



Why are we in Prague?

by Sara and Jarda Tusek



We moved to Prague in August and are still getting settled into our new home. Since we've been here, we've renewed many relationships with relatives, friends, and ILI program participants, and we've met some very interesting new people.

One question that we've gotten used to answering is, "why are you in Prague?"

We have at least 4 answers, depending on the questioner and the circumstances.

1. **"We are reuniting our family."** This is the answer we were advised to give by the Foreign Police when Sara applied for her long-term residency permit. She had written "To learn Czech and study Czech literature" as her reason for wanting to be allowed to live here, but the young woman at the desk told us very firmly that the best answer was "to reunite our family," as Jarda is an EU citizen (he's had dual US/Czech citizenship since 2005), and Sara will have a right to live here because of that.

2. **"We're taking care of our property."** Jarda's parents left us part ownership in three properties in Prague. We sold our share of one property in 2007, and have been doing our best to be good stewards to the other properties. Although we didn't move here primarily to take care of the

properties, since we've been here Jarda has dealt with a series of urgent situations in need of his personal presence concerning the properties. This has taken up a great deal of time, but is well worth doing, to honor his parents' memory and to fulfill our legal responsibilities.

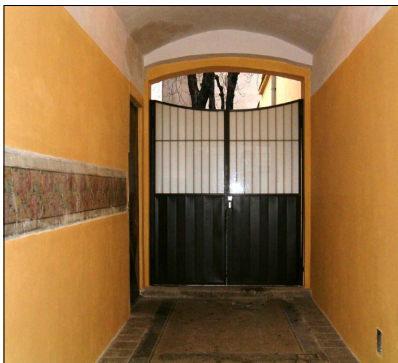


3. **"We are reinvigorating our business, the International Leadership Institute."** ILI has been active in Prague since 1990. In the past, we've run executive education programs in Tennessee, Georgia and Florida with the Czech Ministry of Industry and Trade; we've offered American English Immersion programs for

Czech students, delivered in the U.S.A.; we've run Travel-and-Learn programs for Czechs to visit the U.S.A. and Americans to visit Central Europe; we've written and published newsletters, newspaper articles and books about our activities in the Czech Republic. Now we're decided to run just these four programs:

- *Career development seminars using our latest book, 21st Century Jobs*
- *Conversational English lessons*
- *Essential Prague in Four Days*
- *Travel-and-Learn programs to Florida, New York City and the American West.*

To p. 2



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Books at www.ili.cc:

- *21st Century Jobs*
- *Three Things You can't Do in Prague*
- *Three Things that Last Forever*

"Why are we in Prague?"

4. "We want to run Alpha in English in Prague." This is the answer we wrote about in the April issue of *Servant Leaders*, "One thing we must do in Prague." We've been through eight Alpha programs in the U.S.A., as participants and as leaders. Alpha is a 13-week program on the basics of the Christian faith that started in London in the late 1970's and spread around the world.

Alpha has been offered for the past decade or so in the Czech Republic through various churches; the Evangelická církev metodistická (ECM-United Methodist Church) and the Křesťanská misijní společnost (KMS-Christian Mission Society) have been very active in Alpha.

We knew that the course was not given in English in these churches; instead, Nicky's words were dubbed in Czech. But the humor didn't translate well, and the cultural references fell flat.

Our idea was to offer Alpha in English, using the original tapes, to attract young people who wanted to improve their English. We thought this would be a way to attract young people to knowing



The Alpha Course & Nicky Gumbel

The Alpha Course has been running for over 30 years. It began at Holy Trinity Brompton in central London, in the late 1970s, initially as a means of presenting the basic principles of the Christian faith to new Christians in a relaxed and informal setting.

By 1990, when former barrister Nicky Gumbel took over the Alpha course, it was a central feature of the church's life. It was while leading his second Alpha course that Nicky realised how this simple course could also appeal to non-churchgoers and he adapted the course to give it the kind of feel that would suit this group.

The Alpha Course - UK and Worldwide

The Alpha course spread during the 1990s, initially in the UK and then internationally, as more churches and groups found it a helpful way to answer questions about the Christian faith in an informal setting.

There are now over 33,500 courses worldwide in 163 countries and it is supported by all the major denominations.

(www.uk.alpha.org)

continued from page one

Jesus, which is our most compelling reason for moving to Prague. Since we arrived in Prague, we've been searching for a church that would like to host our Alpha in English courses.

We're still in the process of implementing this idea. So far we've found the best match with the ECM church in Strasnice, where we were welcomed in a friendly way when we attended church there in September.

Really—why are we in Prague?

None of the 4 answers above reveals the simplest truth: we're here because we believe God wants us here. How our lives take shape here depends on how patient and faithful we are to He Who sent us.

We've had a number of ideas since 2002 about how our Czech ministry would take shape. With our friends, we've discussed these ideas, examining them from many angles, discarding some and adding others.

Right now, though, we're of the opinion that we are our ministry; what we do and how we live are the only means of evangelism that will really define why we are in Prague.