

EUROPEAN METHODIST FESTIVAL

June 2007

1st – 5th August 2007

Venue: The Economic University, Horsky Park, Bratislava

Welcome to the European Methodist Festival and its theme of “Let’s Celebrate”. Here is some further information about the Festival. The Planning Group is working extremely hard to enable the Festival to be hospitable, inspirational and well organised! We want you to come and engage with people from a wide range of cultures, languages and expressions of Christian faith all under the Methodist family.



1. Numbers Attending

We are now expecting 900 – 1000 people at the Festival from 25 countries so the “full” sign has gone up! As you can imagine, this is both an exciting and daunting challenge. Maybe it will be reminiscent of the experience of Pentecost when “everyone heard in their own language”. We must ensure language is not a barrier to communication! The official languages of the Festival are English, German and Slovakian and translation from the stage will be in these languages. However, simultaneous translation will be available in up to six languages with language groups bringing their own translators and the Festival organisation providing the equipment.

Some of the items below you may have already discovered for yourself and so this will act as a reminder, but others matters will be new information and need to be carefully noted. They come in no particular order.

2. Arrivals

When you arrive at the airport or train station you should go to the Festival Welcome Desk. Here you will be given a travel ticket to get you to either your hotel or direct to the Festival site at the Economic University in Horsky Park. If you are staying in a **hotel** please check in there first before you come to the Festival. If you come to the University neither the organisers nor the university authorities can be responsible for your baggage and belongings. If you need an entry visa for Slovakia please let us know immediately so you can be sent a letter of invitation.

3. Registration

The Festival registration desk will be open from **2pm** on the **1st August 2007**. Here you will receive a packet of information. It will include:

- a. Security label / lanyard. *Please note that you are expected to wear this at all times. Without it you will not be allowed into any of the university buildings, or be able to receive meals. The campus is open to the general public but the buildings are closely monitored by security / caretaking staff.*
- b. Programme
- c. Maps
- d. Information about Bratislava

4. Medical facilities

There are modern medical facilities at the University, and a doctor will be available at certain standard times of the day but at other times by appointment. He speaks very good English and is offering his services to the Festival participants. If you live in a country that enables you to obtain the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC or in some countries still E111) please get one but be ready to pay for the doctor's services if requested to do so.

5. Ticks & mosquitoes

The festival is being held at the time of the year when mosquitoes and ticks are around so come prepared. See your doctor or local pharmacy should you need advice.

6. Currency

Slovak currency is the Slovak Koruna. There are approximately 34SKK to 1 Euro. You can gather from this that for holders of pounds and euros Slovakia is an economically cheap country to visit, though the centre of Bratislava is getting to be as expensive as other European capital cities.

7. Travel / buses / trains

There is plenty of public transport – buses, trolley buses and trams! It is not expensive to use but you will need to buy tickets prior to use and validate them when you are on board otherwise you risk getting fined. A Bratislava web site worth viewing is www.imhd.sk which gives a lot of details about public transport.

8. Meals

With the exception of the City Hostel, breakfast will be taken in your hotel, but all other refreshments and meals will be provided at the university. To receive these you will need to be wearing your identity lanyard.

9. Programme

Details of the programme will be placed on the Festival web site (www.methodist.eu). The Festival will open with the first evening celebration at **7.30pm on the 1st August**. This will take place in the large marquee (tent), as will all the evening celebrations.

For those who wish for a liturgical start, the day will begin with **Morning Prayer** (8.00-8.30am), followed by a lively music based **Wake Up & Praise** (8.45) and an **Introduction to the Day's Theme** (9.15 – 9.45am) – interviews, conversation, drama - all in the main marquee.

As this Festival celebrates the **300th anniversary of the birth of Charles Wesley**, music will play a key part of the programme. Each day there will be an **Open Stage** (2 – 3pm) for those of all ages who wish to offer their musical talents to the Festival. This will also include Tomas Boström (Sweden) leading “**Charles Wesley in New Clothes**”.

There will be bands from Portugal (Trev Allegre) and Poland, but much of the music will be led by an International House Band brought together by Tomas Boström (Sweden). The bandmaster is David Plüss (Switzerland) and other musicians, and with Kristine Markay (Italy & Ukraine), Helmuert Kandert (Switzerland / Germany), Piret Rips (Estonia), Irina Mitina (Russia), Tore Aas (Norway) and Tomas Boström. Some of the musicians will be leading music workshops and the development of a Gospel Choir.

Each day you will have a choice of **Bible studies (10 – 11.00am)**, which, unlike the workshops, do not have to be signed up for beforehand. Simply go to the one of your choice. Each Bible study leader will be addressing the theme for the day but using their own choice of biblical texts, and using different methodologies. The **Bible Studies** are as follows:

<u>Style</u>	<u>Leader</u>	<u>Language(s)</u>
▪ Listening:	Bishop Hans Vaxby	English
▪ Listening	Revd Viera Hroncova (1 st BS)	Slovakian
	Professor Pavel Prochazka (2 nd & 3 rd BS)	Slovakian
▪ Listening (Contemporary)	Revd Inderjit S Bhogal	English
▪ Listening (Contemporary)	Bishop Rosemarie Wenner	German
▪ Art Many!	Mrs Muriel Guntelach-Bolleter & Gabrielale Jaros	
▪ Discovering Together (all ages)	Mr Steve Pearce & Revd Jürgen Blum	English/German/Slovakian
▪ Youth	Mrs Eva Walker & Mr Vojto Sirkovsky	English/Slovakian
▪ Meditative Walk	Mrs Tove Odland & Mrs Katrine Meltzer	English/German/Slovakian

All the Bible studies are open for anyone to attend. Indeed we encourage people to experience different approaches to Bible study. If you need a language not in the right hand column you will need to find out in which Bible studies simultaneous translation will be available.

Each day there will be about **25 Workshops** on a wide range of themes – some discussion and some practical on themes. Some of the workshops will be held off the university site and transport will be provided to and from the venue (Suza Hotel).

Each participant will be a member of a **Wesley Group** – a small group of 12 –15 people that will give opportunities for sharing, telling of personal stories, reflections on the day’s theme and Bible study. There will be Wesley groups especially for children, and young people. The groups will be responsible for their own agendas. Each group will have a facilitator to help the group to function. When you register at the arrival you will be able to sign up for workshops and find out which Wesley Group you are in.

There will be a **Prayer Tent** – open for most of the day, and a **Market Place** at which pre-booked organisations will be able to advertise who they are, share their concerns and purposes.

There will be a **children's and youth programme** (see 10 below) but many of the main events will be for all ages, including the Sunday worship and all-age Bible study. More details will be placed on the web site.

The **Evening Celebrations** (Wed 7.30, thereafter 8.00pm) will follow the "Let's Celebrate" theme for the day

- Wednesday: Being Loved
(led by the United Methodist Church of Central & Southern Europe)
- Thursday: Being Young (European Methodist Youth Council)
- Friday: Being Foreign (European Commission on Mission)
- Saturday: Being Different (Mainly music led by Tomas Boström)
- Sunday: Being a Traveller (European Methodist Council)

Each evening celebration will conclude by 9.30pm. For those who want to continue celebrating there will be lively Late Night Extra and a quieter Late Night Café.

10. Children

There will be many children and young people at the Festival. Parents should be aware that health and safety standards on the site may be different from those they are used to and children should be well supervised. Children are welcome at the all-age Bible Study and the children's Wesley Group. Workshops indicate suitability for different ages and there will also be children's workshops. Check the web site for a full children's programme. Parents will receive a registration form for children's activities when they register.

11. Translation

As you can imagine this poses many challenges for the Festival! There will be almost as many languages spoken as there are countries being represented – maybe more. Fortunately many who are coming speak more than one language – a huge help. However, you should note the arrangements the Planning Group are making, and some suggestions by which we can help each other. We ask you to be aware of the following arrangements:

All large, plenary type sessions in the marquee will be in English, German and Slovakian. There will be available multi-channel equipment for up to six languages. Each language group that needs other than one of these three languages is encouraged to have in their group a translator who would service the group. In small groups (Wesley Groups, Workshops) whispered translation can be used if the group leader(s) cannot provide your language.

12. Smoking

Smoking is illegal in public areas in Slovakia, therefore anyone wishing to smoke will need to go off the university campus as the university is a public area.

We hope this is sufficient information to excite you and to give you confidence that everything is being done to enable this to be an enjoyable, memorable and challenging Festival. If there is anything not covered here that you need help with or further information about please get in touch either by E-mail or telephone.

Colin Ride & Armin Besserer

Festival Co-ordinators

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** For emergency use