

Serving in the Czech Republic: Marcus and Amie Denny



1. An Introduction to the Czech Republic

A Brief Modern History of the Czech Republic

The Czech People have had a difficult existence. Simply going back to WWII, the Czechs suffered greatly under Nazi Germany's occupation. Approximately 390,000 Czechoslovakians were killed, including 83,000 Jews who were living in Czechoslovakia at that time. Nazi occupation ended in the spring of 1945, as Soviet troops rolled in to "liberate" the people. However, by 1948, under the totalitarian Soviet regime, the iron fist of communism took over. Under communism, atheism was propagated and religious freedom greatly stifled. Although the Czech Republic gained its freedom in 1989, communism had made deep imprints upon Czech minds. The Soviets may have left, but their godless philosophy still reigned. And despite a rich legacy of missionary zeal, modern-day Czechs remain in great spiritual darkness.

The Spiritual Demographics of the Czech Republic

Religious Breakdown (from the 2001 census):

None 59%

Catholic 26.8%
Protestant 2.5% (broadly defined)

Nineteen percent say there is a God. Fifty percent believe in some sort of spirit or life force. The Czech Republic is the second least religious country in the European Union, behind Estonia. Pagan spiritualism is on the rise, with religions like Buddhism and Hare Krishna making great inroads. Bible-believing churches are sparse to say the least.

2. The Ministry of Kladno Bible Christian Church (BSKK)

The BSKK was planted in 2002 by Peter and Sonya Smith. The fledgling church consisted of the Vondruškovs, Pavel Maršalek, the Smiths and a great God.

Currently, there are around 20-25 attendees each Sunday, including three recent converts. The church gathers for a Bible study at 9AM, followed by the church service at 10. Peter is currently preaching through 1 Corinthians and is now in Chapter 11. On Friday nights, the younger members gather for Bible study at the Smith home. These members include Radek and Eva (new believers through the Summer English Camp) and Daniel Adamovsky, who recently came to Christ after the Smiths ministered to him for eight years. Peter teaches two English outreach classes during the week, as well as his weekly Monday English conversation classes at the local high school. It is here where God continues to open tremendous doors to share Christ. Even though Peter has been reprimanded numerous times, God has used such gospel-centeredness to diffuse His glory in this little part of the Czech Republic.

3. Our Partnership with Peter Smith and BSKK.

We sent our first summer team in 2002. Ever since then, we have sent a team every summer and during other times of the year. Nearly 50 members of our church have ministered in the Czech

Republic. All of our elders and pastors have visited and ministered in the Czech Republic as well. Dale and Joan Shim were sent out as our first long-term missionaries in 2006 for one year, and Joe and Elaine Jhung, who ministered there for almost 18 months, followed them. We thank God for our partnership in the gospel with Peter and BSKK. It has been a mutually fruitful and spiritually profitable relationship in Christ.

4. Our Next Step

After an eleven-year ministry in the Czech Republic, God is moving Pastor Peter Smith and his family back to the United States. God has moved our hearts (Pastor Peter Smith, Pastor Marcus Denny, Leaders of BSKK, Elders and Pastors of CBC) to send Pastor Marcus to replace Pastor Peter as the teaching pastor of BSKK.

Is this a church plant?

This is not a CBC church plant. Instead, we are sending Pastor Marcus to be the pastor of an established local church (BSKK). When the Shims and Jhungs went to the Czech Republic, they were sent as CBC's missionary envoys to serve alongside the Smiths. In this situation, Marcus is being sent to assume the leadership of an autonomous, independent local church. Rather than planting a church, Marcus will continue the work of building up the Kladno church.

The Smiths will return to the United States by the end of August 2009. Peter is praying and seeking God's will as to his future. Before he leaves, he will pass the baton to Marcus by installing him as the teaching pastor of Kladno Bible Christian Church.

5. CBC's relationship with Pastor Marcus Denny and Kladno Bible Christian Church

We are sending Pastor Marcus Denny with complete love, honor, and affirmation. We believe that he is a godly and called man of God who will faithfully fulfill the pastoral office at Kladno Bible Christian Church.

Our role is to send them with joy, pray for them, encourage them in the Lord, support them financially, and send them servants to serve alongside them.

It is our desire and commitment to continue our partnership in the gospel with them as we have with Peter Smith but in a much deeper way because of his and his family's time and ministry with our church.

6. What should CBC members do?

(1) Rejoice! The gospel is advancing throughout the world (Col 1:5-6)!

The spiritual dynamics of the Czech Republic seem to be changing. The country is possibly entering into a time of reaping after a long period (10 years) of sowing. Those who have been there, CBC missions teams and Pastor John Smith (Christ Our Hope Bible Church) sense a new spiritual vigor. There have been three baptisms in the last few months—a milestone for the church there.

Pastor John Smith:

"This is my fourth time in Czech, and I can clearly see a progression of the Gospel in the ministry there. Though Czechs are very slow in responding to the Gospel, it seems that the Lord is steadily peeling back the spiritual blindness in a number of their lives and instilling a hunger for true spiritual life in Christ. At the camp, there were twenty-seven who specifically indicated that they were interested in pursuing a personal relationship with Christ! I think that this is unprecedented and shows that God is doing a work. In particular, I was most

encouraged by the conversations we had after each of the evening sessions. The gospel was proclaimed very clearly in each evening session and at least 65-80% of the Czechs stayed behind and talked for an hour to an hour and a half about significant spiritual issues. I was amazed at how deeply these supposed atheists were willing to dialogue openly about God and how to have a relationship with Him.”

(2) Weep! Our dear pastor and his family are going to a foreign land for the gospel.

We are saddened to see our dear pastor and pastor’s family leave our church fellowship. They have been dear friends and co-workers in Christ. We will greatly miss them. We allow them to go only because we believe this is the Father’s will for them, for BSKK and for us. Through it all, we hold on to these words and promises of our Lord:

Mark 10:29-30

29 Jesus said, “Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands, for my sake and for the gospel, 30 who will not receive a hundredfold now in this time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life.”

(3) Support! Spiritual and financial encouragement.

- a) Our support for the Dennys is as strong as CBC is strong. Our faithfulness to the Lord and to CBC is the first way we can support our gospel efforts here and in the world. Let us be encouragements to the Dennys by first being faithful Christians and members of our dear church. Their foremost desire is for growth in our collective spiritual maturity (1 Thess 3:6-10).
- b) They need our prayers (Col 4:2-4). We need to diligently and

perseveringly pray for them. Their initial prayer cards will be followed by many prayer requests as they go, start and continue their ministry in BSKK. Let us, moved by the gospel of God’s grace, faithfully pray for them.

- c) Because of our commitment to the gospel, to the Dennys and to the gospel ministry in the Czech Republic, CBC will provide full startup support for the Dennys and a significant portion of their support for their on-going ministry in BSKK. Their support will come directly from our church budget because we believe that God’s global vision for the gospel is projected through the local church.

At the same time, we want to give our members an opportunity to give towards this work.

So we will have a one-time missions offering on January 18th where 100% of the offering will go directly to the Dennys and to their ministry in the Czech Republic.

So, let us consider how we can serve Marcus and Amie. For as we do this, we support the advancement of the gospel.

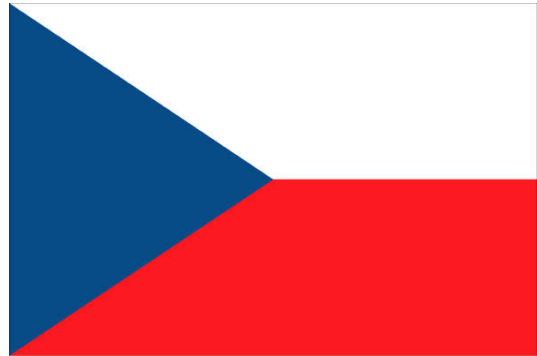
7. What are our plans for the various ministries that were under Pastor Marcus?

- a) Singles Ministry: This ministry will be most directly impacted by this change. We believe that the Singles Ministry is a very important and vital ministry of our church. The ministry has grown and flourished under Pastor Marcus’ leadership and is stronger than ever. We know that no one can ever “replace” the personal relationships that he had with you and his personal ministry to you. We have been much encouraged by the spiritual growth

and vitality of the ministry that is the result of godly and biblical leadership.

Therefore, we want to all the more do our best as elders to serve and care for this ministry. So, we have decided to move Pastor James and his wife Serin to serve and care for the Singles Ministry for two years. They are excited at the privilege of ministering to CBC's dear singles.

- b) Yorba Linda Flock: This is another major ministry that directly benefited from Pastor Marcus and Amie. It is an important group of maturing couples who have flourished under the Dennys' care and service. We had been considering a mid-level reorganization of our flock ministries after February of 2009, so we have asked Mr. Hyon Seo to serve as an interim flock facilitator until the end of February. Marcus and the elders have full confidence in Mr. Seo. Yorba Linda Flock is blessed to have him serve in this capacity.
- c) SCCO: Pastor Marcus has been preaching at the "Fellowship of Christian Optometrists", a Christian campus ministry of the SCCO (Southern California College of Optometry). God has been greatly blessing this ministry and it has been a privilege for us to be a small part of what God is doing on that campus. Pastor Joe Jhung will continue this ministry along with the rest of our leadership team for the preaching of the gospel at the school.



But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8).