

The Gospel as an Instrument of Reconciliation between Peoples

Hungarian and Slovak Baptists commemorate the reformer
Andreas Fischer

Kosice – On 20 and 21 June in the Slovak city of Kosice, Slovak and Hungarian Baptists jointly commemorated the life of the Anabaptist reformer Andreas Fischer (1480-1540) for the first time. The event was entitled “The Message of the Faith of our Forefathers”. Fischer, a German speaking theologian, was an advocate of adult, believer’s baptism and had fled from Evangelical and Catholic repression to Upper Hungary – today’s Slovakia. There, in the course of many years he had been successful in winning over people, above all local miners, for his theological convictions. Yet in the end he was arrested and executed by being thrown from the tower of the fortress Krasznahorka near Kosice.

During the congress, hundreds of Baptists hiked to the fortress to attend a commemoration in which a plaque in four languages was dedicated. It reads: “The martyr Andreas Fischer, a representative of the Anabaptist wing of the Reformation, was thrown from the tower of this fortress in 1540 according to the decree of Ferenc Bebek, the Prefect of Gerner. Slovak and Hungarian Baptists honour his memory,” The festive sermons at the commemoration were held by the Presidents of both Baptist Unions: Tomas Kriska (Bratislava) and Dr. Kalman Meszaros (Budapest). A historical novel dealing with the life of Fischer written by the Hungarian author Janos Somogyi was also introduced at the conference. It is entitled: “The Crown of Life”. A projector helped with the translation of the conference for Slovak participants. A male choir from Budapest, “Vox Nova”, was responsible for the musical portion of the festivities.

Correction: For some technical reason the editor’s printer skipped this paragraph of the article **Set Your Compass in the Right Direction:**

“The purpose of the Bible is simply to proclaim God’s plan to save his children. It asserts that man is lost and needs to be saved. And it communicates the message that Jesus is the God in the flesh sent to save his children.”

At a celebratory service in the chapel of Kosice’s Baptist congregation, Pastor Kriska stressed the significance of the Christian message as a force for reconciliation between the nations. Though tension has existed between Slovaks and Hungarians in the past, the Gospel has remained “a solid foundation for both sides”. He added: “The Gospel is for us a more decisive issue than national differences. It is the Gospel which unites us.” The mayor of Kosice, Fratisek Knapik, expressed himself in similar terms. He lauded the role of Baptist believers in society and called on them to continue doing their best for the common good. At the behest of the Hungarian Bible Society, Lajos Marosi Nagy, Senior Elder and Press Spokesperson of the Hungarian Union, distributed 250 copies of a bilingual, Slovak-Hungarian New Testament. He expressed thereby the conviction that this Bible would help deepen the friendship between Slovaks and Hungarians. President Meszaros stressed the historical significance of the gathering in Kosice: “It never before has occurred that Baptists from our two countries have celebrated jointly.” In his sermon he pointed to the unlimited possibilities which the Holy Spirit can offer us. He indeed is capable of negating all differences.

The Baptist Union of Hungary has approximately 12.000 members in 362 congregations; the Slovak Union has roughly 2.000 members in 24 congregations.

Klaus Rösler, European Baptist Federation; ebf.org



Sierra Leone

Makeni, July 7, 2009

The light is coming and I am moving!

It was Alfred, one of my neighbors who asked me a few weeks ago:

“Where will you go when they move your house?”

I didn’t take him seriously because the guys in the neighborhood always liked to pull my leg. However, a few days later, government workers came and painted a big red “B” on the house that I rented. I quickly called the pastor and he talked to the leader of the demolishing crew.

We found out that indeed, the bulldozers are hungrily waiting to put their

iron teeth into the walls of my living room. The reason? In the dry season, the workers successfully finished the long awaited hydro power plant of Sierra Leone and they pulled out the high voltage lines in our street to bring electricity into the town. The first storms of the rainy season filled up the rivers with water enabling the power plant to produce electricity. The government decided to light the town and they announced on the radio that the houses under the electric line had to go. Definitely, it is very dangerous to live under these electric lines. Though they are not used in times of thunder, all of the sockets are sparkling in my house.

I am very happy for the coming of the light, but it is difficult to understand why I was not informed about that earlier. Had my landlord known about this? Maybe, but he didn’t tell me anything. Anyhow, it was about 30 years ago that the people started to build the power plant. From that time, governments have come and gone, but the Sierra Leoneans lived in darkness. However, the new president of the country promised that there shall be light and there would be light. That is a political issue, but when I saw the “break down” sign on my house, I was sure that there would not be any more delays.

I have been praying earnestly ever since. At first, the Baptist Convention offered me an empty mission house in Lunsar, but it was soon rented to another missionary. I spent two weeks in a frantic search for another house. However, most of the houses for rent were in an area where there was neither water supply from the town nor hope to have electricity. Meanwhile, the clock ticked faster and faster.

Then, I was informed that the house at the right side of the mosque is for rent. (Currently, I’m living at the left side of the Muslim prayer house.) Since the caretaker of the mosque passes by my house two to five times everyday, I asked him to find the owner of the house. It turned out that the owner lives in Freetown, but he has a representative in Makeni.

That representative told me that a professor who hoped to get a job in Makeni already rented out the house. He started to renovate the house, but because he didn’t get the position, he was willing to give the house to me if I pay what he already spent on it.

I checked the house and found out that not much work was done on it. There is a water pipe on the street, but no water inside. The house is already con-

nected to (future) electricity, but the rooms are poorly wired and most of the switches are missing. Also, the roof is leaking here and there. Window glasses are broken and there are no screens on the windows. The bathroom and kitchen must be rebuilt. Doors need to be fixed and locks must be changed. Of course, everything needs to be painted and cleaned up. One room is filled up with garbage and I wonder if the rebels had left that there.

On July 2nd, it was announced that all people who lived under the main electric lines should leave their houses by the 18th of the same month. Three days later government workers came to my house and registered me as a tenant. They promised to give me 400 dollars as compensation for leaving my house. Though they didn't give anything yet, they emphasized that I must leave the house by the 18th of July.

There were no alternatives. I paid an advance for renting the house on the right side of the mosque and now I am looking for masons, electricians, plumbers, carpenters and other skilled laborers to fix the house in ten days. Please pray that I would be able to have the most important things repaired by the deadline. Also, pray that I would have enough time to pack up my old house and that nothing would be spoiled, lost or stolen as I move from one side of the mosque to the other.

If you would like to contribute to this emergency moving and house reparation, please send a tax-deductible check to:

Hungarian Baptist Convention of North America - Mission in Sierra Leone

Mr. Louis Drescher, Treasurer
2636 EAST 124th Street
Cleveland, OH 44120

Please, write in the memo: renovation, mission house. Thank you very much.

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace."

Yours in Christ,
Gabriella Kamilla Furedi

Making a will? Don't forget about the Convention, our Hungarian mission.

Végrendeletet készít?

Ne feledkezzen el

Szövetségünkről, az amerikai magyar baptista misszióról.

Annual Convention at Rama A BACKWARD GLANCE

It was a privilege for me to attend our Annual Convention at our Rama Campgrounds located in the beautiful Lake Couchiching area of Canada. July is hot in Florida and the cooler temperatures were very refreshing.

Our member churches were well represented with their young people and children as well. Reports were given and good speakers gave an inspiring message on our theme "Christ, the eternal foundation." There was an excellent slide presentation on the 400th Anniversary of the Baptist movement. We have come a long way, but there is so much more to do to reach out to the unsaved.

Hungarians love music and there were several musical groups in attendance with added so much to lift our spirit. The combined brass band is always a special treat. They played wonderful music before and during the evening service. The adult choir and young people's groups presented special music also. Sunday morning a large group of small children, many pre-schoolers, sang in Hungarian. What a delight to hear them!

The church women outdid themselves in providing the wonderful Hungarian home style food, always in abundance. The BBQ was indoors this year; due to rain.

On Sunday evening there was a huge bonfire. It was a beautiful cool evening with a full moon shining above the blazing fire. The singing and the band music in the gazebo was a special time of fellowship.

Our convention has a beautiful facility in Rama with accommodations for all ages. The Toronto church members have a big responsibility in taking care of that beautiful camp to the glory of God. I see improvements every year and heard some of their future plans. God bless them for their dedicated service.

Convention is a time to reflect on progress, to pray together, to praise God, and to make plans in carrying out God's command to spread the Gospel. It was nice to see the large group of teenagers in attendance. I am very happy I was able to attend and God willing, I will be at the convention next year again. I hope and pray you will be there too.

Ethel Petre Kish



The newly elected leaders of the Women's Convention: President: Mrs. Irenke Torma, Vice President: Mrs. Zsuzsanna Toth, Secretary: Mrs. Eva Herjeczki, Treasurer: Mrs. Ildiko Miko

Az Ige szerepe a nők életében

Azt, hogy az Igének hány irányú, oldalú szerepe van a nők életében, fel sem tudjuk fogni, mégkevésbé elmondani. Csak megemlíteni tudunk belőle néhányat.

Lukács ev. 8:2-3. versében azt olvassuk, hogy az Úr Jézusnak voltak női követői is. Itt hármat név szerint is megemlít, de nagy kegyelem számomra, és valamennyiünk számára, hogy a "sok más asszony" között ott lehetünk mi is. Galata 3:28 szerint nincs különbség Krisztusban, mindnyájan egyek vagyunk. A kegyelem, az üdvösség, az Ige a mienk is.

János 4:27-ben úgy találjuk, a tanítványok csodálkoztak, hogy Jézus asszonnyal beszélt. Igen, számomra is ez a legnagyobb csoda, hogy megszólított, szoba állt velem, és a samáriai asszony szavaival élve: "mindent megmondott nekem, amit cselekedtem".

Az igének ez az egyik legnagyobb szerepe az életünkben, hogy **büntudatra ébreszt, bűnbánatra készítet, és azt is megmutatja, hol szabadulunk meg terheinktől.** A samáriai asszonynak megvan a saját története. Nekem is,