. Some even urge us to gratify our needs and desires at the expense of others. But Jesus told His disciples to deny themselves. He followed that comment with the unusual demand found in Mark 8:34.

The idea of taking up one's cross has led to a lot of confusion and some equally unusual answers. Since we associate a

cross with crucifixion, what did Jesus mean when He told us to take up our cross? And just as hard for some to understand is how we can lose our lives and in the process gain them again.

When Jesus spoke, His listeners envisioned a criminal hanging on a Roman cross, but the kind of death the Lord spoke of wasn't death on a wooden cross. Why? Because elsewhere, He said we should take up our cross daily (Luke 9:23).

Instead of physical death, the Lord was referring to the tests of obedience we face each day as His followers. How can they be likened to death? They demand of us that we die to our fleshly desires.

Jesus set the example here. In Gethsemane He prayed three times that the cup of death would be taken from Him, but He concluded, "Not as I will, but as you will." He said no to His human desire to avoid the cross, and yes to God's will. Similarly, we take up our cross when we say yes to God while our sinful nature is begging us to disobey Him. Each time we obey, we lose our self-life but taste the victory awaiting us in the resurrection life of Christ.

Obedience, especially when it involves self-denial, remains one of the great challenges of the Christian life.

*Glorious Hope October 1990*

*Helen Mikulencak was president of The Czechoslovak Baptist Women's Mission Union 1990–1992*

### Ladies' Baptist Union, Slovakia

Ladies of the Czech and Slovak Baptist Union are preparing for their Annual Gathering from May 2nd to May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2014, in Poprad.

Theme: *Godliness with contentment*

Text: *"But godliness with contentment is great gain."* 1 Timothy 6:6

*"We are aware of the need to encourage one another towards living godly and contented in a world deprived of godliness and contentment. Surely Lord Jesus wants to be everything for us. He wants us to rest safely in His arms and enjoy His presence every new day."*

*Ruth Madarová,*  
President, Ladies' Baptist Union

### Bratská Jednota Baptistov, Odbor Sestier, Slovensko

Konferencia Odboru Sestier BJB v ČR a SR sa uskutoční v Poprade v dňoch 2.5.– 4.5.2014

Téma konferencie: *Pobožnosť so spokojnosťou*

Text: *„No, je naozaj veľkým ziskom pobožnosť so spokojnosťou“* 1.Tim.6:6

*"Uvedomujeme si, že sa potrebujeme povzbudzovať k tomu, aby sme žili pobožne a spokojne na tomto svete, ktorý je plný nespokojnosti a bezbožnosti. Pán Ježiš túži byť pre nás naozaj všetkým, On chce, aby sme bezpečne spočívali v Jeho náručí a abys me sa tešili v Ňom na každý nový deň."*

*Ruth Madarová*  
predsedníčka Odboru Sestier BJB



## International Baptist Theological Seminary (IBTS)



The IBTS courtyard prepared for the outdoor Pentecost Sunday service

The process of relocating the International Baptist Theological Seminary (IBTS) from Prague, Czech Republic, to Amsterdam, Netherlands, continues. The seminary is to be transformed into an International Baptist Study and Research Center that will become an embedded institution within the Department of Theology of the VU University Amsterdam.

The new site is in a Baptist church building in Amsterdam that will also house the Baptist Seminary of the Netherlands, the offices of the Baptist Union of the Netherlands, and the offices of the EBF. The property in Prague is to be sold with the proceeds going toward meeting the financial needs of the relocated and reconfigured entity.

## Baptists and Methodists Conclude First Session of Dialogue

Representatives of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) and the World Methodist Council (WMC) met January 30–February 5 at the Beeson Divinity School of Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama, in the United States. The meeting was the opening session in the first international dialogue between Baptists and Methodists.

The delegations were welcomed by the provost and executive vice president of the university, Bradley Creed, as well as Debra Wallace-Padgett, bishop of the North Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church, and Mike McLemore, director of missions for the Birmingham Baptist Association.

The overall theme of the dialogue is faith working through love. Participants discussed presentations on the history, theology, and contemporary global situation of Baptists and Methodists.

The participants worshipped together each day, drawing on the two traditions, and attended the Sunday service at the

Dawson Memorial Baptist Church in Birmingham.

The meeting in 2015 is planned for Singapore, where the dialogue partners will discuss the nature of the church with special attention to justification and sanctification.

## Baptists to Tour Biblical Sites in Turkey

The Baptist World Alliance (BWA) continues its preparation for the 2014 Annual Gathering, this year in Izmir, Turkey, from July 6-12.

The BWA Annual Gathering, normally held in July, brings together denominational leaders, pastors, theologians, seminary presidents, professors and interested Baptists from around the world for worship, fellowship, study and for decision meetings.

The 2014 meetings will be held in western Turkey, a region of significance to early Christianity, referred to in the New Testament as Asia or Asia Minor. Izmir is biblical Smyrna, one of seven churches to which the book of Revelation was addressed.

The Annual Gathering will include tours to the ruins of Ephesus as well as stories of Christian witness and history in Turkey, a country with a long, ancient and rich heritage.



The theater in Ephesus, where the scene in Acts 19:28-41, may have taken place

## The Youth World Day of Prayer

The Youth World Day of Prayer is an annual event held on the second Sunday in June.

Young people around the world are encouraged to plan services reflecting the importance of prayer and to intercede on behalf of others.

It is a time to celebrate the unity we share as believers in Jesus Christ and to seek a deeper relationship with Christ.

It is also a time to contribute to our annual Prayer Offering. This offering is used to assist with mission projects involving young people around the world. (visit [www.bwanet.org](http://www.bwanet.org))



## Anne Opocensky (nee Vintr)



Went to be with her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ on December 24, 2013, at 88 years of age. Beloved wife and best friend of Fred Opocensky for 56 years, Anne was predeceased by her parents Josef & Alzbeta Vintr, her brother Karel (Olga), and

sisters Amalia Ozdan (Paul) and Bernice Fibich (Ed). She is remembered as a very special aunt to many very special nieces and nephews all across Canada. Anne worked as a Canada Customs officer from March 1953 until her retirement in December of 1980. She was a long-time and integral member of Grace Baptist Church, serving in the church music ministry for 65 years, playing both piano and organ. As an active and devoted member of Grace Baptist, Anne served as pres-

ident of the Young People's Group, president and treasurer of the Women's Mission Circle, and church clerk. Anne Opocensky served as secretary of The Czechoslovak Baptist Women's Mission Union of The Czechoslovak Baptist Convention of USA and Canada from 1974 to 2002. She was the longest-serving officer in the history of the Women's Mission Union. Anne did many other volunteer activities in which she touched people's lives, pointing them to the Lord Jesus Christ and helping them in practical ways such as hospital visitation and making many supportive phone calls to those in need. Anne will be missed by many who loved her and enjoyed her friendly spirit and her keen sense of humor. She showed love and compassion and generosity to others, and always took great enjoyment in the children and youth at Grace. Anne was affectionately known to many as Mrs. O.

*"I thank God for all His faithfulness and His all-sustaining power. I feel that He has been with me all the way on life's incredible journey. His constant presence has always been a tremendous help and comfort to me both day and night, and I am so grateful for that!"* (Anne Opocensky, Testimony, *Glorious Hope* 6, 2012)

## Oliver M. Whitlow



Age 79 years, passed away on February 28, 2014, at his residence in the town of Goodrich, Wisconsin. A memorial service was held on Saturday, March 8, 2014, at Goodrich Community Church.

Oliver was born November 2, 1934, in Lakeland, Florida, the son of Lee Holland and Mildred Viola (Rushing) Whitlow. On October 2, 1965, he was united in marriage to Ruth Mikulencak at Emmanuel Bible Church in Berwyn, Illinois (formerly Lawndale Baptist Church in Chicago). He came to know the Lord through the pastor in Lakeland, Florida. A few weeks later he was baptized. As a young teenager he was sent to spend a summer with his sister in Chicago. It

was there he met his lifelong friend, Ray Woestendick. They attended Beldon Baptist Church and became active in the youth programs, which included competitive sports with other evangelical churches. Later on they began attending Lawndale Baptist Church in Chicago and became members. Oliver was involved with his church, including being president of his youth group, AWANA leader for many years, and a deacon. He also spent two summers as waterfront director at the church's Bible Camp. He also loved watching professional sports, played basketball, baseball, and football, and was an avid tennis player. Oliver worked for 40 years as a meat cutter, mostly for the National Tea Company. He also was a custodian for 5 1/2 years for a college. Oliver was known among his friends for his knuckleball.

He is survived by his wife of 48 years, Ruth; his sister, Vesta, of Florida; and his brother, Dean (Glenda), of Kentucky. He was preceded in death by his parents and by his siblings Robert, Tony and Elizabeth.



## God's Cure

Petar Vlasic



**N**ot once in my life did I think that one would ever use lyrics from the electronica genre of music to bring out a spiritually encouraging point, and yet, a mere month or so ago, I found myself listening to a track with this line: "I am the one who's sent to save you," and well ... here

we are. In the video to the song, we find a story of two brothers and their mother: one brother homeless and in heaps of trouble, his brother and mother desperately trying to locate and bring him home. At the end of this story, the lost son is holding a sealed envelope at the front of a house. In it, he finds an old picture of him and his brother in front of the same house, at which point his older brother comes and tears of happiness flow from both, but the culmination of the story occurs when mom opens the door and all three embrace, rejoicing that the prodigal son has returned home. Throughout the track, the following lyrics are sung:

*On your feet my friend.*

*Run, they're closing in.*

*Follow me for protection.*

*Keeping you safe from  
destruction.*

*I am the one who's sent to  
save you.*

*I can help replenish what  
they've taken from you.*

As we try to untangle the mess that is the bunny, colored eggs, and peanut butter cups so we can discover the purpose for this joyous occasion, I can't help but think that the line "I am the one who's sent to save you" sums up well the reason for the birth, death, and resurrection of our

Lord and Savior ... it was all for us. We are all the prodigal sons and daughters, and the Lord calls us all to come home. He loves us so much that He spared no price to:

**Save us**—"Because he loves me," says the LORD, "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name." "*With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation,*" (Psalm 91:14, 16). Not only is our salvation from eternal damnation, but it also grows us daily until that day when we meet and are made perfect. Let's come back to Him so we can live a full, rich life of love and obedience to Him until He calls us home.

**Replenish (heal) us**—"He Himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed," (1 Peter 2:24). Sin scars us and takes our joy away. His sacrifice, and the salvation stemming from it, heals those wounds and the ones brought on by the sins of our neighbors. The joy and peace we long for come only through Him.

**Protect us**—"But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you," (Psalm 5:11). In addition to all of the above, His salvation means protection under His mighty hand. No, life is not easy as His follower, but may we never forget that the same power which made the world and raised Jesus from the dead

is the power by which our Lord protects those who obey Him.

So let's stop trying to do this life on our own, but rather let's run to our Lord for protection, let Him save us, protect us, heal us. His salvation is the only remedy for what ails us.



# Children's Corner

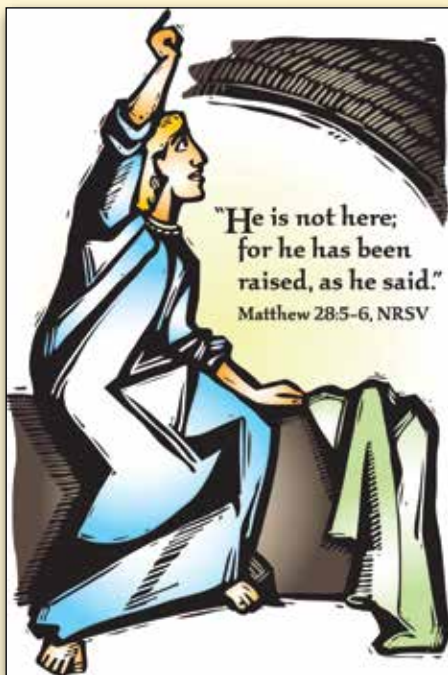


I still remember it like it was yesterday. Easter morning we would wake up extra early and put on our Easter outfits, complete with the pretty new knitted white sweater and brand new sandals. Next we'd all pile into the car and drive the few short miles up to campus where we'd soon see our church mem-

bers piling into the back of Old Main.

If you've ever been to Alderson Broaddus, you'll know exactly what I'm talking about, but if you haven't, let me draw you a picture. In the back of the Old Main building (now called Burbick Hall), there is a patio. It's large and made from beautiful stone. When you stand on the patio and look out, you have an absolutely perfect view of the entire city of Philippi. The city seems like it's perfectly nestled into the hills of West Virginia. It's on this patio, or right inside the doors to the patio, that every year we would experience our church's Easter sunrise service. As I child I remember listening as our pastor or a speaker would read the Easter story, or speak about the death and resurrection of Jesus. Without fail,

at the exact moment that the speaker would start talking about the early morning when Mary Magdalene went to the grave, the sun would beg for attention as we watched it peek its head through the clouds over Philippi and light up the sky. It was a very sweet moment that would make us reflect on how wonderful it must have been on the morning that the grave was found empty. Then we would sing a few songs, pile back into the car and head to church. Soon after would follow a fellowship breakfast, the annual egg hunt, and the Easter church service. For years that was what I knew Easter to be. I knew the traditions of celebrating Easter, and that Jesus died for my sins. However, it wasn't until later in life that I TRULY understood the importance of Easter.



As a child, I knew and understood the importance of Jesus dying on the cross. I knew that because God loved us so much, He sent His son to die on the cross for our sins so we wouldn't have to. What I didn't recognize was the importance of the resurrection.

So why is the resurrection important? (Have your Bible ready to fill in the blanks!!)

1. First of all, it proved that He was, in fact, who He claimed to be, and fulfills Biblical prophecy. Jesus had claimed to be the Son of God, and many people not only didn't believe Him... but wanted to kill Him because of it!

a. Psalm 49: 15 "But as for me, God will redeem my \_\_\_\_\_. He will snatch me from the power of the \_\_\_\_\_."

b. Romans 1:3-4 "The Good News is about his \_\_\_\_\_. In his earthly life he was born into King David's family line, and he was shown to be the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ when he was raised from the dead by the power of the \_\_\_\_\_. He IS Jesus Christ our Lord."

2. Next up, it shows that because He saved us from death from our sins and hell; we can now have life! And live it abundantly through Him!

a. Romans 5: 9- 10 "And since we have been made right in God's sight by the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation. For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his \_\_\_\_\_ while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the \_\_\_\_\_ of his Son."

b. John 10:10 "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have \_\_\_\_\_, and have it \_\_\_\_\_."

3. Lastly, it's part of the saving faith that we have in Christ.

a. Romans 10:9-10 "If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the \_\_\_\_\_, you will be \_\_\_\_\_. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and is it by confessing with your mouth that you are \_\_\_\_\_."

As you celebrate Easter this year, I hope you not only have joy in knowing that Jesus died for your sins; but also REJOICE that because He LIVES we can face tomorrow! I leave you now with words from one of my absolutely favorite hymns...

*God sent His Son,  
They called Him Jesus!  
He came to love, heal and forgive.  
He lived and died to buy my pardon,  
An empty grave is there to prove my Savior lives!  
Because He lives I can face tomorrow  
Because He lives all fear is gone!  
Because I know He holds the future,  
And life is worth the living just because He lives!*



*Who are you to question my wisdom without knowing what you are talking about? (Job 38:2)*



*Has anyone told the Lord what He must do or given Him advice? (Isaiah 40:13)*

*The Scriptures ask, "has anyone ever known the thoughts of the Lord or given him advice? But we have the mind of Christ. (I Corinthians 2:16)*

Missionary activity is no longer predominately the domain of Western

Christianity. Increasing numbers of missionaries are being commissioned and sent out from churches in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Oceania. As this movement has emerged and evolved, missiologists have referred to these countries as the "Majority World" (MW). There are now more missionaries from the Majority World than from the Western world. China is second to the USA in sending out missionaries! Indeed God is doing an amazing thing!

As the above verses suggest, we can either question God on what He seems to be doing in this world with MW missionaries, or we can embrace and thank Him for His Spirit's leading. The next thing we can do is ask: How we can join with what God is doing? How can I become part of this movement of missionaries from anywhere to everywhere?

As you know, I have the privilege of working in SIM with some of these MW missionaries as an advisor to SIM's new sending entities (NSE). In January, I had the opportunity to return to West Africa to work in SIM's West Africa Office (WAO) and to attend the Council meetings for WAO. I spent a week in Abidjan where WAO is located and a week in Ou-

gadougou in Burkina Faso attending financial training for some of the NSEs. I was also able to visit Ghana for four days.

One of the things that made me sad was to see the lack of funds for the WAO. Dr. Bako, a Chadian who raised his own support, moved to Cote d'Ivoire to become the director of WAO. But unfortunately the funds for running the office are not sufficient for him to do his work. Can you imagine a carpenter without a hammer or a doctor without a stethoscope?

They are tools of their trade necessary for them to do their work. Dr. Bako's role is to cover all of West Africa, but he cannot do his work because there is no money to help out in travel. If you are interested in helping out for this important cause click:

<https://web.simusa.org/give/start.php> if in the US or

<http://sim.org/index.php/donate> if outside the US.

Thank you for being willing to participate in what God is doing in West Africa!



Financial training in Ouaga

My thanks to all of you for making it possible for me to be still involved in what God is doing in the world. Rejoice with me that He continues to send out committed missionaries to reach the world with the Gospel!

*Ruby Mikulencak*

## Sharing One World... Continues from page 11

Columbia United Christian Church, St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church, and Columbia Baptist Fellowship.

Ardent followers of their respective Judeo-Christian faiths enjoy shared use of a common facility and close proximity of staff offices. These contribute to

the building of respectful relationships that are alert to opportunities for shared engagement in community building. After all, are not the adherents of the faith communities at the Oakland Mills Interfaith Center sharers in one city and one world?

*Neville George Callam, a Jamaican, has been serving as general secretary and chief executive officer of the Baptist World Alliance since his election in Accra, Ghana, in 2007*



## Not To Be Served, but To Serve

A Canadian orthopedic surgeon, an American surgical fellow, a retired Korean professor of physiology, a Korean-American cardiac physiologist, an Ethiopian public health doctor—what do they all have in common? A desire to teach Ethiopian medical students at Myungsung Medical College, a small Christian school associated with MCM (the Korean Hospital). It takes a village to raise a child – and likewise it takes the faithful commitment of dozens of seasoned teachers of all specialties to achieve our college's vision of training a new generation of Christian servant leaders!

Following the college's slogan, "*Christ came not to be served but to serve*" (Matt. 20:28), our curriculum stresses not only academic excellence but also faith training and community



MyungSung Medical College

service — the students spending an afternoon every two weeks serving in various capacities at such places as The Sisters of Charity's home for sick and dying destitutes, or the well-known Hamlin Fistula Hospital. With modern educational methods and early introduction of patient contact, the college's reputation has spread quickly in just one year, resulting



Dan with first-year students ready to see patients

in 200 applicants competing this fall for 25 positions... what an opportunity!

What could help us improve the college further and increase its impact? Prayer, of course, plus two other gifts: more short- and long-term faculty, especially in the basic medical sciences, and scholarships to allow students without resources to enrol. With a yearly tuition of \$3,000, this is a great educational deal

anywhere! Would you ask your biomedical scientist friends to consider at least a short-term trip to teach, or alternatively give one student the chance to make a difference in this vast country? Thanks in advance for your help!

## What is happening with us, and how can you pray?

**Our stay in Canada:** we spent September and October in Canada, primarily being close to our family. Dita was mostly in the Hamilton area, caring for her mother and close to her brother, while Dan worked at Montréal Children's Hospital, with the amazing added bonus of being most of the time with both boys! While Daniel was doing his term-long, challenging stage (term-long training placement), Chris was also in Montréal for a work co-op with Morgan Stanley Corporation, so the three men spent precious time together, exploring the city, biking, and visiting friends.



Boys and Dan riding with friends for a good cause

**Return to Ethiopia:** we both "hit the ground running," with Dita starting back in charge of the Korean Hospital's quality management department, and Dan overseeing the second class of medical students and helping Dr. Frehun in the



Dita teaching first Basic Life Support course at MCM

BethanyKids pediatric surgical unit. We have also had the blessing of reconnecting with our various ministry partners from the Korean Hospital, our local church (Addis Christian Life Assembly), and SIM, the organization that we are seconded to here. We have also realized that what little Amharic (the main language in Ethiopia) we knew before leaving is now mostly lost. At least we

continue to enjoy the traditional Ethiopian foods, and delight in the sunny, balmy weather, day after day after day...

*Dan & Dita Poenaru*





## News flash: Building Fund Goal Met!

God has miraculously provided the full amount of the purchase price of the building for South City Church, and the current owners have agreed to sell it to us! 49% of the finances have come from the church's building fund savings, gifts, tithes, and donors like you, and 51% is made up of eleven interest-free loans from Czech churches, individuals, and orga-



Two Mongolian believers, Puje and Margad, were baptized by Mark and Daniel

nizations. After the signing of the purchase agreement and completion of the land registry documentation, the former boiler building will belong to South City Church. The next steps will include budgeting for loan repayment and beginning basic remodeling of the main meeting room so that the building can be used as soon as possible.

## Ládví Church

The new Ládví church plant has begun hosting a new 12-week video



Petr joining the church at Ládví

outreach course which covers the basics of Christianity. The course, called Christianity Explored, has been professionally dubbed into Czech and is based on the gospel of Mark. We are meeting in a pizzeria near the Ládví subway station, and up to 12 people, including the team, have been participating. One new participant named Jana, who claims to be Buddhist, said she knew nothing about Jesus before coming to the course. Two other participants, Milan and Honza, already invited friends for the second evening of the course.

## North City: Challenges and Changes

Throughout the fall and winter, it has become increasingly difficult to agree with the Christian School about the terms of use of their facility for meetings of CB Ládví. In addition, differing expectations about the level of involvement of



Petr (center) inviting people to the Ládví church

South City Church as sponsor of the school have resulted in the elders' decision to no longer pursue becoming the church sponsor of Heřmáněk Christian School. Several other factors played into the decision, including negative feedback from some of the non-Christian parents about having their children



Christianity Explored at Ládví

in a church-sponsored school and potential financial liabilities. Finding suitable meeting places for new church plants in Prague is a never-ending challenge.

Continues on next page





## Praises and Prayer Requests:

1. Praise God—the monthly support has been raised.
2. Pray that our start-up cost would come in so we can leave in April. We have purchased our plane tickets and we are scheduled to fly out April 23<sup>rd</sup>, landing in Vienna, Austria, April 24<sup>th</sup>. (Vienna is closer to where we are going to live, closer than Prague, where one would usually land.)
3. Praise God for the continued faithfulness of our supporters, both through their prayers and financially.
4. Please pray for peace during this very busy time, that we would not be overwhelmed by all there is to do. As we are preparing to depart for Czech on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, there is much to do between now and then (packing/figuring out what to take, selling items, cleaning current house, visits with family, finalizing housing in Czech, and on and on and on). Pray that we would get the rest that we need and that we would keep our focus on the Lord.
5. Pray for our transition to Czech. Anthony, being a Czech native, is obviously familiar with the Czech culture, but not so for the rest of us. Please pray for Jamie and the kids as they adjust to a new culture, new people, new relationships, new language, new foods, etc.... Pray for Anthony



as he helps the rest of us to adjust. Pray for him to know how to help us and for patience.

6. Pray for our location. We are currently finalizing our housing in Czech. Pray for our future neighbors, that we can build relationships with people in the community. God has provided for us a place to live. This is a major answer to prayer. The housing market in our target area is not very good, offering very limited options for almost a year now. So, finding a good place to stay was very dif-



We hope to move into the blue house on the left

ficult, but once again God has provided. Pray that we would make good friends with locals and find ways to be involved with the community.

7. Pray for our vehicle needs. We are also in the process of finding a reliable, reasonably priced vehicle.
8. Pray for the people of the city Přerov, where we will church plant. Pray that we will connect well with our ministry partners in Czech and their families. Pray that we would connect well with the local church in Kroměříž, a nearby city.
9. Pray for safe travels in our last few months here in the US and also for our travels to Czech.
10. Pray that God would continue to provide for our start-up cost.

## The Potmas... Continues from page 22

### Needed: English Teacher at Skalka Church

We are looking for a person to do English-based outreach for the Skalka church in Prague. This would also include teaching English and Bible for adults, and could also include a kids' club, teen club, and other interest-based activities.

### Prayers and Praises

1. Praise the Lord with us for his gracious provision of the building for South City Church. Please PRAY that God would

guide each step forward as South City Church makes plans for putting the building into use.

2. Please PRAY for Mark's parents, Jerry and Joanne, as they adjust to Jerry living in a long-term care facility.

3. PRAY for Petr Vlček's outreach at the Ládví subway station and for the Christianity Explored course.

Your servants proclaiming Christ as Lord,

*Mark & Gretchen, Luke, Noemi, Ben, Elise*



**He is risen!**  
**Vstal z mrtvých!**  
**Vstal z mŕtvych!**

