



Pieter & Nora Kalkman International Ministries

*Life-changing missions in Europe through partnerships
with European Baptist Federation*



May 2009 Newsnotes – Diamond Jubilee, God in the Center or in the Palace?

Dear Friends,

We concluded this month by going with joyful hearts and happy expectations to the 60-year Diamond Jubilee of IBTS (International Baptist Theological Seminary). It stands for an education concept for graduate and post-graduate theological training for students and Baptist leaders of all 50 EBF (European Baptist Federation) member unions, which we wholeheartedly support. Seeing the need for quality theological education in Europe, our mission International Ministries is among their long term strongest supporters.

The celebrations started with this years graduation, where graduates were encouraged to be proud, and on Saturday's official jubilee ceremony, splendid and perfect reports helped the rector to be exuberantly praised for his achievements, and people expressed their love for the p(a)lace, the shiny yellow shades, and whitewashed glorious and really beautifully looking campus. We were happy that a long retired professor was called to the microphone, and he addressed the almost 100 attendees, using his couple of minutes for a perspective that reminded us of Gods presence and work through the institutions history. This was a refreshing moment, and we pray for Gods grace for good prospects for IBTS as the economy is causing clouds to rise over its future, and that His presence might be visible again, at IBTS for many years to come.

Just about a fortnight before, we spoke at a Czech Baptist church West of Prague. This church was also celebrating their 60-year anniversary (Diamond Jubilee). The church outgrew its long-term moderate facility and members and visitors are sitting on stairs and in hallways each Sunday to be part of the overcrowded worshipping community. This was a great encouragement to us, as this is special for the Czech Republic, where secularism and atheism are dominant and seem all-present.

This church has a Romanian pastor from Czech descent (religious persecution drove Czechs in diaspora almost four centuries ago), a man from simple background, but who knows and trusts the Lord, in a radiating way, which helps his congregation knowing trusting and loving God, and growing tremendously. We sensed God being in the center in that church, in praise, atmosphere, speech, and fruit. We pray that Gods presence continues to be obvious at that church. Please see our interactive Website part for opportunities for work teams to help this church with their new facilities.

We had started the month with marriage seminars outside the Czech Republic. and then helped organize marriage seminars for our church members, however due to short notice, we had to reschedule that. which then worked out well because we had the privilege of having a volunteer for ourselves for the second time since we are in Prague to help specifically with our ministry. Kerry was there for about the last 10 days of the month. To us, he is a gift from God, helping us tremendously with our computer and website needs.

This time he upgraded our website and made it interactive, so that it is easier for potential volunteers to find a matching volunteer position in Europe. Also, he helped us tremendously with our data management, transferring address data between different programs. And he took a couple of hundred hard copy prayer letters for us to be mailed in the US, at less than half the cost of mailing it from here. We thoroughly enjoyed not only his help but also his company as we had some private time at different occasions.

Greetings and Blessings,
Pieter & Nora