

The Link

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IBTS DIRECTORS' CONFERENCES DRAW SCHOLARS FROM ALL OVER

Each year IBTS offers a series of Directors' Conferences on important themes at the heart of contemporary church life and mission, designed to bring people together from many countries within the European Baptist Federation, also welcoming the insights of those outside of the EBF family. At the end of August IBTS held the first Directors' Conference of the 2005/2006 academic year facilitated by IBTS Rector Keith Jones and Academic Dean Dr Parush Parushev. Entitled **Currents in Baptist Theology of Worship**, the conference explored the theology evident in the form and the content of baptistic worship

as being a source for and an expression of the primary practice of baptistic communal living. IBTS was privileged to have many speakers who brought the richness of varying worship traditions and research. These included **Christopher Ellis** (UK), author of *Gathering: A Theology and Spirituality of Worship in Free Church Tradition*; **Tony Peck** (UK/Czech Republic), General Secretary of the European Baptist Federation, **Ivana Noble** (Czech Republic, IBTS /Czech Hussite Church), **Lina Andronovienė** (Lithuania/Czech Republic, IBTS), **David Holeton** (Canada, Czech Republic, IBTS, Anglican) and others.



Ian Randall, Michael Bourdeaux, Walter Sawatsky, Parush Parushev and Toivo Pilli - from the IBTS Directors' Conference: Baptist Histories in Eastern Europe, May 2005

Working within the framework of the European baptistic context, the conference provided a unique opportunity for both theological reflection and participation in the development of holistic worship. Together participants and organisers explored various practices of worship, liturgical patterns, theology and dynamics of music as well as the transformative power for daily living before, during and after the believing community assembles for weekly gatherings. As a result of this highly successful conference IBTS is in process of publishing a book of the compiled presentations.

More recently over 50 scholars and graduate students met at IBTS, 30 January – 3 February for the Directors' Conference: **Anabaptism and Mission**. **Wilbert Shenk**, as the keynote speaker, delivered five presentations highlighting themes from, or characteristics of Anabaptist-Mennonite life which stimulated fresh thinking about mission focussing on post-Soviet society and western Europe. One of his presentations included the weekly Wednesday graduate research seminar in which Shenk focussed on the theme

of mission and marginality.

In a range of plenary sessions and workshops conference members from Siberia, Kazakhstan, Bulgaria and Romania sought to draw parallels and discussed these at length.

Mennonite scholars from Western Europe and North America in addition to Shenk, reflected some of the diversity of present day Anabaptist missiology. The extensive interaction between Anabaptist-Mennonites and Baptists showed through as an important element, even if in the contemporary West the degree of interaction has been much less. **Ian Randall**, Senior Research Fellow at IBTS and a lecturer at Spurgeons College, noted a recent encounter between Baptists and Anabaptists in Britain that influenced their own new involvement with the east Europeans, especially at IBTS. Papers were presented by new doctoral level scholars from the Russian German immigrants in Germany still insufficiently noticed in America and western Europe, who addressed the theme of mission from a theology rooted in the Anabaptist tradition. Its relevance for the Slavic free church tradition came through in IBTS

doctoral student, **Gregory Nichols'** depiction of the "Russification of the Continental Baptist Movement."

IBTS Course Leader in Biblical Studies and conference organizer **Peter Penner** presented a thought-provoking case study on peace and witness in Russian and German history. Peter described how in an attempt to gain advantages for the church in times of testing, Evangelical Christian Baptist leaders had placed a higher priority on inner piety than on public witness to the gospel of peace, but that there was a movement back to a stronger social witness and that the churches must bear witness through the opportunities now present.

Walter Sawatsky along with **David Shenk** presented valuable insights as they were again welcomed as Mennonite participants to the IBTS mission conferences.

Conference papers from this Anabaptism and Mission Conference are projected to appear as an IBTS publication from Neufeld Verlag, and in *Mission Focus: Annual Review*. This and other publications can be found and ordered from the IBTS website.

FORTHCOMING IBTS CONFERENCES & EVENTS:

MAY 28-30

Certificate of Applied Theology Reunion

MAY 30

Graduation and Valediction Service with David Coffey, President of the BWA

JUNE 7-11

EBF Home Secretaries Conference & IBTS Directors' Conference: Mission and Ethnic Churches – a Baptist Response

JUNE 16-17

Examiners Board of the UW for MTh Degree Students



Walter Sawatsky presents at an IBTS Directors' Conference

AUGUST 23-27

IBTS Directors' Conference: Creation, Theology & the Environment
A preparatory conference for the Third European Ecumenical Assembly

SEPTEMBER 5

58th Academic Year Commencement

NOVEMBER 6-8

Hughey Lectures with Dr H W Walker Pipkin on Balthasar Hubmaier

NOVEMBER 13-17

IBTS Directors' Conference: Israeli – Palestinian Conflict

For more information regarding forthcoming IBTS Conferences, please contact IBTS Conference Secretary, Vanessa Lake: lake@ibts.cz

HOTEL JENERÁLKA ESTABLISHED



Ever since IBTS moved to Prague in 1996, part of the vision of the campus here has been to provide accommodation so that we can host Conferences, but also accommodation for guests as a way of generating revenue to help fund our scholarship programme.

In recent years we have been marketing our accommodation with the brand name "Hotel Jenerálka" and with our own web site www.hotel-jeneralka.cz. The more people have learned of our beautiful oasis hotel in the delightful Šárka Valley, near to the historic city and midway between downtown and the airport, the more people have chosen to stay here.



First official meeting of the Jenerálka a.s. Board in March 2006

In the past eighteen months we have been upgrading our accommodation and now meet Czech Tourist Board three star standards. However, IBTS exists principally as an educational establishment not for profit and so our legal and tax structure became somewhat problematic.

At the EBF Council, held on the IBTS campus in September, permission was given for a separate trading company, Jenerálka a.s., to be established to run the hotel. This company, like IBTS, is wholly owned by the European Baptist Federation, but is able to operate the hotel in a commercial way. The company was legally established at the turn of the year and took over the Hotel operation from 1 April 2006.

A Board of Directors has been established with Jan Saethre, EBF Finance Committee Chair as Chair of the Board. The operations of the Hotel and Seminary have been split, but in order to ensure co-operation between the Hotel and Seminary, Keith Jones and Petra Veselá have been appointed Joint Managers of the Hotel operation. Work on refurbishing has continued with new carpeting in the Hotel rooms, cor-

ridors and stairways, improved furniture and fittings in many rooms, a major upgrade in decoration in the Dining Room to take place over the summer, remodelling of the Reception area to provide a pleasanter ambience for guests booking in, WiFi facilities for guests who come with laptops and who want to stay connected with the world wide web.

Increased marketing of the Hotel is under way and during the summer months we are hosting several weddings of people who appreciate the ambience of our site.

So, help us to make Hotel Jenerálka a great success by encouraging your friends and neighbours to have a vacation in Prague and use our excellent facilities. Look out for special deals on our hotel website, especially during the pre-Christmas and early spring seasons. Why not bring a group of friends to stay with us and see Prague? Special package deals including lectures on Czech history, historical tours of Prague, receptions and half board meal arrangements are on offer. This year we are anticipating welcoming six such groups from our European Baptist family.

SABBATICALS AT IBTS

As a part of the life and mission of IBTS to engage in supporting lifelong learning by pastors, ministers, missionaries and theological educators, IBTS encourages ministers to take advantage of the Prague campus for the period of their sabbatical study. IBTS has **special sabbatical packages** during the course of the normal academic year, with advantageous accommodation rates in the period between 1 November and 28 February.

The 70,000 volume English language theology library draws people on sabbatical from all over the world. Some enjoy participating in our weekly graduate seminars in the relevant disciplines – Applied Theology, Baptist/Anabaptist Studies, Biblical Studies, and Contextual Missiology. Others value making specific arrangements with a Course Leader or Research Professor to develop guided reading programmes, consultations or one-on-one seminars on the fields chosen for sabbatical study. All those who choose IBTS for their sabbatical stay have opportunity to participate in the morning community worship and enjoy eating and meeting with our student community, full and part time, drawn principally from Europe and the Middle East, but also including students from the Americas, Africa and Asia.

IBTS is situated in a peaceful wooded valley with many nature paths winding through the hills of the Sarka Valley. The IBTS grounds give opportunity for one to walk leisurely through quiet gardens or find a place on a bench for quiet reading. Downtown Prague is only 15 minutes away from IBTS with easy access to public transportation. The city has a unique architectural and cultural heritage and we encourage those on sabbatical to have a good mix with recreation drawn from the life of this vibrant and historic city.

From January through this Spring LINK publication IBTS has welcomed three individuals for part or all of their sabbaticals: **Mark Barnard** a Baptist minister in Auckland, New Zealand, **Bill Slack** the General Director of the Baptist Union of Scotland and **Mike Pears** a Baptist Minister from Bristol.

Below Mike Pears has shared his reflection on various aspects of IBTS during his six week sabbatical stay at the Prague campus.



Mike Pears from Bristol studying during his sabbatical stay



The Scottish Baptist Union General Director Bill Slack in the IBTS library

On IBTS Community Life:

Mike was grateful that the seminary day was structured around morning prayers, community mid-morning coffee break and lunch. This set programme provided excellent opportunity to join in community life and get to know people in a comfortable setting. The Sunday worship of Šárka Valley Community Church which meets in the IBTS chapel and the IBTS Wednesday morning Eucharist service allowed time to fellowship and helped encourage a strong sense of community life focused on the Lord

On the Relationships:

The IBTS Lecturing staff, Mike recalls appreciatively, were more than willing to help provide direction and reflection for his study. During his stay Mike was also inspired by an IBTS Directors' Conference on Anabaptism and Mission which was welcomed by him as a minister on sabbatical.

IBTS is an excellent setting to meet people involved in mission, theological education and church planting from across Europe and the Middle East. Mike's lunchtime conversations with students, staff and other IBTS guests have also been a great opportunity to explore and reflect on issues – During six weeks, Mike counted having discussions with sisters and brothers from 31 nationalities!

On the Location:

Mike commented on the ease of using Prague's Public transportation and the magnificently rich city with great venues for music and the arts, coffee, and just exploring its fascinating streets. Mike took his opportunities in the city as a wonderful place to relax between study.

For further information about sabbaticals, you may contact the Personal Assistant to the Rector, **Vanessa Lake** at: lake@ibts.cz. IBTS is a welcoming community in a number of ways and hopes to introduce you or your minister to our campus for a sabbatical stay!

IBTS WELCOMES VOLUNTEERS OF ALL AGES AND ALL COUNTRIES!

IBTS has had some encouraging and hard working volunteers so far this academic year and is eagerly awaiting still others. The students and staff have equally expressed their enjoyment in developing relationships with each volunteer and appreciation at the immense help they are around the IBTS campus.

Sasha Sannikov and **Sara Kackur** both arrived at IBTS in mid-October for three months of volunteer work. Sara comes from the Swedish speaking section of **Finland** and Sasha is from Odessa, **Ukraine**. Before winter's snow and cold hit Prague, they worked together to complete some much needed outside work on campus such as repainting handrails, trimming trees and various landscaping tasks. With the fall of snow and colder temperatures, they moved inside to begin



Sara Kackur of Finland repaints the handrails around the IBTS campus

painting. They repainted the former English Suite which is now used as office space for Christopher Newport University from Virginia for their semester of study here. Sara and Sasha have also repainted many of the guest rooms in the Helwys Pavilion and other rooms around the IBTS campus before leaving at Christmas.

IBTS was pleased to again welcome **Bill** and **Nancy Lively** of Annapolis, **Maryland**, USA this past January to begin another stay as IBTS volunteers. The retired librarians spent five months volunteering during the academic year of 2004-2005. Their involvement in the lives of students, participation in the IBTS community and simple enjoyment of Prague's beauty brought them back to IBTS for another five month stay. Bill and Nancy are again spending most of their time in the IBTS library of 70,000 volumes. They are assisting in the reorganization of the library collection to make room for future growth. Their work also includes completing the list of library holdings in the online catalogue, and offering students assistance in locating appropriate materials for their research. Bill and Nancy who are members of Broadneck Baptist Church in Annapolis learned of seminary through Bill's brother-in-law, Glen H Stassen an IBTS associate lecturer in theology and a good friend of the seminary.

To help in the English programme this year **David Leutzinger** and **Sheldon Bassett** gave of their time to teach CAT classes and English to the Czech staff. David from London has had experience working in various countries such as Hong Kong, Wales, Serbia and Poland prior to coming to IBTS. When David is not involved in the English Department he has found time to assist with needs in the library. Sheldon from **Chicago** on the other hand has been to the Czech Republic on many occasions prior to his becoming a volunteer at IBTS. He has assisted in English language camps for youth, many of whom Sheldon still has strong relationships with.

If you or your church group are interested in helping IBTS through volunteering, you may see more information on our website www.ibts.cz/volunteers and/or you may contact our Volunteer Coordinator Team at volunteer@ibts.cz, who will be very helpful in directing and coordinating your time and stay in Prague.

IBTS SAYS FAREWELL TO THE PILLI FAMILY

Sadly IBTS is saying farewell to a dear family who have been a significant part of the IBTS community for 4 years. **Toivo and Einike Pilli** with their three sons, **Iisak, Siimeon and Timoteos** will be returning to Estonia this summer of 2006. They each are appreciated for their dedication to the various programmes as IBTS and their creative and noteworthy involvement in Šárka Valley Community Church, the Baptist church which meets every Sunday morning in the IBTS chapel.

Toivo and Einike offer some reflections below regarding their years in Prague.

TOIVO:

I am thankful for these four years at IBTS and for the privilege to be a part of a vibrant learning community. Perhaps what makes this experience especially valuable, is the sense of development -- not only in the academic life of the school, but also in the lives and academic achievements of the students. And having this experience of working closely together with my colleagues and students -- I will never be the same myself. As the course leader in Baptist and Anabaptist Studies I am very glad to see that much valuable work has emerged in these years in the form of student essays and dissertations (as well as in the form of conference papers) and that the graduates of the programme continue to do research and reflect upon the Baptist identity and history in their own home countries.

Back in Estonia, I will be involved in the work of Tartu Baptist Theological Seminary and Estonian Evangelical Christian and Baptist Union. Estonian churches are sincerely searching how to fulfil God's calling in a changing culture: how not only to speak but also to bring along transformation for better in the society and in the individuals' lives. There is much to do to help to 'give back' to our churches their history, which was 'deprived from them' by the atheistic structures of socialist times. Also, questions of identity, meaningful worship, interpretations of discipleship and being a dynamic community are all important for Estonian baptistic churches. I believe that IBTS ethos and experience can prove helpful in this process. I would be glad to share this with my brothers and sisters at home, hoping that they will find these insights supportive also in Estonian context. I am convinced that the mission of IBTS is both academic and spiritual, and it certainly reaches beyond Prague and Czech Republic.

EINIKE:

I am grateful for the time at IBTS and Prague. I have learned a lot from people and from good books and probably also from this situation of living in abroad and in compa-

ratively small and closed community. Šárka Valley Community Church has been a place of learning many new things. As a family we are grateful for the Riverside School community, where families gave so much support to each other! I hope all of these contacts continue in one way or another. Our three boys have learned to speak fluent English and sometimes I hear them talking it while they are sleeping!

Probably the biggest accomplishment for myself while at IBTS was the possibility to finish my DTh dissertation in the Autumn of 2005. IBTS was an ideal venue for that, not least because of a good library.

Returning to Estonia after such a long period is a risk, as it would be for anyone. I hope to work at Tartu University and the Baptist Seminary and continue helping in Estonian Baptist churches. I feel we go back home as different people and time will show the fruit of our stay in Prague.

The Pilli family will be deeply missed from the IBTS community and will leave us with fond memories. However with the sorrow of their leaving, we know that Estonia is gaining back a dynamic family for the work of the church and the Kingdom.



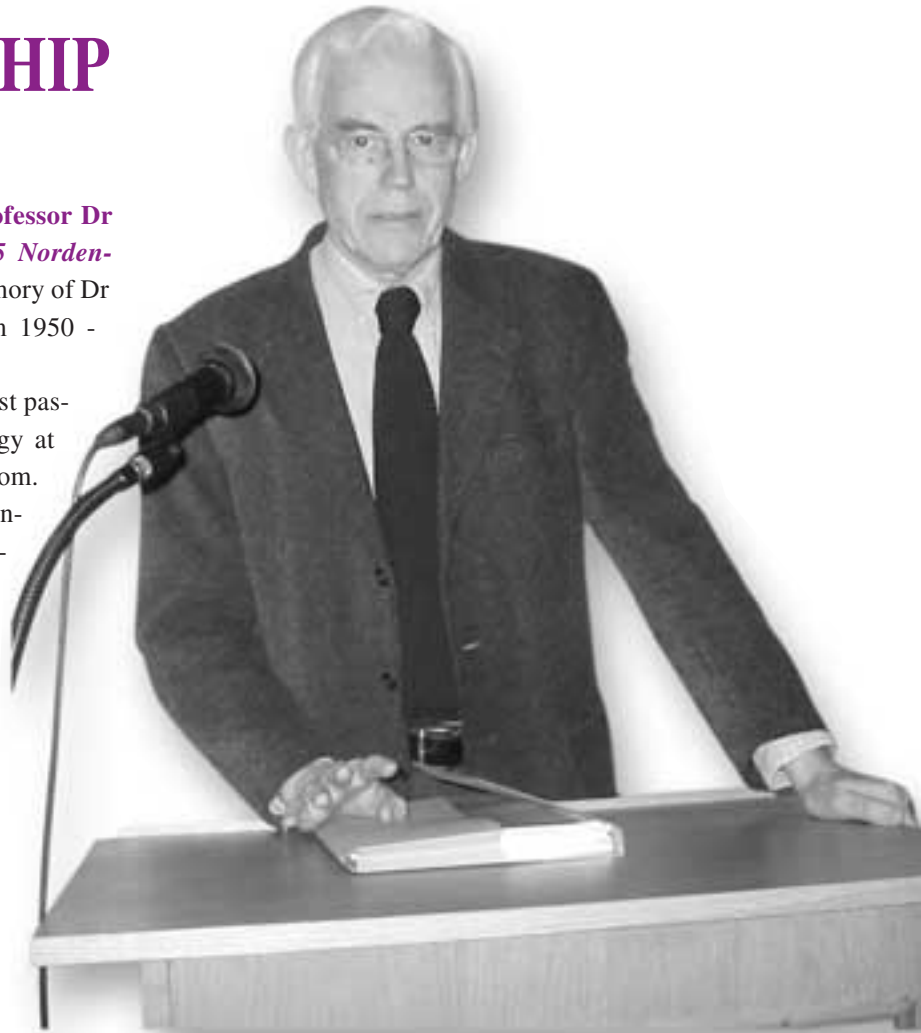
The IBTS Board of Trustees say farewell to Einike and Toivo Pilli with a special dinner and dedicatory prayer

IBTS LECTURESHIP SERIES

IBTS was pleased to welcome **The Revd Professor Dr Michael H Taylor**, as presenter of the *2005 Nordenhaug Lectures*, which were established in memory of Dr Joseph Nordenhaug, President of IBTS from 1950 - 1960.

The Revd Dr Michael Taylor is a British Baptist pastor and presently Professor of Social Theology at the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom. He has been pastor of two local churches, Principal of the Northern Baptist College (Manchester) and Director of Christian Aid, the British Churches Aid and Development agency. The theme for his lecture series in early November 2005 was: *BORDER CROSSINGS: Exploring Social Theology in Christianity and Islam*. He presented his lectures in three sessions: I Social Theology - Public Religion and Pluralism; II Realism, Poverty and Power; III Not by Theology alone. These are now published as an IBTS Occasional Publication.

His time at IBTS brought about intriguing discussions regarding the possibility of Christians finding dialogue partners within Islam on issues of justice and social policy.



Michael Taylor presenting the 2005 Nordenhaug lectures in the IBTS chapel

The *J D Hughey Memorial Lectures* on Baptist History and Identity were established in memory of Dr John David Hughey, one time President of International Baptist Theological Seminary, Rüschtikon. Dr H Walker Pipkin, who founded the Institute of Baptist and Anabaptist studies and is a noted Anabaptist historian, was instrumental in the seminary establishing this lectureship and in raising the funds for it.

Dr Hughey joined the Rüschtikon faculty in 1952 after serving as a missionary to Spain for eight years. He was President of the Rüschtikon seminary from 1960 to 1964. In 1964 he was named Director (at that time, secretary) for Europe, the Middle East and South Asia for the Foreign Mission Board, SBC, retiring in 1981.

Known as a missionary leader and a scholar, Dr Hughey is remembered for his commitment to Christianity and his family devotion. His wife, Evelyn, was a co-worker with him throughout his life. Dr and Mrs Hughey were the parents of four children and have several grandchildren.

In honour of his legacy, the Hughey lecture series was developed. Well-known Baptist scholars and church leaders have been invited to lecture on topics related to Baptist life and witness in Europe and other areas of the world, focussing on the distinctive witness that Baptists have made historically and continue to make today.

IBTS is delighted to welcome **Dr H W Walker Pipkin**, one time Director of the Institute of Baptist and Anabaptist Studies, for the next lectures in this series. They will take place on the Prague campus *6 - 8 November 2006*. Dr Pipkin will be focussing on the life and work of the great Anabaptist figure, Balthasar Hubmaier, who led the Anabaptist community in Mikulov, Moravia. Dr Pipkin, with John Howard Yoder, translated the major works of Hubmaier into English and is one of the foremost authorities on the Anabaptists of Switzerland and south Germany/Austria in the world. It will be a great delight for the IBTS community to welcome our friend and colleague "home". Why not join us for what promises to be an excellent occasion?

ALUMNI & STUDENT NEWS

SASHI JAMIR (MTh 2005) was married to Ellen Konyak on 22 November 2005 in Dimapur, Nagaland. Sashi is presently teaching Greek in the Oriental Theological Seminary in Dimapur and Ellen is teaching psychological counselling and English as Second Language.



Jamir wedding

JAMES MWADZI (BTh 1997) and his wife, **EVERLYN**, (Advanced Diploma of Theology BTh) with their children Gloria (7 yrs) and Jonathan (5yrs) are presently living, working and studying in their home country of Kenya. James is lecturing at Kenya Baptist Theological College and Everlyn graduated with a BTh in March 2006.

SKANDER KURTIN (MTh 2005) has been appointed to the pastorate of Björkhöjds kyrkan in Göteborg, Sweden.

JULIE JUSTUS (MTh 2006) is serving as an Intern for Baptist World Aid at their offices in Falls Church, Virginia, USA. Julie has taken on responsibility for some of the project work of BWAid.

GYULA BORZÁSI (Post graduate diploma 2005) is now director of the Hargita residential camp of the Hungarian Romanian Baptists. He joins **MAGDA MARIA PAP** (MTh 2004) in leadership of the camp programme.

KATARZYNA JAROSZ (MTh 2005) has been serving as an intern with Dr Jim Purves at Bristo Baptist Church in Edinburgh.

LJUBOV MIVSHUK-PAYNE (MTh 2002) is now a Research Fellow at Spurgeon's College, London and pursuing doctoral studies there.

HIKMAT KACHOUH (MTh 2003) and his wife **KRISTA** (CAT 2003) welcomed the birth of daughter Betine Elodie Kachouh on 5 April 2005. She joins her older brother Markus in the Kachouh family.

VIRGIL H MOOREFIELD died on 6 May 2004 after a long period of illness. Virgil joined the staff of IBTS, Rüsçhlikon in January 1966 as a lecturer and director of Conferences and remained in this appointment until December 1973.

He is survived by his wife Carolyn, who resides in Gate-side, Fife, Scotland; two sons, Virgil Edwin and William, both living in the US and his daughter Christina residing in Winterthur, Switzerland.

DR F S ARNOT (BD 1964) passed away in Canberra, Australia on Tuesday, 29 November 2005 after a long illness. Fred served in ministry for many years in South Africa and Australia. Our thoughts and prayers are with Norah and the family.

If you have some news which you would like to have printed in the forthcoming publications of the LINK, please contact LINK editor Vanessa Lake: lake@ibts.cz