

**WE DO KNOW ENGLISH: PHILADELPHIA'S CZECHOSLOVAK
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF JAN HUS, 1926-1967**

by

Joseph P. Budd

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fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Liberal Studies

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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF JAN HUS, 1926-1967**

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ABSTRACT

About 10,000 Slovak-speaking immigrants from Upper Hungary settled in the Philadelphia area between 1880 and 1920. They relied on hard work, thrift, and social networking rather than formal education to achieve social success. Ethnic Christian churches were established to enable them to worship and socialize in their native tongue, make sense of their lives in unfamiliar surroundings and forge an identity. Liturgies and practices were influenced by European events dating back to the Roman Empire. The Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus, the last Slovak language church organized in Philadelphia, was formed by a group of people who broke away from their Roman Catholic parish in 1926. Their church was small, yet survived for 42 years. The assimilation of the church's congregants into Philadelphia society is examined in this study.

Philadelphia's Slovak ethnic churches, in the early twentieth century, encouraged members to learn English, purchase homes and become U.S. citizens. As Slovak-Americans were assimilated into Philadelphia's social structure, a goal of the churches was to help members preserve the Slovak language and old world traditions. After World War II, second and third generation Slovak-Americans intermarried and moved to distant neighborhoods where they joined local non-ethnic churches. Many of the founding church members passed away; others moved with their children. The social relevance of Philadelphia's Slovak churches was no longer significant enough to

attract them to the city. Consequently, the ethnic churches were forced to consolidate or close due to declining membership. Ironically, the demise of the ethnic churches was a direct result of the success of the founding members.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Slovak immigrants in early twentieth century Philadelphia found themselves in a land with strange customs and an unfamiliar language. They formed churches, benevolent societies and social clubs to preserve their culture and make sense of their lives in alien surroundings. Their activities were strongly impacted by current events in the “Old Country” as well as political, religious and cultural history going back more than a millennium. Philadelphia Slovaks established Roman Catholic, Byzantine Catholic and Lutheran churches that were holding services in their own buildings by 1921. This study is about a church community formed later, in 1926, by Slovaks who broke away from their Roman Catholic parish. These settlers had been in Philadelphia for up to three decades and were committed to permanent United States residency. The new church community met and worshipped in several locations for 20 years before establishing themselves as a Presbyterian church and purchasing their own building. This study demonstrates the strong cultural bonds that formed and maintained this community, and helped its members succeed in their newly adopted country.

I attended a small Slovak church in Philadelphia with my grandmother about 30 times as a child from 1944 until 1961. I remember sitting in the hard, uncushioned church pews, listening to Slovak hymns sung with organ accompaniment and seeing tiny drinking glasses half filled with red wine at the “Celebration of the Lord’s Supper.” I

looked at the mural of the “shepherd and the lamb” on the front wall of the worship space and wondered how the artist painted the water pipes in front of it to match the scene. As a youngster, I had little interest in learning about the church that I attended only for special events, and I completely lost touch with it after moving from Philadelphia. About five years ago, however, my curiosity was piqued about this church when I started researching family history, but efforts to learn about it were unsuccessful. The people had passed away. Records appeared to be non-existent. Even the church’s name and address could not be found. The only recollection I had about the church’s identity was that the name of the Bohemian reformer *Jan Hus* was in the church’s name. I had given up hope of learning about this congregation.

The original thesis plan was to investigate the history of Philadelphia’s Slovak immigrant churches and analyze their life cycles from the time that they were founded in the late nineteenth century to the present. One of the repositories visited was the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies in Philadelphia. There I serendipitously discovered a clue to the mystery church. The “Inventory List” of the records of the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity noted that the records of the Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus were included. The day was spent examining the contents of eight boxes brought from distant storage, two at a time. However, nothing was found about the church. At my request, the desk clerk had the storage area searched and concluded that I had seen all the boxes for this title. When she was shown the inventory list describing records not found in the boxes, the warehouse clerk was asked to search again. He replied that the only other thing there was an old leather pouch that had been on top of the boxes! That pouch was

summoned and found to contain the 1926 to 1952 records of the congregation. I discovered a potential “mother-lode” of information, only twenty minutes before closing time at the end of a long day. Subsequent visits to the Balch Institute provided leads to other sources of information including The Presbyterian Historical Society in Philadelphia, The Philadelphia Archdiocese Research Center in Wynnewood, Pennsylvania, the Hagley Museum and Library in Wilmington, Delaware and Philadelphia’s City Hall. The study was refocused to examine the history and life cycle of the Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus and to learn how it functioned in the context of the larger Philadelphia Slovak community. More specifically, the objective was to discover what prompted this group of people to form their own congregation, to examine the difficulties they encountered, to learn what held this community together for more than 40 years, and identify the circumstances that led to dissolution of the congregation. Although the specific reason for the schism was not identified, the study revealed more than originally expected. The history of this small church chronicled the progress and assimilation of Slovak immigrants into Philadelphia Society between the conclusion of World War One and the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Background

The first attempt at a Slovak community in Philadelphia failed when a family of wireworkers set up business on Front Street near the Delaware River in 1840.¹ It was another four decades before numbers of Slovak settlers arrived in Philadelphia. Emily Greene Balch (1867-1961) studied and documented the difficult social, economic and political conditions affecting Slovaks living in Upper Hungary during the late

eighteenth century.² Slovaks migrated to many parts of the world to escape their hardships and to build a better life. Newspaper writer and amateur historian Konstantin Culen (1904-1964) was one of the first people to describe the life of Slovaks who settled in the United States.³ His writings provide an overall picture of the Slovak-American immigrant experience both on a personal level and within Slovak institutions.

Historian Marion Mark Stolarik provides a more comprehensive study of Slovak immigration up to the beginning of World War One from the perspective of the late twentieth century.⁴ Most Slovaks coming to the United States were attracted to jobs as laborers in large industries such as steel manufacturing and coal mining. Philadelphia, however, was a city of craftsmen and artisans with few industries to attract large numbers of unskilled laborers. Consequently, few Slovaks settled there. Those who did settle in Philadelphia were scattered through out the region, but tended to be concentrated around places of employment. Slovak immigration to Philadelphia was most significant between 1880 and World War I. Most Slovaks were Christians and they established national churches when their numbers became great enough to support them. Church histories are a major source of information about early Philadelphia Slovak settlers. However, churches were not the only institutions that brought Slovaks together. Fraternal groups, benevolent societies and athletic organizations were also cohesive forces.

Historian Robert Zecker describes how the Philadelphia region Slovak population was, in effect, a trans-local community, similar to the one that they left behind in their

Upper Hungary homeland. He expands this concept to show that the Slovak community ranged far from Philadelphia, in some cases more than several hundred miles.⁵ The Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus was on the fringe of Zecker's trans-local model. Few of his 52 informants (interviewed in 1996) were familiar with it. The church was formed by a determined group of people who established roots in Philadelphia, became United States Citizens, had families and were working to shape and control their future. Unlike the other Philadelphia Slovak churches that were founded prior to World War One, this church was formed after the armistice and after the formation of Czechoslovakia in 1918. These factors introduce unique national and religious identity issues that will be examined. The importance of this study is not theological but societal. It is about a group of people who migrated to a new permanent home with a range of personal needs. They clung to important aspects of their past lives while developing a new lifestyle for themselves and their children.

This thesis explores the activities and progress of this small congregation making their way through the twentieth century and how they were affected by events in their Slovak homeland, before and after their arrival in Philadelphia. The information will show that this Slovak immigrant community, like others in the United States, did not look to education as a path to upward mobility, but relied on hard work and personal resourcefulness. Ultimately, while seeming contradictory, it will be shown that the demise of this 42-year-old community resulted from the success of its members.

¹ *History of Slovaks in America*, 18-19

² *Our Slavic Fellow Citizens*, 85-119

³ *History of Slovaks in America*. Originally published in 1942 as two volumes in the Slovak language. Translated and published in English as one volume in 2007.

⁴ *Immigration and Urbanization: The Slovak Experience, 1870-1918*

⁵ *All Our Own Kind Here*

Chapter 2

CHRISTIANITY IN SLOVAK CULTURE

Culture and History of the Slovak People

Slovaks are one of many Slavic cultures in Central and Eastern Europe. Other Slavic groups are Russians, Bielorrussians, Poles, Ukrainians, Czechs, Serbs, Croats, Bulgarians, Macedonians and Slovenes. The territory of the present day Slovak Republic (Slovakia) has been home to Slovak people for over 1500 years. Today's Slovak Republic was officially established as a sovereign state on January 1, 1993. On that date, Czechoslovakia officially dissolved into the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic in what is familiarly called the "Velvet Divorce." About 86% of the five million people in the Slovak Republic are ethnically classified as Slovak. With the establishment of the Slovak Republic, Slovaks controlled their own country for the first time.¹

Philadelphia's Slovak immigrant church communities were formed at the beginning of the twentieth century. The churches were influenced by a long history of political and religious events in Europe, and the culture and traditions of the people in their ancestral homeland. Slovak political, cultural, and religious traditions interacted with the challenges they faced as settlers in Philadelphia in some very interesting ways. A review of some key events in Slovak history will help in understanding their religious life in Philadelphia.

Christianity in the Roman Empire

In 330 A.D., Emperor Constantine moved the capital of the Roman Empire to Byzantium and renamed the city Constantinople. In 395, the empire split into East and West Empires. Before the fifth century, there was a single Christian church. Each nationality expressed their Christianity in their own language, culture and even liturgy. Over time, cultural, geographic and religious differences gave rise to separate churches in the Eastern Roman Empire. Starting in the fifth century, many of the Byzantine churches drifted away from the authority of Rome and the church of the Western Roman Empire. Constantinople became the center for these Eastern Orthodox (Byzantine) Churches. By 1054, the split from the Roman church was complete.

The Western Roman Empire was attacked by a confederation of Germanic peoples during the third century. Their king, Clovis, invaded Roman Gaul (present day France) in 486 and created a kingdom extending from the Atlantic Coast and the Pyrenees Mountains eastward beyond the Rhine River. Clovis was the first great Germanic ruler to accept Christianity. The Kingdom of the Franks continued to expand and reached its peak under the reign of King Charlemagne (768-814). East of the Frankish kingdom was a region populated by Slavic tribes who paid tribute to the Franks. Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne Roman Emperor in 800 as a sign of the strong relationship between the church and the Frankish Empire. After Charlemagne's death, the kingdom started to break up, later forming the kingdoms of France, Italy and Germany.

Slovaks and Christianity

Slavic tribes moved and fought in the area now known as Slovakia for hundreds of years before a state known as the Great Moravian Empire was established. This was a vassal state, led by Mojmir of Morava (833-846), paying tribute to the Germanic Frankish Kingdom (Fig.1). A German Roman Catholic bishop baptized Mojmir. Mojmir used the Christian religion to unify his people after he observed the power that the Franks had under the Catholic Church hierarchy. Mojmir was succeeded by his nephew, Prince Rastislav (846-861). Great Moravia expanded eastward during Rastislav's reign towards a border with Bulgaria. In 855, the Germans invaded Great Moravia, attempting to overthrow Rastislav. A stalemate demonstrated the growing strength of Great Moravia, and resulted in a peace treaty in 859. Meanwhile, the Frankish Roman Catholic missionaries, whose religion and politics were entwined, continued to be active and successful in converting the Slavs in Great Moravia to Christianity. To thwart the German Franks' political influence in Great Moravia, Rastislav asked Pope Nicholas I, in 861, to create an "ecclesiastical province on Slav territory" that was independent of the Franks, and to supply teachers who could speak Slavic. The Holy See in Rome did not respond, most likely because such teachers were not available.

Rastislav then turned eastward to Emperor Michael III in Byzantium for teachers and a bishop. Two Greek brothers, who had learned the Thessaloniki Slavic dialect, arrived in 863 with disciples. The brothers, whose names were Constantine (later to be known as Cyril) and Methodius, developed an alphabet for the Slavic language using Greek symbols modified for Slavic sounds. This alphabet became known as the

Cyrillic alphabet (after Cyril) and with variations is still used by many of the Eastern and Southern Slavs including Russians, Ukrainians, Serbs, Macedonians, Bulgarians, and Bielorrussians. The brothers translated scripture and liturgy into the vernacular. When the Bible was translated into Slavic, it became the third oldest Bible translation in the world after Latin and Greek. Codification of the language also initiated Slavic literature.

The Frankish clergy practiced under Roman authority using the Latin Rite. They were unhappy with the Eastern clergy's presence and influence in its territory, and tried to suppress the work of the brothers. They had the brothers summoned to the Holy See. Despite Frankish opposition, Pope Hadrian in Rome blessed their work and approved the Slavic language liturgy that was based on the Greek Catholic (Byzantine) liturgy. The Pope saw that the work of the brothers served his interest in dampening the increasing power of the Frankish church. Tension between followers of the Latin (Roman) and Greek (Byzantine) Catholic liturgies became a theme in the region, continuing into current times, extending even to the United States.²

The Frankish clergy was persistent and increased their power in the region of the Slavs through ecclesiastical court proceedings. After Methodius died in 885, the Frankish clergy gradually displaced the Slavic liturgy with Latin. During this period, Magyars (Hungarians) migrated to south central Europe in increasing numbers from the east. The Magyars defeated the German Army in a battle near Bratislava in 907 bringing an end to the Moravian Empire. The land where the Slovaks lived was partitioned among Magyars, Poles and Czechs. The Germans defeated the Magyars

in another battle in 955 ending the Magyars' raids. The Germans formed the Holy Roman Empire in 962 under Otto I who was crowned Holy Roman Emperor. The Magyars made peace with the Germans and allowed the German clergy to spread Christianity in their territory which became known as Hungary. The leader of the Magyars in the year 1000 was Stephen I, a Roman Catholic. He petitioned Pope Sylvester II to crown him king of Hungary. The pope agreed and, after he was crowned, Stephen made Roman Catholicism the official religion of Hungary. The Magyars (Hungarians) extended their influence so that by 1031, the Slovaks were completely under the Magyars.³ Over the next 400 years, the Kingdom of Hungary granted large tracts of land to the Catholic Church, fought off the Mongols, and engaged politically with Austrians, Germans, Bohemians and others, while consolidating the kingdom.⁴ In 1273, Rudolph of Habsburg became the first Habsburg family member to rule the Empire. From then until 1806, when Napoleon abolished the Holy Roman Empire, most Holy Roman Emperors were Habsburgs. After that, the Habsburgs were emperors of Austria.

The Reformation

John Wycliffe (1320?-1384), a Philosophy Professor at Oxford, is considered the first great English reformer. Wycliffe noted the power conflicts that took place among Popes, Priests, Kings and Nobles, with no one taking the position of the common man. Wycliffe claimed the Bible as the authority over the church. He challenged the authority of the Pope, and disagreed with the central tenet of the Catholic Mass, the Transubstantiation of bread and wine to the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. The Catholic Church declared Wycliffe a heretic.

Jan Hus (John Huss), a Roman Catholic priest, was influenced by the writings of John Wycliffe. He was born in southwestern Bohemia about 1369, and received the Bachelor of Arts and Masters degrees from the University of Prague. Before Hus was ordained, in 1378, a confused papal election resulted in two men claiming to be pope. A third man claimed the title of pope in 1409. All three denounced each other, causing many people to question papal authority. Hus began preaching against the practices of the church hierarchy soon after his ordination in 1400 and sought reform, for example, against the practice of paying for indulgences. Later, Hus went as far as to call the papacy an “institution of Satan.” Hus attacked the Papacy, but, unlike Wycliffe, he did not attack the Mass. His disagreements with the pope led to his excommunication in 1412, condemnation, and execution in 1415.

Martin Luther, influenced by Hus, was more radical. Luther, also a Roman Catholic priest, posted his Ninety-Five Thesis on Wittenburg’s Castle church in 1517 and was excommunicated in 1521. Luther taught that Scripture alone was the source of all church doctrine. Luther’s followers spread his teachings eastward from Bohemia into regions where Slovaks lived. These regions changed hands many times over the centuries including occupation by the Ottoman Turks from 1526 to 1699. During the Reformation, Lutherans, Calvinists, Anabaptists and other religious groups gained followers in Hungary.

The ruling Habsburgs launched the Counter-Reformation in 1553, and by 1646 Catholics who practiced the Byzantine (Orthodox) Rite acknowledged the authority of

the Bishop of Rome. These Catholics, living primarily in eastern counties of Upper Hungary, used *Old Church Slavonic* in their liturgy. Jesuits became very active throughout the region and emphasized education. A university was established in Trnava in 1635 and interest in the arts was renewed. Secondary schools (gymnasias) were founded in Bratislava and other cities. By 1640, there were seventy gymnasias.⁵ We will see that the activities of Hus, Luther and their followers played a strong part in the lives of Slovaks as they settled in Philadelphia at the turn of the twentieth century.

The Nineteenth Century in Hungary

During the reign of the Holy Roman Empire (962-1806), the Slovak people were under Hungarian authority. Hungarian control of Slovaks continued during the nineteenth century under the Habsburg Empire.

Intellectuals in eastern and central Europe under the Habsburg Empire expressed interest in a more liberal and free society during the early nineteenth century. In 1848, Hungarian students in Budapest rallied and encouraged the populace to demand independence from Habsburg authority. The Habsburg monarchy in Vienna granted autonomy to Hungary but retained loose ties. The Hungarian parliament, operating under Austrian consent, proclaimed freedom of the press and abolished serfdom. Hungary's move for complete independence resulted in their army's defeat by the Austrian army in 1849 and a return to Habsburg rule.

France and Italy challenged and defeated Austria in 1859, diminishing Austria's power. Austria was defeated again by Prussia and Italy in 1866. This weakness allowed Hungarian leadership to force Austria to grant equal status to Hungary. The Austria-Hungary Empire (dual monarchy) was formed. The Austrian monarchy was divided into two states, Austria and Hungary, in the *Ausgleich* (Equalization) with Habsburgs as kings of Hungary. Each state independently controlled the people within their territories. Almost half of Hungary's population was non-Magyar. The Slovaks living in the region known as Upper Hungary made up 12% of the total population of Hungary. Slovaks, the largest Slavic minority in Hungary, and other national groups began to demand self-government under the new structure. The Slovaks asked for parliamentary representation, recognition of Slovak as their official language and teaching of the Slovak language in the schools. As a result, three Slovak High Schools were established. But the greatest achievement was the establishment of the *Matica Slovenska* (Slovak Mother), a society to influence research in Slovak culture.⁶

A law was passed protecting the rights of all inhabitants in Hungary, but it was ignored. No further democratic reforms were made. The Magyar goal, in fact, was a unified Hungarian nation with a uniform culture. This meant that Slovak and other cultures would eventually be wiped out within Hungary. The Magyarization process was so successful that by the end of the nineteenth century, the *Matica Slovenska* was dissolved, the three secondary schools closed, and the Slovak language replaced by Magyar in schools and daily life. By 1910, Slovaks had lost almost all representation in the government.⁷

Emigration from Upper Hungary

The Hungarian government invested little capital in Upper Hungary. This forced family providers to travel to other parts of Hungary, Europe and the world to earn “bread” for their families. This was not a new event for Slovaks. Trencin County wireworkers (Drotari) had been traveling throughout Hungary and beyond for many years to supplement family income.⁸ Other people migrated to perform seasonal farm work. The growing economic pressures of an increasing population living on limited farmable land forced travel in increasingly wider circles. Many Slovaks decided to settle in Germany and other industrialized parts of Western Europe in the hope of a better life. Others migrated to Central and South America. Growing labor demands of the United States and Canada, driven by their expanding economies, made North America particularly attractive. Between 1880 and World War I, about a half million Slovaks emigrated from Upper Hungary to the United States. Coalmines of Pennsylvania, Ohio and Illinois were major destinations. Steel mills, factories with mass production, oil refineries, leather tanning and textile industries provided other job opportunities. Europeans migrating to the United States between 1880 and World War One entered a country that quickly absorbed unskilled labor. Migration of Europeans to the United States diminished after World War One due to immigration restrictions.

Religion in Upper Hungary in the nineteenth century

The church was involved in all aspects of personal life from Baptism to burial in late nineteenth century Hungary. Roman Catholicism was the state religion and the state

paid clerical salaries and appointed church officials. The state also passed laws regarding church matters such as interdenominational marriage.⁹

The rural, agrarian society in Upper Hungary looked to God for successful crops and healthy animals. Religion was a blend of worship, tradition and folklore. Rituals and practices blended peasant mystical tradition with church practice. These traditions and practices varied among regions in the same way that ethnic identity varied due to different language dialects and clothing.

The religious affiliation of Slovaks living in the 16 counties of Upper Hungary in 1910, a period of high emigration, was as follows:¹⁰

Roman Catholic.....	70%
Greek Rite Catholic.....	7%
Lutheran... ..	13%
Calvinist	5%
Jews and “other”	5%

We will look, later, at how the Christian religious groups developed churches in Philadelphia and how the church-state relationship in Hungary influenced their behavior.

Upper Hungary after World War One

The territories of the Czech and Slovak ethnic groups were joined politically after World War One forming Czechoslovakia. The cultural and language similarities gave some comfort to Slovaks who had been neglected educationally and economically by Hungary. Slovaks looked forward to improving their culture and economy with the assistance of the more advanced Czechs. The arrangement seemed beneficial to the Slovaks at first. However, over time, the Czechs became more aggressive in trying to impose their language and culture on the Slovaks and this created new tensions. Some Slovaks in the United States took comfort in being able to identify Czechoslovakia as their homeland. Others favored formation of a separate Slovak State. These contrasting positions were a source of tension among Slovak-Americans at meetings and in the Slovak press.

In 1919, a large group of Czech Clergy broke away from the Roman Catholic Church and established the National Czechoslovak Catholic Church. The church was officially founded in 1920 in the Czech (western) region of Czechoslovakia.¹¹ Based in Prague, the church sought reform in the tradition of Jan Hus, held services in the native language (Czech), was autonomous from the pope in Rome, and chose bishops by the consent of the faithful through community councils. The priests were permitted to marry, and also to divorce and remarry. As we will see in Chapter 4, a priest ordained by the National Czechoslovak Catholic Church emigrated to the United States and became pastor of an independent Philadelphia Slovak church.

¹ Slovakia existed as a political entity for about six years after Germany absorbed the Czech occupied regions of Czechoslovakia (Bohemia and Moravia) on March 23, 1939. However, German control over Slovakia until the end of World War Two prevented true political independence.

² *A History of Slovakia*, 26-30

³ *A History of Slovakia*, 41-42

⁴ *A History of Slovakia*, 42-47

⁵ *A History of Slovakia*, 33-88

⁶ *A History of Slovakia*, 117-124

⁷ *Slovensko-Anglicky Tlmac*, 96-98

⁸ Drotari (Tinkers) used their wire crafting skills to extend the life of damaged pottery, and construct mousetraps and other functional and decorative wire objects.

⁹ *Catholic Encyclopedia*, “Hungary”

¹⁰ *The Immigrant Church and Community*, 3-6.

¹¹ Ludvik Nemec documents the establishment and history of a national Czechoslovak Church in *The Czechoslovak Heresy and Schism, The Emergence of a National Czechoslovak Church* in Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, Volume 65, Part 1, 1975. The church maintained a presence through the twentieth century, even under Communism. The church changed its name to the Czechoslovak Hussite Church (Československá Husitská Církev) in 1971. It claims 180,000 followers in today’s Czech Republic, but has only a small following in the Slovak Republic.

Ludvic Nemec, a native of Czechoslovakia, was ordained a Roman Catholic priest in Prague in 1940. In 1950 he arrived in the United States and served as pastor of a Pittsburgh church. He moved to Philadelphia in 1964, and practiced a weekend ministry at St. Agnes Church, served as professor of humanities at Rosemont College and visiting professor of church history at Chestnut Hill College. More details of Msgr. Nemec’s life and accomplishments can be found in his *Philadelphia Inquirer* obituary dated June 25, 1988.

Chapter 3

SLOVAKS IN PHILADELPHIA

Historian and Anthropologist Robert Zecker estimates that Philadelphia had about 2,000 Slovak-born residents in 1900, and 8,000 to 10,000 residents in 1930. Slovaks comprised only about 0.7 % of the population in a city of 1.5 million people.¹

At the turn of the twentieth century, Philadelphia employed a quarter million industrial workers in a diverse mixture of mills and manufacturing operations. There were about 700 companies manufacturing a broad spectrum of products in the textile industry alone, employing about 60,000 workers. Although there were a few large companies, Philadelphia was known more for its broad range of small and large firms functioning as an interdependent network of manufacturers, and because of this diversity, was an excellent “incubator” for new businesses. It had a high percentage of skilled workers.² Therefore Philadelphia was a destination for few Slovaks. Yet many of the first Slovaks settling in Philadelphia from the eastern counties did find employment at the Philadelphia Gas Works and the oil refinery at Point Breeze (Southwest Philadelphia), the steel mills and manufacturing sites in Nicetown (North Philadelphia), and at the Delaware River Port (Southwark), all within Philadelphia’s city limits. Later immigrants from the western counties found work in the tanneries and workshops in Northern Liberties, north of the “Old City” and in textile mills of Clifton Heights, just outside Philadelphia in Delaware County.³

“PHILADELPHIA: CORRUPT AND CONTENTED” read the July, 1903 headline in a McClure’s Magazine article written by “muckraker” Lincoln Steffens.⁴ This was the political environment facing Slovaks moving to Philadelphia at the turn of the twentieth century. But Slovaks faced bigger barriers than dealing with local politics in the New World. They spoke a foreign language and lived in dispersed communities near their jobs. They had no sense of national identity and identified themselves as residents of the nearest large town or village in the “old country” (stari kraj). They even had differences in language, customs and religion among themselves. Slovak dialects were distinctly different among the eastern, central and western counties of Upper Hungary. People from the eastern counties tended to be Byzantine Catholics, whereas those from the central and western counties tended to be Roman Catholics. Despite these differences, Slovaks established their own social groups and benevolent societies to develop a sense of community. Established churches were readily available to Slovak Christians, but worshipping and praying in churches of other ethnicities did not provide the community and comfort they sought. So they set out to organize and establish their own Slovak-speaking churches.

Eastern Byzantine Rite Catholics who emigrated from eastern counties met as early as 1886 in private Philadelphia homes, celebrating in services held by traveling priests. They formally founded the Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Parish in Southwest Philadelphia with 600 people in 1891 and dedicated a small brick church building at 1925-1929 Passyunk Avenue in 1895.⁵

Roman Catholic Slovaks had no difficulty finding places of worship. There were German, Polish, Irish and other ethnic parishes in all areas of the city, and Slovaks were welcome and did attend services there. However, the desire to sing, pray and hear sermons in their own mother tongue was intense. Meetings to organize a Slovak parish started in 1893, but it wasn't until 1903 that a parish was established with services held in a St. Alphonsis (German) Parish Church building at Fourth and Reed Streets. In 1906, the congregation purchased the Wharton Street Presbyterian Church of the City of Philadelphia at 9th and Wharton Sts. in South Philadelphia for \$28,000. The renovated building was dedicated in 1907 as St. John Nepomucene Parish.⁶ This church was more conveniently located for Slovaks who lived in Southwark and Point Breeze, south of Philadelphia's Market Street. Most of these Slovaks were from the eastern counties of Upper Hungary.

Slovaks living north of Market Street, primarily in Philadelphia's Northern Liberties Section, tended to be from the western and central counties of Upper Hungary. Intent on establishing their own church, they founded St. Agnes Parish in 1907. The cornerstone for the St. Agnes Parish building, at 3rd and Brown Sts., was laid in 1910.⁷

Slovak Lutherans were small in number and widely dispersed throughout the Philadelphia-Camden area. They organized the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity in Camden in 1900 and finally moved to the permanent church home at 721 North Fifth Street in Philadelphia's Northern Liberties Section in 1921.⁸

Summarizing, there were four major Philadelphia Slovak language Christian communities celebrating in their own buildings by 1921:

Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Parish

St. John Nepomucene Roman Catholic Parish

St. Agnes Roman Catholic Parish

The Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity

St. Agnes Roman Catholic Parish is the church that a group of congregants left to form an independent church in 1926. This church will be discussed in the next chapter.

¹ *'All Our Own Kind Here': The Creation of a Slovak-American Community in Philadelphia, 1890-1945*, 7-8

² *Workshop of the World*, ii-2 to ii-8

³ Tanning of kid leather for shoe uppers increased by a factor of 16 between 1890 and 1900 and continued to increase after that. Almost all goatskins were imported through the eastern seaboard trade centers of Philadelphia, Wilmington and Camden and tanneries to process the skins were constructed near these Delaware Valley ports. In 1910, these three cities tanned almost 80% of the kid leather in the U.S. according to *The American Leather Industry*, page 35. These tanneries, often called "Morocco shops," employed many Slovaks, as can be seen on pages of the 1910 U.S. census population schedule for Philadelphia.

⁴ *Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens*, 413

⁵ *Byzantine-Ruthenian Metropolitan Church of Pittsburgh DIRECTORY*, 192

⁶ *St. Agnes-St. John Nepomucene Diamond Jubilee Book*, pp. 10-11. This location was centrally located but convenient to few Slovak parishioners. The neighborhood is best known today as the home of the two most famous cheese-steak eateries in Philadelphia, and often featured by TV networks broadcasting sports from Philadelphia.

⁷ *St. Agnes-St. John Nepomucene Diamond Jubilee Book*, pp. 11-12. Declining attendance and rising costs led to the consolidation of the two parishes in 1980. The church at 3rd and Brown became known as St. Agnes-St. John Nepomucene Slovak Roman Catholic Church.

⁸ *Historical Sketch of the Congregation* prepared for the 85th anniversary of "Holy Trinity" in 1985.

Chapter 4

THE CZECHOSLOVAK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF JAN HUS

Father Francis Cyril Vlossak was a dynamic builder who founded 14 Roman Catholic Parishes for Slovak immigrants in the United States, primarily in the coal mining regions of eastern Pennsylvania. Born in Bobrov, Orava County, Hungary, he spoke Slovak, English, German, Hungarian, and Polish.¹ He was ordained a Roman Catholic priest at the Catholic University of Louvain in June of 1891², emigrated to the United States in October of the same year³ and became a U.S. citizen in 1899.⁴ Fr. Vlossak founded St. Agnes Slovak Roman Catholic Church in Philadelphia in 1907. After St. Agnes Church was built in 1911, he was reassigned to a parish in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.⁵

The next 11 years were tumultuous for the young congregation. Five priests served as pastor of St. Agnes. One reason for the high turnover was the power of the lay trustees. In 1915 they petitioned the Archbishop and had a pastor removed because of “overcharging for baptisms.”⁶ In 1922, the last of the five priests left St. Agnes after a “confrontation that ended in the calling of constables.”⁷ The power of lay trustees and their contentiousness will be discussed in Chapter 5.

The power of lay trustees greatly diminished when Fr. York became pastor in 1922, mainly because of his strong personality and leadership.⁸ Father John Lawrence York,

born in Nesquehoning, Pennsylvania in 1892, was the second of 11 children. His father was born in Zemplin County, Upper Hungary. Father York claimed that the patronymic “York”, which appears to be Scottish, was the result of a customs official misinterpreting his father’s pronunciation of Jurak (pronounced Yu-rak), when entering the United States. Fr. York spoke Slovak and English fluently. At least two of his brothers went to work in his father’s butcher shop, but John York worked his way through Catholic grade School to St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Overbrook, Pennsylvania where he was ordained in 1918.⁹ After ordination, he was rector at Pennsylvania churches in Bethlehem, Treskow and Mahanoy City before moving to St. Agnes in December of 1922 where he served for the remainder of his years.

Fr. York unified St. Agnes parish immediately when he became pastor. He got the finances and facilities in order, and aggressively planned a parish school that became a reality in 1926. St. Agnes became the only Philadelphia Slovak church to build a school. The Sisters of Saint Cyril and Methodius from Danville, Pa taught the students for all 43 years of school operation.¹⁰ The sisters lived in a convent on the third floor of the school. Classes were held in six rooms on the second floor and the ground floor had an auditorium. Enrolling children in a Catholic school typically means registering and financially supporting the school’s church. Parishioners drawn away from St. Agnes to other schools would be lost to the parish and so would their financial support. Building a school at St. Agnes meant keeping parishioners. Parish schools, although costly, have ancillary benefits. They generate community spirit and camaraderie through parent associations, fundraisers and student activities. St. Agnes School graduated 746 students between 1926 and 1969.¹¹

Fr. York continued to be a unifying force in the parish throughout his 41-year tenure. He was a strong leader, good administrator and energetic worker.¹² But he also had a reputation for being “outspoken, abrupt, and over demanding to the point of causing dissention among parishioners.”¹³ Roman Catholic Church members and lay trustees in the U.S. were typically respectful of their religious leaders, but frequently took issue with them on non-religious matters.¹⁴ When differences with the church hierarchy could not be resolved, members sometimes broke away and formed independent churches.

A disagreement, details of which are obscure, between Father York and some parishioners caused a large group to leave St. Agnes to form their own independent Slovak church community. The new church was officially founded on February 28, 1926.¹⁵ The dissidents rented Slovak Hall, only 4 blocks from St. Agnes Church, for their first church service during April of 1926.¹⁶ Slovak Hall was a logical place to rent for the service. The Slovak Hall Association was incorporated on November 18, 1915 as an organization to serve the entire Philadelphia area Slovak community and was used, owned and operated by members of the Greek Catholic, Roman Catholic and Lutheran churches. When the “breakaway” community first used Slovak Hall for its services, Fr. York encouraged St. Agnes parishioners to boycott the Hall. But the boycott was short-lived as Slovak community bonds transcended religious differences.¹⁷

Meeting records were not found for the early years of the church. However, the four ledger books at the Balch Institute provide some insight into operations, activities and congregation members during the early years. A formal church name is not documented, but the first page is titled “M. Jan Hus” (Master Jan Hus). The ledgers are organized as follows:

1. Income and Expenses (April 1926 to January 1939)
2. Income and Expenses (April 1, 1926 to December 31 1949)
(Restated, Corrected and Summarized – closed on December 31, 1945, reopened on January 1, 1946)
3. Sunday Collections (January 1938 to December 1949)
4. Building Book (Income and Expenses for the Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus - October 6, 1945 to December 1952)

The four ledgers overlap in time and function and were examined and interpreted as a set. Although the monetary entries are lumped into broad categories, there are enough details to provide insight into operations and activities during the early years of this congregation.

Rev. Ladislav Ballay, a Slovak-speaking priest from Czechoslovakia, presided at the first service of the new M. Jan Hus church. Born about 1886, he immigrated to Glassport, Pennsylvania, near Pittsburgh, in 1920.¹⁸ National Catholic Czechoslovak Church Bishop Gorazd Pavlik visited the U.S. in 1922 to expand his church into the U.S. Only Rev. Ballay and one other priest were persuaded to join him. During that visit, Bishop Pavlik installed Father Ballay as pastor of the independent Czechoslovak

Church in Palmerton, Pa.¹⁹ Father Ballay may have been summoned to Philadelphia to preside at that first service by relatives, noting that some of the original church members had the same family name. The 46 families who made donations to the monthly collection that day are listed in Figure 5. With a conservative assumption that the average family attending was composed of four people, it is likely that the first service had at least 180 people in attendance.

Slovak Hall rental for the first service in 1926 was \$15.00. The first baptism was recorded that year,²⁰ and in 1927 and 1928 there were “Plat. Knazovy” (payments to clergy) for Reverends Lehner and Hudaček.²¹ Then in May of 1929 a \$23.00 entry for “cestovne” (travel) appears for Reverend Typlt, probably for a round-trip from Johnstown, New York where he lived at the time. This is the first time his name appears in the records. This is consistent with Reverend Typlt’s comment in the Silver Anniversary booklet where he notes that he first preached before this congregation in April of 1929.²² Reverend Typlt later became Pastor of this congregation. From 1931 to 1934, there were entries “Epistkapalnemu Kostalu na uhlji” (To Church for coal). This may have been the Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church where services were held.²³ In December of 1934, Christmas presents were made to Reverend Typlt (\$5.00), Pani (Mrs.) Typlt (\$5.00) and Organistka (organist) Rose Chobot (\$10.00).²⁴ Entries in 1936 included “Polskemu Kostalu rendu” (To Polish Church for rent).

Some senior St. Agnes parishioners reported in oral histories that they believed this breakaway church was associated with the Polish National Church. They may have

arrived at this mistaken belief because services were held in a Polish National Church for a while.²⁵ The only Polish National Church Parish that existed at that time was St. Valentine's at Melrose and Margaret Streets. St. Valentine's new church building was completed during the summer of 1927.²⁶

Reverend Rudolph Frank Typlt became pastor of the congregation in 1934. Born in Hradec Karlove, Bohemia in 1887, he grew up and attended the Roman Catholic seminary there, and was ordained as a Roman Catholic Priest in 1910. He was reordained in 1925 in the Independent Czechoslovak Church and served as a pastor in Prague, Bohemia (Czechoslovakia) until 1929 when he immigrated to the United States at the age of 42.²⁷ Reverend Typlt declared his occupation in the ship's manifest as "minister," speaking and writing "German and Slovak." He noted that he was married and his destination was the "Head Council of Czechoslovak Church of Sts. Cyril and Methodius" in Johnstown, Fulton County, New York.²⁸ His wife did not come to the U.S. with him. A year later, he was divorced from his wife in Czechoslovakia and remarried. His new wife immigrated to the U.S. with her mother in 1912 at the age of 2 and claimed "Bohemian"(Czech) ethnicity on the ship's manifest. She lived with her parents in Trenton, New Jersey in 1930.²⁹ Reverend Typlt served as pastor of the "Independent Czechoslovak Church" in Johnstown, New York from 1930-1933, and moved to Trenton, New Jersey about 1934.³⁰

The operations of the M. Jan Hus church community are defined in more detail following reorganization as a Presbyterian Church in 1944. However, the reasons for affiliating with the Presbyterian Church are not clear. Perhaps the Slovak immigrants

from Upper Hungary had a degree of comfort with the Presbyterian expression remembering that Calvinists were active in their motherland. Also, the Presbytery of Philadelphia may have provided the group with the most reasonable opportunity for establishing and supporting an independent church with which they were comfortable. The fact that Reverend Typlt was ordained in the Czechoslovak National Church in Czechoslovakia, and attempts to expand this church to the United States were not successful, may have given him the opportunity to, once again, change confessionals.

In 1945, the congregation located two attached buildings at 2328-30 Germantown Avenue in Philadelphia for their church and purchased them for \$11,000.³¹ The previous owners, undertakers, had used the first floor of one building as a funeral parlor and the second floor as a social hall. The attached building was an income apartment property.³² The first service of the Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus was held on June 10, 1945. A mimeographed two-page “Dedication Service” program in the Balch Institute files notes that “Guest Ministers” would address the congregation but they are not identified. The program was probably written by the pastor, who was ordained in the Hussite rooted National Czechoslovak Catholic Church. The references to Hussite history are noted parenthetically in the program. The opening hymn was “Ye who are Warriors of the Lord” (Hussite Battle Hymn – 1415 A.D.). “The Lord’s Prayer” is identified as (Hussite – 1420 A.D.).³³

The reorganized congregation made several record-keeping changes at this time. The “Income and Expense Book” was “Closed” and “Reopened” on January 1, 1946. The quality and detail of the entries were significantly upgraded because the Presbytery of

Philadelphia required annual Session and Congregation meetings to be held and documented in English. These were then sent to the Presbytery office for review and approval. A Finance Secretary was appointed and the books were audited annually.³⁴

Christian churches traditionally combine worship of God with fellowship of like believers for mutual support. This congregation was no exception. Before Sunday services, the congregation met in the assembly room to share personal news, in Slovak, for about an hour. After the service, more discussion was held over coffee and pastry in the basement kitchen-dining hall. Several times a year there were special events such as weddings and fund-raisers. These events were accompanied with generous meals served in the kitchen-dining hall. The ladies prepared traditional Slovak foods such as klobasa (garlic-spiced sausage), kapusta (sauerkraut), holubky (cabbage stuffed with pork, rice and onions), and pirohy (dumplings stuffed with potatoes or cheese). Fund-raisers ended with most people moving to the second floor Social Room for a serious session of Bingo.

During Rev. Typlt's pastorship, church services were entirely in Slovak from the opening hymn, the doxological "Chvaltez Boha laskaveho" (Praise God from whom all blessings flow), to the closing hymn, "Svaty, svaty, svaty" (Holy, holy, holy).³⁵ During August 1947, no services were held for three weeks when Rev. Typlt was on vacation, according to session minutes, because "there are not ministers speaking Slovak language in Phila."

In 1947, the “Red Men’s Lodge” (The Advanced Order of Red Men) made an offer to purchase the building attached to the church at 2330 Germantown Avenue for \$10,000. Several lodges of this fraternal group had been renting part of the building for their meetings. The 43 members attending the congregational meeting voted to accept the offer. Settlement was made in February of 1948.³⁶ This sale recouped \$10,000 of the \$11,000 spent for both buildings only 28 months earlier. The church did well financially during its early years.

However there was discord within the church and Reverend Typlt found it necessary to remind the “Session” that “continuous absences from the meetings and church worship is a regrettable negligence and must be corrected.” By May of 1948 the pastor asked the congregation to accept his resignation. An outside moderator held a meeting to discuss the situation. Many members were reluctant to give a public opinion, so a secret ballot was held on whether to accept the pastor’s resignation. Members voted 16-9 against accepting the resignation and asked the pastor to reconsider. The pastor noted that there were members who were working against him and that “these circumstances would be a great impediment in pastor’s work and detrimental to the church.” The pastor noted the group of people voting was small and he requested another vote the following week. The revote was 21-6 against acceptance. The pastor agreed to revoke his resignation under conditions that his salary was increased to a “reasonable level immediately,” that the “Board of Trustees and the Session will take general instructions in a course given to them by the Presbytery,” “all drinking on the church property would be strictly prohibited,” and the “Pledge System” would be adopted by the church for financial support. Although

the immediate crisis was over, attendance at Session Meetings continued to be problematic and the pastor continued to press for attendance by Session members.³⁷

In 1950 the church mortgage was satisfied and a Sunday school was established to teach the children of several new church members. Everything seemed to be operating smoothly as the congregation was preparing to celebrate their Silver Anniversary as a worship community. Then Reverend Typlt announced that he received a call in his city of residency, Trenton, for a pastorate. The membership realized that there was no possibility of another Slovak-speaking pastor and tried to change the time of their Sunday worship schedule so that he could serve both churches, but this approach was not successful. At this time, the first of five non-Slovak speaking pastors began to serve the community. Preparation for the Silver Anniversary celebration scheduled for April 7, 1951 was carried out without the newly appointed moderator, note the minutes, "because of the difficulty of translating" and the moderator "does not speak our language in which our meetings are conducted." The Silver Anniversary Service and Banquet was actually held on March 31, 1951 according to a small booklet prepared for the occasion. The speaker was Frank Kral of the University of Pennsylvania, but the topic was not specified.³⁸ Reverend Typlt announced his resignation on April 15, 1951 and the congregation unanimously accepted it.

By January of 1953 the congregation had abandoned the idea of finding a Slovak-speaking minister. The session minutes state, "After all, we do know English and can understand an English minister."³⁹ It is interesting to note that Session and Congregational minutes were written legibly in good English from the very beginning

as a Presbyterian Church in 1946, a requirement, because minutes were periodically submitted to the Philadelphia Office of the General Assembly for review. At this time, the congregation had been functioning in an English-speaking world for decades. A pastor with the ability to preach and converse in Slovak was more a desire than a need. This is explored in more detail in Chapter 5. The congregation continued to function well with English speaking pastors.

The congregation celebrated their 10th anniversary as a Presbyterian Church on June 10, 1954. Weddings were held and new members continued to be admitted through Baptism and Confirmation. However, the membership increase was not enough to make up for lost members. Members were lost through death, illness, and moving away to live with younger family members. Over time, declining attendance at church services and session meetings, declining membership, and the concomitant decline in collection revenue could not be overcome.

During 1956, five people left the congregation and one person died, reducing the membership to 40 people at year-end. Income for the year was \$1,879 vs. expenses of \$2,414 with a treasury balance at year-end of only \$2,232. To compensate, costs were reduced by holding services only twice a month, and even less frequently through the summer. By 1964, average weekly attendance declined to 15 people and the balance in the treasury dropped below \$2,000. During 1965, the membership declined to 26 people. Finally, in 1967, the members discussed dissolution of the church and joining the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity on North 5th Street in

Philadelphia.⁴⁰ This marked the end of a church community that started 41 years earlier.

The Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity grew from 28 families in 1914 to 43 families in 1922 when a core group of 20 families lived close by in the Northern Liberties. From 1922 to 1944, membership grew from 43 families to 59 families, but the number of families living close-by dropped from 20 to 8 primarily due to movement to Philadelphia's growing Northeast area and suburbs.⁴¹ Church membership declined after World War II for the same reasons as the Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus.

On the Festival of Pentecost, (Mother's Day, May 14, 1967) the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity held a "very impressive service" during which 25 members of the Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus were received into membership "by affirmation of faith."⁴² Most of these new members, like those of Holy Trinity were senior in years and widely dispersed, bolstering Holy Trinity's loss in membership only temporarily. The Holy Trinity congregation voted to dissolve their church on March 20, 1988.

Afterword

The Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus church building, assessed at \$3,000, was sold to The Trustees of the Presbytery of Philadelphia on July 24, 1968 for \$1.00. Signing for the church were Stephen Sakala (President), and Sophie L. Surovcik (Secretary). The Presbytery of Philadelphia resold the building for \$1.00 to

Hartranft Community Corp. on September 19, 1972.⁴³ The site on which the church stood is now vacant.

- ¹ *Assumption BVM Church Centennial History (1892-1992)*, Mahanoy City, PA, 9
- ² *Catholicity in Philadelphia: from the earliest missionaries down to the present time*, 529
- ³ Manifest of S.S. *Victoria Luise* arriving in New York, New York on 3 October 1911 lists him as Francis C. Vlosak. He was later known as “Vlossak.”
- ⁴ Passport issued to Francis C. Vlossak on 6 June 1923.
- ⁵ *St. Agnes-St. John Diamond Jubilee Book*, 12
- ⁶ *St. Agnes-St. John Diamond Jubilee Book*, 12
- ⁷ *All Our Own Kind Here*, 263
- ⁸ *St. Agnes-St. John Diamond Jubilee Book*, 12
- ⁹ U.S. Federal Census, 1910 and 1920, Mauch Chunk, Carbon Co., Pa.
- ¹⁰ *A History of St. Agnes School Building-1998*
- ¹¹ *St. Agnes-St. John Parish 91st Anniversary Open House Booklet*
- ¹² *Assumption BVM Church Centennial History (1892-1992)*, 17
- ¹³ *History of St. Agnes Parish*, Stanley M. Gana, May 20, 1969
- ¹⁴ Marion Mark Stolarik discusses “parish priest-lay trustee” disagreements in U.S. Roman Catholic Churches in *Immigration and Urbanization*, pp. 85-94. June Granatir Alexander describes dissention between Pittsburgh’s Roman Catholic bishops and lay trustees in *The Immigrant Church and Community*, pp 57-61. Howard Finn Stein documents a 300 family breakaway group in McKeesport, Pennsylvania in 1922 to found a National Independent Slovak Catholic Church in *An Ethno-historic study of Slovak-American Identity*, 207-219.
- ¹⁵ *The Twenty-fifth Anniversary of Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus* booklet, 1951
- ¹⁶ Slovak Hall, built in 1921, was located at 510-512 Fairmount Avenue.

¹⁷ *All Our Own Kind Here*, p. 304, note 185, Oral History Review 29/1, 4, Journal of Social History 38.2, 39

¹⁸ New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1957. Year: 1920, Microfilm serial: T715; Microfilm roll: T715_2890; Line 7. Ancestry.com (Database on-line)

¹⁹ *Silver Anniversary of the Founding of Palmerton, Pa 1898-1923*, 51-52

²⁰ The books noted the baptism of Karol Ballaj in this case. Throughout the life of the congregation, church minutes made reference to baptisms, first communions, weddings and funerals, but few names were recorded. The author was not successful in locating the church register for these special events.

²¹ No information was found on these two men.

²² *The Twenty-fifth Anniversary of Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus* booklet, 1951 housed at the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies in Philadelphia.

²³ *All Our Own Kind Here*, p. 304, note 185, Oral History Review 29/1, p. 4, Journal of Social History 38.2, 39

²⁴ The larger Christmas present for the organist is probably because she was not paid a salary like the presider. The author was surprised to see that his mother was the organist. He had not even known she was a member.

²⁵ *All Our Own Kind Here*, p. 304, note 185, Oral History Review 29/1, p. 4, Journal of Social History 38.2, 39

²⁶ *History of St. Valentine's Parish*,
<http://maxpages.com/stvalentine/History_of_our_parish>

²⁷ "Minister Biographical Questionnaire" on file at the Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The Independent Czechoslovak Church listed is assumed to be the National Czechoslovak Catholic Church in Prague.

²⁸ New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1957. Year: 1929, Microfilm serial: T715; Microfilm roll: T715_4449; Line 2, New York Passenger Lists, 1820-1957. Ancestry.com (Database on-line).

²⁹ _____ ibid. Year: 1912, Microfilm serial: T715; Microfilm roll: T715_1859; Line 12, Stephanie Skunda.

³⁰ “Minister Biographical Questionnaire” on file at the Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

³¹ Deed no. 163146 on file in Philadelphia City Hall, Room 154. John H. Wetzel and Walter F. Wetzel to *Czechoslovak Church of Jan Hus* dated October 6, 1945 and recorded October 25, 1945.

³² *Polk’s (Boyd’s) Philadelphia City Directory, 1929.*

³³ “*Program of the Dedication Service of the Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus*”

³⁴ 1947-1949, Joseph Kalocay-Finance secretary, Sophie Surovcik, Stephen Sakala, and George Zuber-Auditors, Paul Labuda-Moderator of Trustees, Andrea Hribek, Stephen Labuda, Sophie Surovcik-Elders.

³⁵ Comments about church activities and liturgy are the author’s recollections based on personal attendance at about 25 church services between 1944 and 1961.

³⁶ *Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus. Minutes of the Session and Congregation.* 2 November 1947 and 11 January 1948.

³⁷ *Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus. Minutes of the Session and Congregation.* 11 January 1948 to 9 May 1948

³⁸ *The Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus* booklet, 1951. Frank Kral (1892-1980) occupied a chair of veterinary dermatology at the University of Pennsylvania and is credited with laying the basis for modern veterinary dermatology. Born in Albrectice (eastern Czech Republic), he was rector of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at Brno (Czech Republic) before coming to the United States. His 1953 textbook *Veterinary Dermatology* was the first English language text published in this field of veterinary medicine.

³⁹ *Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus. Minutes of the Session and Congregation.* 15 January 1950 to 11 January 1953

⁴⁰ *Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus. Minutes of the Session and Congregation.* 23 January 1953 to 29 January 1967

⁴¹ “*All Our Own Kind Here*”: *The Creation of a Slovak-American Community in Philadelphia, 1890-1945*, using data compiled on pages 505-512

⁴² *Historical Sketch of the Congregation prepared for the 85th anniversary celebration of the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity*, November 10, 1985. Mother's Day Program for May 14, 1967 in possession of the author.

⁴³ Microfilm information on file in Philadelphia City Hall, Room 154.

Chapter 5

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

The story of Slovak immigrants in Philadelphia is a microcosm of Slovak immigrants in America. But the wide distribution and small number of Slovaks in Philadelphia made their imprint less noticeable than where they were more numerous and concentrated such as in Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Bethlehem and coal mining regions of Pennsylvania and Ohio. Even though Slovaks lived in scattered groups throughout the Philadelphia area, they organized benevolent societies, clubs and churches to create their social network. Ethnographer Josef Barton noted “A Philadelphia layman described how Slovaks had organized eleven societies in the city during 1898 and only a political club was lacking.”¹

Establishment of New Churches

New churches are frequently organized to fill a void. Newcomers to an area may find existing churches too distant to attend or too different from their past experience. Eastern Rite Catholic Slovaks moving to Philadelphia had few options, so they were the first to organize their own church in 1891. Slovak Roman Catholics could join Latin Rite churches across the city, but formed their own parishes because of a strong desire to worship with people who shared their native language. Lutheran Slovaks could also attend many established churches, but chose to organize their own.

A commitment of funds is required to establish a new church. In the Kingdom of Hungary, where Roman Catholicism was the state religion, the laity was not required to provide strong financial support for the church. New arrivals to the United States found it difficult to accept a new commitment to pay for church facilities, and pastor's salaries. There were many "birds of passage," people who came to the United States to earn money and return home. This number was significant. Estimates for the period of 1880-1930 indicate that from 20 to 36.5 per cent of Slovaks immigrating into the United States returned home.² People who had not yet decided to become permanent residents were also reluctant to provide support in favor of sending money back home.³ Many people just had difficulty providing consistent support because their employment was sporadic.⁴ When a new Roman Catholic Church was established, the lay trustees took their roles very seriously because it was their money that built the church. They exerted their power as previously noted during the early years at St. Agnes. When a strong pastor who was highly admired and respected took charge, the lay trustees would relinquish their power. This happened when Fr. York became pastor at St. Agnes in Philadelphia and when Fr. Vlossak served as pastor at St. Cyril & Methodius Church in Bethlehem.

Churches were also established as a result of a schism. Causes ranged from differences in theology to personal reasons. Personal differences and exercise of power were the chief causes of schisms in the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. One notorious case involving Slovaks occurred in 1922 at St. Mary's Slovak Catholic Church in Passaic, New Jersey when Father Emery Jecusko arrived from Czechoslovakia to serve as vicar. He quickly won the respect and

admiration of the parishioners. He also uncovered “disregularities” in the doings of the pastor. When the bishop of Newark tried to deport Fr. Jecusko back to Czechoslovakia “for being too honest” the parishioners organized a new church called The Holy Name Slovak Catholic Church of Passaic with Rev. Jecusko as their pastor.⁵ This church celebrated its 75th anniversary in 1997.⁶

Philadelphia’s Holy Ghost Greek Catholic Church had a major schism in 1913. Robert Zecker describes the situation as “having more to do with personal grudges than religion.” Eventually a large group of people left to establish Holy Virgin Russian Orthodox Church in Southwest Philadelphia. Friction between the groups elicited epithets of “Moskai” towards Russian Catholics and “Rusnak” towards Greek Catholics. Grudges were held for decades.⁷

The schism at St. Agnes in 1926 that ultimately led to the formation of the Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus in 1944 apparently did not harbor long held animosity. Once Fr. York’s call for boycotting of Slovak Hall was disregarded, both factions seemed to go their separate ways although some parishioners referred to the dissidents as “nebalezny” (nonbelongers).⁸

Pastoral Tenure and Laity Dedication

Pastors of Philadelphia’s Slovak-American churches had remarkable tenure despite the high turnover experienced in early years. Most notable was Rev. Joseph A. Kavalek who served as pastor of Holy Trinity Slovak Lutheran Church for 50 years (1931-1981). St. John Nepomecene had only 3 pastors from 1929 to 1978, with the

shortest tenure at 15 years. And Fr. York served as pastor of St. Agnes for 41 years (1922-1963). Rev. Typlt served as pastor of the Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus for 7 years (1944-1951). However, considering his less formal relationship with the same church community beginning in 1929, his “pastorate” was 22 years.

Slovak church members were loyal to their churches, and long commutes to attend services were not atypical.⁹ One family group living in Paulsboro, New Jersey attended Holy Spirit Slovak Lutheran Church in Philadelphia for many years (30 mi. round trip) even though services were held regularly in Camden (22 mi. round trip). The bridges over the Delaware River between New Jersey and Pennsylvania had tolls, so it also cost New Jersey residents more to worship in Philadelphia than in Camden. Loyalty to the church and family relationships overcame convenience and cost.¹⁰ A member of Holy Ghost Byzantine Church lived across the street during his childhood. He moved to Wilmington, Delaware in 1967 after serving in the navy. Forty-two years later, “Holy Ghost” is still his church and he regularly makes the 80 mi. round trip to worship in Philadelphia with family members.¹¹

Pastors of ethnic churches are always aware that the congregation’s continuity is tenuous. One way to keep the congregation motivated, active, and cognizant of their fragile situation is to celebrate anniversaries.¹² Most churches celebrate anniversaries on five or ten year intervals. Holy Spirit celebrated annually.¹³ St. Agnes-St John Nepomucene Church currently sets two to five year goals and celebrates these milestones to maintain a vibrant community. Holy Ghost Byzantine Church and St.

Agnes-St. John Nepomucene Church are the only remaining Slovak Churches in Philadelphia.

Education, Religion and Social Mobility

Slovak immigrants did not view education as a path to upward social mobility. Few first-generation Slovaks in early twentieth century America graduated from high school. Less than 1% even attended high school.¹⁴ This theme was expressed throughout Slavic communities. For example, a 1913 survey of 500 Slavic children in Chicago revealed that over 80% would prefer to work in a factory rather than continue their education, even if they were not forced to work for economic reasons.¹⁵

Slovak leaders viewed education as a tool to preserve ethnicity, and, in the case of Catholic leaders, to save souls. St. Agnes Parish operated the only Slovak-speaking elementary school in Philadelphia. Other churches held Sunday school classes in an effort to preserve Slovak culture and language along with religion. One might argue that opening the St. Agnes Parochial School in 1927 was “too little, too late.” Most first generation Slovak-American children were already too old for St. Agnes. In fact the first year enrollment of 260 students crammed into six classrooms was the peak enrollment year.¹⁶ The first and second-generation American-born children who attended were already fluent in English and American ways. St. Agnes was seen as one way to, at least, preserve the Slovak language in the new generation. As Jozef Barton notes, “During the period of generational transition, language tended to become less the possession of an inherited culture and more a cultural goal.”¹⁷ Preservation of culture and language seemed more important to parents than

education. In fact, most first generation Slovak-American children did not go far beyond grade school.¹⁸ One Slovak summed up the future of young men in his community like this:

...In our particular environment, college was not the thing, you see. Who the hell ever talked about college among the Slovaks? The only thing we were ever taught was making money....All we got was the old peasant thing from Czechoslovakia: you grew up, got a job, paid room and board to your parents, got married had a family, kept working and the cycle kept right on going. It was a tough life, a hard life, a clean life.¹⁹

Despite this cultural viewpoint, some first generation Slovak-Americans did succeed in transcending the education hurdle. Most Philadelphians would be hard-pressed to name a prominent Philadelphia-born Slovak-American. But they would be quite apt to recognize the name of Joe Ferko, the founder of the famous Ferko String Band that parades down Broad Street every New Years Day. Joseph Aloysius Ferko (1895-1964) was born and grew up in Southwest Philadelphia as a parishioner of the Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Church and was acculturated as a Philadelphian. He received his Doctor of Pharmacy degree in 1916 from the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and ran a drug store at 5th and Glenwood Streets in North Philadelphia. He formed the Ferko String Band in 1922 with rosters, over the years, that look like random pages from the Philadelphia phone book with names of many ethnicities.²⁰ In 1924, he was popular enough to be elected State Representative on both the Republican and Democratic tickets.²¹ Even as a successful businessman in North Philadelphia, Ferko continued as a Holy Ghost parishioner and through the 1930s brought his string band to South Philadelphia to celebrate Christmas (Jan. 7 in the Eastern Rite church).²²

Another Slovak-American from the area who broke the pattern was Charles Bednarik (1925-), Hall of Fame Philadelphia Eagles Football Star. Even before becoming an Eagle, “Chuck” was well known in Philadelphia as a star football player at the University of Pennsylvania where he was runner-up Heisman Memorial Trophy winner in 1948. Bednarik was born of Slovak and Yugoslav parents in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania and attended the neighborhood Slovak parochial school of St. Cyril & Methodius Church from 1931 to 1939.²³ This was the church where Father Vlossak was pastor for more than a quarter century. Bednarik retired as an Eagles player in 1962. His football jersey number 60 is also retired but Chuck is still known as “Mr. Eagle.”²⁴ Yet few Philadelphians have any idea that Bednarik is a Slovak-American. Throughout his biography, Bednarik recalls his Slovak-Catholic roots in Bethlehem and, even years after his retirement, made himself available to the men and ladies of St. Cyril and Methodius Church in Bethlehem, although he lived 40 miles away in suburban Philadelphia.

These stories are exceptions. The typical Slovak in America relied on hard work, thrift and social networking rather than education for success. This is not surprising because most Slovak immigrants had limited education and relied on physical labor, and practical skills for their livelihood in the old country. Many of the St. Agnes men worked in one of the many leatherworks or “Morocco Shops” in the Northern Liberties. Even as renters in courtyard houses, they took in boarders to supplement income.²⁵ Over time many families started side businesses and used their savings to purchase real estate.

One example is the story of a founding family of the Jan Hus Church. Pavel (Paul) and Rosalia (Rose) immigrated to Philadelphia from Trencin County, Upper Hungary in 1906 and were married in 1909 by Fr. Vlossak, even before the St. Agnes church was built. By 1915, they had four daughters. Only one daughter, the youngest, graduated from high school. The family moved several times and took in boarders. Paul worked as a “glazier” at the Surpass Leather factory in Northern Liberties and became a naturalized U.S. citizen in 1922. He had a side business of selling soft drinks and candy from his rented home in 1925 at the time of the St. Agnes Parish schism. By 1930 Paul and Rose purchased a three-story apartment building with a street-front store that the family operated as a Delicatessen and Restaurant. After the Volstead Act was repealed in 1933, the restaurant was moved to the back room and the street-front store was converted to a Café (taproom). Paul then quit the leather factory to devote full time to the Café. Rose became a U.S. citizen in 1938. Over time, Paul and Rose purchased houses in Philadelphia with the assistance of a real estate man who was, interestingly, a naturalized Hungarian. The properties were either rented for income, or sold while Paul and Rose held the mortgage. By 1940, Paul and Rose sold the Café business, purchased a house five miles away in the growing Northeast section of Philadelphia and lived the rest of their lives with one of their children on income from their real estate “savings.” Through out this period, they remained members of the Jan Hus church. Although Paul passed away in 1953, Rose was an Elder and active member right up to the time of the church’s dissolution in 1967. Other churches were within walking distance of her home, but she faithfully attended services and church meetings at Jan Hus, and then Holy Spirit using public

transportation.²⁶ This story is not unusual, but typical of the way Slavic immigrants progressed in society.

It is interesting to note that the Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus was founded in 1944, just before the end of the Second World War when significant changes were about to occur in American lifestyle. Discharged G.I.s returned home in 1945 to a country that was moving towards a peacetime economy with enormous opportunities. And the men themselves were changed as a result of their broad exposure to people and personal experiences during the war. The growing post-war economy encouraged physical and social mobility. Many families moved their households to get better jobs and live in more attractive neighborhoods. And there was major movement from the city to the suburbs. Changes were facilitated by federal legislation that offered grants for higher education and vocational training and mortgage loan guarantees for homes, farms and businesses.²⁷ At the same time, many members of Philadelphia's urban Slovak churches were in their senior years living with children, so when the children moved, the "seniors" moved with them. It was the success of the church members and their families that gave them the opportunity to move, but in doing so they were leaving their ethnic communities and becoming assimilated in the "melting-pot" communities of suburbia.

Conclusion

The Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus was initially successful because of lay control and camaraderie of the congregation. However, the number of Slovak immigrants coming to the United States after World War I was severely curtailed by

federal legislation.²⁸ Growing, or even maintaining, the size of the congregation depended on the addition of new family members during the inter-war period. After World War II, Slovak families became more integrated into American society. Marriage with people from other ethnic groups became more common. Families became more physically and socially mobile. Jobs were found and homes were purchased in new communities. These changes further dispersed urban ethnic communities and tended to make ethnic social structures, including churches, less relevant. As second and third generation Slovak-Americans became less reliant on their ethnic churches, they provided less support for them. Without new immigrants or young Slovak-Americans to fill the pews and collection baskets, the Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus could no longer survive and the church became a victim of the congregation's success in achieving the American dream.

¹ *Peasants and Strangers: Italians, Rumanians, and Slovaks in an American City, 1890-1950*, 80

² *Round-Trip to America: The Immigrants return to Europe, 1880-1930*, 10-12

³ American Slovaks sent home \$41.6 million from 1900 to 1912 according to Hungarian postal receipts. See *Round-trip to America*, 60. Historian Marion Mark Stolarik estimates that more than \$200 million was sent home by Slovaks between 1870 and 1914 in *Immigration and Urbanization*, 186.

⁴ *The Immigrant Church and Community*, 53

⁵ *A short life, long remembered: the late Rev. Emery A. Jecusko*

⁶ Slovak National Catholic Cathedral
<<http://www.tccweb.org/passaichouses.htm#Slovak%20National%20Catholic%20Cathedral>>

⁷ *All Our Own Kind Here*, 207-213

⁸ *All Our Own Kind Here*, 261

⁹ Robert Zecker provides many examples in *All Our Own Kind Here*, 193-277.

¹⁰ Interview with Joanna Schwartz

¹¹ Interview with William Hudak

¹² Interview with Reverend Francis Landacky

¹³ Interview with Reverend Joseph Schwartz

¹⁴ In 1908, only 0.8% of Slovak children in the United States attended high school compared with 9.1% of native-born children. *Immigration and Urbanization*, 170

¹⁵ *For Bread with Butter*, 132

¹⁶ *A History of St. Agnes School Building-1998*

¹⁷ *Peasants and Strangers: Italians, Rumanians, and Slovaks in an American City, 1890-1950*, 152

¹⁸ *Immigration and Urbanization*, 173-174

¹⁹ John Bednarik, older brother of Charles Bednarik in *Bednarik – Last of the Sixty-Minute Men*, 24

²⁰ *Joe’s Boys*, 166-175

²¹ *Joe’s Boys*, 58

²² *All Our Own Kind Here*, 279, n16

²³ *Bednarik – Last of the Sixty-Minute Men*, 18

²⁴ *Bednarik – Last of the Sixty-Minute Men*, 196

²⁵ This theme appears in the 1910 and 1920 U.S. Census population schedule pages.

²⁶ Excerpts from the author’s personal family history

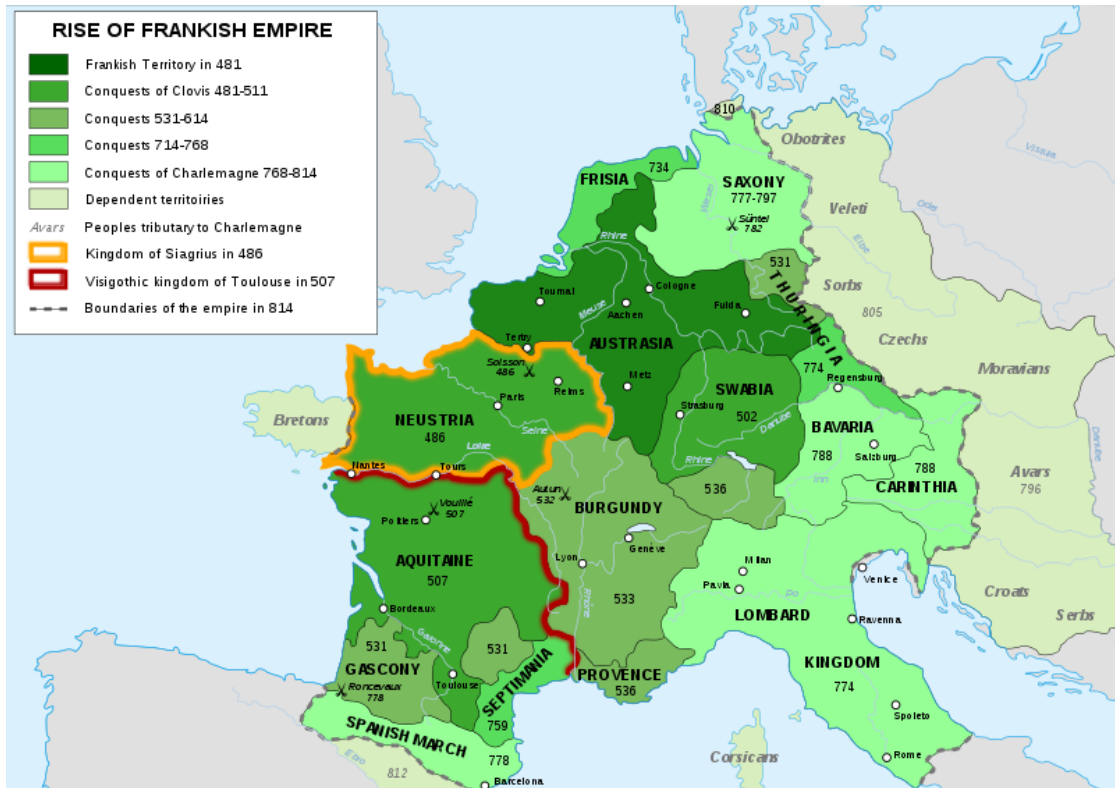
²⁷ Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Serviceman’s Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly known as the G.I. Bill of Rights, into law on June 22, 1944. The intent was to help the country reabsorb World War II veterans returning from overseas. The legislation escalated demand for housing and facilitated the emergence of a new post-war middle class.

²⁸ The Quota Act of 1921 and the Immigration Act of 1924 were passed to limit immigration from southern and eastern Europe. The 1924 quota for Czechoslovakia was 3,073. Details on other eastern and southern European countries can be found in *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (1929), 102

APPENDIX

Figure 1

Frankish Empire Growth from 481 to 814 A.D. showing Slavic territories to the East with tribute to Charlemagne



Source: Wikipedia. "Francia". Wikimedia Commons

Figure 2

Timeline of Key Events in Slovak Political and Religious History affecting
Philadelphia's Christian Slovaks

330	Roman Empire capital moved to Byzantium by Emperor Constantine. Byzantium renamed Constantinople.
486	Roman Gaul invaded by Clovis, King of Franks.
768-814	Frankish Kingdom reaches peak under King Charlemagne.
833-846	Great Moravian Empire, a union of Slavic tribes, established by Mojmir with tribute to German Frankish Kingdom.
863	Constantine (Cyril) and Methodius arrive at the request of Rastislav to codify the Slavic language and spread Christianity.
885	Methodius dies and Franks displace Slavic liturgy with Latin liturgy. Magyars (Hungarians) migrate into Slavic territory from the east.
907	German Franks defeated by Magyars near Bratislava. Territory in which Slovaks live is divided among Magyars, Czechs and Poles.
1273-1806	Magyars influence expanded throughout territory inhabited by Slovaks. Habsburgs rule the Holy Roman Empire.
Ca. 1370	John Wycliffe challenges Catholic Church doctrine and the pope's authority.
1415	Jan Hus is executed for challenging the papacy.
1512	Martin Luther is excommunicated.
1553	Counter-reformation launched by Habsburgs.

1646	Byzantine-Rite (Orthodox) Catholics acknowledge authority of Roman Pope.
1866	Austria defeated by Prussia. Hungary gains equal status in Austria-Hungary Empire. Magyarization process begins.
1880	Slovaks migrate from Upper Hungary in large numbers. By World War One, one half million Slovaks have migrated to United States.
1918	Czechoslovakia formed as democratic republic.
1919	Czechoslovak National Church established in Prague by group of Czech Roman Catholic clergy.
1938-1945	Czechoslovakia comes under German occupation and control.
1948	Czechoslovakia becomes puppet state of U.S.S.R. with Communist Government.
1989	Communist party control of Czechoslovakia ends (Velvet Revolution).
1993	Czechoslovakia separates into Czech Republic and Slovak Republic (Velvet Divorce).

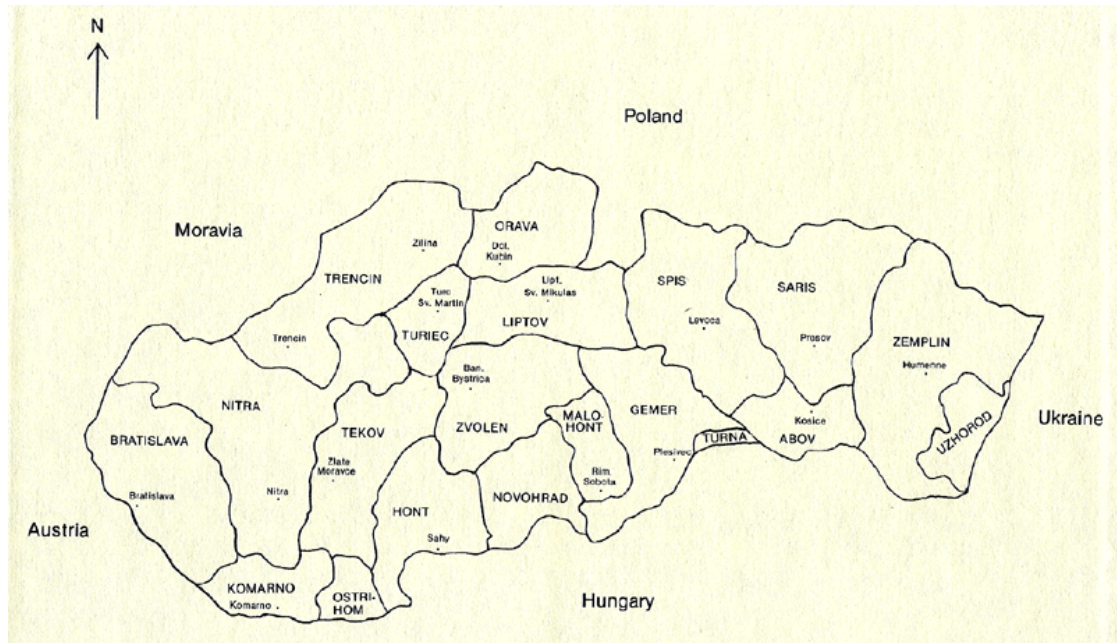
Figure 3

Timeline of Key Events in Philadelphia affecting Christian Slovaks

1891	First Philadelphia Slovak church, Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Parish, founded.
1900	Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church founded in Camden, New Jersey.
1903	St. John Nepomecene Roman Catholic Parish founded in South Philadelphia.
1907	St. Agnes Roman Catholic Parish founded in Philadelphia's Northern Liberties section.
1913	Schism at Holy Ghost Byzantine Catholic Parish results in founding of Holy Virgin Russian Orthodox Church in Southwest Philadelphia.
1926	Schism at St. Agnes Roman Catholic Parish leads to formation of M. Jan Hus Church.
1927	St. Agnes Roman Catholic Parish School opened.
1944	Jan Hus Church reorganized as Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus.
1967	Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus dissolved.
1969	St. Agnes Roman Catholic Parish School closed.
1980	St. Agnes-St. John Nepomucene Roman Catholic Parish established by merger of two Slovak parishes experiencing membership decline.
1988	Holy Trinity Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church dissolved.

Figure 4

Slovak Counties in 19th Century Europe



Source: St. Agnes-St. John Diamond Jubilee Book. 1982

Figure 5

The Founding Families of M. Jan Hus Church,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania – 1926

Adamcik	Andrej	Jurkovska	Maria
Adamov	Paul	Kollar	Anton
Badik	Peter	Labuda	Marie
Ballaj	Karol	Majerik	Peter
Barcay	Karol	Majerik	Karol
Chobot	Paul	Maryka	Matus
Clebuch	Joseph	Mastalsky	Jan
Deck (y)	Michal	Medvedik	Joseph
Decky	Gaspar	Mitas	Juraj
Dihala	Michal	Mociak	Luis
Gajdos	A.B.	Nemcik	Joseph
Gana	Edward	Pacek	Stefan
Gana	Paul	Pavlik	Frantisik
Gana	Stefan	Pincik	Jozef
Gaspar	Juraj	Polienka	Michal
Gessaj	Andrej	Sajda	Paul
Havik	John	Sakala	Jozef
Hlusik	Thomas	Sakala	Stefan
Hoferica	Jan	Simina	Julia
Hrabovsky	Ondrej	Srnik	Jozef
Hribik	Andrej	Stopko	John
Hricovsky	Stefan	Uhrik	Andrej
Hudek	Imrich	Zubec	Juraj

Source: Book of Income and Expenses – 1 April 1926 to 31 December 1949

Figure 6

Membership of Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus
14 January 1962

Amero	John (Jr.)	Mihalik	Peter
Amero	Josephine	Myerik	Mary
Chobot	Rose	Myerik	Charles
Decky	Casper	Sakala	Joseph
Decky	Margaret	Sakala	Stephen
Decky	Pauline	Sevcik	Antonia
Decky	Michael	Surovich	Louis L.
Hlusik	Thomas	Surovich	Sophie (Labuda)
Hlusik	A. (Mrs.)	Surovich	Louis
Hornik	George	Trinka	John
Kalocay	Julia	Zubar	George
Kalocay	Andrew	Zubar	Josephine
Mastalsky	Antonia		

Source: Minutes of the Session and Congregation – 14 January 1962

Figure 7

Pastors of Czechoslovak Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus
June 1945 to March 1967

Reverend Rudolph F. Typlt	Jun-45	to	Apr-51
Brother Gedion E. Galambos (Student Minister)	May-51	to	Feb-53
Reverend George Wickwire	Mar-53	to	Jan-58
Reverend Dr. Paul J. Weatherly (ThD)	Jan-58	to	Apr-65
Reverend J. Paul Trout	Apr-65	to	Dec-66
Reverend John D. Scott	Jan-67	to	Mar-67

Source: Minutes of the Congregation and Session Book

Figure 8

Reverend Rudolph Frank Typlt at the pulpit of the Czechoslovak
Presbyterian Church of Jan Hus



Photo by Jerome Hustak, Trenton, NJ circa 1948

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