



The Prague Christian Fellowship POST

Monthly Newsletter of the Sbor Krestanské společenství PCF

Cost 10 Czech Crowns - September 2005

John Mullen, PCF Pastor

WORSHIP, COMMUNITY and MISSION

A Christian community would be an oxymoron outside the context of worshipping our Lord and King. What about Christian worship outside the context of community? What about Christian community outside the context of reaching out to a lost and dying world (mission)?

Recently I read an article from a pastor in the UK that resonated with me. He wrote: "I see less and less room in the New Testament for any kind of faith outside of community. The individualism of our culture is so alien. We're realizing we are on a journey together and we need to be working though this together. It's about us and Christ, not me and Christ. It's not me and my relationship with Him. It's not about my salvation, it's about the salvation of the world and our part in that. We're trying to work out what that means. How does community serve all our relationships with Christ and his mission? How can we better help one another in that?"¹

These are two relevant questions for our

community at PCF. I have been asking others and myself: Why are we doing the things we are doing? What purpose do they serve? We took a month off from our normal service and met in the park this summer. I was hoping the time away would give us fresh perspective on our normal routine. What purpose(s) do our normal worship services serve? In order to complete that line of thinking we have to address the question: What purpose do we want to serve?

I keep coming back to three words: worship, community and mission. Each of these is important and the three need to be kept in balance. For instance, if we all stayed home and privately worshipped, we would be like a cell of Jesus Christ rather than the true expression of Him - His Body. If we came together and never worshipped, we would be like a club in Prague and not His Bride whom He loves and will return for. If we worshipped together and never reached out, we would be like a reflection in a mirror without the hands and feet to fulfill the commission/

purposes of Christ.

So with all three in mind, what kind of activity should we actively foster and put our energy into? The New Testament has a lot to say about sharing our lives together and building the kingdom of God, but not too much about meeting in the Synagogue (not to say the Synagogue did not serve some important roles as well). So I wonder about a Christian community that states that attending a Sunday service is THE primary spiritual activity of the week.

I would guess that the Church of the Lord
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Lukas Port, PCF Member

REVIVAL OF CIVIL SOCIETY - PCF's ENGLISH CAMP

Kelsie and John asked me to follow-up my talk about civil society that I gave at our Sunday service in August. I am glad to share it again in more detail in this article. As a student of political and social sciences this area is not only my major but also my hobby. I enjoy using and applying my knowledge in everyday situations through the philosophical concepts I have had the opportunity to digest during the past five years of study. One of these instances was during my visit to the most recent English Camp organized by PCF in Úvaly in August. What was going on in Úvaly, whether its organizers realized it or not, was **an example of the revival and growth of civil society**. But before continuing, I will clarify briefly the basic idea of civil society and its relation to the political process and the post-communist region.

Civil society is the part of society where people learn to become active citizens. It includes the "schools" of active participating citizens - citizens who are indispensable for democracy. These "schools" are places where people learn how to organize themselves, interact and carry out projects of their own interests. Thus they enrich each other through perceptions, opinions as well as and learning about political tolerance. Among these "schools" are churches, clubs (not only for adults but also for children) or even small and "insignificant" groups such as a band of friends meeting in a pub regularly and discussing life issues. This may eventually lead to collective political action to counteract, stop or influence the process and the future. Unless they meet, organize and share their opinions, no such action is truly possible. If not, it ceases to be a de

mocracy and becomes a sort of dictatorship, totalitarian regime, oppression or a different sort of political unit.

Civil societies in post-communist countries are facing particular problems related to the debilitating, long-term and often indirect curbing of their governments' effective functioning by the communist regimes of Central and East Europe before 1989. Among these problems are disillusionment with the new system not fulfilling the original expectations, political transformation hardship, economic instability, distrust for political as well as other authorities, post-totalitarian psychological distress, and lack of interest. This has created this distaste in the post-communist citizens to organize, create, develop, build, hope and long for, or in other

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Member of the Month

Garth Wright

II Cor. 5:17 says, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come."

I am from California and I was raised with two brothers and a sister by a loving but alcoholic mother and her string of husbands. Mom was a waitress in various bars and casinos. We were what most Americans would call, "poor white trash". While I was growing up I followed in my mother's footsteps and her addictive behaviors and drank and experimented with drugs while moving from one relationship to another.

When I was 21-years-old and in my third year in the U.S. Army, I remember the Christmas Eve that changed my life. I was on a military base in the middle of Texas, far from friends and family and feeling very much alone. I knew that on this night most people were having big Christmas dinners, surrounded by people they loved.

I was an atheist, but I was so lonely that I decided to go to a military chapel that advertised a "free Christmas Eve movie and snacks". The people who greeted me in the chapel were really nice. The movie turned out to be an Italian Catholic film on the life of Christ, with English subtitles. At the end of the film, Jesus died on the cross. There was no resurrection scene and to that point in my life I had never heard that Christ rose from the dead, so when I made the decision to become a Christian, I thought it meant you



became a follower of a dead martyr named Jesus.

The next year I got out of the Army, moved back to California and met a Christian girl named Diana. She made a deal with me that I could take her out on dates but between every one I had to take her to church. It soon dawned on the pastor that I was unsaved. He preached a simple salvation message and I ran forward after the service, was baptized and became a radical believer, trying to share Christ boldly, but mostly succeeding in offending all my friends and relatives.

Since then I've attended seminary, been involved in street-drama evangelism, preaching, home groups, and gone on short-term missions to third world countries. But it was in 1994, while I was a businessman living "the good life" by the beach in Malibu, California, that a tragic illness turned my life back to my original call to missions. I woke up one morning and my legs barely functioned. I drove myself to a nearby hospital, collapsed

outside of the emergency room entrance, and after days of medical tests a neurosurgeon told me that I had a rare form of polio and would be a quadriplegic for life. At this point all I could move was my head and my right arm.

Lying on my back, a helpless cripple, gave me plenty of time to have a serious conversation with God. He told me that I had disobeyed His original call on my life to be in overseas ministry. I promised the Lord that if He would heal me I would sell my business and move to Europe and help the local church in any way I could. I had some business associates carry me out of the hospital and after three months of physical therapy, God's healing was complete and I was back on my feet.

I first moved to Italy, and then in 1996 I moved to Prague and met John and Kelsie Mullen and became involved in Prague Christian Fellowship. After three years I moved away from Prague, and during the last six years have lived and worked in Brno, Croatia, Bosnia and Slovenia. I have just moved back to Prague for my job with an American company. I am very happy to have a church that feels like home, and I pray I can be of some use to the Lord in His ministry at PCF.

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED....

The best way to keep up with your giving for TAX records or to simply to "keep up" is via bank transfer.

Please consider this option, it will be easier for you and you'll make the church accountant happy.

PCF Bank Info:

**Sbor Krestanské společenství
PCF, CSOB a.s., Kamenická 26,
Prague 7**

Account No. **181730394/0300**
Variable symbol: 10261

(Continued from page 1, Revival of Civil Society...)

Info

words, to have faith.

Now we arrive to the relation of the concept of civil society and PCF. PCF is an important part of the Czech civil society. It is a place where ideas, political perceptions and energy to organize are present and reviving. It is a source of hope and one of the various schools of democracy, be it our refugee camp ministry, the Úvaly English Camp, different meeting groups or simple member interaction. The energy to do things or start things is here. Hence, the participants of the English Camp (and not only from the side of the kids) had the opportunity to learn a different language and to participate in a mutual effort with other pupils. This is an example of a group of active, healthy citizenry who organize and affect change through an event for the village of Úvaly. They are able to learn about religion (thus exceeding the secular school system), a different language, different nationalities, geography, team cooperation, and social interaction skills. They also relieve their parents from their duties and responsibilities for a brief while, giving them their children back with good impressions and experiences that surely influence not only the children, but also their parents indirectly as well.

Thus this citizenry gives birth to a long-term process of revival of post-communist society as a whole. How? Well, not only by doing a one week English Camp, but also by giving these children an experience that they will carry within themselves, often unconsciously, for the rest of their lives.

We are thus at the beginning of a long chain of consequences. If the inhabitants do not care about Úvaly, who else will? If you do not know your neighbors, or even secretly despise them, how can you get together to raise funds or initiate social change?

To conclude, even the fact that this current PCF Post in your hand exists, and that through this medium you have just explored the idea of civil society from a student of political science, is a real example of a functioning civil society process.

Lukas

~ A full version of this article may be viewed online on our web page:
www.praguefellowship.cz

International House of Prayer Prague

Every Tuesday night starting in September at 6:00 PM at the YMCA (Motylek school), Bourilova, Prague 9. Worship with us and corporately seek God's will for this city and this nation. Getting there: Go to metro Rajska Zahrada - yellow line. Get off and walk across the street, downhill Bourilova street on the right side - 5 min walk.

PCF Leader's Meeting

Thursday, September 8, 2005 at 6:00 PM. We will be meeting at the Methodist church at Jecna 19 at 18:00. We will try to stick to ministry issues and meet separately for business. If you wish to be involved with the business meeting, please contact John Mullen at 608243788.

ALL Night Prayer in Jihlava

Friday, September 9, 2005. Come and join Czech intercessors to pray for the Czech Republic. Contact Mirek & Petra Cejkovi (ceyka@ji.cz) for more info.

Miracle Meeting:

"Jesus is the way to Life"

Friday, September 23, 2005 at 6:00 PM and Saturday, Sept 24 from 9:00 - 12:00 & 14:00 to 17:00. Location: KSP, Na Zertvach 23, P8- Palmovka. For more info call Martin Njamba at 608445629 www.wo-mn.org.

Cross Culture Adjustment Seminar

Saturday, September 24, at 10:00 AM. We have 2 experienced cross culture adjustment teachers at PCF and they will be leading a seminar for those who are new to Prague. The seminar will be held in Úvaly at the home of John & Kelsie Mullen. Location and details can be found on the PCF web page. Please call Kelly Kuest for details at 605911105 or write to kuestesi@hotmail.com.

Church BBQ

Saturday, September 24, after the Cross Culture Seminar we will have a BBQ for those who can stick around and those who want to come out. Please call Kelsie Mullen for details at 777150802 or write to mullen@uvaly.net.

Ministry to the Refugees

Saturday, September 24, 2005 at 10:45 AM. Once per month we go to the refugee camp in Bela pod Bezdezem on a Saturday to hang out with the people there, serve tea, play with the kids, do sports and generally build relationships and try to make their routine a bit more fun. We will be leaving at 10:45 AM and returning

to Prague around 5 PM. If you are interested in joining us or want to make a donation, contact Katka at katka.kounovska@praguefellowship.com. NOTE: This month's date is still to be confirmed...

Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem

Sunday, October 2nd is this year's date for praying for peace in Jerusalem. Please put it on your calendar.

Darwin and Design

Saturday, October 22, 2005 from 8:30 AM to 19:30 an International science conference will be held to review evidence for intelligent design, drawing upon results in astronomy, physics, mathematics, biochemistry, biology, genetics and paleontology. Registration 350 - 650 czk.

The Church Feast

Thursday, November 17, 2005 at 10:00 to 22:00. Express our joyful waiting for the return of the Lord with music and arts (4 worship bands). Kostel sv. Vojtecha, Praha 6 - Dejvice, Thákurova 3. Please contact Petra Sustrova for more info at petra@angelmountain.net or 776116477.

Church Library Inventory

Our church library is in the process of inventory. Please return your books, videos, tapes and CDs to the office ASAP. The office is located at Elášova 15, Prague 6. Please call ahead and arrange your visit (224-315-613) or bring your return items to the Sunday service.

New Web Page

Visit www.PragueFellowship.cz to see our new interactive web site. Members can log-on to view/update member info, sign up for Sunday school/ worship team/ church set-up, and chat with other members.



Upcoming Birthdays

The following PCF members past and present will be having birthdays in the next few weeks.

Jacob Kropf	September 1
Dave Hein	September 3
Eric Steiner	September 6
Darina Sedlacek	September 6
Petra Štiglerová	September 12
Nancy Efinger	September 15
Lincoln Sporaro	September 16
Zhanna Klimishinets	September 17
Teirany Mehaffy	September 18
Jack Reinhardt	September 21
Kamil Detky	September 24
Sylvia Apodaca	September 24
David Lubwama	September 26
Robin Harsh	September 30



(Continued from page 1, **Worship**, ...)

Jesus Christ has the primary role of making disciples who will transform society. The question is whether our meetings foster discipleship and shape lives. Or, do our meetings merely provide a source of identity (“I am a follower of Christ because I attend a Sunday service”) or entertainment (“I liked the message at church today”). I for one, am ready to take a hard look at that question.

Before addressing meetings, I would have to say that I am much more interested in what happens between the meetings rather than in them. Community is about getting to really know one another, caring about one another, and being accountable to one another. It is about relationships. We have to make a conscious effort to be relational and ensure that relationships are always more important than structure. I am prepared to change the structure in order to serve the relationships, AND it seems to me, the best structure to foster relationships is small/house groups, and common mission activities such as serving the poor or refugees.

When we meet corporately, I believe



PRAYER ITEMS

- 1) **Church Finances** (generous, joyful givers). **Birthing of “Marketplace Ministry” in Prague** to shift finances into Kingdom of God.
- 2) **Home groups**; for hosts and leaders as well as a commitment in the Body to share their lives together.
- 3) **International House of Prayer Prague (www.ihopp.org)** - For more leaders and finances.
- 4) For the **Peace of Jerusalem**, especially on October 2 (Ps. 122:6).
- 5) **Richard’s family and his ministry** in prison – he has been relocated to a prison in Moravia.
- 6) **More laborers in the harvest field of Prague and at PCF (Matt 9:37,38)**, and more salvations in the Czech Republic
- 7) **Christian International School of Prague (www.cisprague.org)** for more students/ teachers and approval of legal status.

these times should facilitate community and relationship building. They should be the fruit of holding our lives in common. Great meetings should exist because the lives of the people in our community are great, not because the pastor is skilled at creating an environment that makes everything entertaining and wonderful. The meetings are meant to be the fruit of people’s discipleship, the fruit of the peoples’ worship, rather than the weekly feeding that should enable them to get through till the next Sunday.

How do we do that? Well scripture says: *When you meet, one will sing, another will teach, another will tell some special revelation God has given, one will speak in an unknown language, while another will interpret what is said. But everything that is done must be useful to all and build them up in the Lord.* (1 Corinthians 14:26-27 NLT)

My interpretation of this passage is that the body comes together and shares the spiritual fruits and gifts represented in their lives. I think this applies to Sunday worship services as well as weekly small groups, as well as the mission activities we pursue. My hope is that we can see

more and more of this as we gather together in the future. My suspicion is that as we do we will see more and more of Christ in one another and more and more growth and maturity. Then we will be on the road to making disciples who will transform the world and society for Christ. †

[†]Community: Sustaining community in a growing church. Cutting Edge UK talks with Matt Hyam, Cutting Edge, Spring/Sum 2005.

PCF Finances

May 2005

67,905.50	Total Income
592.50	Internet & Communications
7,000.00	Office Rent & Electricity
8,500.00	Church Rent
0.00	Supplies & Equipment
0.00	Copying & Publishing
10,582.00	Salaries/Employer Tax
0.00	Evangelism & Teaching
0.00	Church Giving
947.00	Fees & Advertising
1005.00	Miscellaneous
28,626.50	Total Expenses
39,279.00	Net Income

All amounts shown are in Czech Crowns.

June 2005

45,473.00	Total Income
7,164.00	Internet & Communications
11,021.41	Office Rent & Electricity
8,500.00	Church Rent
0.00	Supplies & Equipment
0.00	Copying & Publishing
26,150.00	Salaries/Employer Tax
1,400.00	Evangelism & Teaching
5,690.00	Church Giving
1,660.50	Fees & Advertising
498.00	Miscellaneous
62,083.91	Total Expenses
-16,610.91	Net Income

All amounts shown are in Czech Crowns.

July 2005

27,500.00	Total Income
3,754.00	Internet & Communications
3,000.00	Office Rent & Electricity
0.00	Church Rent
0.00	Supplies & Equipment
0.00	Copying & Publishing
25,543.00	Salaries/Employer Tax
0.00	Evangelism & Teaching
0.00	Church Giving
1,000.00	Fees & Advertising
1,588.00	Miscellaneous
34,885.00	Total Expenses
-7,385.00	Net Income

All amounts shown are in Czech Crowns.

PCF’s 5th Annual English Camp



Above: Ben Fluno’s shirt says it all!

Left: John, Kelsie and the mayor of their village judge the performance of the kids.

Should you have a testimony to share please email us. The deadline is September 17, 2005