

Meet Your Missionaries

Charlie & Barbara Brennecke

Serving with Pioneers in Croatia

	<u>Charlie</u>	<u>Barbara</u>
Birth place:	Austin, Texas	Salem, Mass
Birthdate:	July 3 rd	March 13th
Salvation Age:	27	26

Charlie's Favorite Verse:

Ephesians 2:8 - "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God"

Barb's Favorite Verse:

I Peter 3:15 - "but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence"

Children: Matt, Ann, and Tom: All are grown with wives, or husband, and children of their own.

Education: We both graduated from the University of Missouri with a BA in Education.



Testimonies:

Barbara

I grew up in a church that had the scripture and Godly hymns but never explained that Jesus died for my sins. Charlie and I were married and continued to attend this denomination. We both believed Jesus was God's son but had no personal relationship nor a true understanding of sin and the separation it causes.

My brother went to a YMCA camp and came in contact with someone from Campus Crusade. My brother came to understand that Jesus died for the forgiveness of his sins and that God wanted to have a personal relationship with His people. He came home and shared the Good News. I came to realize that yes, I was a sinner and through Jesus death, burial and, resurrection I was forgiven and I could have a personal relationship with God. My parents, sister, brother and myself were all saved through the Good News shared by a camp counselor to my teen age brother!

Charlie

Barbara's whole family became Christians. I was the only one who continued to doubt. I was concerned about all the intellectual arguments and continued to debate this issues. This continued for about a year until I was asked to run a film for the youth group at our liberal church. God put me there to hear the story of a young husband who was dying and his encounter with God. I seemed to hear God asking me, How old will you be before you trust Me and the work of my Son? I just said I give up, I do believe. When I came home and told Barb she gave me a big kiss and I realized that my life was already better.

Together we began to live our lives as Christians. We changed to a Bible Church, joined Bible Study Fellowship and raised our children. I worked at Cambridge Engineering and Barbara worked as a teacher.

Our family came to Grace Community Chapel in the fall of 1988. We think of Grace as our home church family. While at Grace I was an Elder and Barbara a deaconess. We served on various committees and lead small groups and Bible Studies. In 2001 we went on a short term mission trip to Hungary. The next year we went again to help scout areas for planting a new church. While on this trip we began to feel God tug at our hearts, thinking God was working a plan for our retirement.

One Sunday Pastor Dair was preaching and we both felt God communicating that we were to go to Eastern Europe and not to delay. Our thoughts were confirmed by Bryan and Terri Lisech. Bryan put us in contact with PIONEERS through his father. One year later we were on the field serving in Croatia.

2004- current: PIONEERS Team Croatia

We joined an existing PIONEERS team in Croatia, a former communist country in Eastern Europe with a cultural Catholic heritage. Our PIONEERS team was working to plant a church in Slavonski Brod. This work requires reaching out into the community through programs such as English classes, kids clubs, concerts, sports camps, Bible studies, craft classes, anything we can think of to gain validity and awareness of our church in the community. We use these out-

reaches as opportunities to meet people and share testimonies of what Christ is doing in the lives of His people.

We were asked to lead the team in 2005 and now are the team leaders of 8-- soon to be 10 individuals who make up team Croatia.

The church planted in Slavonski Brod is 11 years old and is able to stand on its own without missionary help. There are 30+ members who are true growing believers.

In 2010 we moved to Nova Gradiska a small town 40 minutes away. Here we are again trying with God's help to plant another church. Our team is working with a Croatian Pastor and his family because the desire is to have the church truly be Croatian.

We continue to work to meet the needs in the community and offer classes where we can share God's love for His people and salvation through Jesus. We have a small faithful group and good Biblical teaching in Croatian is offered every Sunday. The biggest blessing for our Church this year is two new believers who chose to be baptized.

We continue to be in contact with the church in Brod and our desire is to reach out to strengthen all Christian churches in our county. There are so few believers, less than 1/10 of 1%, and they need to be encouraged. We have begun a once a year county gathering and are at work on other ways to grow and strengthen area churches.

Contact Information:

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