



# parakletos

Dear Friends,

'Trusting you are enjoying the arrival of spring with its explosion of new life! May it remind us all of the new life we have been given in Christ.

What a privilege it has been to travel throughout the Czech Republic these last several months meeting with many people who desire to learn how better to grow in Christ. Not only did we seek ways to live Christ-centered lives with them, but we now better understand the pressures and needs these believers are experiencing as well as being able to observe how different churches have responded. Because our focus is on relational needs we were able to identify the areas of struggle marriages and individuals experience. This continuous flow of communication is so precious to us and is helpful as we work to serve others better! During these months we were also privileged to continue our work with individuals and pastors.

## SEMINARS

In December Pavel defended his dissertation, *Conflict Transformation in Marriage*, which has been one of the themes of our seminars. Over the last years we have collected extensive material regarding specific ways in which conflict can bring new life, and deeper levels, to relationships. Our seminars are designed to deal with different aspects of transformation which can happen during conflicts whether these conflicts be in the church, marriage, relational conflict, or a theology of conflict. God can and does change us through conflict.

Conflict happens often in life and yet we as Christians are often ill-equipped to deal with it. Because God knows our every need, the Bible speaks in depth about not only the

reality of conflict but ways to approach them in godly ways.

One of our seminars took place at a church that had just gone through a conflict with their pastor resulting in a lot of hurt and strong emotions. We dealt strictly



"I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me." Acts 26: 17-18

We exist to facilitate the church to be a safe, honest, and intimate place to meet, know, and grow in Christ and His Body. Parakletos creates a safe place through means of individual counseling, seminars, and mentoring.

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Two one day seminars on pastoral care and counseling for married couples were held. A relatively new issue for our country, pre-marital counseling, was also included in our discussions. In fact, our pastors are even being asked to officiate at the marriages of non-believers. While this represents a new issue, it also offers new opportunities for ministry. Our pastors realize that the culture is changing so saliently that old answers and methods no longer work. We have a plan to continue with additional training for these pastors so they can more effectively help couples in and outside of their churches.

with biblical views of how to grow in conflict, allowing God to transform us. Sensing some calmness and mollification, we pray for continued healing. A couple attending one of our conflict seminars shared the following.

“We were deeply touched by what was said. Not really just by what was said but because of the spirit in which it was said. God spoke to us in a profound way.”

## PASTORS

A three day pastor's conference was held focusing on practical conflicts pastors face in congregations, or opposition in the church, in a Christ-like way. Good, honest discussions were held and, from pastors reactions, they benefited from what was said as well as from what we learned together.



**Please note that there has been a change of address of Bridge to Life for your donations!**

For financial support from the US you can send tax deductible contributions to Bridge to Life Ministries, 17194 Van Wagoner Rd, Spring Lake, MI 49456. Make the check out to Bridge to Life and designate the gift for CCMCR or Parakletos. Or send check to LeadingEdge, PO Box 1893 Noblesville, IN 46060-1893 for Parakletos.

Online giving at: [www.leadedge.org](http://www.leadedge.org)

From the UK: CAF Bank, Acc Name: Central Eurasian Partners, Sort code: 40-52-40, AccNo: 00016282, designate to Parakletos.

From the CZ: ČSOB AccNo: 186 694 169 / 0300

## Family

- Jana continues working full time in Manchester, UK as well as attending night classes for her lawyer training. While this represents a lot of stress, she enjoys her studies and is very motivated to help the poor and disadvantaged.
- During her ministry in Thailand, Kristyna did some traveling to villages and cities where her mission provides training. She plans to be back in the Czech Republic in June, something we anticipate with great joy!

As always, we are ever so appreciative of your prayers and support!

Please know you are in our thoughts and prayers,

Pavel and Julka Raus