



# **CHARLES UNIVERSITY IN PRAGUE**

## **PROTESTANT THEOLOGICAL FACULTY**

**How shall we sing the Lord's song  
in a strange land?  
Proclaiming the Gospel in a secular society**

**Prague, Czech Republic  
March 23 – April 1, 2011**

A seminar for pastors from the Presbyterian Church (USA),  
the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB),  
and other Protestant churches



## How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? Proclaiming the Gospel in a secular society

**Purpose:** In today's increasingly secularised society, with fewer and fewer people taking the Church seriously, how can we remain faithful witnesses to our Saviour and spread the Gospel values among those around us? It may be interesting to hear the experiences of Christians from the Czech Republic, one of the most secularised countries in Europe. The Protestant Theological Faculty (PTF) of the historical Charles University in Prague (dating back to the 14th century) has combined with the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB – the partner church of the PC(USA) in the Czech Republic) to offer a seminar on this theme, enabling pastors from the ECCB, the PC(USA), and other Protestant churches, to share experiences from their different settings and cultures, and to explore the challenges facing Christians in a secular society under the expert guidance of teachers from the PTF. Part of the programme will include some days spent in an ECCB congregation outside Prague to experience the everyday life of a Czech pastor on the ground. There will also of course be an opportunity to explore the beautiful city of Prague.



**Themes:** It is planned to cover the following topics, among others:

- Survey of the history of the Protestant churches in the Czech lands, including Jan Hus and the Reformation, the Counter-Reformation,
- the Tolerance era, the communist period, and developments since the Velvet Revolution
- The roots of secularisation in the Czech Republic – historical, cultural, social
- Mission in the post-Christian society
- How to make Christianity comprehensible for the average person
- How to deal with the suspicion of ideology
- Techniques and methods of mission and evangelisation
- The role of diaconal work

All participants will be encouraged to make contributions based on their own experience, so that the participants from different countries can share with and learn from each other.



#### Provisional schedule:

- Wednesday 23 March 2011: arrival in Prague, where you will be met by your Czech "host" pastor and travel with them to their congregation. You will spend the next few days as a guest in their congregation, experiencing at first hand the joys and sorrows of the everyday life of a Czech pastor, including Sunday worship.
- Sunday, 27 March: travel back to Prague with your host pastor in the afternoon or evening.
- Monday 28 to Wednesday 30 March: seminar proper in Prague.
- Thursday 31 March: free for sightseeing in Prague.
- Friday 1 April: return home.

The arrival and departure days can be flexible. The schedule is designed to allow pastors to use study leave time, missing only one Sunday service.

#### Costs: [figure about 20 crowns to the US dollar]

- The basic cost will be **20,000 Czech crowns** (or the equivalent in dollars). This will include the costs of the seminar itself, single-room accommodation in Prague for the 5 nights 27 March – 1 April, and meals during this period. Other possible additional costs:
- 1700 crowns for each additional overnight with breakfast in Prague, should you wish/need to stay longer.
- Concert or theatre performance in Prague (optional): 500-1000 crowns.
- Return travel costs from Prague to congregation during the first half of the programme: up to about 800 crowns depending on the distance.

*You will of course also be responsible for your travel costs to and from the United States and Prague and for your travel insurance.*

*U.S. citizens do not need visas for short-term stays in the Czech Republic.*



**Accommodation:** As already mentioned above, you will spend the first half of the programme in a Czech congregation and will be accommodated there. Accommodation in Prague during the second half of the programme will be in the "Church Pension" guesthouse of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB), in the same complex as the ECCB central offices. It is situated in Prague's Old Town within easy walking distance of all the main sights, and also only five minutes' walk from the Protestant Theological Faculty, where the seminar will be held. International participants will be accommodated in single rooms. Accommodation is comfortable, with washbasins in all rooms; in some cases rest rooms and bathrooms are shared between two rooms.

Breakfast will be taken in the Church Pension building, and lunch and evening meals in a nearby restaurant.

**Registration:** Please complete the registration form and send it to the following address:

Rev. Dr. Barbara A. Renton,  
2891 State Highway 7, Bainbridge, NY 13733  
tel: 607-967-4819 or [renton@frontiernet.net](mailto:renton@frontiernet.net)

The deadline for registrations is **September 1, 2010**. The seminar will take place if a minimum of 7 American and 7 Czech participants have registered by that date. Participants from other churches will of course also be welcome. It will still be possible to register after then (up until November 30, 2010), provided there is still room – the number of participants will be limited to a maximum of around 25 in the interests of interaction between them. Once we receive your registration form, we will send you confirmation straight away, and more detailed information in January 2011.



**Payment:** Unfortunately we do not have the facilities to accept payment by check or credit/debit card, so payment will have to be made by bank transfer. Because of the costs of international transfers, we will not ask you to pay a deposit. Payment for the theatre/concert and travel costs to the congregation should be made in Prague in cash. Payment of the basic cost (and supplement for additional overnights where appropriate) by bank transfer should be made in advance as follows:

- You must make the payment in Czech crowns and pay your bank for the cost of the transfer. (This could be as much as \$50.00).
- Payment should be made no earlier than 1 January 2011 and no later than 28 February 2011.
- As message for the recipient you should send your name and "Secularism Seminar".
- If you make your payment in advance and are later not able to take part in the seminar, we will refund your payment after deducting 15% to cover administrative costs, bank charges, and loss of income from the rooms. If you cancel after 1 March 2011, we will deduct 20%.
- Details of the bank account to make the payment to (your bank will have the forms):
  - Account holder: Univerzita Karlova v Praze, Evangelicka teologicka fakulta, Cerna 9, P.O. Box 529, CZ-11555 Praha 1, Czech Republic
  - Bank: Komerční banka, a.s., Spalena 51, P.O. Box 1090, CZ-11121 Praha 1, Czech Republic
  - IBAN (International Bank Account Number): CZ28 0100 0000 0000 8543 9011
  - BIC (Swift Code): KOMBCZPP

**For further information contact:**

Rev. Dr. Barbara A. Renton,  
2891 State Highway 7, Bainbridge, NY 13733  
Tel: 607-967-4819 or e-mail: [renton@frontiernet.net](mailto:renton@frontiernet.net)

or:

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*Last updated: 29 June 2010*