

Gospel trip to Wroclaw, October 2024

After the ITERO 2024 in Warsaw, my wife and I signed up for the gospel trip to Wroclaw, the third-largest city in Poland but little known to most people outside of Europe.

Since my first trip to Poland in 2017, I have had close contact with saints in Poland. They came to attend the ICSC 2018 in Taiwan and the national college conference in Illinois in 2019. Through those trips and blending times, the burden for the churches and saints in Poland remained in my thoughts. When many ITERO attendees signed up for trips to visit other European countries, I decided to go to a place where not too many people would go, that is Wroclaw. In fact, besides my wife and I, only another couple from the church in Manchester, Massachusetts, Br. Paul Juraschek and his wife Deborah were on our team.

The local team leader is Br. Staszek, a dear full-timer serving in Wroclaw since 2023 with his wife Renee. They gave us a ride from Warsaw to Wroclaw on Monday, Oct 7 in their station wagon with loads of audio equipment used in the ITERO just finished over the previous weekend. Br. Staszek has been serving audio for training and conferences conducted in Europe for years. That audio equipment will work in the 2024 European conference in Baarlo, Netherlands by the end of October. In the meantime, Br. Paul and his wife took a train ride to Wroclaw by themselves. A two-bedroom Airbnb condo in the old town square of the city of Wroclaw with a little larger living room was rented for our team fellowship and prayer gathering. Br. Paul rented a different Airbnb unit on the same street just 100 feet away.

On Tuesday, Oct 8, 10 am, we had the first group fellowship and prayer in our condo then proceeded to one of the major transportation hubs in the city located at the center of a number of universities. We would serve to pass out the Polish recovery version NT Bible in the next few days. A portable Bible for Europe table was set up in the underpass with banners to attract people passing by. Br. Jaroslaw a Polish brother who graduated from full-time training in Moscow in mid 90's was with us the whole time. From time to time, young people in college and high school age would come up to our table to request a Bible. On the first day, Br. Paul met a young graduate student who came from India. He had sincere questions regarding what is repentance. Br. Paul even set up an appointment with him for further discussion on the same topic. Even though most of the people who approached us were from Catholic churches, they showed strong interest in studying the Bible.



Currently in Wroclaw, the total number of saints is around 25. Some are Ukrainians. Among those Ukrainian saints, a single young sister came to Poland by herself alone after the war that broke out in 2022. Beside, a family of 5 came before the war. As a matter of fact, it's been decades since Ukrainian people have migrated to Poland in search of a better life. As told, overall in Wroclaw, the number of Ukrainian refugees who settled here after 2022 is about 300,000. There is a great need to preach the gospel to these refugees. Up to this date, there is no lamp stand, or church established yet in Wroclaw. Considering where the saints live, the Wroclaw saints meet in two small groups on Lord's Day. In additions, on Wednesday night, at one Polish brother's house, they have a group meeting listening to the ministry messages. Some saints would join through Zoom.

On Oct 08, a group of saints from Australia and New Zealand passed through Wroclaw. They invited us all to a love feast to have fellowship with them. The Australian/New Zealand group rented a very large house near the airport enough to accommodate their group of 16. The fellowship was really sweet and encouraging.



On Oct. 09, after the afternoon Bible distribution, we joined the Wednesday night ministry meeting at Br. Zdzislaw's house. Br. Zdzislaw is a music professional who came to the Lord's recovery not long ago. The message we listened to was message 2 from 2024 summer training.

The message was streamed in Polish language while we listened to the English Channel through ear phones.



The high light of the trip is on Oct. 10, Thursday. We traveled to two small towns where major events took places in the history of the church reformation. We left 7 am in the morning in three cars for a total of 13 saints including one 10 year old small girl, two young sisters and 10 adults.

The first stop was Twardocice, a small village in south west Poland near Germany, Czech Republic border in the general area called Silesia. We visited a church building ruin where the Caspar Schwenckfeld followers gathered as their meeting hall before they migrated to the US in the 1740's. Never had I known before that Schwenckfeld was a great reformer in Church history and highly regarded by Br. W. Lee in his 2nd Corinthian life study message 19. Br. Lee's word is as following.

Justification unto life

The matter of living Christ for the church is something that has been lost and that needs to be recovered. At the time of the Reformation, Martin Luther recovered justification by faith. By God's grace, Luther was willing to risk his life for the recovery of justification by faith. Justification by faith in an objective way can be compared to the skin of a chicken; it is not the meat. According to Romans and Galatians, justification by faith must have a result. These books reveal that justification by faith is unto life. This means that justification is with a view to life. It should not stand by itself; rather, it must result in life.

Caspar Schwenckfeld saw that justification must result in life. He may be regarded as one who touched not only the "skin" of the revelation in the Bible, but also began to see the "meat" under the skin. One day I was very surprised to learn that Schwenckfeld used some of the expressions we use today to speak of life. He even spoke of the life-giving Spirit. My point in referring to Luther and Schwenckfeld is to say that the Lord wants to recover not only the skin, that is, certain fundamental doctrines; He also wants to recover the meat under the skin of the Word.



The 2nd stop was Herrnhut where Zinzendorf and the Moravian brother's church started here in the 1720's.



The trip ended with a dinner at a Polish restaurant 40 minutes away from Herrnhut where we enjoyed wonderful Polish dishes at very reasonable price. It is in a small town called Zgorzelec.



Oct 11, Friday we continued our 3rd day of Bible distribution when Br. Paul met with his Indian gospel contact for the 2nd time for a time of Bible study. In the evening, we invited the local saints to our condo for a love feast of Pizza, grilled chicken, and Miso soup. Through the time of fellowship, we came to know each other more intimately like how each one came to the Lord's recovery and the burden of gaining a golden lampstand in the city of Wroclaw.

Oct. 12, Saturday, Br. Paul and his wife left for Berlin by train and then on their way back to Boston. My wife and I took time to explore the city on foot.

Oct. 13 Lord's Day, the meeting was at Br. Jaroslaw's house. Br. Jaro recently came back to Poland after spending 20 years in London. He was burdened with the Lord's move in Poland and moved back to Wroclaw to coordinate with Br. Staszek. Both of them attended the full-time training in Moscow in the mid 90's. For lunch, Sr. Lisa and Daniela prepared Japanese Sushi for everyone. It is a great surprise to know that Sushi is quite popular in Poland among the younger generation.

Monday, Oct. 14, we took the rail train to Berlin. The train ride was 4 hours to Berlin then another 40 minutes of train ride to the Berlin airport. After an overnight stay at the airport hotel, we flew back to LAX the following day to conclude the two-week trip to Poland.