



Prague Christian Library

A Ministry of

ICR Institute *for*
Christian
Resources

21st Century Europe



Prague: Its History and Culture

Thousands of years of history have contributed to the modern-day culture of the Czech Republic. Though largely evangelized by the Moravians in the 16th century, the religious persecution of the 17th century drove out many Christians as Emperor Rudolf II embraced occult practices. Under his rule, Prague was not only the capital city of the Czech Republic; it also became the center of the European occult revival.

Later Secular Humanism became the prominent philosophy, which resulted in a weakened church with limited effect on the culture. This in turn allowed for further repression of the church. Religious restrictions continued into the 20th century under Nazism and Communism. In 1989, the “Velvet Revolution” overthrew the constraints of communism and opened the doors to political and religious freedom. Christianity now competes in the marketplace of ideas with Christian cults, Eastern religions and secular thought.

Communism left a wide swath of destruction in its wake. Family structure was devastated as the government assumed the role of provider and authority for individual lives. Atheism was taught as the only acceptable belief system, and today 40% of adults in the Czech Republic are avowed atheists. Barring the freedom of press and the freedom of association, the Communists created a deficit of Christian information that still exists.

With a 99% literacy rate and a culture that promotes intellectual endeavors, the people of the Czech Republic highly value books and dialogue. Interest in evidences for belief, family and social issues, and in Biblical studies is strong. The Prague Christian Library is uniquely positioned to effectively spread the gospel in one of Europe’s most interesting cities.

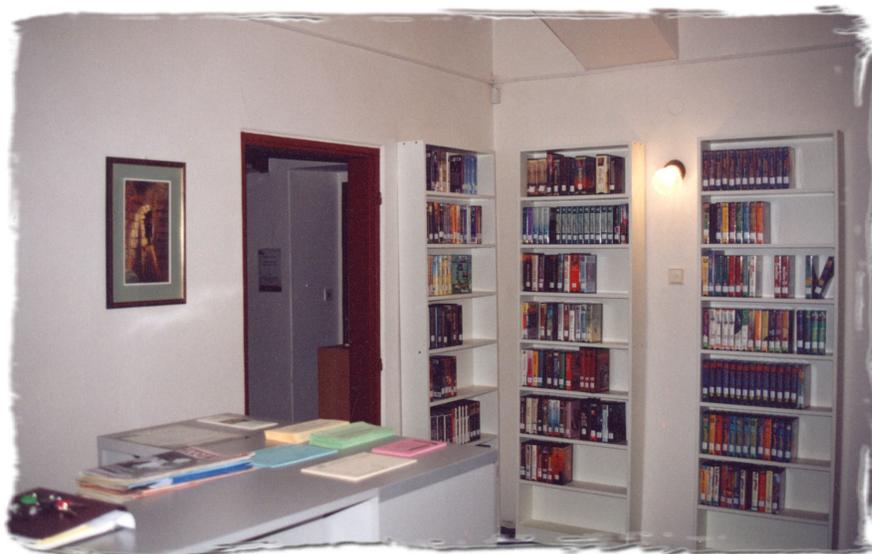


Prague Christian Library...



Jim & Laurie Barnes, Founders and Administrators, Prague Christian Library

“Location, location, location” is the catch phrase in the real estate world and God has blessed the Prague Christian library with a wonderful location! Easily accessible by public transportation the library is situated in a commercial area that is frequented not only by the local Czechs, but by the rather large, International community as well. The “user friendly” design of the library, the welcoming atmosphere, and the convenient location all make for an effective marketplace evangelism tool. The ravages of communism have left many Czechs living lives of quiet despair. The only antidote for that despair is the living hope found in Jesus Christ. Through accessing the materials and attending various classes, both Czechs and those in the International community of Prague are being introduced to Christ and are finding a new, joy-filled life in Him.



“The benefits of a place such as the library, is that it provides people the opportunity to read and study and the personal freedom they need to explore the truth of Christianity. Someone can borrow a book with the freedom to read part or all of it and then can decide for themselves what they believe and what they will do as a result. Freedom of choice is very important as this is of course something that has not always existed here in the Czech Republic.”

— Pavel Raus (founder of the largest evangelical Christian publishing house in the Czech Republic)

...On the Inside

“Thank you very much indeed for all the care I have received from you through the ministry of the library — such a friendly and supportive place to be and to study. I really feel God’s presence there through the words spoken and the general atmosphere. Everything I have found so very helpful — the information updates, lecture series, your ordering the NIV Study Bible and the New Bible Dictionary for me — thank you. Now that I am a Christian, whenever I take the study Bible for reading I cannot believe it is mine! A year ago I started a struggle with a hundred year-old King James version borrowed from the Prague Municipal Library - the only option in English I had at that time. What a change!”

— Eva Ciperova (recent convert)



“I want to thank you both for the library as the books have meant so much to us and as a result my husband is now a BELIEVER and the books I have read have really helped me to grow as well. I have come to realize that not everybody’s ideas have to be exactly the same, but what is important is that we have found a lot of answers. The work you are doing through the library is ‘gentle conversion’ missionary work at its very best!!”

—Emily West (former patron, recently relocated to another area)



Children's Ministries



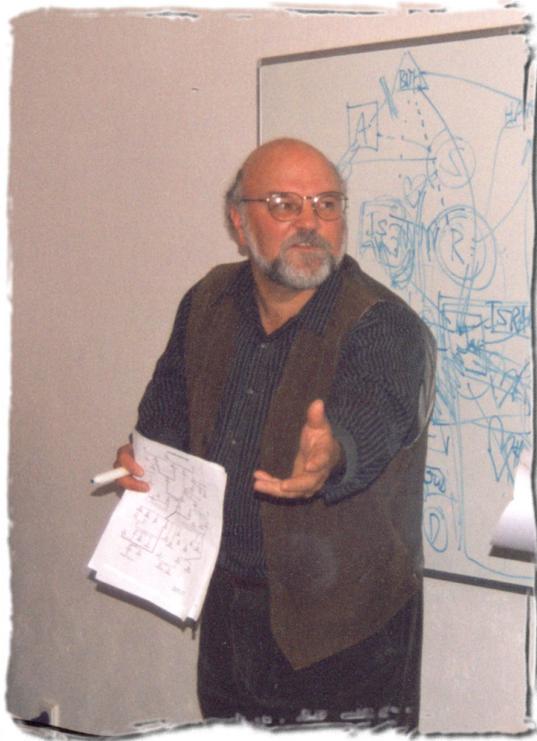


Many volunteers have traveled to Prague and donated their time to the library. Among their favorite jobs is reading stories to the children during the Saturday Morning English Story Hour.



From Czech folk stories to crafts celebrating American Valentine's Day and God's love for us, both local children and the children of Prague's international community enjoy fun-filled learning experiences at the Library. Because of the strong desire for children to learn English, this has proved to be an excellent way to each out to the whole family as Biblical concepts are introduced in a warm and friendly atmosphere.

Library Guest Lecturers



Jim Koch

Teaches On:

Parenting and Adolescent Issues

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Us:
Breaking the Yoke of Family Dysfunction

God-Given Dominion

*"They are really excited to hear about more respectful,
more responsive ways to listen and work with their
spouse." - Jim Koch*

Carol Walsh

Teaches On:

Childhood Trauma

Abuse Issues

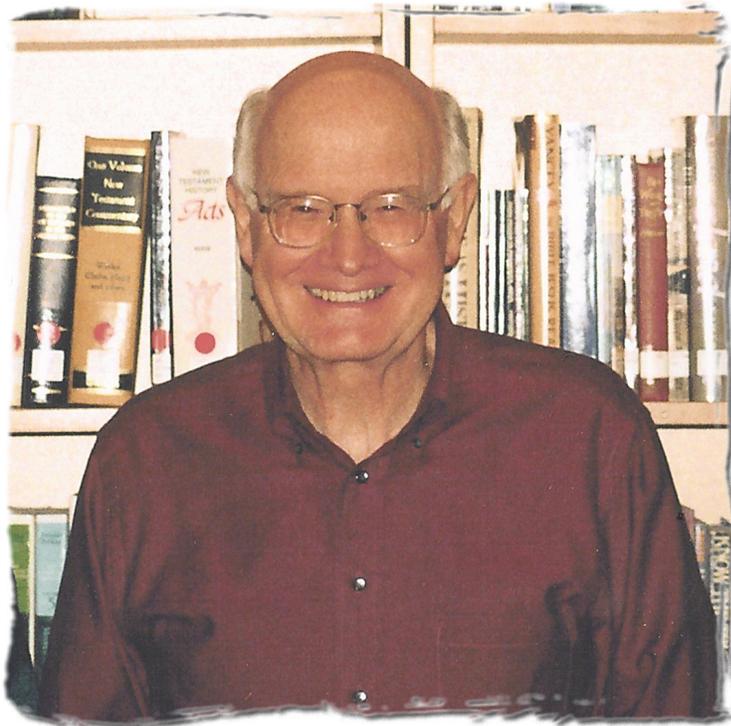


Library Guest Lecturers

Ed Brackenbury

Teaches On:

Dealing with Change



Ron Wiebe

Teaches On:

Premarital Counseling

Pastoral Burnout

Library Guest Lecturers



Margo Grieg

Teaches On:

Anxiety

Healthy Families

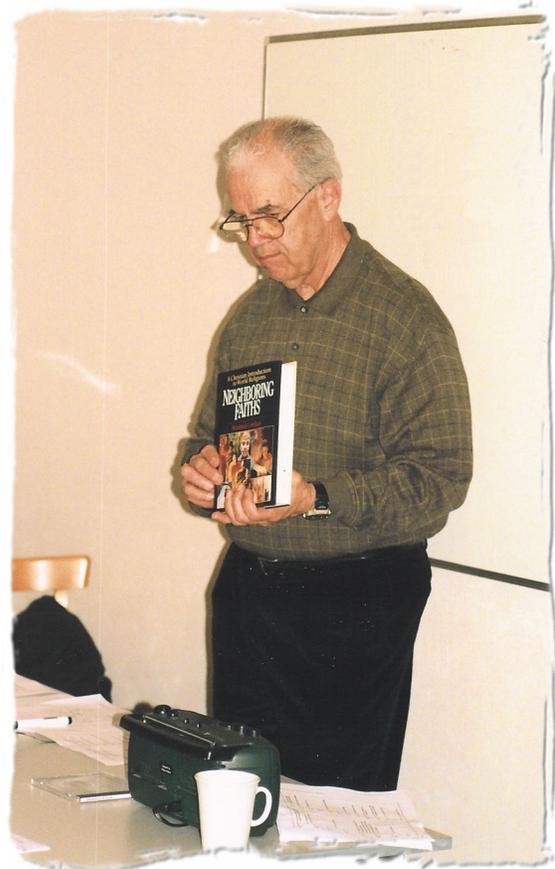
Marital Intimacy

Harvey Bacus

Teaches On:

Islam

“You have filled in so many of the missing pieces for me; Thank you so much.”
– *Lecture Attendee, Prague Christian Library*



ICR: Our Vision for the Future



The need for Christian Resources in Europe and the Middle East has outpaced the supply for several generations. Though there exists an interest in learning about Christianity, the availability of teachers and training materials has been severely limited.

ICR dreams of launching libraries in at least 5 new countries. We envision each library to be equipped with adequate technology to accommodate distance learning. Each library will have a teaching center where relevant topics would be taught including:

- Family Issues
- Ethics
- Evidence for Belief
- Comparison of Christianity to Other Religions



Our enthusiasm and interest in this vision continues to grow as we are consistently being approached by various Mid-East and European countries to start libraries. A man from Croatia who has already collected 700 volumes asks us, "Are you willing to come to Croatia and establish a library like you have done in Prague?" The answer, of course, is a resounding "YES!!" We pray that God will provide funds and staff to see this vision become reality.



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