

MESSENGER

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER & PRAYER GUIDE



Vojta Prkna (third from right) and The Prisoner's Journey® participants in the Czech Republic.

LEAST-REACHED & BEHIND BARS by Vojta Prkna

During one session of The Prisoner's Journey® program, one of the inmates in the group named Milan was grappling with the concept that Jesus' death some two thousand years ago should apply to him and his sin. I did my best at listening to his concerns and his processing, affirmed him and encouraged him to try and stay with that tension and not leave it until he comes to some sort of resolve.

During the next session two weeks

later, the video testimonies that are part of each lesson were especially touching for Milan, and he shared that he felt really drawn to the gospel and to what Jesus offers. Each time after the session, we would walk back to the units, which is a good time to connect with inmates one on one. And right then I asked Milan if he was ready to accept Jesus. He said "yes" and did it right there on a bumpy sidewalk in the middle of the prison compound!

After COVID restrictions were lifted and prisons opened again to non-governmental workers, a wide door swung open for an evangelism program called The Prisoner's Journey® (TPJ) to be presented to inmates in a group setting of eight to twelve people. Thanks to God's favor, this was also possible because the new director of the entire Czech prison system is a believer in Jesus. This is quite special in a population with fewer than 0.5% evangelical

... CONTINUED FROM THE FRONT

believers. This eight-week program presents the good news, following the storyline of Mark's Gospel, along with video testimonies of people who met Jesus in prison from different places around the globe. This material was translated and published in the Czech language about 10 years ago, and after a slow start is currently being used in about 20 out of 36 prisons in the country by chaplains and volunteers.

The team who created TPJ also developed a follow-up material called Discipleship Explored Prison Edition. This program has the same format of lessons, and uses the book of Philippians in each of the eight sessions. These sessions focus on a specific area of what life with Christ

brings (e.g., righteousness, joy, contentment, etc.). It's easy to make a list of the things Christians do — go to church, read the Bible, pray, share the gospel — but that doesn't really tell us much about what following Jesus is actually like. That's where Discipleship Explored comes in.

Besides all the good work that prison chaplains do in their programs and one-on-one meetings, there's a growing number of graduates of TPJ along with others who would benefit from having a program to participate in to further explore the path of following Jesus.

This Discipleship Explored material has been translated into Czech and is being tested in one prison. The plan then is to offer it to all

leaders of TPJ so they can add this to their toolbox and offer an eight-week follow-up program mostly to TPJ graduates, just as the Discipleship Explored Prison Edition is designed to be used. For this to become reality, the materials need to be officially published along with the accompanying videos that are yet to be translated and dubbed. With your help, we will be able to publish the Czech translation of the Discipleship Explored Prison Edition.



Vojta Prkna and his wife, Stacy, and their children serve with EMM in the Czech Republic.

You can support the publishing of this curriculum that Vojta translated by giving a gift online at EMM.ORG/CZECHTRANSLATION or by sending a check with “Czech Translation” in the memo.

INCARCERATED PEOPLE IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

It is often argued that the Czech Republic is among the most secular countries in the world. Yet, a rich spiritual heritage is part of Czech history, including Jan Hus, a reformer who inspired Martin Luther, and the Moravian Brethren, who accomplished amazing missionary work in North America and all over the world. Despite this rich heritage, the Czech nation is now profoundly secular.

The Czech Republic has the fifth-highest incarceration rate in the European Union (out of 27 EU member states) and the ninth-highest of all the 46 European countries. Prisoners have a unique opportunity to step away from the snares and demands of life and think about what really matters. Many inmates carry a lot of guilt and experience intense loneliness.



FEBRUARY DAILY PRAYER

1 MIDDLE EAST | Pray for God's peace to be very real to Michael and Laura* in the midst of much unsettledness. Pray that they can be God's peace to those around them who find themselves in pain, grief, and turmoil.

2 CAMBODIA | Pray for workers to be called to the work of young adult outreach and discipleship in Cambodia.

3 EL SALVADOR | Pray for Ethan Horst as his team works together in the outreach portion of the Vida 220 discipleship program. Ask God to give them favor with the people they serve and that God would be glorified among them.

4 CAMBODIA | Pray for Kandace Glenn that she will continue to be a light in the darkness. Pray for God's protection over her both spiritually and physically.

5 ROMANIA | Pray for safety in travel and a smooth transition for Phil and Linda Gottschalk as they return to Romania after spending time in the U.S.

6 GLOBAL | Pray now for God to call Advance Global participants for the fall of 2024 to the regions of West Africa, Central Europe, and Southeast Asia.

7 COSTA RICA | Pray for Daryl and Jen Hoover, as they are on home leave until the end of the month. Pray for good connections with supporting churches as well as times of refreshment and renewal.

8 PERU | Pray for Holly Hollenbach as she serves in Peru. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead her as she shares his love with the students at the Promesa school.

9 U.S. | Pray for Lea* as she works stateside but continues to connect with friends who still live in the mountains where she had been living. Pray for wisdom as she works on a web-based project, developing resources for the mountain people group and for others who do have access to go there and serve.

10 GLOBAL | Thank God for EMM's privilege of partnering with Jesus' followers to help them cross cultures to tell others about Jesus. Pray for EMM and our founding church body, LMC, to lead and serve each other well in overlapping areas of ministry.

11 THAILAND | Pray for Jeremy and Jennifer* as they oversee the workers in their region. Pray for Jubilee in school and in her relationships. Pray for Juniper and Jude as they live in Canada away from their family.

12 COSTA RICA | Pray for Wendell and Melanie Nofziger and their family as they serve in Costa Rica. Ask the Lord to guide and direct them as they serve as directors at Vida Net.

13 CENTRAL ASIA | Pray for Alexander and Maria* as they serve in Central Asia. Ask the Lord to continue to provide opportunities for them to connect with others in innovative and positive ways.

14 U.S. | Pray for God to raise up Kingdom Team staff to serve with youth in the summer of 2024.

15 CENTRAL AFRICA | Pray for Peter and Christy* as they serve in Central Africa. Pray for God to sustain Christy in her work as a midwife and Peter as he teaches seminary courses. Pray for their children to thrive in school and in their friendships.

16 U.S. | Pray for God to call volunteers to provide childcare for the children of refugees who attend ESL class at Neighbors Community Center at Hub 450 in Lancaster, Pa.

17 U.S. | Pray for Binsa* as she continues to relate to persons from Buddhist and Hindu backgrounds. Pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to draw persons to himself.

18 GERMANY | Pray for Matthew Baugher as he serves in Halle, Germany. Pray for meaningful opportunities for Matthew to share the Lord with others as he develops relationships.

19 GERMANY | Ask God to strengthen, encourage, and protect Persians who have come to faith in Christ. Pray that they would begin a disciple-making movement among Persians all across Germany.

20 CZECH REPUBLIC | Pray for youth workers to help conduct summer English camps in the Czech Republic.

21 MARSAILLES, FRANCE | Pray for Jennifer Weaver as she prepares for long-term service in Marseilles. Ask the Lord to prepare the way for her through connections and support.

22 CZECH REPUBLIC | Join us in praying that God might send workers to be part of a church planting team in the Czech Republic.

23 U.S. | Pray for Michael and Ruth Hershey as they minister to international students through Immerse International. Pray for their children to thrive in their schooling and friendships.

24 CAMBODIA | Pray for Lena Kauffman as she begins her outreach portion of the Advance program. Ask God to give her meaningful relationships during her outreach.

25 THAILAND | Pray for Mark and Sarah Schoenhals and their daughters as they serve in Thailand. Ask God to sustain and encourage them as they provide support to Life Enrichment Church.

26 U.S. | Ask God to lead people to join Vision Support Teams to facilitate ministry among unreached people groups in Central Asia, Central Europe, Southeast Asia, and West Africa, and to refugees in Lancaster, Pa.

27 GLOBAL | Pray for J.C. Ebersole as he continues to give leadership to the All-nations Association of Bible Schools. Pray for wisdom as they collaborate with many churches and ministries. May God continue to use AABS for resourcing and growing leaders.

28 THAILAND | Pray for God to call pioneer church planters into the harvest field of Thailand to join the team there.

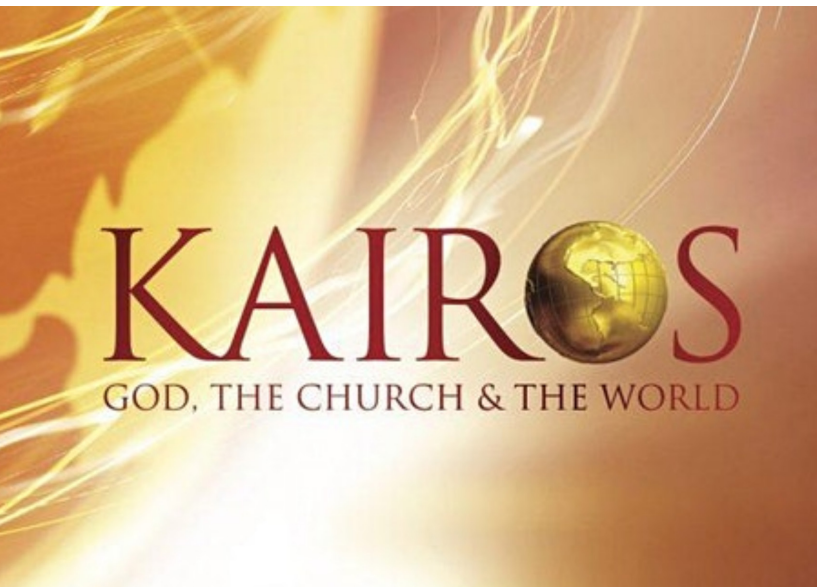
29 U.S. | Thank God for faithfully providing for EMM's needs through the generosity of His blessed people. Ask Him for contributions moving the Impact Fund by leaps and bounds towards this year's goal.



Eastern Mennonite Missions

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



The Kairos course guides participants to a biblical worldview and to live as a world Christian. It uses a unique combination of facilitated introductions, reading, videos, group discussions, special activities, and prayer for unreached peoples. Kairos is one of several mobilization tools produced by Simply Mobilizing, Inc., which began in the Philippines. Kairos is for all Christians at any point in their journey with God. It is not a “missions” course. It is an opportunity for all God’s people to have their worldview transformed and aligned with God’s heart for the nations. He has called us all to play a part in His mission, and there are many different roles to fill.

March 16 – April 16
450 North Prince Street
Lancaster, PA 17603

\$125 per person
(\$95 for LMC church attendees)



LEARN MORE AND REGISTER AT EMM.ORG/KAIROS

THE IMPACT FUND FOR 2024 NEED IS \$1,792,455

When you support EMM’s Impact Fund, you enable us to recruit, equip, and send EMM workers around world.



EMM.ORG/GIVE

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