

The Link

Diamond Jubilee 2009

No. 119

International Baptist Theological Seminary
of the European Baptist Federation,
Prague, Czech Republic



The LINK is published at least twice a year by the International Baptist Theological Seminary of the European Baptist Federation at the European Baptist Centre in Prague, Czech Republic.

Address correspondence to **The Link**

**International Baptist Theological Seminary
Nad Habrovkou 3
Jenerálka**

**164 00 Prague 6
Czech Republic**

The editors reserve the right to edit all submissions for publication without prior consent of the author.

LINK Editor:
Vanessa L Lake MTh

Printed by:
JD GRAFIKA

ISSN: 1213 - 4805

60 YEAR DIAMOND JUBILEE OF IBTS: 1949 - 2009



1949 – 1950 First IBTS class of students with lecturers and President George Sadler



Rüschlikon bell tower

The Academic Year 2008 - 2009 saw IBTS Celebrate 60 years of service to the world Baptist family - educating pastors, missiologists, theological teachers, union and convention leaders. Yes, it is 60 years since Dr George Sadler gathered the first group of students in Rüschlikon, Switzerland, in 1949.

Since that time IBTS has grown from an institution offering initial ministerial formation to a handful of European men, into a world institution providing accredited and validated degrees for women and men from first level to doctor of philosophy and with an expanding range of specialist post graduate programmes for continuing professional development. It is an amazing story with alumni serving in every continent and with a current student and academic team from over 30 countries and a community of 160 in our Prague family!



IBTS fountain (Prague)



2009 IBTS community

BWA Gathering in Prague starts the celebratory year for IBTS

For a few exciting hours on 22 July 2008 the IBTS courtyard was filled with Baptists wandering through the restored neo-renaissance garden, listening to a classical musical ensemble playing in the salon of the chateau, or taking an informative tour of the expansive library.



Live classical music in the Chateau's salon

Others were sat on the patio around the narthex to the chapel listening to a jazz concert, whilst still more were learning about various environmental exhibits IBTS demonstrated in the Norwegian corridor. Meanwhile, an informative PowerPoint sequence was running in the chapel, and campus tours were organized around the site. Participants in the **Baptist World Alliance 2008 Gathering** in Prague arrived to the IBTS campus for the

evening and were enchanted by the beauty of the site located in the greenest part of the city. After a few drops of rain the setting sun added to the romance of the courtyard and oil lamp flares were lit to add to the flickering lights of the fountain. So, with well over 400 people on site from all across the world, we launched our Diamond Jubilee year on 22 July 2008 in grand style.

The world Baptist family graced us with their presence and gave us a great launch-point for this 60th academic year of celebration! Just a month earlier we had an amazing graduation ceremony at the end of the 59th academic year which saw us graduating no less than eleven Master level graduates who were able to attend the ceremony and don their gowns and hoods, together with fourteen Certificate in Applied Theology students and two English language for Theology students with the crown in the jewel being the graduation of the first four Doctor of Philosophy students.

This is the heart of what IBTS is about – serving our Baptist family, principally in Europe and the Middle East, by being a learning community providing high quality academic education in the context of prayer and worship; inviting to our campus countless others in sabbatical study, for conferences, to use our library or simply to enjoy our beautiful facilities.



Over 400 people gather in the IBTS courtyard

Friends from around the world come to IBTS

IBTS concluded its 60th year of academic work with a weekend of celebrations.

From 28 – 31 May 2009, the seminary welcomed all to a special Jubilee gathering at the seminary grounds in Prague. Members of the Board of Trustees, the officers of the European Baptist Federation, alumni, Academic staff, students and volunteers of IBTS gathered for an excellent few days of remembering God’s goodness in the past, thanksgiving for His present provision and encouraging each other in the vision forward for IBTS.

These celebratory days included alumni re-unions, a graduation ceremony of twenty students with a festal buffet on the Friday; an ordination to Christian ministry of an IBTS alumnus, and a seminary Birthday Party on the Saturday and concluding with an open-air thanksgiving worship service on Pentecost Sunday in the Courtyard. Those who joined the events reminisced on their studies at Rüschlikon, others told of the move to Prague and the challenges that were faced and still others had more recent stories from their days in the beautiful “Jenerálka castle” of Prague 6, the present site of the seminary.

The Chair of the IBTS Board of Trustees, the Revd Dr Ruth M B Gouldbourne, spoke at the graduation and the EBF President, Toma Magda brought greetings from our European family. IBTS was delighted that during these events two of the doctoral students who successfully completed their degrees during the year were able to be present: Olu J Menjay from Liberia and Jan Hábl from the Czech Republic. Olu has since then been elected as a Vice President of the Baptist World Alliance and we congratulate him on this recognition of his sterling work as Principal of the Ricks Institute in Monrovia.

It was truly a historic event for IBTS and with participants from around the world and messages of appreciation being sent from those not able to attend showing the gratitude and support of the entire European Baptist family.



IBTS volunteer Don King (Scotland) reunites with CAT alumnus Leonard Kiraly (Hungarian Romanian)



IBTS Rector, Kvestorká, Chair of the Board and Academic Dean with PhD graduates Jan Hábl (Czech Republic) and Olu J Menjay (Liberia)



Dr G Keith Parker, former lecturer at Rüschlikon, greets the Diamond Jubilee participants

HISTORICAL TIME-LINE OF IBTS'S 60 YEARS

1949 Baptist Theological Seminary is founded in Rüschlikon, Switzerland

1950 Bachelor of Divinity degree begins. Dr Josef Nordenhaug appointed as President

1955 Women's Missionary Union of the SBC raises funds to build a chapel

1957 ThM degree begins

1979 Summer Institute of Theological Education (SITE) begins, directed by Dr Denton Lotz

1982 Institute of Baptist and Anabaptist Studies founded with Dr H W W Pipkin as Director

1988 Dr John David Hopper appointed President

1988 Institute of Mission and Evangelism founded

1988 IBLA, now Certificate in Applied Theology (CAT), established

1989 Seminary handed over from Southern Baptist FMB to European Baptist Federation

1991 Seminary fully defunded by Southern Baptist FMB

1994 Institution renamed – International Baptist Theological Seminary

1996 Relocation of seminary to Prague, Czech Republic

1997 EBF Council refocuses work of seminary

1998 EBF changes title of "President" to the European "Rector". Keith G Jones becomes first Rector.



The Sunken gardens of the Chateau at the Rüschlikon seminary: 1949



Dr Josef Nordenhaug awarding a diploma to Jose Borrás (Spain): 1951



JD Hopper, Noel Vose, Keith Parks, Claus Meister, Knud Wumplemann and G Keith Parker exchanging the key of IBTS from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to IBTS: 1989



Prague's site for IBTS before extensive renovations: 1996



First Certificate in Applied Theology class: 2000 - 2001



One of the first Environment Management & Protection Team meetings: 2003



Tina Grozdanova (Macedonia) being awarded her Magister in Theology degree in the IBTS Prague chapel:2006



Dr Pilli (second from left) being congratulated by his wife, Dr Ian M Randall (his supervisor) and the external examiners: 2007

- 1998** Agreement with University of Wales on validation
- 2001** First Certificate in Applied Theology graduates
- 2002** IBTS becomes higher educational institution in the Czech Republic and able to award Czech Magister degrees
- 2002** IBTS adopts an environmental policy towards becoming an eco-seminary
- 2002** First Master of Theology students graduate
- 2003** Graduation ceremony in Bryansk of the course in Transformational Preaching conducted by IBTS, the Russian Baptist Union and the American Baptist churches
- 2004** Institute of Systematic Studies of Contextual Theologies founded with Dr Parush R Parushev as Director
- 2004** Institute of Biblical Studies founded with Professor Wiard Popkes as first Director
- 2005** The European Baptist Centre is established on the IBTS campus
- 2006** Thomas Helwys Institute of Human Rights & Religious Freedom transferred from Bristol Baptist College to IBTS
- 2006** First Magister in Theology students graduate
- 2007** First Doctoral students graduate
- 2008** Validation of Postgraduate Certificate in Theology Course with University of Wales for pre-doctoral studies
- 2009** IBTS 60th Year Jubilee Celebrations

IBTS STAFF NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS TO DR NOBLE



Tim Noble with his awarded scroll at the Vrije University, Amsterdam

Tim Noble, Course Leader in Missiology and our Magister programme, has been awarded a Doctor of Philosophy degree cum laude! Tim has successfully defended his dissertation at the Vrije University in Amsterdam, Netherlands. His dissertation topic was "Keeping the Windows Open – The Theological Method of Clodovis Boff and the Problem of the Alterity of the Poor". His dissertation is available to purchase from the IBTS bookshop.

TRANSITION OF REGISTRAR

Lydie Kucová **has moved into the office and position** of the IBTS Academic Registrar. Lydie has specialised education in the area of Old Testament Biblical studies and is a lecturer for the IBTS students. While studying for her first degree in Prague, Lydie took a special interest in the study of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible under T. Raymond Hobbs, professor of Old Testament at IBTS, 1996-1998. After a year spent in London she continued her postgraduate studies in Scotland and received her Doctor of Philosophy degree from the School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh, in 2005.

FAREWELL TO THE PENNER FAMILY

IBTS said farewell to **Peter** and **Katharina Penner** with their children Patrick and Miriam this summer 2009. The Penner family have been an integral part of the academic programmes and in the development of the IBTS library since 2001. Katharina has played a vital role on our library team and from 2007 was our IBTS Head Librarian. Peter was appointed as lecturer in Biblical Studies and later the Director for Mission and Evangelism. From 2005 Peter was the Course Leader of the IBTS Biblical Studies Department. Peter, Katharina, Patrick and Miriam have relocated to Vienna, Austria and are working for TCM International.



Peter Penner, IBTS Kvestorká Petra Veselá, IBTS ProRector Parush Parushev and Katharina Penner at the Penner farewell in the IBTS Guest Lounge.

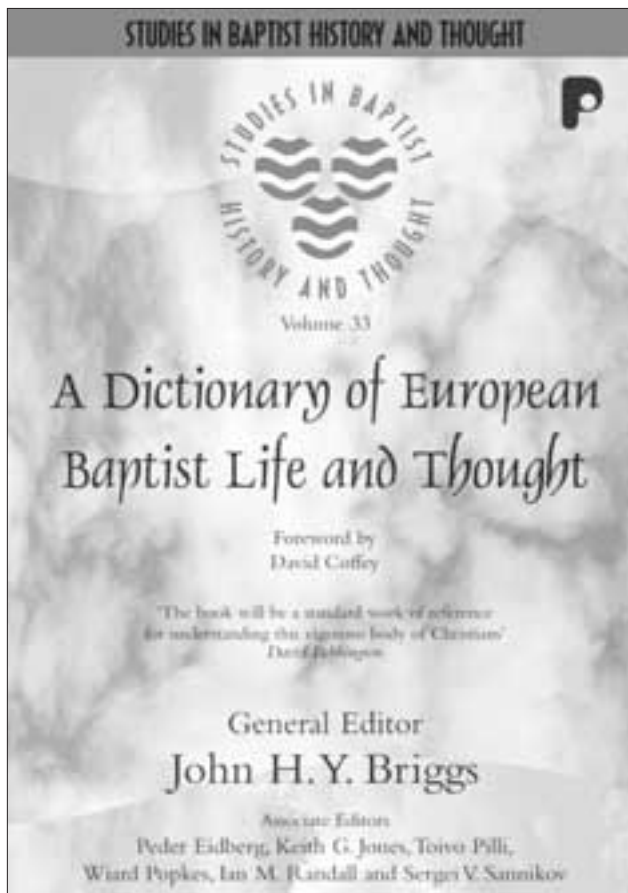
NEW HEAD LIBRARIAN

We welcomed to IBTS Zdenko Š. Širka to the full time position of the new Head Librarian. Zdenko did his theological studies in Slovakia (Bratislava), Germany (Tübingen) and in the Czech Republic (Prague). He is presently doing PhD studies at Prague's Charles University. Zdenko's area of academic interest and fields of research are hermeneutics, philosophy, and the theology of Luther. Zdenko has been married to his wife Ivanka for two years who teaches English in Prague.

IMPORTANT PUBLICATIONS AT IBTS

The Dictionary of European Baptist Life and Thought

John H.Y. Briggs (General Editor), Peder Eidberg, Keith G. Jones, Toivo Pilli, Wiard Popkes, Ian M. Randall and Sergei V. Sannikov (Associate Editors). Paternoster Press, 2009



What do you want to know about European Baptist life and thought? Maybe your interest is in Baptist architecture, or Baptists and the Bible, or the Catechumenate, or Eschatology, or Ministry, or Peace, or Spirituality. I have picked these virtually at random, to show the range of topics in this remarkable volume. There are entries on every Baptist Union or Convention, seminary and major institution within the fifty-two Unions and Conventions that comprise the European Baptist Federation. There are comments on all the major and many of the minor doctrinal themes and issues within Christianity, with European Baptist perspectives being offered.

It has been a huge task to coordinate the production of this volume. The idea goes back eight years and many authors across Europe have contributed to the entries. Much of the planning and implementing work has been done at IBTS, and we are very grate-

ful to Professor John Briggs for coming to IBTS from the UK so regularly to guide the editorial team. The volume, which shows the variety and the vibrancy of Baptist life in Europe, is already being much appreciated and is selling fast. It is beautifully produced, as part of the very fine Paternoster series on Baptist History and Thought.

Professor Alan P.F. Sell, looking at this volume from the standpoint of someone who has a range of denominational involvement, comments: "Baptists in other parts of the world who think that all Baptists are as they are will gasp with amazement; other European Christians will find much that echoes their own thought and experience as well as some thought-provoking points of difference." Professor Richard V. Pierard, a renowned Baptist historian at Indiana State University, says that "it calls attention to the vital role Europeans play in the world Baptist community." Professor David Bebbington at the University of Stirling sees the book as "a standard work of reference". BWA President David Coffey has this to say: "I am sure that the wide distribution of this book amongst our constituency and beyond will be of great advantage to our nurture and our witness." This is a book to buy and to use.

Other books recently published that you may be interested in:

The European Baptist Federation: A Case Study in European Baptist Interdependency 1950 - 2006

Keith G Jones, Paternoster Press, 2009

A criticism often levelled at Baptists is that they have no theology of ecclesial reality beyond the local. In this book Keith Jones describes the history and current life of the European Baptist Federation and seeks to demonstrate that there is an ecclesial reality within the organisation, expressed in its communal life, mission activity, working on theological education, in relationship to other Christian world communions and in its decision making processes.

Communities of Conviction: Baptist Beginnings in Europe

Ian M Randall, Neufeld Verlag 2009

In this book, our Baptist historian, Ian Randall, charts Baptists beginnings in Europe from the Ana-

baptists in Switzerland, the General Baptists in Amsterdam, the Particular Baptists in London, beginnings in French-speaking Europe, the missionary enterprise of Oncken, developments in the Nordic and Baltic nations, expansion amongst the Slavs, the Latin countries, southern Europe and throughout central Asia and the Middle East. This comprehensive story is told with academic thoroughness, but in an enthusiastic and accessible way.

***International Baptist Theological Seminary:
A Unique Gift to Europe***

Timofey V Cheprasov (Editor)
Olexandr S Pavlichenko, 2009

This beautifully designed, limited edition IBTS coffee-table book is full of images from the past 60 years in Rüschtikon and Praha. It was published for especially for the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of IBTS and many found it a wonderful memento of their time at IBTS whether is be as a volunteer or a student or just someone passing through. The book was both compiled and published by two alumni of IBTS and has proved to be a “must have” purchase!



Dr Carol Woodfin (IBTS/Rüschtikon alumnus) in the IBTS bookshop with the new IBTS coffee table book.

These and many other interesting publications are available from our IBTS bookshop.

You may see what is available and how to order from our website: www.ibts.eu/research/publication-list

STUDENT & ALUMNI NEWS

Jan Hábl (PhD 2009) took on full time academic position of an assistant professor at the University of Usti nad Labem, Czech Republic.

Peter Andreas was born to **Dejan (Mgr 2006)** and **Daily (Valk) Adam (current MTh student)** in August 2008.

Michael (MTh 2004) and **Asanuo Yhome-Heneise** welcome the birth of their son Tristan in March 2008.

Filip Vicent Csényi was also born in February to **Katka (former IBTS Administrator)** and **Norbert (MTh 2005)**.

Alex (MTh 2008) and **Phil Alexander (English Dep. Head 2008)** announced the birth of Gracie Isa-

belle in February 2009. The Alexander family has since moved to London where Alex is serving as co-pastor of E1 Community church.

Hikmat Kachouh (MTh 2003) and **Krista (Betina) Kachouh (CAT 2003)** welcome their third child, a daughter Daniella Martine in March 2009.

Sashi Jamir (MTh 2005) and his wife Ellen had a second daughter born to them on the 4th of June 2009.

Good friends of IBTS **Joe and Joanna Proctor** released the sad news that their son David has passed away. He leaves behind a young ten year old son.

If you have any alumni news or information which you would like the LINK to publish, please contact the editor.

In its drive to become an ecoseminary, IBTS prints each copy of the LINK on 100% recycled paper.

