

April '06 Update

Dear Friends,

Easter greetings from Slovakia! We hope you are all experiencing the joy of this season as we celebrate together God's ultimate gift of himself for us in the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We have had a busy season of Lent. Attendance at our English worship services has continued to be very good with many new people joining us from around the world. A number of the students we teach and see in the schools where we work have also become quite active in church services and activities. We have enjoyed some well-attended evening Lenten services and a very dramatic and musical service on Palm Sunday. In the next four days we will turn our hearts toward re-experiencing the high point of the Christian year, as we hold special services for the English speaking community here in this city on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday.

It is good that our hearts will be warmed by the message of this Easter season, because the weather has brought very little warmth so far this spring. Slovakia is having one of the coldest springs on record. Last year by this time the weather was quite warm and all the trees and flowers had blossomed out. This year we're still waiting.

Things have been very busy also at the schools where we both work. The cataloging of the seminary library where Carla works hit a milestone in recent months – we catalogued our 10,000th book! That may not sound very exciting to many, but it is very significant for the ministry of the Lutheran Church in Slovakia. It means that books that were previously inaccessible can now be found and put to use. A bigger problem now is the books themselves. Most of them are in German (since Bratislava was historically German-speaking for so long) and are from the 1800's and the first half of the 1900's. The library is really in need of English language theology books published in the last five years. English is quickly exceeding German as the second language here (not much is published in Slovak). If anyone would be interested in donating recently published theology books, please let us know. At this time the seminary has little money for new books.

Students are entering the home stretch at the Lyceum high school where David teaches. Most of the rest of the remaining 1 ½ months of school will be spent preparing students for the extensive state exams they must take in order to graduate in June. David is working especially closely with ten students who are taking religion as a major emphasis in their high school studies. It has been an enjoyable school year so far, with some very meaningful interaction with the students both in and out of the classroom.

As most of you know, we will be on home leave this summer. Many of you have responded to our offer to visit your congregation and tell our story. We look forward to meeting you this summer.

Make God richly bless you in this season of Easter with the joyous presence of the risen Christ and his message of new life.

Together in Christ's Service,
Carla and David Schick