

The Karlovy Vary (Carlsbad) Region is situated on the western border of the Czech Republic. Border with the Federal German State of Saxony is formed by the Krušné hory (the Ore Mountains) with the highest mountain Klínovec (1,244 m). Aš westernmost tip is wedged between Saxony and the Federal German State of Bavaria. There is the river Ohře flowing from the west to the east.

It is our third smallest region: its area is 3,314 square km and its population is approximately 315,300 inhabitants. Its history is as in other border regions marked by centuries of coexistence of the Czech and German population (some areas were mostly German), by war events and by the departure of Germans after World War II. New residents began to build a diverse communities; they were however as well influeced by further historical development.

Natural beauties are definitely not missing in the region. For example: the Krušné hory with the highest located town in the country called Boží Dar (God's Gift) and with many opportunities for summer and winter recreation; natural reservation area Slavkovský Forest, fortunately untouched by coal mining, unlike especially the area around Sokolov. Smrčiny Hills dominate the area of Aš tip.

The treasure of the Carlsbad Region is the spa. The unique spa triangle – Carlsbad, Františkovy Lázně and Mariánské Lázně- is registered as a candidate for entry into the UNESCO World Heritage List. Noteworthy is also the town of Kraslice and Luby which have a long tradition in manufacturing of musical instruments. In each of these three districts (Cheb, Carlsbad and Sokolov) we can find besides the natural beauties also stories of a rich past. But it is also a region that lives in the present and that has good prospect for future.

The Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) has its congregations in Aš, Horní Slavkov, Cheb, Chodov, Carlsbad, Mariánské Lázně, Nejdek, Ostrov nad Ohří, Sokolov and in Teplá. It may seem strange for you that we are not inviting you to Carlsbad. There is certainly no extra need to introduce this town. The world famous spa with many historical monuments but especially with healing water and a legendary thermal spring will impress every visitor. The Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren has also its congregation in Carlsbad where you are warmly welcome – its residence is a congregation house in a spa quarter. This house however does not have much to do with the Reformation heritage. You will certainly find the way to Carlsbad by yourselves. But we will introduce some preaching stations to you, the churches of which have a great historical value.

In Aš tip, the westernmost part of the Czech Republic, near Smrčiny Hills there lies a town of Aš (666 metres above sea level, 13,420 inhabitants). It is surrounded by the German Federal States, Saxony and Bavaria. Hill Háj (757 m) with a view tower is a popular place for walks.

The first written records come from the year 1270. King Sigismund gave Aš region to Zedwitz family in 1422. This was important in matters of religion in this region (the counter-Reformation was not carried out so hard), and therefore the religious monument treasures could appear here - Baroque churches in a Protestant Baroque style. Only in 1775 Aš region was attached to Bohemia. Later there was a great development of the textile industry. In the late 1930's German population strongly supported Henlein movement so that most Czech families had to leave the town. After World War II (Aš was liberated by the Americans in 1945) it was the German inhabitants for a change who left the town, including the Lutherans, the descendants of the Protestants who already in 1622 built the Church of the Holy Trinity. In its place a new church with three galleries and a remarkable altar was built in 1749. Up to 2,500 people could gather here.

After World War II the Church of the Holy Trinity, the most valuable religious building not only in Aš but in the whole western Bohemia region was given to the congregation of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) for using. During its repairs in January 1960 the church burnt to the ground. Only a memorial of Martin Luther from 1883 survived. These days the whole place is piously maintained.

The Protestant church in Hranice which is under the congregation in Aš comes from the year 1682. At that time one-nave Baroque-Classicist church was built here, in 1719 it was rebuilt into its current form. Inside of the church there is a Baroque altar by M. Zeitler; a pulpit was built over the altar. Baptistery dates back to the year 1763. Equally massive church tower as in Hranice can be as well found in Podhradí. Also a tower of a burned church in Aš was built in the same way. Modern rectory from the twenties of the 20th century serves as a chapel in winter. The church is used for worship in the summer months.

Few people know that in a tiny village of Podhradí, distant 5km from Aš, there is another rare building of the German Protestant Baroque-Church of the Good Shepherd. The original church was built in the late 15th century, in the years 1678-1712 it was rebuilt into the present form. From outside it is a Baroque-Classicist church with a strong tower. An amazing sight however awaits the visitors inside: not only painted wooden galleries and a choir, painted ceiling but also wooden benches from the end of the 16th century which are painted at their sides. Altar made by M. Zeitler dates back to the year 1710. Not for nothing the Church of the Good Shepherd is a protected site and its visit is for sure recommended. From Faster to Christmas there is a religious service in the German language.

Aš congregation also takes care of one more important religious building: it is a church in Mokřiny, built by a famous German architect Otto Bartning in 1914 in a style of German Art Nouveau. After World War II the church was in a deplorable condition. Thanks to the collections within the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren and foreign financial assistance the church was

restored in the 90's of the 20th century. Also here as well as in Podhradí there is a worship in the German language from spring to winter.



Αš



PODHRADÍ



HRANICE



MOKŘINY



Historic Town Reserve Cheb (459 metres above sea level, approx. 35,000 inhabitants) lies on the river Ohre near the border with Germany.

It was founded in 1204 and since 1322 it is a part of the Czech state. At the time of the Hussite wars the town supported Emperor Sigismund. In 1432 there was an important event in Cheb - legates of the Basel Council met here with the leading representatives of the Hussites. Their negotiations resulted in an agreement of 18 May 1432 which was called "Cheb Judge". This agreement ensured the safety of the Hussites on the way to Basel and free defence of Prague's four Articles at the Council of Basel. Only the law of God which was followed by the early Church should have been recognized as the most fair judge. This major concession of the official church-to deal with "heretics" in Basel on the basis of equality, was a victory for the Czech Reformation which for the time being prevented fragmentation of the Western Church. Thirty Years' War also affected the history of Cheb. On 25th February 1634 commander Albrecht of Wallenstein was assassingted here.

There are a lot of historical monuments in the town and they will surely become an aim of the eager visitors. We can find here remains of the Romanesque castle from the end of the 12th century with the Black Tower. The Church of St. Nicholas also dates back to the Romanesque period; its towers have been partly preserved. The church was rebuilt in the 15th century in a Gothic style; both towers were repeatedly damaged over the years and only in 2008 they received a definite pseudo-Gothic appearance. Lovely "Špalíček" in King of Poděbrady Square is formed by a block of eleven half-timbered medieval merchants' houses.

At the beginning of the 20th century Cheb is becoming an industrial town and an important railway junction. Munich Agreement from the year 1938 and the situation in the border forced the Czech residents to leave Cheb which was predominantly a German town at that time. After World War II it was for a change the German population who had to leave Cheb. After the war a newly formed congregation of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) including the Protestant newcomers from various parts of Czechoslovakia and from abroad started to use a church and a

rectory after the German Evangelical Church. This church was built in a pseudo-Gothic style according to the project of Cheb architect A. Haberzettl from the year 1871. Preaching stations in Františkovy Lázně and in Plesná also belong to the congregation in Cheb.

Františkovy Lázně is a Historic Town Reserve. It lies at an altitude of 442 metres and has about 5,500 inhabitants. Together with Mariánské Lázně and Karlovy Vary it forms a world-famous spa triangle.

Mineral springs and their healing effects were known here already in the Middle Ages. The spa was founded in 1793. Emperor Francis Joseph I declared it a town and gave it his name. Františkovy Lázně was built in an early Classicist style. The streets are running in the direction of the oldest spring, the Francis Spring. Simultaneously with the town also the parks in the English style were being built. Another springs are as well used for spa treatment. In the past the spa was visited by many prominent personalities. A municipal theatre is named after a writer Božena Němcová.

There is an Empire Roman Catholic Church of the Elevation of the Holy Cross in the town which comes from the beginning of the 19th century. Protestant three-nave Church of St. Peter and St. Paul was built in 1880 in a neo-Romanesque style according to the project of Cheb architect A. Haberzettl. The church serves the Czech Protestants and also the spa guests from abroad. Religious service is held here regularly in the Czech and German language.

In Plesná, a village near a small German town Bad Brambach we will find a Baroque Roman Catholic church from the year 1849 which was rebuilt in an Empire style.

Local Protestant church was built in the years 1847-1849. It is a building in a neo-Classicist style. Inside we will find a valuable Baroque altar with images of Christ on the Mount of Olives and the Last Supper of the Lord and a pseudo-Gothic font. In the church there is also an organ which is on the list of protected objects. The church is mentioned in connection with Gustav-Adolf's Club in Germany. This Club supports Protestant minorities and repairs and construction of churches in various countries including the Czech Republic.

In the church in Plesná a worship takes place only occasionally.



CHEB





Františkovy Lázně





PLESNÁ



The spa town of Mariánské Lázně lies in the Southern part of a Nature Reserve Slavkovský Forest at an altitude of 630 metres above sea level, with 15,000

inhabitants. Its history-unlike other towns-does not date back to the late past. Local springs were known already in the 16th century but only at the beginning of the 19th century they began to be intensively developed. This was thanks to dr. J. J. Nehr who was the first one to analyse chemical composition of the springs but especially thanks to an Abbot of Teplá Monastery, K. Reitenberger who initiated the establishment of the settlement and supported its development. The first spa house was built in 1808. The town was built according to a well-thought-out plan of architect Václav Skalník who established a large English park. In 1866 Mariánské Lázně has been declared a town and more and more guests were using the spa springs. We can see here the traces of some significant European personalities such as the English king Edward VII, famous poets and composers of that time. Our first two presidents T. G. Masaryk and E. Beneš also liked to visit this spa.

Mariánské Lázně reached its highest development at the end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century. Houses and spa buildings in a historicist style were surrounded by parks. Spa colonnade comes from the second half of the 19th century. We should also mention the churches: Neo-Byzantine Catholic Church of the Assumption of the Virgin, Anglican and Russian Orthodox Church of St. Vladimir. The Jewish synagogue was destroyed by the Nazis during the "crystal night" in 1938. Empty space where the synagogue originally lay is now piously maintained.

In the thirties of the last century the same history as in other border towns with the German population majority was as well repeated in Mariánské Lázně: Munich Agreement, land occupation, fanatic belief of the local inhabitants in Adolf Hitler. The end of World War II had hard consequences for the local Germans. They had to leave. After 1945 new residents came to the town and its life gradually revived.

Nowadays, Mariánské Lázně is an important and beautiful town in the middle of the parks

with a remarkable "Singing Fountain". Since 1992 Mariánské Lázně is an urban protected area.

After World War II many Protestants from the whole Czechoslovakia, but also reimmigrants from Silesian Husinec and Polish Zelow came to Mariánské Lázně. On 1st July 1947 a congregation was established here, its first minister and later a Senior became dr. Jiří Otter. The Protestant repatriots from Silesia established a live preaching station in Tři Sekery, the repatriots from Zelow settled in Teplá where an independent congregation was as well established in 1952.

The Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) took over the church after the German Evangelical Church as well as a Neo-Classicist rectory from 1888. In 1857 an interesting Jesus Church was built in a Neo-Romanesque style and its construction was supported (and later the church was also owned) by the German king Frederick William IV. The side wall of the three-nave church is facing the street front. It does not have a tower, just a little bell tower. Inside we will be impressed by a picture of blessing Jesus Christ with a chalice

in his left hand. An author of the picture which is situated in the front above the Lord's table is Jan Bochenek who was born in Hlučín. The stained-glass windows make the interior of a church very impressive. Their common motive (in connection with spa) is water. They represent biblical stories: dialogue of Jesus Christ with Nicodemus (John's Gospel 3,1-15) and with a lady from Samara (John 4, 5-29), the picture on the last stained-window represents a story of recovery near a pond Bethesda (John 5, 1-9).

Both congregation buildings are carefully maintained. In the year of 2007 the congregation members together with numerous domestic and foreign guests commemorated with gratitude 150 years since the building of Jesus Church which serves the believers until now.



Congregation House

Church





The town of Nejdek (560 metres above sea level; 8,500 inhabitants) near Carlsbad is situated in the valley of a small river Rolava, surrounded by high hills with forest slopes. Until 1945 it was predominantly a German town. It was already noted in the 13th century as a mining settlement. Tin was mined here, and later iron. The village reached its highest development in the 14th to 16th century, later the mining activity declined. Then the local people made their living by making bobbin lace; in the 19th century a spinning mill of worsted yarn and ironworks were built here.

By building a railway line from Carlsbad to Saxony in 1899 Nejdek region became a very attractive tourist area. It is worh noticing 24 metres high stone view tower on Tisovský hill or a view tower on Plešivec. There are a lot of interesting historical monuments in the town. On a rocky promontory surrounded by the river Rolava there is a Romanesque-Gothic tower, perhaps the rest of the castle from the 13th century, with a rare Renaissance bell from 1579. In a Baroque Church of St. Martin from the second half of the 18th century we can see valuable woodcarvings on the side altars. In the second half of the 19th century the stations of the Cross leading through the forest park with beautiful views were built in the hill above Nejdek. In the main square our attention will be attracted by a modern fountain Rolávka which was designed by architect R. Kautský and which describes the story of the Rolava river.

The congregation of the German Evangelical Church was established in Nejdek in 1922. However, the German Lutherans have already been gathering since 1873 and soon they began to consider the construction of a church. On a hill above the town a foundation stone of a church according to the project of Leipzig architect J. Zeissig was laid in 1903. Already in 1904 it was consecrated and until now it is one of the town's dominating features. The stone fair-faced church in a Neo-Gothic style

has a special double tower. Apse is decorated by two stained-glass windows representing St. Peter and St. Paul. The organ is located along one of the side walls.

After World War II, the abandoned church was taken over by the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB). In the congregation set up on 1st May 1947 Czech repatriates from Volyně, Silesia and Romania began to meet each other. There were also Protestants coming from other places.

Today's congregation is live and it takes care well and with respect of its Church of Saviour.

The congregation in Nejdek has its preaching station in Jáchymov, a town rich in history, a town of silver thalers (which began to be minted here before the year 1520, they were known as Joachim's thalers and much later they gave its name to the U. S. Dollar). Jáchymov is also famous for its spa and is well-known as a centre of popular summer and winter sports. Uranium mining was not only its wealth but also

its damnation, especially in the unfortunate 1950's, when the prisoners of a totalitarian regime suffered in its mines.

German Protestants built their congregation house with a church in 1914. After 1945 it was taken over by the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren. The house now serves not only for religious purposes but also for meetings of the youth as well as for the family recreation.

Visitors of the congregation house will be impressed by a memory board dedicated to Johann Mathesius, a German Lutheran minister, a colleague of Martin Luther. He lived here between 1504–1565 and he was an important spiritual figure of Jáchymov.



NEIDE

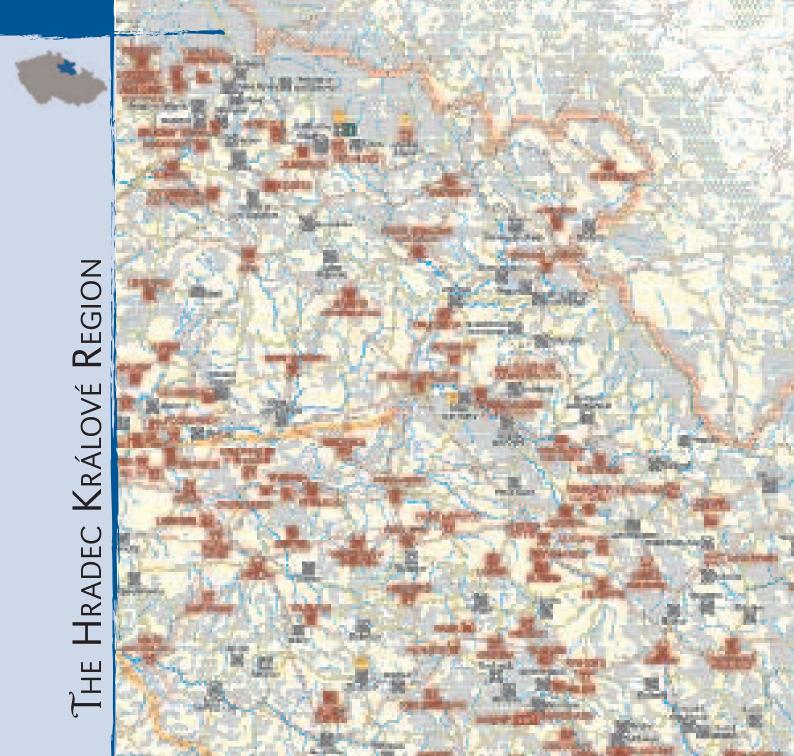




Jáchymov





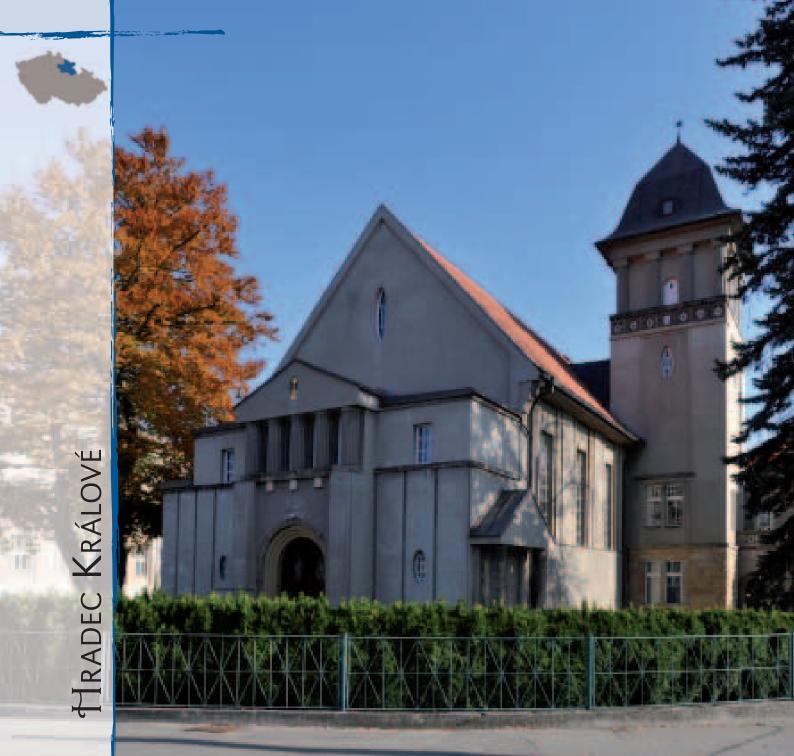




The Hradec Králové Region is situated in the northeastern part of the Czech Republic. It occupies an area of 4,758 square kilometres and almost 562,000 inhabitants live there. In the northwest it borders on the Liberec Region. It shares its western border with the Central Bohemia Region, the Pardubice Region lies to the south and a big part of border in the northeast creates at the same time the border of the Czech Republic with the Voivodeship of the Lower Silesia. The region shares with Poland not only our highest Mountains Krkonoše with Sněžka (1, 602 metres) but also a part of the Orlické Mountains.

The Hradec Králové Region is divided into five districts: Hradec Králové, Jičín, Rychnov nad Kněžnou, Náchod and Trutnov. The rivers Orlice, Metuje, Úpa and Cidlina create graceful natural sceneries, they are parts of many historical towns and finally they flow into the Elbe – our largest river. The Elbe rises on the Labská meadow in the Krkonoše Mountains, flows through the region and leaves our country on the other side of the republic near Děčín. In the Hradec Králové Region we will find maybe the biggest number of the protected landscape areas: the Bohemian Paradise and the Prachovské skály rock formations, the region around Kozákov, Broumov, the Orlické Mountains, the National Park of the Krkonoše Mountains. Besides many really very valuable natural sites, in this region we can visit many castles, chateaux and ancient towns. Where to go first? To Safari park in Dvůr Králové, to the Špork's Kuks, to the castle Kost and to Plakánek, to the Grandmother's Valley or to the Ratibořice castle? To the Dahlia festival in Česká Skalice or to Opočno or to the castle in Náchod? To Broumov or to the Teplice-Adršpach rocks? To the Pecka castle where Kryštof Harant's from Polžice and Bezdružice home was?

The Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) has 17 congregations in the Hradec Králové Region. We will visit seven of them.



Hradec Králové, metropolis of the Hradec Králové Region, lies in its southern part at an altitude of 235 metres. It covers an area of 4,758 square kilometres and almost 96,000 inhabitants live here. The adventageous location on the confluence of the rivers Elbe and Orlice predetermined its importace already long time ago. In 1225 Hradec was mentioned for the first time as a royal town. By decree of King Wenceslas II Hradec became a dowry town of the Czech queens. Eliška Rejčka and Eliška Pomořanská lived here.

In the 14th century Hradec was the most important Czech town after Prague. The Hussite Wars did not seriously affect the town, its prosperity continued also in the 15th century. The Thirty Years' War however brought a forced counter-Reformation to Hradec and also Sweedish occupation, all of this damaged the city very much. The 18th century was also accompanied by fires and wars – and controversial plans of Joseph II to transform Hradec into a fortress town. In 1856 Hradec Králové became an independent town and its modern history started.

Let us return for the moment to the monuments of Hradec: the historical centre of the town is formed by the Big Square with the examples of three architectural styles. The Gothic Holy Spirit's Cathedral comes from the 14th century. Eliška Rejčka, a widow after King Wenceslas II and Rudolph I the Habsburg, takes credit for the building of this cathedral. The Renaissance White Tower from 1574 is 72 metres high and offers a beautiful view over the surroundings. In the tower there is a bell called Augustin which is the second biggest bell in Bohemia. The Renaissance town hall was later rebuilt in a Baroque style. The Baroque period in Hradec is represented by an early Baroque Jesuit the Assumption of Our Lady's Church from the middle of the 17th century, the work of builder Carlo Lurago. The former Jesuit college is also built in a Baroque style. The native of Hradec Králové Bohuslav Balbín was a teacher at the former Jesuit grammar school. In 1664 the bishopric was founded in Hradec and at the beginning of the 18th century the bishop's residence was built here. The 19th century brought a development of railway and beginnings of industry. A production of pianos by the Petrof company made Hradec Králové world famous.

At the beginning of the 20th century a new stage of modern development of a town began. The mayor František Ulrich called architects Jan Kotěra and Josef Gočár to Hradec. They designed as the first ones in the country a general urban solution of the town. Kotěra built the Municipal Museum in the Art Nouveau style. Now, it is a National cultural monument. His pupil Gočár continued in a modern construction of Hradec Králové. He enriched the city by functionalist buildings. Today's Hradec Králové is a modern prosperous town and was declared a Historic Town Reserve thanks to its numerous monuments.

The congregation of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) in Hradec Králové was founded on the 14th of June 1920. Preaching stations of the Augsburg as well as the Helvetian confession of the congregation in Černilov had already been there before. The Luther's Institute (later Hus House) on Kavčí plácek built in 1883 was owned by the Augsburg congregation and it was a home for the Protestant students. After 1948 the church lost the building, in the 1990s they got it back during the restitution and for a few years it was a seat of the Biblical Missionary School. The members of the Reformed preaching station in Hradec Králové decided to build a church according to architect Oldřich Liska's plan.

On the 7th of July 1912 the Art Nouveau church with an asymmetrical placed tower was solemnly inaugurated. There is a big room for prayer with Art Nouveau decorative elements and another rooms for daily activities of the congregation. In 1942 the congregation purchased a new organ. A flat for the preacher is also a part of the building. The entire building except for minor repairs and modifications of the interior has been serving the congregation since the time of its origin up to the present. A garden with nice grown up trees surrounds the church. The whole complex is a protected site.





SKY A PROROCKY KDEZ JEST ARUNTON THE THE ANNUAL MALIEZKET IST

The municipality of Černilov which formerly belonged to the royal chamber lies near Hradec Králové. It is mentioned as a large village with a small church already in the 13th centry. It lies on the Černilov brook at an altitude of 253 metres and about 2,300 inhabitants live here. Further it was mentioned that "the soil here is heavy but fertile". Already during the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy a special Water team was founded here to takes care of drainage of wet lands.

Černilov can be proud of three churches: the Roman Catholic Finding of St. Stephen's Church with a slender tower was built in the middle of the 18th century. There are St. Stephen's and St. Peter's and St. Paul's statues on the main altar. A sandstone font is from 1895. The church has colourfully decorated windows.

We will mention in more details about a life of the local congregation of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) and its two churches. After the declaration of the Toleration Patent part of the Protestants joined the Augsburg confession, they created a congregation and built a Neo-Classicist church in 1889 on the place of the original wooden house of prayer. This so called "lower church" stopped being used and after the establishing of the

ECCB it declined. There is a ceremonial funeral hall today.

The reformed congregation in Černilov has its origin in 1784. A barn was the first sanctuary for worship but already two years later a wooden house of prayer was built. It served still in 1830; a brick building was built in those days but it was without a tower. It had only a small turret with a bell. The church got its final Neo-Renaissance appearance by adding entry portal and a tower. (Josef Blecha's company from Prague performed the building in 1882). The walls inside are decorated by verses from Psalms and from Luke's Gospel. Memorial tablets commemorate the 500th anniversary of Jan Hus's birth and a date of beginning a construction of the church.

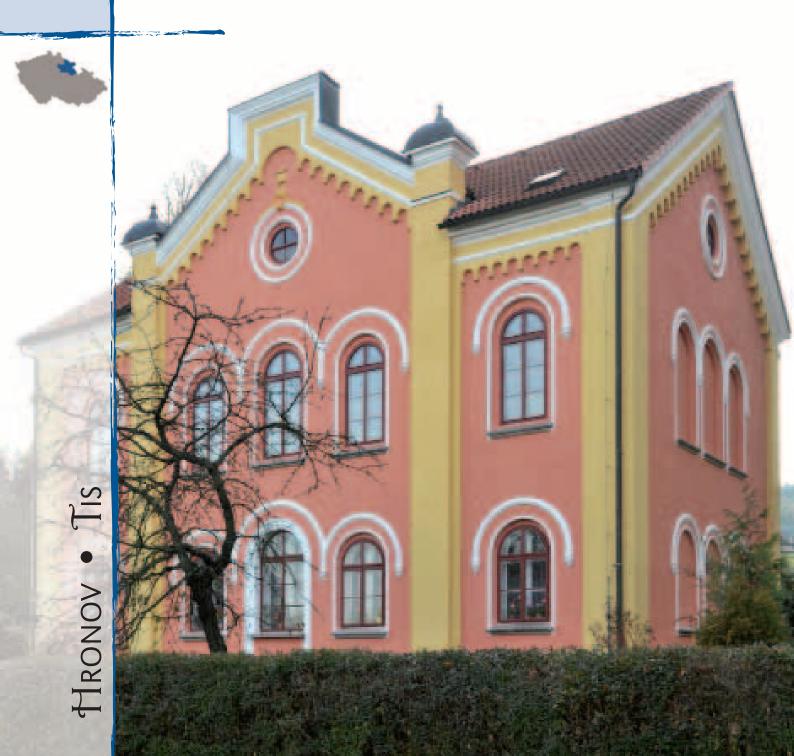
In the middle of the 19th century a new rectory was built near the church. After some repaires it still serves. Recently the municipality bought an old Protestant school that is near the church. This school should be changed into cultural and club house. An original shape of building was kept; an original chalice and Bible above the entrance were restored, too. The Protestants of Černilov gather here in winter.











Broumov tip in the northeast Bohemia is surrounded by Poland from almost all the sides. Not by chance, it is a protected landscape area Broumovsko. Not far from Náchod, a town Hronov lies on the river Metuje. It is forever linked with a name of the famous native Alois Jirásek.

Hronov was known as a peasant village already in the 2nd half of the 13th century. The water fortification was built here during colonization; later it was mentioned as a small town which belonged to the Náchod domain. In the Hussite time the Utraquist believers prevailed. The area was Protestant until the events culminating by the Battle of the White Mountain on the 8th of November 1620. The Thirty Years' War blew over Hronov, too. The Swedes burnt it out in 1639. After a long time, in the 19th century Hronov slowly began to develop especially thanks to home weaving and agricultural production in the surroundings. The textile production began to develop with the introduction of railway and cultural development of the town also accelerated.

All Saints' Church, formerly Gothic, rebuilt in a Baroque style at the beginning of the 17th century belongs among the important historical buildings. A bell tower with wooden boarding from 1610 is a typical building for Hronov. Jirásek's theatre built in 1930 according to architect Jindřich Freiwald's plan dominates Hronov. A year later a theatre festival called Jirásek's Hronov held here for the first time.

It is worth noticing a native house of Alois Jirásek. It is a timbered small cottage from the end of the 18th century. It is a rare monument of folk architecture as well as so called "free yard" on the place of a medieval fortress. In addition to Jirásek, Josef Čapek and his sister Helena, Egon Hostovský and also a famous cameraman and director Jan Špáta belong among other significant natives of Hronov.

The river Metuje creates romantic valleys on its upper and middle stream, the most famous of which is so called "Hell" Valley. Near Hronov

we can also visit a national cultural monument Dobrošov.

Before World War II an artillery fortification with underground corridors formed a part of the defensive fortification of Czechoslovakia and it had to be given without fight to the Germans after the Munich Agreement in 1938. Nowadays, it is a seat of a

museum. In the 1920s the tourist cottage in Dobrošov was rebuilt according to architect Dušan Jurkovič's plans.

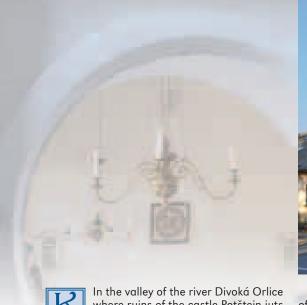
The Evangelical congregation of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) in Hronov has its origins in 1869 when it became a preaching station of the Klášter nad Dědinou congregation. The date of its origin as a congregation is the 27th of August 1885. Originally the Protestants gathered in various rent houses; many donors supported building of a house of prayer. It is interesting that the plans of a church in Růžová near Děčín were used for the construction of this house of prayer. The church in Růžová is however, for unclear reasons in a very bad condition until now.

The house of prayer in Hronov was built in 1876, later so called winter house of prayer was added. The hall for worship is on the 1st floor; a new organ according to prof. Jiří Reinberger's plan was installed in 1955.

The congregation has its preaching station in Tis. It is a building from the end of the 19th century which was repaired in rather high costs in 1939 and it serves for popular recreation of children and youth.







where ruins of the castle Potštejn juts out highly in the rocks is a small town of the same name – Potštejn. The surrounding country and a small town with a population of approximately 1,000 inhabitants lies at an altitude of 315 metres. These favourable natural conditions invite to romantic walks along the river through the age-old linden tree lane near Ann's Valley – thanks to it Potštejn became one of the first summer resorts in Bohemia and a place of rest for many famous people in the past and in the present.

The castle Potstejn which is dilapidated today is a scene of Jirásek's short-story "Treasure". In 1731 Potstejn was a small town as it is proved by an accidental finding of a sealing-stick with its crest and coat of arms. The original Gothic St. Lawrence's Church was rebuilt in an Empire style in the years 1815–1821. Inside of the church you will be impressed by the altar painting of St. Lawrence by Antonín Machek from 1819. We will certainly notice a statue of St. Florian and a nice fountain in front of the church. In the middle of the 18th century a Baroque castle was built near the church; later this castle was sensitively restored by its current owners.

In the past the persecuted members of the Unity of Brethren were hiding in the surroundings of Potštejn. The name of a deep valley "Praying Pit" where the Czech Brothers used to gather for the secret worship confirms this fact.

"The Brethren District" is a name of the part of Potštejn where a Brethren house of prayer and a parish can be found. Potštejn was the first congregation in Bohemia where so called Renewed Unity of Brethren worked. The first wave of non-Catholic exiles left Bohemia after 1620. Later in the 18th centry the members of the Unity of Brethren found their refuge in Herrnhut (Ochranov) at the domain of count Zinzendorf. Thus the Renewed Unity of Brethren was formed

and later became famous under the name "Moravian Brothers". Despite many problems (this Renewed Unity of Brethren was not recognized in Bohemia immediately after the declaration of the Protestant Patent in 1861) congregations were being established also in Bohemia and Potštejn was chosen as the first one. It happened on the 16th of October 1870. The first Brethren house of prayer was consecrated in Potštejn after more than 200 years on the the 6th of August 1871. The current one comes from the year 1899.

The members of so called Seniorate of Ochranov are a part of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) but they remain affiliated to the World Unity of Brethren. Today there is a modernized rectory with a winter house of prayer next to the Brethren church. There is a possibility of nice accommodation especially during the summer months, too.



In a flat countryside on the connfluence of the rivers Orlice nad Dědina, 13 kilometres east of Hradec Králové, we can find a town of Christmas cribs, Třebechovice pod Orebem. It lies at an altitude

Trebechovice pod Orebem. It lies at an altitude of 243 metres and it is a home of 5, 800 people. The original settlement was established along the trade trail in the 1st half of the 14th century. Its owners were the lords of Dubá and the Trčeks from Lípa.

In the Hradec Králové Region there was a strong Hussite tradition. In 1419 representatives of the Hussite movement met in the Vinice Hill. They renamed the 260 metres high hill to Oreb and hence for they were called the Orebites. Later in the 16th century under the family of the Trčeks of Lípa a small wooden church was built here.

After the Battle of the White Mountain in 1620 the family of the Colloredos gained the domain. During their reign the counter-Reformation was particularly hard. In the 19th century the town began to recover from the war suffering, fires and oppression. Since 1849 Třebechovice has been a free town. The twentieth century brought a cultural and technological development. Nowadays, Třebechovice is a famous tourist attraction.

There is a Baroque column commemorating a plague, St. Trinity's statue and a fountain from the year 1675 on the square. There is also a Roman Catholic St. Andrew's Baroque Church. The old small church in Oreb was demolished and since 1835 the Church of Christ's Body has been standing on its place.

The pride of the town is the Museum of Christmas cribs of Třebechovice. The national cultural monument Probošt's mechanical Christmas crib of Třebechovice was built at the turn of the 19th and the 20th century and belongs among the most valuable treasures. The carved little figures can move and entire Christmas crib consists of 2,000 pieces. The museum also looks after collections and prints including rare hand written and illuminated "Writer's Graduale" from 1559.

Jan Theobald Held, doctor and rector of Charles University and Jan Blahoslav Čapek,

Protestant literary scientist, philosopher and writer belong among the significant natives.

After the Toleration Patent was declared, the Protestants from Třebechovice and its surroundings joined the Reformed confession and at the beginning they belonged to the Klášter nad Dědinou congregation. A separate congregation in Třebechovice was founded on the 5th of May 1871.

A Neo-Romanesque Protestant church, a pride of the square in Třebechovice, was built by builder A. Nový from Rychnov nad Kněžnou in 1876–1880. The spacious church has two galleries, between two high windows in the apse there is a pulpit and the Lord's table in front of it. The Lord's table was made by a Třebechovice woodcarver J. Podstata. A room for prayer is nicely decorated, too. The rectory with the minister's flat has reconstructed rooms for winter house of prayer and other rooms needed for the congregation activities. All these rooms can be found on the ground floor. Běleč nad Orlicí is a preaching station of the Třebechovice congregation.

The Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) has a recreational centre here, it was founded in the 1920s at the bank of the Mlýnský pond by Hradec Králové minister Adolf Novotný and his wife. A Summer camp of Komenský was very popular among children and youth. They lived in country cottages, they could use small boats on the pond and nearby pine forests were goal for walks and games. Children spent here not only pleasant summer vacation but they also met for lectures which developed their spiritual live.

In 1951 the camp was closed by the communist authorities; and it was turned into a pioneer camp eleven years later. After November 1989 the complex was given back to the ECCB. There had been a lot of building alterations, a brick building and a dining room were built but country cottages remained. Today's centre is used not only by children and young people including the handicapped people but also by individual families. Various courses and summer meetings of seniors are also held here.





On the map we will find Trutnov at the foothills of the Krkonoše Mountains. The river Úpa flows through this ancient town which has a dragon in its coat of arms. It lies at an altitude of 404

metres and 34,000 inhabitants live here. A historical part of the town is a Historic Town Zone.

Since the 14th century Trutnov was a royal town and a dowry town of the Czech queens. Canvas was the main article coming from Trutnov to the royal court; the local linen industry had a great reputation already at that time. In 1421 during the Hussite wars Trutnov was conquered by the Hussites. Later in the year 1642 the town was conquered and burned down by the Swedes during the Thirty Years' War. In 1647 the Swedes seized Trutnov again and they also devastated its castle.

In the Renaissance period the houses with arcades were built on its historic square. There are also buildings from the Baroque and Empire period. The square is decorated with the Krakonoš Fountain. The original Renaissance town hall was rebuilt in a Pseudo-Gothic style. There is a museum in a late Empire style on the place of the former castle.

The Nativity of the Virgin Mary's Church from 1755–1769, a late Baroque building with Classicist elements, was built on a place of a church from the 13th century. There is a valuable equipment inside. The tower is 63 metres high. In the 18th century Trutnov witnessed a great peasant rebellion and later the Austrian and Prussian troops clashed here in 1866. The other disasters affected the town, too: a big fire in 1861 and devastating floods in 1897.

Trutnov was predominantly a German town. In the year 1900 a National (Czech) House was opened which was a big event. The 19th and the 20th centuries brought cultural and industrial development. The town became an important railway junction and a centre of the textile industry. In 1938 the Nazis burned down the synagogue, the border lands were occupied and Trutnov became a part of the German Empire.

After the liberation and after the Germans left, new people settled in Trutnov. After the

year 1948 the old monuments fell into disrepair. New housing estates were being built. Only after 1989 Trutnov began to live again.

After the Second World War the Czechoslovak Hussite Church took over the German Lutheran Neo-Gothic church from the year 1900 with an octagonal, 43 metres high tower. The Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) gained an Art Nouveau rectory. A new ECCB congregation was established on the 1st of August 1947.

Both churches held services here, however, later the church fell into disrepair and it was even planned to demolish it. But luckily, in the 1980s it was converted into a nice concert hall. It is named after Bohuslav Martinů and it is decorated with sculptor Olbram Zoubek's statues. Sometimes a worship of the Trutnov Protestant congregation (it has its own worship room in a rectory) is held here.

Janské Lázně (The Janské Spa) is a preaching station of the Trutnov congregation. Janské Lázně is a famous spa and a recreation centre under Černá Hora (the Black Mountain) in the Krkonoše Mountains. The healing springs were discovered here already in the 16th century. Their biggest development came after the First World War. In the year 1935 the first institute in Europe to treat the children affected by poliomyelitis was established here.

After 1945 the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) gained a small church from the German Augsburg congregation. It was built in 1879 in a Neo-Gothic style with a polygonal tower. In 1950 the ECCB bought a former rectory building near the small church; soon, this building became a popular recreational centre for the Protestants. It was known under the name Sola Fide. Later this popular building underwent a reconstruction and a modern mountain house was built. The new house of Sola Fide was solemnly reopened on the 26th of May 1991 and it belongs among the most favourite recreational centres of the ECCB members and their guests.



Church in Trutnov



Congregation House in Trutnov

Janské Lázně



Vrchlabí lies at the foothills of the Krkonoše Mountains under the slope Přední Žalý and the Jankův Hill at an altitude of 477 metres. The river Elbe

flows through the town. In this important tourist centre and the surrounding villages where the road to Špindlerův Mlýn leeds along the Elbe valley, there live about 13,500 inhabitants.

The foundation of Vrchlabí is being mentioned in the 13th century in connection with mostly German colonization. In the 16th century the royal mining hetman Kryštof of Gendorf bought the town. In that period (1533) Vrchlabí was promoted to the mining town with its coat of arms and mining laws. Silver, gold and also iron ores were mined and processed here. In 1624 Albrecht of Wallenstein who during the Thirty Years' War from here supplied the army by weapons and also by pitch and sulphur wreaths, bought the domain. Luther's teaching penetrated to Vrchlabí thanks to the German inhabitants and a bigger religious freedom was here. However, during the reign of the Morzins family hard counter-Reformation prevailed so, many families left abroad. In the 19th century the textile industry and small crafts began to spread in Vrchlabí. The Second World War interrupted a positive development of the town. A mostly German town of Vrchlabí became part of the Great German Empire. After the end of the war German inhabitants left and new people began to arrive into the town. After years of the totalitarian regime a new life came also here.

The most valuable historical monument in Vrchlabí is the Renaissance castle built by Christopher Gendorf in the middle of the 16th century. Inside we will find rare tiled stove with biblical scenes and a year 1545 is written on it. The former town hall also dates back to the Renaissance period; it was rebuilt in a Baroque style in the years 1733-1737. There is a Neo--Gothic deanery St. Lawrence's Church on the place of the original Gothic later Renaissance church which was demolished in 1886. A cooper font from 1556 was moved from the original church to the new church which has a valuable inner decoration. The former Baroque Augustinian monastery is the seat of the Museum of the Krkonoše Mountains. Historical houses from the 17th century which are preserved in their original condition are very valuable. The House with seven gables – the oldest one in Vrchlabí – is also a remarkable example of the urban architecture of that time.

A history of the German Lutheran congregation in Vrchlabí is connected with the life of the secret Protestants in Rudník where meetings were held also during the counter-Reformation time. Already in 1784 a congregation was founded here and it became a centre of the German Protestants in

the area. The church from the 2nd half of the 19th century is a ruin nowadays.

In Vrchlabí there were not many Protestants left. However, gradually their number began to increase so in the year 1900 a branch congregation was founded and an independent congregation was founded 10 years later. A remarkable Art Nouveau congregation house was built in today's Street of Czech Brethren according to a plan of Dresden architects Rudolf Schilling and Julius Willi Grabner. The Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) obtained this house after the Second Word War as well as on the 1st of March 1948 a newly formed Vrchlabí congregation. The room for worship has a coffered ceiling, decorative Art Nouveau elements and stained-glass windows. Later alterations were good for the prayer room.

The congregation has its own preaching station in Herlíkovice (today part of the village Strážné). You will certainly be impressed by a visit of this beautiful area. In the picturesque countryside of the Krkonoše Mountains which is dominated by Žalý Mountain, a small white Art Nouveau church from the year 1904 shines far and wide. The church was designed by the same architects who designed the Art Nouveau rectory in Vrchlabí. At that time they also designed an Art Nouveau church in Lánov near Vrchlabí but it was demolished in 1982. According to some sources this church in Herlikovice is the highest located Protestant church in our country. The ECCB got it after the German Protestant Church together with some houses. Later these houses were rebuilt and today they serve as the Mountain Home for summer and winter recreation, for meetings of young people and spiritual as well as lay workers.



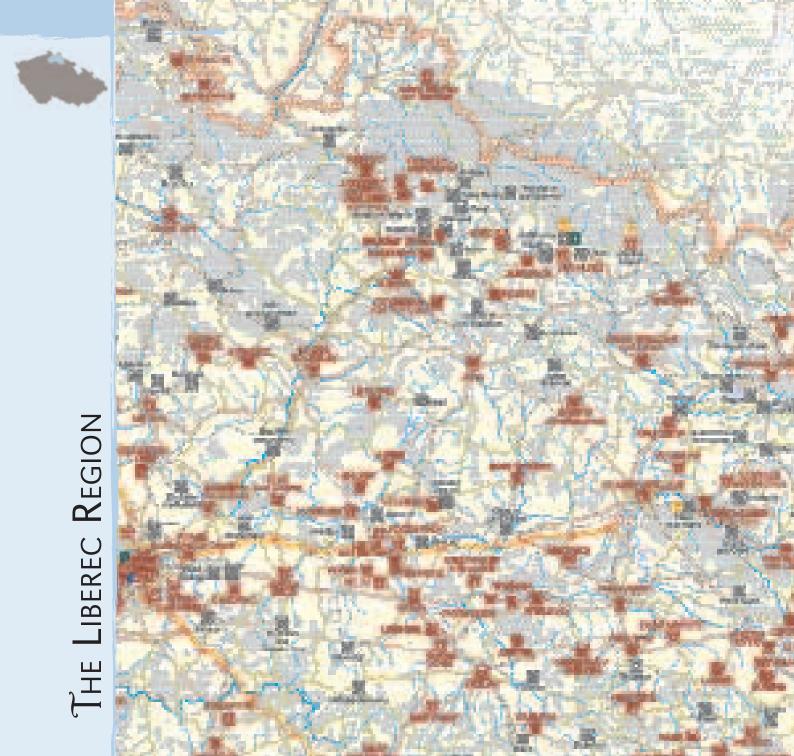
Church in Herlíkovice-Strážné



Mountain Home in Herlíkovice-Strážné

Congregation House in Vrchlabí







The Liberec Region, the second smallest in size but certainly not by importance is located in the north and partly northeast of Bohemia. For brief information we will give you some data: The area is 3,163 square kilometres (three percent of the territory of the Czech Republic), number of inhabitants is: 428,291.

It is a border region: In the north it borders on the Federal Republic of Germany and in the northeast on Poland. A look at the map shows us a diversity of its natural beauties. In the territory of the Liberec Region we find the Krkonoše Mountains, the Jizerské and Lužické Mountains, but also Český Ráj (the Czech Paradise), Kokořín region and the Bohemian Central Highlands (České Středohoří). In each of the four districts (Liberec, Česká Lípa, Jablonec nad Nisou, Semily) there are many natural, cultural and architectural monuments.

The natural center of the region is Liberec with almost one hundred thousand inhabitants. The Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) in the Liberec Region has its congregations in Česká Lípa, Jablonec nad Nisou, Jilemnice, Křížlice, Liberec, Libštát and in Nové Město pod Smrkem. We will show you three of them: the congregation in Křížlice, in Libštát and in Nové Město pod Smrkem. It might seem strange for someone that the congregation in Liberec does not have its own church. It had it and it was a beautiful one from the year 1868 which they got from the German Protestant Church in Bohemia after 1945. In the period of normalization in 1973 it had to be transferred to the property of the town, free of charge and on the 29th of May 1976 it was shot down and razed to the ground...

In the Liberec Region we will also find congregations of so called Seniority of Ochranov which follow the Unity of Brethren. Except Jablonec nad Nisou, Koberov, Rovensko pod Troskami, Turnov and Železný Brod it is also a remarkable small church in Tanvald – Smržovka, which we find in Kořenov.





I still have the countryside in front of my eyes. Behind Tanvald and Desná a twisting road climbs up to Příchovice; on both sides there are forests and hills – and suddenly on the left side of the road, on a long hill there appears a stockade building of unusual shape, dominating its surroundings.

At the beginning of the 20th century a preaching station of the German Protestant Church of the Augsburg Confession in Jablonec nad Nisou was established in Kořenov. In 1908 a desire to build their own church led the local Protestants to the young German architect Otto Bartning who was only 26 years old at that time. We already mentioned him when we spoke about "Luther's Castle" in Nové Město pod Smrkem. An ambitious young architect designed a simple octagonal stockade building which became a local dominant. The foundation stone was laid on the 20th of May 1909 and already on the 20th of October in the same year the small church was solemnly consecrated.

Post war history was repeated in the whole Czech and Moravian border region. The German inhabitants left the republic, new inhabitants came to the mountains and members of the Tanvald's congregation of the Unity of Brethren faithfully took care of their small church. The Seniority of Ochranov acquired the property in February 2009 and uses it especially during important church festivals. The village of Kořenov as well contributes to its maintenance.

On the 19th of September 2009 a big celebration of the 100th anniversary from its foundation was held here under the open sky, in front of the reconstructed shiny white small church. Besides other guests at this celebration there were also representatives of the Protestant congregation from the Austrian city of Dornbirn. And why just them? Since 1931 in this town there stands an identical small church, maybe just slightly bigger – thanks to the fact that the Austrian Protestants got the same plans for the construction of their church after the agreement with the inhabitants of Kořenov. Before you leave the top of the hill, make a break at the small church in Kořenov. You will not regret it.



If you go from Jilemnice towards Mísečky, soon turn left. A steep path will lead you to the charming Krkonoše village of Křížlice. You can also take the other road through Poniklá and Jestřábí. However, you will miss a splendid view of picturesque hills and meadows with views of Přední and Zadní Žalý dominated by a Protestant church. Nowadays, Křížlice is a part of the village Jestřábí. The first records of the settlement are from 1492. In the period of the Reformation the village was Protestant. After the Battle of the White Mountain, here as elsewhere in the Czech Lands there was an effort to re-catholicize the inhabitants.

This effort was not however very successful: soon after the proclamation of the Toleration Patent in 1781 the Protestants from all over Křížlice region meet here; as early as in 1782 they founded the congregation, whose members professed the Augsburg (Lutheran) Confession. At that time also the Lutheran Protestants from remote Libštát and Spálov belonged to the Lutheran congregation of Křížlice.

A toleration house of prayer similar to many permitted houses of prayer of that time (as we know them from other places) was built in 1786 behind the village, without a tower. It was additionally built in 1878 and the ringing of the bells has been resounding since that time over the mountain hills and valleys. The inner equipment of the church corresponds with the original house of prayer, with a pulpit over the altar and with a typical Lutheran "fence". Also wooden galleries and pews remind us of the old times. The organ was placed on the choir later. A cemetery which is situated around the church comes also from the toleration period and it has served its purpose until now. Nearby architecturally rich rectory with a mansard roof was built in 1871 and now it is used for a recreation. Old Protestant school belonging to the church is a popular place for summer and winter vacation for the young people.

Since 1918 the congregation is a part of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB). It is worth noticing that in the war years Křížlice was a part of the German Empire – but still the Word of God was preached here in the Czech language and it was a great support to many people. After the Second World War also the Protestants from Křížlice began to move to towns, but they always like to come back to their congregation.





CHURCH

OLD PROTESTANT SCHOOL







A small town of Libštát spreads out on both banks of a tiny river Oleška. It was already mentioned in 1322. Since 1525 it has already been called a small town. Today's population is about 1,013 and it is a part of a microregion of Pojizeří. There has been a very strong Protestant tradition. In the period of persecution the Protestants met secretly in their homes and thus resisted the forced recatholization. After the proclamation of the Patent of Toleration by Joseph II in 1781 the majority of Protestants (117 families) professed the Helvetian (Reformed) Confession, several families chose the Lutheran Confession.

The construction of a house of prayer was not long in coming. It was simple, otherwise it would not have been allowed. It had to stand at the edge of the village, it was not allowed to have a tower or decorative windows. It was built in a Neo-Classicist style and is beautiful in its simplicity. It has served since 1787 until now. On the original wooden doors we can read a biblical text: "Behold! Judge Standeth before the Door!" and the year 1786 – when the construction of the church started.

Soon, the congregation house next to the church was built; this was in 1789. The cemetery was founded in 1856; and it is owned by the congregation until now but it is maintained by the municipality. The former local minister Slavomil Daněk, who left in 1921 for Prague to the newly established Hus Theological Faculty, is buried here. He became a distinguished Professor of the Old Testament.

The families of the Augsburg Confession belonged to the closest Lutheran congregation

located in Křížlice. Believers gathered in families, sometimes they also used a house of prayer of the Helvetian Confession. Only in 1838 they were allowed to build their own house of prayer in the hill above a small river Oleška. Their church was consecrated in 1842, later a wooden belfry for three bells (donated from Dresden) was added and a cemetery was founded.

After the establishment of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) in 1918, both congregations joined into one and now the Divine service is given only in a house of prayer which was originally built for believers of the Helvetian Confession. The former Lutheran house of prayer slowly dilapidates and the cemetery does not fulfil its purpose, either. There is however effort to keep and preserve it. The house of prayer with a belfry and with the cemetery is now a protected site and in 2001 it was declared a cultural monument.

Preaching station in Spálov, a small village near Železný Brod also belongs to the congregation in Libštát. In 1888 the Protestants of the Augsburg Confession built here a chapel which served to the 80th of the last century; but later it was devastated and it should have been demolished. However after 1989 it was rescued by the local enthusiasts and cottagers (painter Vladimír Veselý founded a music and art festival "Indian Summer of Spálov" which became a famous cultural event over the years and which is also supported by a town of Semily). Since 1995 the Divine service has been given in the chapel again.

Let us also remember a protected tree near Spálov chapel – 200 years old lime.



HOUSE OF PRAYER IN LIBSTÁT



FORMER
LUTHERAN
HOUSE
OF PRAYER









In the eastern part of Frýdlant tip just 4 kilometres from the Polish border there lies Nové Město pod Smrkem at an altitude of 465 metres. It has been

a town since 1584 when Melchior of Redern, owner of the domain founded it for new settlers who came to mine tin and other non-ferrous metals. And a word Smrk (Spruce) in a name of the town suggests that we are near the highest mountain of the Jizera Mountains (1,124 m).

The original population here was predominantly German. In the 19th century there was a rapid development of the textile industry, the town was growing, but its fate was negatively influenced by two world wars. Today the town with 4,000 people is developing favourably. This is mostly thanks to the beautiful countryside and the development of tourism.

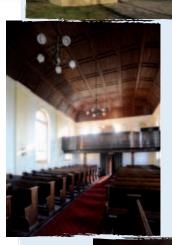
Local Protestants of the Augsburg Confession did want to become an independent congregation with its own church. It is interesting to know that St. Catherine's Church from 1607 was originally Protestant, only in the year 1652 it was re-consecrated as a Catholic church.

The members of the then preaching station entrusted a young architect Otto Bartning with a construction of their own church. Bartning lat-

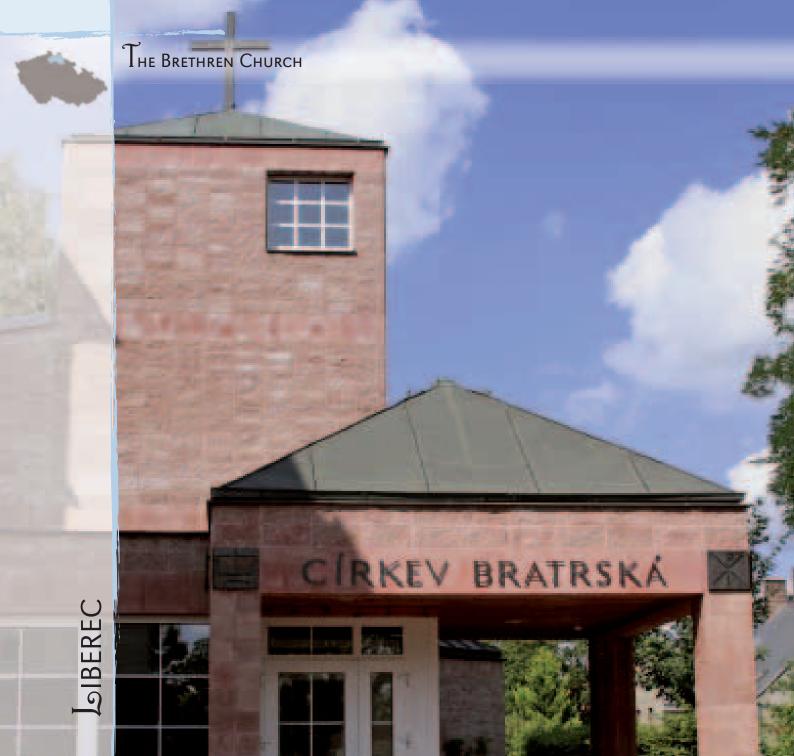
er became famous for many important religious and secular buildings.

"Luther's Castle" as the church was called according to Luther's famous song "The Strongest Castle is Our God" started to be built in 1911. The church was not the only issue; according to Bartning's plan a very modern and efficient set of interconnected buildings including a hall and a spacious congregation house was as well built. The building was consecrated on the 11th of August 1912. An independent congregation of the German Protestant Church in Nové Město pod Smrkem was established in 1928.

Both wars mixed fate of many people, especially in the border region. After the end of the Second World War the German population had to leave and the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) took over the church. The repatriates from Volyně and Polish Zelow became the new members of the congregation, but people also came from other places. Newly established congregations in the former German border region created varied communities; many problems appeared, indeed. Some congregations disappeared, others continued. The congregation of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren in Nové Město pod Smrkem belongs to those which have been kept.









The congregation of the Brethren Church (originally Unity of Czech Brethren) in Liberec was established in 1945 as a result of the after-war

settlement in Czechoslovakia caused by the displacement of German inhabitants living in the border regions. Under the border settlement plan, the Local Council in Prague iniciated the move of three families from Písek to Liberec. And it was this small community that the present congregation originated from. Today, it has 263 members, including the stations in Jilemnice, Nové Město pod Smrkem and Jablonec nad Nisou. The congregation station in Nové Město pod Smrkem was established in 1945 when people living in exile in Polish Zelow returned. It was a place where the Czech Protestants were moving to after the Battle of the White Mountain.

Spiritual activities are developing also in Chrastava, Frýdland, Smržovka a Semily.

Getting much larger in the 1970s and 1980s, the congregation tried to build a new house of prayer with propriate facilities. However, at the time of socialism (except a short period after 1968), it was banned to build new solitary sacral buildings, especially in urban areas. After a lot of difficulties, the Liberec congregation of the Brethren Church bought a villa in the middle of 1989 with the possibility to build a chapel and facilities which the congregation needed. The original house to which a building was annexed in 1980 became the first building on the Keilův Hill where lots of residental villas were put up in the following years. Constructed in the late Neo-Renaissance style on a piece of steep land, it has three floors and a terrace constructed at the same height as the attic and tower.

The architectural design was drawn up by the architect engineer Pavel Vaněček. It was the solid character of the original building with its outstanding tower that inspired the design of the chapel and its facilities. The tower with its 4 x 4 m groundplan became a composition principle of the whole building complex. It is a sort of "talk" of three towers. The low little tower leads to the hall, the Lord's table, pulpit and crucifix are situated in the middle tower while using the symbol of light, and the third tower is designed as a multipurpose meditation place. The space and interior conception of the chapel results from mass of the building object. It is maily con-

ceived as diagonal, the central space with the Lord's table, pulpit and crucifix being situated under the tower from which it is directly lighted. Its stair-step design also makes it a place to be used by the choir or music groups.

The entrance to the hall with its side dressing room, sanitary and the main door to the chapel is through the low tower. Space of the chapel can be enlarged due to a next-door small hall separated by a movable wall. The levelling staircase gets you to the level of the presbytery and small hall. The non-barrier entrance to the presbytery and other "upper" rooms is also through the outside ramp around the building. Next to the presbytery designed as variable space (a room for mothers and children, with a big parallel window to the chapel), there is a kitchen where food and drinks can be served, a children's clubroom for Sunday school, an archive and a library. The new congregation premises are connected with the original building by a corridor between both stair feet.

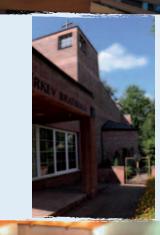
The electric organ with "church" sound is supposed to be replaced by a costly classical one in future. When the choir sings, physical acoustics are used, but with spoken word electro-acoustics are preferred to make voice intelligibile and clear, and to let the elderly and hard of hearing use the remote control system of earphones.

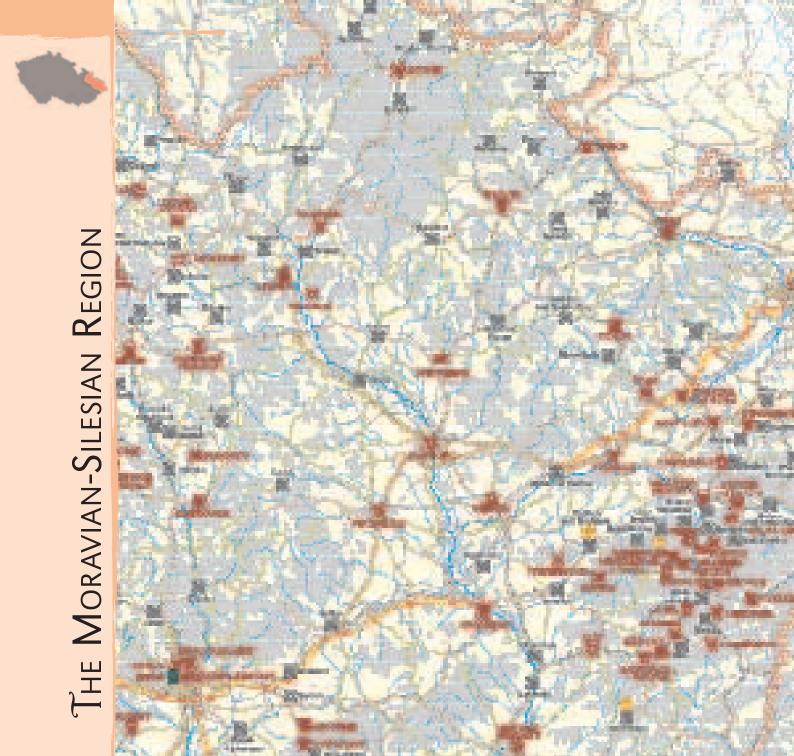
The Lord's table created by the sculptor Jiří Seifert is made of solid oak with natural mat surface. The pulpit is carved out of solid oak, too, and has a processed, smooth surface. And the same sort of wood was used to make a crucifix with a structural surface. The built-in pews with their sides from Italian terazzo have upholstered seats and backs. On the electric organ placed on the diagonal opposite the Lord's table, there is a tapestry with the old Christian motif of two fish and five pieces of bread, created by the artist Zdena Šafka.

The orientation design was made by the artist Jaroslava Antošová, and the architect Pavel Vaněček. In the small entry tower, on the heads of its columns, there are signs with Christian symbols written on the corners from two sides. The Reformation symbol – the chalice, symbol of the Brethren Church, cryptogram, A, Ω and the Testament tables. Over the entrance to the hall, there are sacramental symbols of baptism and Lord's Supper.











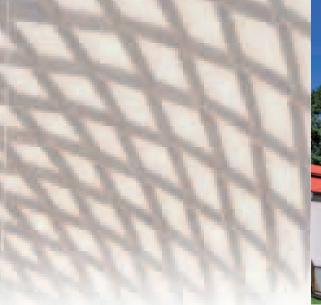
The easternmost region of the Czech Republic covers the area of 5,427 square kilometres and there live 1,247,370 inhabitants. It is the second highest number of inhabitants of all the regions. In the north, the Moravian-Silesian Region borders on two Polish Voivodeships Opole and Silesia, in the northeast it borders on the Žilina Region in the Slovak Republic, in the south it borders on the Zlín Region and in the west on the Olomouc Region. It is divided into six districts: Bruntál, Opava, Nový Jičín, Ostrava-Town, Karviná and Frýdek-Místek. There are four Euro-Regions in the region: the Beskydy Mountains, Praděd, Silesia and Těšín Silesia.

It is a hilly region; the Hrubý Jeseník Mountain with the highest point Praděd (1,492 metres) extends to the west. Praděd is the highest mountain of both regions, the Moravian-Silesian Region as well as the Olomouc Region. There are the Moravian-Silesian Beskydy with the Lysá Mountain (1,323 metres) and Radhošť in the east; we will find the Low Jeseník and Oderské Hills in the southwest. Forests cover 35 percent of the territory of the region. The southernmost part of the Silesian Lowlands – the Opava-Ostrava Basin touches the area around Ostrava.

The river Odra is the most well-known of the local rivers. It springs in the Oderské Hills, on its way it takes up the river Opava and Ostravice and it leaves our country at the mouth of the river Olše. There are three protected landscape areas in the region: the Beskydy Mountains, the Jeseníky Mountains, Poodří (area along the Odra river). The Moravian-Silesian Region is not only rich in the natural beauties; we can find here a lot of interesting and historically valuable castles and chateaux – Sovinec, Hukvaldy, Starý Jičín, Fulnek and others. The towns such as Nový Jičín or Opava or Štramberk are also worth mentioning.

However, there is also the Region of Ostrava – the biggest industrial centre of the Czech Republic with a regional capital of the Moravian-Silesian Region – Ostrava. We should not forget the famous natives: Sigmund Freud, František Palacký, Petr Bezruč, Johann Georg Mendel and also Emil Zátopek.

The Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren has also its congregations in this region. We will visit Český Těšín, Hodslavice, Krnov, Ostrava and Suchdol nad Odrou. Each of them has its own story...





Since the year 1920 Český Těšín has been sharing a fate of a town divided by the state borders. It used to be a bilingual but it is still one city. It lies on the left bank of the river Olše at the edge of the Ostrava Basin at an altitude of 270 metres and 25, 573 inhabitants live there. It is surrounded by several dams and the nearest town is a Polish town Cieszyn. It has several superlatives: the biggest and the busiest border crossing with Poland, the most important centre of the Polish minority in the Czech Republic and the smallest number of historical monuments in a divided town. Although, the Museum of the Těšín Region remained here as well as the Museum Library Silesia and the railway station

the smallest number of historical monuments in a divided town. Although, the Museum of the Těšín Region remained here as well as the Museum Library Silesia and the railway station of Košice-Bohumín track from the middle of the 19th century, most of the historical monuments can be found in the Polish side. Český Těšín had to face and deal with all these factors during the years; the ethnic relations between Czech, Poles and Germans were not negligible, either. Finally, in the year 1938 a Czech part of Těšín was connected to Poland and the town was formally united. But on the 1st of September 1939 the town was invaded by the German army and it became a part of the Great German Empire. This disastrous situation affected hardestly the Jewish community in both parts of Těšín: synagogues were burned and the Jewish inhabitants were deported to the extermination camps.

After the war, life in such a difficult nationality and political situation was returning back to normal only slowly. In recent years we can note a mutual approachement of both parts of the town as well as a developing cooperation across the borders which is also supported by common membership in the European Union.

A division of Těšín in 1920 caused difficulties also to the churches. In the Czech part of the town the Roman Catholic Church had one church from 1894, it was consecrated to the Heart of Jesus. The Protestants lost their church. In 1922 the Czech Protestant congregation was permitted and it joined the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) but they wished to remain at the Augsburg confession.

After the Second World War the renewed Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren congregation obtained a church after the German Evangelical Church. This functionalist building was built in a style of basilica in the year 1927 according to architects Koziel's and Schöne's plan. A nice rectory was built next to it. The Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren congregation in Český Těšín has been using the whole complex until now. In the recent years rooms for lecture activities and accommodation of the young people were also built.

102 · 103





In the Podbeskydské Hills at the southern edge of the Natural park Kojetín along the brook Zrzávka the municipality Hodslavice is stretching. A road connecting Nový Jičín and Valašské Meziříčí is crossing the village. There is a nice hilly countryside with plenty of forests, fields and meadows. The village is at an altitude of 337 metres and over 1,700 inhabitants live here.

The first records about Hodslavice come from the year 1411 from a time of Lacek's of Kravaře reign. The traditions in the region were Hussite and Protestant. A memorial small wooden church in Hodslavice is one of the oldest in Moravia. It was built either by the Hussites or by the Unity of Brethren (1551 is usually mentioned as a year of origin). Only later it became a Roman Catholic Church. Post-White-Mountain period brought a hard oppression particularly from the Olomouc Jesuits. Secret Protestants gathered in a small forest Domorac or in Mořkov at the miller's. In Štramberk they hid the Bible in an apiary.

After a declaration of the Toleration Patent the Protestants joined the Augsburg Confession. The congregation was established in the year 1782 and at the beginning the worship took place in a barn. A small wooden Toleration house of prayer was built already in 1783; this unstable building however did not stand long. In the year 1813 a construction of a new stone house of prayer started. At that time a foundation stone of a

church was laid in a small hill above the village. It was solemnly consecrated in the year 1819. In 1851 a quadrilateral tower with a bulbous turret was built above an entrance door. The windows in an apse were broadened. A choir above the entrance dates back to the 19th century. There is an old Protestant school near the former house of prayer. Jiří Palacký directed this school (at the beginning in his own house) from the year 1786. J. Palacký was our famous historian František Palacký's father.

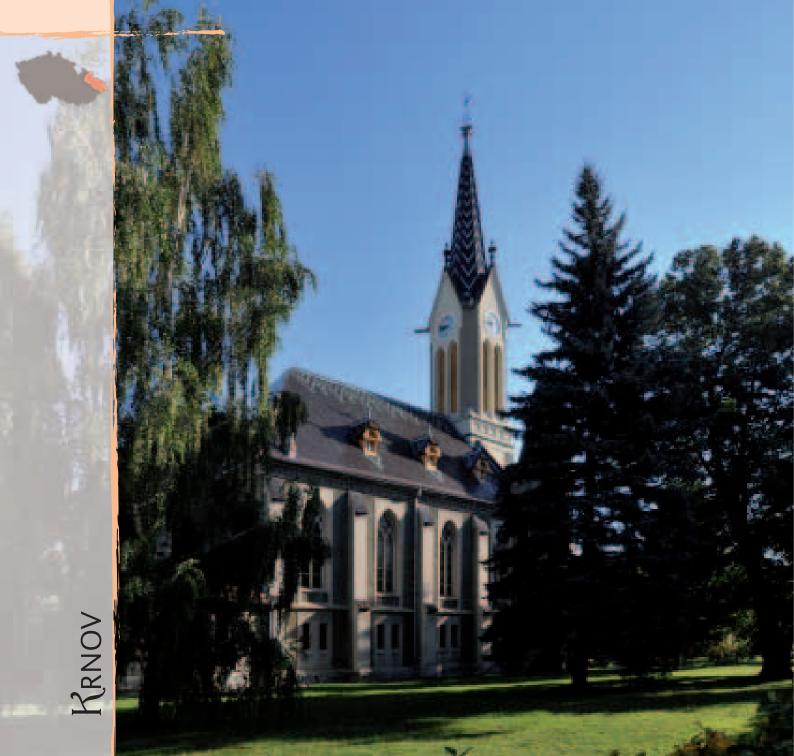
At the beginning of the 20th century the Protestant school was rebuilt in a congregation house; from outside it was however preserved in its original form. Josef Hromádka was a long-time curator of the congregation in Hodslavice. He was a father of a later significant theologian and professor of the Evangelical Theological Faculty in Prague Josef L. Hromádka. A hall in a congregation house is arranged as its memorial hall. The inhabitants of Hodslavice built a modern rectory in the garden of the congregation in the 1920°.

František Palacký's native house is nowadays a national cultural monument. Nearby a wooden small church on the small village green there is a monument of Palacký from the year 1948. This monument was made by professor Vladimír Navrátil. In the opposite hill we can see the Roman Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus built in a Neo-Romanesque style in 1907.





CHURCH WITH RECTORY



M

Krnov lies in the northeastern part of the Czech Republic and it is actually behind the mountains as if separated from the rest of the country by Hrubý

and Nízký Jeseník. On the confluence of the rivers Opava and Opavice, a few kilometres from the Polish border this town lies at an altitude of 316 metres and has 25,000 inhabitants.

Krnov has an old and rich history. The town is already mentioned in the 13th century. It is an important crossroad of trade routes, it got a privilege of having the town walls, the torso of which we can see until now. In the year 1377 the then Principality of Opava was divided and the Principality of Krnov was established. This was the time when a colonization, mostly German began. At the beginning of the 16th century during the reign of the Hohenzollern of Ansbach dynasty a late Gothic prince residence with the Renaissance elements was built in Krnov. A chateau became a significant building dominating the town. Later Jan Jiří Krnovský took a governance over the principality. He participated in the revolt of the Estates and therefore his property was confiscated after the Battle of the White Mountain. In the year 1631 Karel of Lichtenštejn who was already an owner of the Principality of Opava bought also the Principality of Krnov. The dynasty of Lichtenštein hold this area until 1945 when it was taken away by the Czechoslovak state.

The 19th century was a positive period for Krnov. A textile industry was developed and since the 1870^s Riegr brothers' organ production became known and later even world-wide famous. Many nice public buildings and also factory villas arose here. They were built by significant architects from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and also from Germany. In the period of the Munich Treaty in 1938 a majority of the inhabitants reported to the German nationality and during the Second World War Krnov belonged to the Great German Empire with all post-war consequences. In the year 1945 the town was bombed.

Unfortunately the 1970° and the 1980° as well as the period of the communist regime

deprived Krnov of many valuable historical monuments. We mention a parish Church of St. Martin. Originally it was Gothic, in the 1780s it was rebuilt in a Baroque style. There are valuable Renaissance tombstones. St. Benedict's Church is the oldest preserved building of this type in the Moravian-Silesian Region. Its foundations come from the 1st half of the 13th century, the archaeological research revealed valuable wall paintings. The church belongs among cultural monuments. In a church at the Minorite monastery we find beautiful frescoes by Joseph Stern from the year 1765. Above Krnov in the hill Cvilín there is an old pilgrimage place with Our Lady of Sorrows' Church and with the Way of the Cross. On the top of the hill there is also a look-out tower with beautiful views of surroundings.

The Protestant Church on today's Hus Square is a three-nave Neo-Gothic building from the

beginning of the 20th century. A plan according to the architect Franz Blasch was realized by builder Ernst Latzel; an organ comes from the local organ company Rieger and Klos. The church served the German Protestant church till 1945. After a departure of the German inhabitants it was used for some time by the Czechoslovak Hussite Church (CHC). The Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren congregation that took over the church was founded on the 1st of January 1949. In the 1970s the church could be reconstructed thanks to a big help and it was solemnly reopened on the 9th of July 1978. The Protestant church

with its 52 metres high tower dominates Krnov and it is a spiritual home for a small but live congregation.

It is worth noticing that between the years 2008–2009 Krnov was declared "The Town of the Trees" for its excellent way of taking care of the urban greenery.





The town of Ostrava is the regional capital and the statutory town of the Moravian-Silesian Region. It lies in the Ostrava Basin, south of the Opava Hills at an altitude of 208–334 metres. In the whole huge industrial agglomeration there live about 312,000 inhabitants. It is a specific area by its size, big concentration of industry and by its entire history.

Once a small settlement grew here on the amber trail over the river Ostrá (Ostravice); according to which the town got its name. For long years it belonged to the Hukvaldy domain of the bishops of Olomouc. Later the growing village was also spreading along the confluence of the rivers Opava and Odra and was divided into the Moravian and Silesian Ostrava. During the Middle Ages the town was developing well; a decline occured later during the Thirty Years' War

In 1763 miller Jan Augustin of Klimkovice discovered stone coal in Burňa Valley in Silesian Ostrava. However, coal mining began later,in the 1780s. The names of the Wilczek family (the owners of the Silesian-Ostrava domain), the Rothschilds and the Habsburg Těšín archdukes appeared in this connection. In 1828 the archbishop of Olomouc Rudolf Jan founded steelworks in Vítkovice. A rapid industrial development of the town followed, surrounding villages merged with Ostrava, humps appeared. In 1924 a big Ostrava arose. The important dominant sight of the town is the New Town Hall with its 85 metres high tower from 1930. It is a work of architect Karel Kotas. Another significant monuments is St. Wenceslas' Roman Catholic Church which is considered to be the oldest preserved building monument in Ostrava. The Divine Saviour's Cathedral from 1889 is the second biggest church in Moravia. We can also visit the Silesian-Ostrava castle. Some parts of Ostrava were under Polish or German occupation during the Second World War.

Today we can find recultivated areas and nice parks in Ostrava. The town, however, suffers by air pollution. The Polanský Forest and the Polanská Meadow are protected natural areas. Four permanent theatres, Janáček's Conservatory, Janáček's Philharmonic Orchestra and also the University of Ostrava are here.

The Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) has one congregation in Ostrava. From the German Protestant church the Protestants gained a monumental Christ's Church from a ficelle masonry and with asymmetrically built tower. They share this church with the Silesian Church of the Augsburg Confession. The church was built in the early 20th century and it is a unique work of architects Ludwig Faigl and Karel Troll from Vienna. In Ostrava the ECCB congregation was established in 1919. Few years later near the German Chris't Church a congregation house with a big Třanovský's hall and with relevant additional rooms, with a flat for a preacher and with a few tenants flats was built. The building was done by builder Emil Ženatý.

The second congregation of the ECCB was in Ostrava – Vítkovice. In 1999 both congregations were connected together.





Suchdol nad Odrou is a township, it lies in the district of Nový Jičín near the Moravian Gate and the Protected landscape area of Poodří and has

landscape area of Poodří and has around 2,500 inhabitants. The Kletenský brook flows through the village and pours into the river Odra. Although Suchdol is at an altitude of 272 metres there is quite a rough climate there because the country is opened towards the north. It lies on the once important amber route between Danube and Visla which led along the left bank of the Odra river. The Slavonic settlement from the 13th century was destroyed by the Tatars. Mostly German colonists began to arrive here in the 14th century. The lords of Kravaře owned the domain but the owners were frequently changed. The inhabitants of Suchdol and its surroundings underwent the biggest agony during the Thirty Years' War. The imperial army, the Swedes and the Danish army were changing here. In 1624 a plague killed most of inhabitants. In 1653-1828 the Serenys family were the rulers of the domain. Another disasters came during the Napoleonic Wars. The soldiers were changing here again. After the unfortunate Battle of Slavkov (Austerlitz) they brought the typhoid into the region.

The post-White-Mountain period meant a religious persecution for the secret Protestants. Under the influence of Kristián David of Ženkláva the members of the Unity of Brethren in Suchdol and its surroundings decided to leave their homes and find a better place for living. They found such a place at Mikuláš Zinzendorf's domain in the Upper Lusatia. He was a convinced Lutheran and he took care of these refugees. At his domain a town Ochranov (Herrnhut) was founded and a renewed Unity of Brethern was formed here on the 13th of August 1727. Thanks to their missionary activity they soon began to be widely known as the Moravian Brethren.

After the declaration of the Toleration Patent the secret Protestants who did not leave Suchdol confessed to their confession. In 1782 a congregation was established and a house of prayer was built soon.

In the later years the situation in the region calmed down slowly. Suchdol became an important railway station and a municipality was formed. After the foundation of Czechoslovakia there was a strong tendency to establish its own

"Sudetenland"here. In the 1920° families of railwaymen and a few families from Zelow came here. After the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia came into being, Suchdol became a part of the Great German Empire. Trains taking the prisoners to the concentration camps, were passing this railway station and after the war some of them were coming back in the same way. A memorial plaque at the railway station in Suchdol commemorates their suffering.

After the year 1945 new inhabitants began to come to the region, especially from the Wallachia region. The Germans had to leave the Republic. The congregation of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren was confirmed on the 20th of December 1946. The beginnings were hard. The later period connected with the collectivization of villages did not bring peace, either. The Protestants of Suchdol gathered in the rectory, in a congregation room. A big church which belonged to the German Lutheran Church before, was only lent to the congregation. There are two churches in Suchdol. The

Lutheran church was built in the 1850s in a Neo-Classicist style by a significant Austrian architect Ludwig Förster. Only recently it was repossessed by the congregation. Today's Roman Catholic St. Catherine's Church from the 16th century was originally Protestant. There is even a memorial plaque saying that J. A. Komenský preached here between 1618-1621. Both churches as well as today's Catholic parish from 1739 are rated among cultural monuments. The parish is however falling into disrepair. The railway station building belongs among the protected monuments, too. There are two museums in the town - Museum of

Suchdol nad Odrou Municipality and Museum of the Moravian Brethren. This museum is managed carefully. The fate of the Unity of Brethren and its members is reflected here.

In 2008 the Protestants of Suchdol celebrated the 150th anniversary of their church. Thanks to the common effort from home and from abroad, today their church is a dignified place showing that "the time of churches is not over, yet."





M

The town is located in the South Silesia (the Těšín Princedom in the past), on the right embankment of the river Odra. After the Těšín area split up, it

became a part of Czechoslovakia, in 1938–1939 it was Polish and later, till the end of World War II, it was a part Germany. In fact, there is a two town: (Old) Bohumín and Šunychl (Schönichl) developing wildly after Ferdinand's North Railway was opened in 1847. In 1924, Šunychl and its neighbouring villages got the town status and changed the name to New Bohumín. Later, in 1973, it united with (Old) Bohumín, the name of which it kept. A third of the population in both the places was German, displaced after World War II. Nowadays, Bohumín has the population of about 22,700 people.

The Protestant congregation of Bohumín originated from the movement of the Silesian German and Polish people in the late 19th century. The Augsburg congregation started being active in Orlová in 1887 and a year later a branch Lutheran congregation was established there. In 1888, the local Protestants founded a preaching station of the Orlová congregation which had 181 participants at that time. To serve their worship, they borrowed a room at the local school from the management of the Northern Railway. However, the railway school was moved to another place soon and they had to look for another meeting room.

Since the town council refused their demand for using a school room for their religious purposes, they rented a part of Moritz Saffier's pub but soon started to consider building their own church. Their worship took place first Sundays of the month and also on Good Friday, i.e. thirteen times a year.

With an intervention of Dr. Theodor Haas, a Moravian-Silesian Protestant superintendent and rector, and supported by associations as well as individuals, a Protestant church started to be built. After the plot was provided by Count Heinrich Larisch-Mönnich, the foundation stone of the new church (nowadays Štefánikova Str.) was laid on the 12th of August, 1900. It was a one nave. Neo-Gothic, red-brick church with a tower, built on the Latin cross shaped plan, constructed by the local builder Josef Berg who constructed it according to the Brno architect Julius Leischnig's project. The total cost amounted to about 60,000 crowns. A part of money was donated by the municipal board, local enterpreneurs and believers as well as by the faithful ones from the Netherlands and Germany, most money was given by Gustav Adolf's Association. The church was consecrated in 1901 and supplied with bells on the 15th of October, 1913. This ceremony was attended by the Old Catholics from Bohumín who also started useing the church for their services.

After Czechoslovakia was founded, the branch congregation and their mother congregation joined the Silesian Evangelical Church. In 1922 it became independent and built a rectory next to the church (nowadays Masarykova Str.) four years later. As written in the memorial book of Bohumín from 1925, the Protestant parish office in New Bohumín looked after approximately 1,000 parishioners at that time, two thirds of them being German and almost one third Polish.

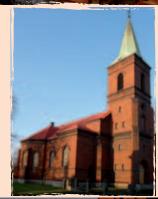
During World War II, the congregation nearly disappeared. The church was given to the German Evangelical Church and confiscated after the war. The Silesian Evangelical Church did not get it back until the beginning of the 1970s when, in 1974, it was reconstructed to get its today's look. The rectory, though, was repaired a long time after it, in 1991.

Czech Protestants within the Orlová congregation gained independence after Czechoslovakia was founded in 1918, and in 1924 their congregation was established and joined the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren.

Already from 1923, Czech Protestant worship was taking place in Bohumín once a month, in the art room of the Czech school. In 1933, the preaching station of the congregation in Orlová was founded. Except for the war period during which the Orlová congregation was actually dissolved, the preaching station has worked up to now, having their meetings in the church belonging to the Silesian Evangelical Church which they borrowed from them. No worship is served in these days.

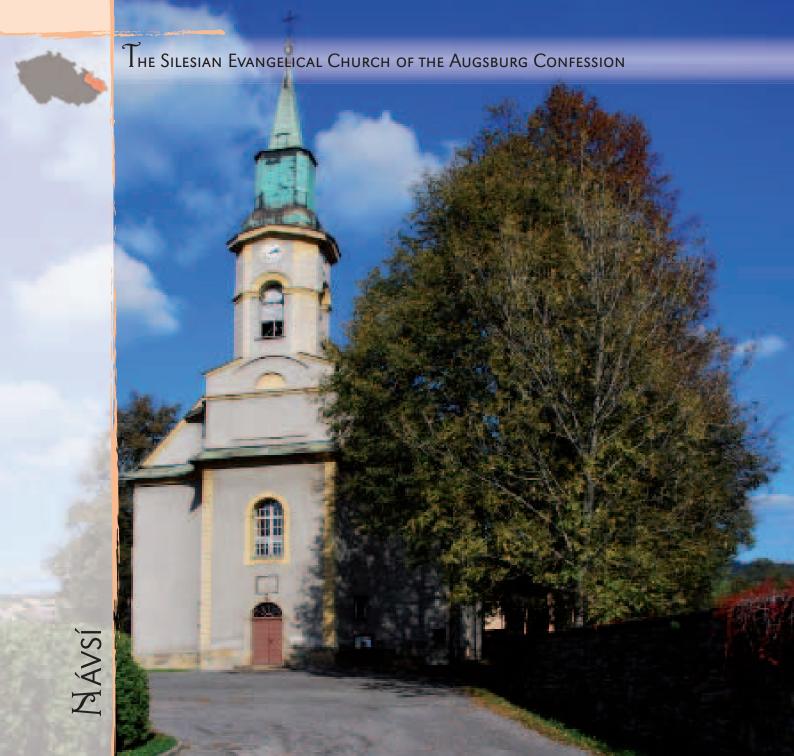
The first Old Čatholic worship was served in 1904 by the rector Erhart from Mährisch Schönberg / Šumperk. 72 people, mostly of German nationality, converted. Later, the branch congregation of the Old Catholic congregation in Friedland an der Mohra / Frýdlant nad Moravicí (nowadays Břidličná) was founded. The congregation was sometimes called Olmütz - Friedland - Oderberg / Olomouc - Břidličná - Bohumín. Service in Bohumín was given 6-8 times a year in the Protestant church. The Old Catholic branch congregation was dissolved in connection with the displacement of the Germans after World War II.











Taking a train from Český Těšín or Třinec to Žilina, the last Protestant toleration church to be found is the one in Návsí u Jablunkova (386 metres above sea level; 3,789 inhabitants), right before the Slovak border. The local congregation was established in 1791 although the people in the Těšín princedom started professing an Augsburg faith as early as in the 16th century and all churches were Protestant.

In time of the counter-Reformation, the Protestants in the Jablunkovsko region met in woods of the Beskydy mountains, holding their secret worship in Dolní Lomná in the place called Kostelky where you can find a modest memorial now.

Apart from a wooden church, a wooden building of a Protestant school was built and a bricked rectory started to be constructed, too. In 1808, the original school building was replaced by a bricked one which became public in 1869. Since the 1990s, it has been used as a training and recreational centre for the general public. This cultural monument is called The congregation House of Emaus nowadays, offering 20 beds in 5 rooms and two common rooms.

The wooden church was replaced by the present one in 1820 and its tower annexed to it in 1849. The one nave Empire church has a capacity of 600 people (including those on the galleries), its speciality is the restored mechanical tower clock from 1891, as well as three bells, already the fourth set of bells in this church, the former ones were being confiscated for military purpose in the past. The original ground floor rectory was rebuilt into two-storey one on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the congregation's foundation. In the 1990s, it was

reconstructed thoroughly and a new part built up to provide another flat for a pastor.

In 1841, the congregation set up a Protestant cemetery where some eminent pastors are buried, for example Jan Winkler, a revivalist and writer, or Senior František Michejda who was a founder and co-founder of several associations and organizations dedicated to improving social conditions, and an editor of a number of ecclesiastical and professional magazines which he issued in the Návsí rectory. An evidence of his importance is a fact that he was visited by President T. G. Masaryk.

In the beginning, the church in Návsí was used by the Protestants from fifteen villages situated in the Jablunkovsko region. Eventually, however, the congregation established three other Protestant communities that became independent. Owing to a new Czech-Polish border set after World War I, three villages behind the Jablunkovský Pass became Polish, and in 1930 the local Protestants founded their own congregation and built their new church in Istebná.

In 1950, the Hrádek congregation gained independence. In 2009 the congregation in Písek u Jablunkova was established and the following year, their new church, an architecturally very interesting building, was finished. The Návsí congregation is a part of the Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession and works with people of all ages, offering leisure activities for children and young people.





EMAUS CONGREGATION HOUSE



The origins of the Protestants from Orlová date back to the Reformation time when Martin Luther's teaching started to spread in Silesia.

At first, they gathered in a confiscated Benedictine church. Situation changed during the counter-Reformation when they had their church confiscated and were made to hold their secret meetings in the woods of Holotovec in Lazy. The pressure was released in 1707 and one of the "mercy churches" could be built in Cieszynia. Finally, the freedom came in 1781 when the Toleration Patent was issued, followed by the Protestant Patent in 1861.

The Orlová Protestants decided to build their own church. Its foundation stone was laid on the 24th of June, 1861 and a year later, on the 15th of October, 1862 the building was finished and consecrated.

Between 1861–1886, the growing congregation was unified, Protestant cemetery set up, bells were bought and Protestant school founded. The number of believers was increasing steadily.

The following period was badly affected by World War I. The congregation lost some of its members and in 1916, the bells were confiscated which made the local Protestants very sad. The confiscated bells were not substituted by new ones until the end of the war. In 1921, a new organ was bought, the church was electrified and a new altar placed in it in 1929. The Protestant cemetery, though, had to be closed due to increased mining activities in 1930. A new congregation house was put up and opened on the 25 of October, 1932.

During World War II, lots of ministers were persecuted and arrested. After the war, the congregation's life quieted down again. In 1950, the church had to be repaired when damaged by mining. The bad effect the mining had on Orlová got worse and the village started to change. A part of the congregation's member had to move away. The congregation was going through very difficult times.

Revival of congregation life came in the 1960^s. An increasing number of children was attending religion and confirmation lessons, and more repairs were done on the church in 1970. Due to lack of money, the congregation got into debt. Also, the bad effect that the mining had on the church building was more and more visible. The church needed a complete overhaul. It started

in May 1980 and on the 26th of June, 1983, the building was consecrated.

In the early 1980°, the decision to build a new rectory was taken. The building was finished and started to be used in 1987. The old congregation house was demolished and a farm building put up.

Since 1989, the congregation has been placing emphasis on working with children and young people. The Christian Association Benjamin was founded in the 1990^s, and holiday and weekend camps, as well as other activities are organized regularly.

In 2004, the church had already been destroyed by mining that much that from safety reasons, the congregation was forced to stop using it. The problem was discussed thoroughly, even demolishion of the building was considered, a year later, however, the church was decided to be overhauled again.

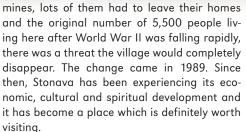
Nowadays, the local congregation is a living part of the Church, worship is held regularly and various meetings and activities organized to attract children and youth. The church has become a cultural centre of Orlová.

The Protestant church in Orlová is one nave. late Classicist building from 1862, constructed by builder Josef Gros from Těšín. It is an interesting example of a religious architecture of the second part of the 19th century which had a significant influence on urbanism of Orlová and on the architecture of the whole North Moravian region. It is a brick, plastered, one nave building with a front tower and a polygonal closed presbytery with an altar made in the late Neo-Renaissance style by the woodcarver Nitra from Horní Bludovice. In its centre, there is a picture of Christ the Victor. On both sides of the altar, two wooden statues are placed -Apostle Peter on the left and Apostle Paul on the right. The altar is decorated with several figural reliefs of angels. Below the top crucifix, there is a circular coloured stained-window with a symbolic motif of a dove. The space in front of the altar is occuppied by a baptistery from the late 19th century. The pulpit is set in the left wall of the presbytery with a baldaquin. The organ is placed on the choir. In the tower, there are three bells made by Wenle company from Bockeren near Leipzia in 1918.

The church was restored in 2005 and worship is held here regularly.







On the way to the village, take a route from Český Těšín to Karviná and turn left just before you get to the town.

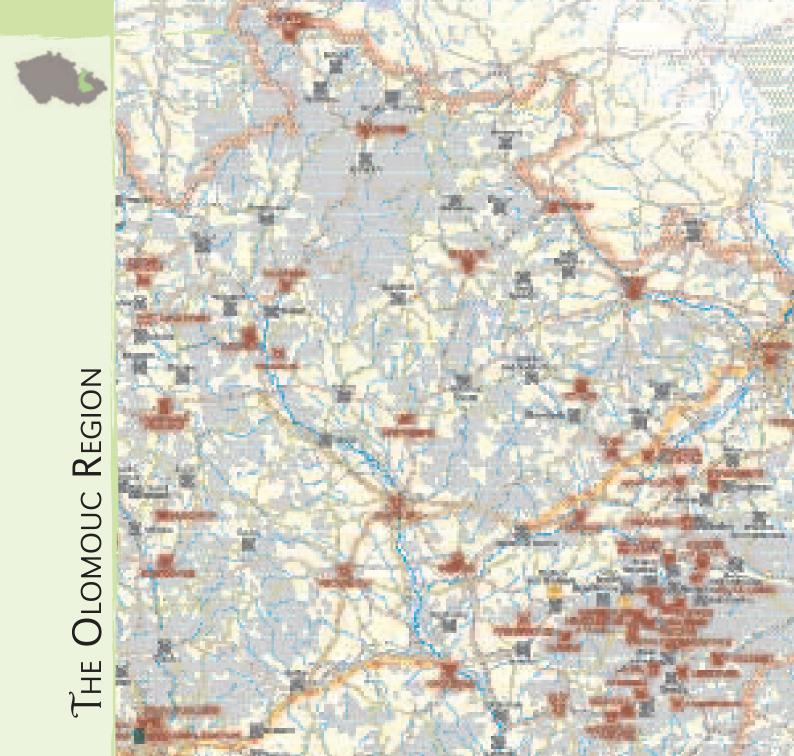
Occupying the area of about 14 km², Stonava has the population of nearly 2,000 people. The first records about it date back to 1415.

After the Toleration Patent was issued,

After the Toleration Patent was issued, the Protestants in Stonava belonged to the Bludovice congregation, burying their dead in a Catholic grave-yard. Their own cemetery founded on the donated piece of land was consecrated in 1858 and a chapel with a bell a year later. The church was built and consecrated in 1938. It is 18 metres long and 10.5 metres wide. The congregation was established in 1950.

Modern history of Stonava is closely connected with coal mining which gradually changed the village and its inhabitants' lives. Due to the







The Olomouc Region is situated in the northeastern part of the Czech Republic. It covers an area of 5,267 square kilometres. Almost 650,000 inhabitants live in its five districts (Olomouc, Prostějov, Přerov, Šumperk and Jeseník). The northwestern part of the district of Jeseník belongs to Czech Silesia. The bounderies of the Olomouc Region are formed by its northern state border with the Principality of the Lower Silesia and the Principality of Opole in Poland; in the east lies the Moravian-Silesian Region, in the southeast the Zlín Region, in the southwest the South-

Moravian Region and in the west we can find the Pardubice Region.

The Olomouc Region is a land of natural beauties. In its northern part there is the Hrubý and Nízký Jeseník mountain range with a large protected landscape area of the Jeseníky Mountains which are shared by the Olomouc Region and the Moravian-Silesian Region. Along its ridge there used to be an old historical border between Moravia and Silesia. We will also find here the highest mountain of both regions Praděd (1,492 metres). The Rychleby Mountains in the very northern part are charming,not yet visited by many tourists. In Javorník there is a beautiful chateau Jánský vrch and a nearby village of Travná used to be a place of meeting for young people. The spa of Jeseník and Dolní Lipová are also much sought by tourists. From the east the Drahanská Highland protects a fertile area of Haná in the region of the Central Moravia.

The river Morava flows through the Olomouc Region from north to south. The protected landscape area where the river creates interesting meanders is called Litovelské Pomoraví. Near Troubky known from devastating floods in the recent years, the river Bečva flows into the river Morava and then the river already leaves the Olomouc Region. A small part of the region in the northeast belongs to a river basin of the river Odra.

Besides agricultural area of Haná there are various industrial centres in the particular towns of the Olomouc Region. The regional capital Olomouc is an important industrial centre. It is not necessary to say that in the Olomouc Region we can find many interesting towns, castles and chateaux with a rich history besides valuable natural monuments. Bouzov, Helfštýn, Plumlov or Velké Losiny and many others, important spas, well-preserved folklore areas such as Historical Village Reserve of

Příkazy or Kojetín with a celebration of the Ride of the Kings.

The Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) has ten congregations in the Olomouc Region – we will visit Olomouc, Přerov, Šumperk and Hrabová. Each of these places has its own interesting story connected to a history of the particular town in which it is located.





Between Šumperk and Mohelnice the river Morava flows through the Mohelnice Furrow. Approximately in the middle of this distance we will find Zábřeh na Moravě and from here it is not far to Hrabová any more. It is a small village with

to Hrabová any more. It is a small village with about 500 inhabitants; it lies at an altitude of 290 metres but we can also find higher hills in the surroundings: Bílý kámen (588 metres) and Malá Polanka (450 metres). Near Hrabová in Vitošov a big limestone quarry with a limekiln is visible from afar.

We do not know a lot about a history of Hrabová, eventhough the first written record dates back to the year 1334. We can get more information about local life from the period of the First Czechoslovak Republic (1918–1938) when cultural societies (reading clubs) started to appear and the activity of gymnastic organization Sokol came into being. It is necessary to remember an untiring activity of the Protestant vicar Rudolf Šedý who travelled to Hrabová from far away Svébohov. He supported the interest of the local people in education and he was inviting interesting quests from home and abroad. In Hrabová a number of Protestants gradually increased. So called "conversion movement" after the establishing of Czechoslovakia played an important role in this connection. A congregation of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren (ECCB) was founded in 1923. At the beginning the worship was held in a Sokol hall or at a school. A foundation stone of a church in Hrabová was laid on the 17th of May 1925. The building was designed by architect Oldřich Liska. The church was built in a modern purist style emphasizing a worship part of the building as well as rooms for congregation activity including a flat for the minister. A room for worship is hidden in a lengthwise bulding with interesting windows. Before a construction of the church was finished

(in the year 1933) the worship took place in a small hall. A side staircase with a niche for a scupture of a chalice and a tower with three bells are attached to the main building.

A unique building – probably the only one in the Czech Republic-got an astronomical cupola with a real astronomical telescope. Children who visited the church in Hrabová were especially fascinated by observing the surrounding landscape through the pieces of colour glass placed in the cupola of the astronomical observatory. Since the year 2003 the Protestant church in Hrabová has been listed as a cultural monument





0

In the southern part of the Olomouc Region, in the centre of Haná lies its capital Olomouc. It was built on the confluence of the rivers Morava and

Bystřice at an altitude of 219 metres. The sixth largest town of the Czech Republic is a home for more than 100,000 inhabitants. It is an important railway junction and it is surrounded by a highway network. Olomouc is a seat of the Archbishops of the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church but also the University of Palacký, Oldřich Stibor's Theatre and the Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra.

Olomouc was probably founded during the reign of Václav I but already in 1063 Vratislav II founded a bishopric here. After Prague, Olomouc is the second oldest and the second largest historic town reserve. Here we can find buildings which are national cultural monuments: a Romanesque castle from the reign of the Přemyslid dynasty with a cylindrical tower and with the rests of a palace belonging among the most valuable monuments and representing one of the most important Romanesque architectural monuments in our country.

Near the tower in a later residence of the capitular deanery, Václav III was murdered on the 4th of August 1306. By his death the Přemyslid dynasty died out by the sword. A part of the castle is St. Wenceslas' Cathedral which was founded in the year 1109. Also the Hradisko Monastery, St. Moritz's Church with a unique organ and a set of Baroque fountains are national cultural monuments. There is the Holy Trinity's Column from the 18th century on the Upper Square which has been listed as UNESCO cultural heritage since the year 2000. From a tower of the Renaissance town hall from the year 1530 you can get a beautiful view of a town and its surroundings - Svatý kopeček with the Premonstrate monastery and with the Visitation of Our Lady's pilgrimage basilica from the 2nd half of the 17th century.

The Protestants in Olomouc have their history, too. Eventhough, such a strongly Catholic town had refused Jan Hus' teaching long time ago, the situation was however changing during the years. Many German inhabitants lived in Olomouc and they began to support Martin

Luther's teaching. Hus' thoughts and memories of the Unity of Brethren did not fully disappeared in the town, either. After the Battle of the White Mountain the local Protestants began to be harshly punished for their participation in the revolt of the Estates in the year 1618.

No Protestants were found in Olomouc after the declaration of the Toleration Patent by Joseph II; so thorough the recatholization had been. The first Protestant worship took place on the 20th of January 1811. Even the soldiers from a local garrison participated in it. The biggest problem similarly as in other beginning congregations was to get a place for gathering. The Body of Christ's Chapel was temporarily lent to the Protestants but only until the German Protestants built their own "red" church in 1902. It was not however allowed to serve the Czech worship there – it was from nationalist rather than confessional reasons.

The congregation of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren was founded in Olomouc in 1906. They built their house of prayer in today's Hus Street. Soon the building was not sufficient and therefore in 1913 architect Otto Kuhlmann from Charlottenburg was asked to design an extension. The preparations were interrupted by the First World War but on the 4th of July 1920 a new church with a tower was solemnly consecrated. The spacious building is very suitable, both of its original parts are ingeniously linked. A room for worship is located on the 1st floor. Big windows bring light into it, new chandeliers and pews were installed. The last adaptations of the interior were made after the big flood in 1997. A bell was moved from the "red" church. It initially belonged to the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren after the Second World War. However, in the 1960s the church had to be given for the needs of the University Library in Olomouc.

The Conservatory of the Evangelic Academy of the ECCB has its seat near the Archbishop's palace. This school was moved here from Kroměříž. In Olomouc the Czechoslovak Hussite Church (CHC) has also its own church. The Orthodox St. Gorazd's Church stands near the Protestant church on the other side of the river Morava.



Near the Upper Moravian Vale in the Moravian Gate near the confluence of the river Bečva with the river Morava lies a town Přerov (210 metres above sea level; 47,000 inhabitants) which is an important railway junction.

The bishop of Olomouc Jindřich Zdík founded the town in the 1st half of the 12th century and from 1256 it became a royal town thanks to Přemysl Otakar II. In the place of the original citadel a Gothic castle was built, later it was rebuilt in the Renaissance style. Today there is a seat of Jan Amos Komenský's Museum. The Upper Town was founded in the 2nd half of the 15th century. The oldest building is the main St. George's Parish Church mentioned already in 1131. There are several preserved late Gothic and Renaissance houses on the Upper Square. For many years Přerov was in the hands of the Pernštejns and the Žerotíns dynasties. In this period the town developed well. Members of the Unity of Brethren settled here from the end of the 15th century. Church synods took place here and the Brethren School was of a great importance. Komenský was studying and later (between the years 1614-1618) was teaching at this school. In Přerov Jan Blahoslav was born on the 20th of February 1523. He was one of the prominent representatives of the Unity of Brethren. Sculptor František Bílek made his statue in the town.

A strong Jewish community was in Přerov, too. Today a synagogue belongs to the Orthodox church. The agony of the Thirty Years' War affected Přerov, too. The construction of a railway junction from Vienna and from Prague and the industrial development greatly contributed to the modern history of the town.

Today Přerov is a modern town with nice parks (Michalov). It is worth visiting the Neo-Renaissance Town House, the State Natural Park Žebračka is also interesting. In a nearby Předmostí we will find a monument of our ancestors who lived here 25,000 years ago. The instructive trail leads to the Monument of mammoths hunters with archaeological finds. Since 1992 Přerov has been a Historic Town Zone. In the year 1997 the town was severely damaged by a flood.

Although Přerov was characterized by so important Czech Brethren past, after the declaration of the Toleration Patent not even one Protestant was registered here. Only in the 1880s a small church was built for the German railway employees of the Augsburg confession. The Czech Protestants also used to go to this church. The sermons were in the German language so it created language problems. The first Czech Helvetian worship was held in the year 1887. The Czech Protestants gathered here until 1899. Later they had to think about their future especially in a situation when a preaching station was founded in Přerov. (An independent congregation was established on the 10th of January 1922). A temporary gathering place in a former locksmith's workshop was absolutely not suitable. Therefore it was

decided to build a church. They got land for the construction in the centre of the town. On the 9th of May 1907 a foundation stone of the church was ceremonially laid. The church was built according to the famous Berlin architect Otto Kuhlmann's plan in a modernist style with historicist elements and with a side quadratic tower. It was interpreted as a congregation house, not only as a separate prayer room. The congregation house was built additionally in the 1930°.

A ceremonial consecration of the church on the 25th of March 1908 was a big event. The Protestants from Přerov were given the church by which (as we read in one of the texts in a memorial book) "the links of the presence with the Czech Brethren past of the town should be clearly indicate". Further it is written that a "simplicity and a reduction of historical inspiration brought a high evaluation to this building as to the first example of modern church architecture in our country."

The church was seriously damaged during the catastrophic flood in 1997. During the elimination of its consequences, new arrangements of the interior according to architect Josef Barták's plan were done. The church in Přerov was again festively opened on the last October day of 1999.





Not in vain Šumperk is called "the Gate to the Jeseníky Mountains". The town is located in a nice valley of the river Desná at an altitude of 330 metres and has almost 28,000 inhabitants. In the surroundings of Šumperk there is a nice and varied nature with hills, valleys of the rivers and ponds. The spa Bludov offers a rest and also a possibility of rehabilitation; in Velké Losiny there is a remarkably well-preserved Renaissance castle which belonged to the Žerotín family and a manufactory for hand made paper production. The castle as well as the manufactory which is unique in the whole Europe, rank among national cultural monuments.

Šumperk was founded in the 13th century and soon it started to grow also thanks to the colonization. Precious metals were mined in the surroundings and a production of linen and cloth trade started to develop. Šumperk was a royal town, in the 16th century belonged to the Žerotín family who built a Renaissance family residence from the original castle. But later they transferred their residence to Velké Losiny.

In the history of the town the 17th century stands out as one of the most difficult periods. Because of supporting the revolt of the Estates in 1618 a town property was confiscated, the family of the Lichtenštejns became the lords of the town and its surroundings. A hard counter-Reformation came, the town was plundered by the Swedes and it burned down in 1669. The region of Šumperk was the most horribly affected by so called "witch processes" in the 2nd half of the 17th century. By the Inquisition court the innocent people were accused of black magic, they were tortured and killed. Then 25 people died in this horrible way. The mayor and a local priest Lautner were among the victims, too.

Šumperk began to develop again in the 19th century. Then a textile production started to increase, noticeably local fabric were demanded home and also abroad. The owners of the factories built their houses according to the designs which the important Vienna architects participated in. At that time Šumperk was called

a "Small Vienna". A former Dominican monastery with the early Baroque the Annunciation of Our Lady's Church (one of the most popular monuments in the town), a town hall with a look-out tower and with nice Baroque and Empire houses together with other historical monuments- a central part of the town create a Historical Town Zone.

The Art-Nouveau St. Jan Evangelista's Church from the early $20^{\rm th}$ century is on the list of the Cultural monuments and it belongs to the Old Catholic Church.

In Šumperk there was mostly German population. After 1945 they had to leave and new settlers came in. The historical part of Šumperk declined, prefabricated houses were built as the industry grew. After the years, the town is slowly returning to its former beauty.

The Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren gained a church and a rectory from the German Protestant Church. A congregation was established in 1946. It consisted of Polish reemigrants and other new inhabitants who came to Šumperk in the postwar years.

The original German Augsburg congregation was founded in Sumperk in 1899. Before it was a part of the Olomouc-Sumperk congregation. A Neo-Gothic church in a shape of a cross was built on today's Square of Liberty. It was designed by the architect Wenzel Knapek. The construction work was led by a local builder Josef Bayer. The church was consecrated in 1874. Originally it did not have a tower; it was added in 1908. There is a gallery in its wider rectangular part. A nice large rectory house create a complex with the church. It is interconnected by a garden. The church was thoroughly repaired at the end of the last century.





Church and Congregation House

