

Newsletter (Pilgrim of Benced)

April, 2009. No. 1.



*Beautiful is the Nyiko Valley
and its neighborhood,
Its people believe in God,
More beautiful is pussy willow,
Like on other places the lily of the valley,
La la la..." (szekler folk-song)*

Redacted and translated from Hungarian by Pall Krisztina

Visit in USA

Pall Krisztina, the President of Benced Ittre Foundation visited USA, the partnerchurch of Benced from Hanska, with the aim to renew the partnership between the 2 communities....

Because of my terrible accident I am in late with this newsletter. Sorry of being late! I don't give up! I 'll show you that I am capable to do it, even I am in the bed, I am capable to redact the newsletter, to write grants! It must be strong and optimistic, even it is very painful.. Thank you for all those persons who are thinking of me, praying for me, Because these are the best steps, the best pills for my recovery. Thank you!!!

Next I will tell you about my trip in USA. Before my accident I was in USA for about 3 weeks, in 3 states.

I've got never minded memories, I didn't believe till I was at the airport. I was invited to attend some conferences. And appeared the idea, if I am in USA, why not visit Partnerchurch of Benced or Partnerchurch of Udvarhely.(the town where I was born) . I choosed Benced's Partnerchurch, the Nora Church.

At the airport in Budapest I cried that I don't want to go alone, but the tickets were in my hand and I had to go. It was an exciting flight, I had to change in London, and I sat in a huge airplane, which brought me through Atlantic Ocean to New York City. It is not easy to arrive in American land. On airplane you have to fill a paper, answering for the questions why are you going to USA, where etc, like at the US Embassy in Bucharest (capital of Romania), where I was interviewed.

But I wasn't done interviewing, too. Arriving at the airport from New York City, a man asked me the same questions. Why I am coming, where etc. They took a picture of me, fingerprint, and a sign in my passport that I have 3 months to stay in USA, even I have 10





In New York

years visa. Finally I went to baggage claim being sick because of flight. (I don't like to much fighting)

In New York city professor Richard Ford was waited for me, with whom I am working for a long time. During 1 week the professor and Eileen Higgins, the colleague of the professor, too navigated me on streets of New York City.

I was staying in Manhattan, I visited the Broadway, Central Park 5th Avenue, Ground Zero, Unitarian Universalist Church in Downtown, attending the coral service, and of course professional meetings.

After this I flew to state of Minnesota, alone, I had to change in Chicago, which is a huge airport, too. It isn't a bus station from Benced...

I arrived in Minneapolis where waited me 2 persons, whom I knew just by mails, I've ever met with them personally, before. They were Mark and Brenda Wiger, the members of Social Justice Committee of Nora Church. I spent one day in Minneapolis, to take a rest after the flight and after it we went to New Ulm, where are living some members of our Partner church. Here I was hosted in house of Coleen Tasto, a Spanish teacher. Arriving in her house the Social Justice Committee give me a complimentary dinner. There was present: Dana Reynolds the minister of Nora Church, Mark and Brenda Wiger, Darrell and Jeannie Hinsman, Coleen Tasto, Vickie Sievie.

I had a lot of memories and good hospitality. One day I had the possibility to spend one day in a High School from New Ulm. I was surprised on the bohemian habits of the students, and hard technical utilities, equipment of the school.

New Ulm is a small town, typical German town established by German settlers, the centre is like you are in Germany. It has about 13000 inhabitants.

Hanska is about 20 kms far from New Ulm. It is smaller then New Ulm established by Norwegian settlers. Here is the beautiful Unitarian Church in a beautiful environment. Member of the church are not living just in Hanska, some of them come every Sunday from 30 kms far. The church contains about 60-70 members. Every Thursday afternoon they gather together in New Ulm singing, reading the Bible, talking etc. It is almost the same like our Women's meeting, but here are men, too.

On Sunday I made a presentation about Benced, I gave the present of our Church, I gave my personal gift, too a ceramic. The members of American Church gather money for Church from Benced. About the money the minister will inform you in time. During staying there I visited real pig farms and cow farms, I was in a German Bear Fest, I visited Mankato, in New Ulm the food shelf, helping to package foods for families.



Unitarian Universalist Church in Hanska

Minnesota state is the coldest part of USA. I felt it... It was a lot of snow... A really februar, like our weather.

I decided that every month I will translate our newsletter from Benced, and I will send to Nora Church to appear in their newsletter. I was happy, they were happy, too

Saying goodbye to my Partnerchurch, I set out for Texas state, I arrived in hiking boots and winter jacket in a 23 Celsius warm town. I was waited by another 2 kind person, whom I've never seen before, just by mails. They were Rita Saylor and Thore Butler, professors at the University from Houston. Again professional meetings, and there was invited as an international presenter at the International Unitarian Universalist Women's Convocation. I made presentation in front of 600 participants about community capacity building assessments, our results, I was at the same the leader, facilitator during the workshops.

But we had free time, too, a very short. We went to the downtown, Museum tour, state park to see alligators etc. Interesting that in Houston the people against the hot made tunnels. There are the stores; the life of the city.



Mark és Brenda with their grandchild

Finally I would like to thank you for all my American friends, who made that my dreams became possible: Nora Church, Eileen Higgins, Cathy Cordes, Dr. Richard Ford, Sztranyiczky Zsófia. Thak You!!! And I would like to thank Civitas Foundation from Udvarhely, especially for Csaki Rozalia who put the seeds of community development. I developed this seed with American professionals and working together in our community with Makkai Ilkei Ildiko our minister and of course with the Civitas.

I wished to make a presentation in the church about my trip. But it happened the accident. I promise that I will make it, as soon as it is possible, after my recovery. Thank you for your patient.

(Páll Krisztina)

P.S. Mark and Brenda Wiger from Nora Church came to visit us, hearing my sad accident. They came from Ploland. They had the possibility in this way to visit Benced, too. In this way I would like to thanks for Makkai Ilkei Ildiko their hospitality, for the good foods thanks for Pap Mária az family of the minister from Ujszekely, Benczédi Polixénia, Pap Benczédi Rózália, Mózes Irénke and for my mother Páll Irénke, Yhanks for the inhabitants of Benced for the many memories, smiles. **(Páll Krisztina)**

Easter

Easter (Greek: Πάσχα, *Pascha*) is the most important annual religious feast in the Christian liturgical year.^[1] According to Christian scripture, Jesus was resurrected from the dead on the third day after his crucifixion. Christians celebrate this resurrection on **Easter Day** or **Easter Sunday** (also **Resurrection Day** or **Resurrection Sunday**), two days after Good Friday and three days after Maundy Thursday. The chronology of his death and resurrection is variously interpreted to be between A.D. 26 and 36. Easter also refers to the season of the church year called Eastertide or the Easter Season. Traditionally the Easter Season lasted for the forty days from Easter Day until Ascension Day but now officially lasts for the fifty days until Pentecost. The first week of the Easter Season is known as Easter Week or the Octave of Easter. Easter also marks the end of Lent, a season of fasting, prayer, and penance.

Easter is a moveable feast, meaning it is not fixed in relation to the civil calendar. The First Council of Nicaea (325) established that the date of Easter would be the first Sunday after the full moon (the Paschal Full Moon) following the vernal equinox.^[3] Ecclesiastically, the equinox is reckoned to be on 21 March. The date of Easter therefore varies between 22 March and 25 April. Eastern Christianity bases its calculations on the Julian Calendar whose 21 March corresponds, during the twenty-first century, to 3 April in the Gregorian Calendar, in which calendar their celebration of Easter therefore varies between 4 April and 8 May.

Easter is linked to the Jewish Passover not only for much of its symbolism but also for its position in the calendar.

Cultural elements, such as the Easter Bunny and Easter egg hunts, have become part of the holiday's modern celebrations, and those aspects are often celebrated by many Christians and non-Christians alike. There are also some Christian denominations who do not celebrate Easter.

About the life of Women's Association in Benced

Makkai Ilkei Ildiko and Benczedi Polixenia will write about the new semester of Women's Association

In the last month of last year, which was so usual, we, the women of Benced have waited very excited the day to gather together every week for our Women's Meeting. On first Thursday of December was the first meeting, where we made with our minister The schedule.

Firstly, before the Christmas we visited the twilight home from Lokod. It was a never mind memory for us. All inhabitant from Benced donated vegetables, fruit, and money, to help those seniors from Lokod. We made 44 packages.

The visit to Lokod was helped by Csaki Levente, the minister of Lokod. Some member of twilight home waited us with a performance, like we who prepared with another performance.

With painful heart we left the home, those people. We promised that we will visit them in the next year, too.

On the next months every Thursday was for Women's Association. Of course we visit every Sunday the Church, too.

The schedule of meetings on Thursday was full. We organized the meeting with WA (Women's Association) from Firtosmartonos. We went their village. We will organize to invite them in our village.

In every WA meeting we learnt from our minister and of course from each other reading, explaining the Bible, learning and singing songs. We made our women choir. With this choir we waited the guest ministers during The Prayer Week.

We had a guest from Szekelyudvarhely, Dr. Csaki Maria, who made an interesting presentation, and answered for our questions .

Thanks for her, and she is welcomed, anytime she is coming in our village.

We had another guests, too. Nemes Annamaria, song teacher from Berde Mozes Unitarian High School, Szekelykeresztur. She made a presentation about her activities, we finishes our meeting singong song.

We celebrated the Women's Day. The invited guest was Molnar Melinda, the journalist of Udvarhelyi Hirado. On the table was cakes, hot tea etc. Thank you for everybody.

At the end of March we gather together to finish the Hour of Women.

It was a kind of evaluation, our minister asked us about these meeting, and everybody answered that it was excellent. We celebrated this day with cakes, hot tea, popcorn, and at the same time we celebrated birthday of our minister's child. Blessings her family, too. We would like to thank to our minister, that she was with us with patient and love, and we ask the God, to help us this year, too to be together and to begin the Hour of Women.

Yours sincerely **Benczédi Polixénia**

Every Thursday our meeting room was full of women laugh, speaking. From our small village came about 20 women. I feel that we realized to left out our problems, weights, pains and to sit near by near and to laugh together. The spring with its full of work finished our meeting, but it is a pleasure to look back and remind these evenings. .

On last Thursday Laszlo Piroska with her tradition told us her poem:

It was so beautiful to gather together
To spend few hours together
But we have to finish it,
Next year, if we are alive, we will start it again,
We ask from God,
To keep our health,
To not forget each us,
If you hear the bell,
Leave everything,
And let's go to the church!

At the same time some of them told us poem celebrating my girls' birthday, and appeared tears in my eyes, when after the gifts my girl was so happy.

Thank you your enjoyment, the good atmosphere, the beautiful poems. God bless you. (**Makkai-Ilkei Ildikó**)

News from Unitarian Church of Benced

This year the **Week of praying** was between 2nd of March and 6th of March from

The guest ministers were:

Monday: Krizbai Imre, reformed minister from Barot

Tuesday: Tódor Csaba, Unitarian minister from Homorodszeptal

Wednesday: Nagy Adél, Unitarian minister from Recsenyed

Thursday: Kelemen Levente, Unitarian minister from Okland

Friday: Demeter Erika, Unitarian minister from Erdoszentgyorgy

At 14th of March was christened the child of Bencedi Gyula and Margit, Orsolya.

At 15th of March was in Székelyszentmihály the commemoration and celebration of **Revolution from 1848-49**

At 22nd of March was meeting with the community, where we chose the Social Justice Committee of the Church. We wish health and power for their function.



At 24th of March was The **Deanery Inquiry Meeting**, where was Lőrinczi Lajos deaner, Kovács Lajos és Bálint Sándor district presidents, Gál Zoltán minister of Gagy, vicesecretar of the district.

At 28th of March **David Ferenc Youth Association** visited Unitarian Church of Tarcasfalva, and took a performance there.

We are **renovating** the church of Upper Benced. The consecration will be on 12nd of July.

Minister: Makkai Ilkei Ildiko

Our community's website:

[www. benced. Ro](http://www.benced.ro)

Our partnerchurch's website:

www.nora-uu-church.org