

MONTHLY CZECH-IN

January, 2022

From Chelsea Irwin, LCMS
Missionary
Serving the Lord in the
Czech Republic and
Central Europe



BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Anyone that knows me well can verify that hiking is one of my least favorite activities. Ironically enough I live in an area where hiking is an extremely popular activity. Although it is not my favorite, I found hiking opens the doors to engage in deep conversations with your hiking buddies. The last hike I embarked on was with the pastor's daughter from my church and our youth leader. We talked about many things including how the ministry is going at church. On the top we ate soup at the lodge and even had time for a little snowball fight on the way down! What a blessing to build relationships while appreciating God's creation.



The view from the top after hiking with Asia and Becia from my church.

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION



Above: A picture of the Kindergarteners from Trinity Lutheran School in Atchison, Kansas. In this moment I learned how difficult it can be to take a picture with a bunch of excited six year olds, hence the blurry photo!

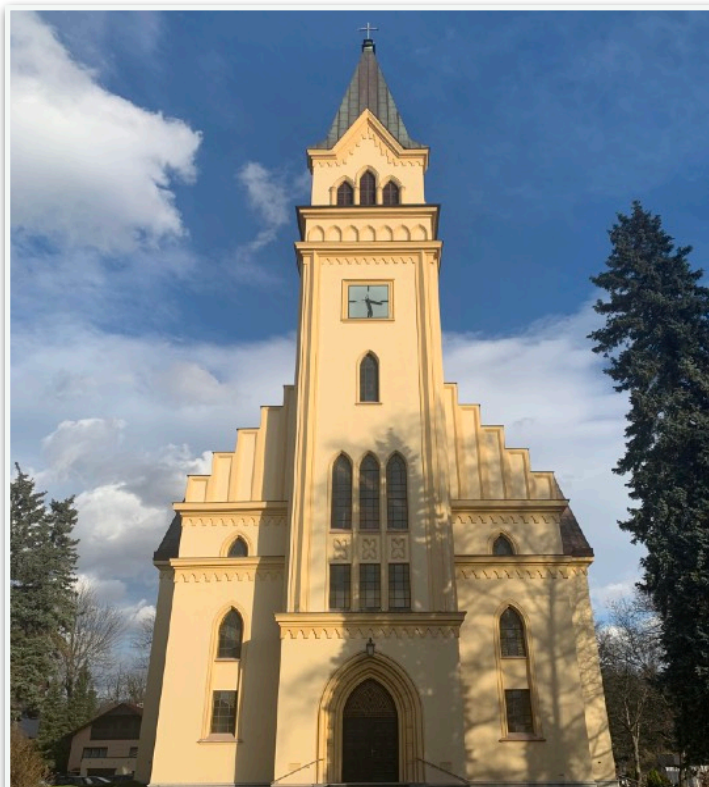
This year for National Lutheran Schools Week I had the privilege of visiting with one special class of students online. This was the kindergarten class from Trinity Lutheran School in Atchison, Kansas where my friend Monica is the teacher. When I was on home service this past fall, I got to be in the classroom with these students for three weeks. While we were in person we talked often about different cultures, and what it is like to live in another country. Kindergarteners are always full of surprises, so when the first child asked me "Chelsea, why don't you have a dryer?!" I had to laugh out loud. They had waited so long to hear the tiny details of missionary life. It was such a joy to see students so engaged in the role of a missionary. Aside from cultural differences we discussed how many people in the Czech Republic are not Christian and that I have the opportunity to share the Gospel with them. Even at the kindergarten level the students understood the importance of sharing the Gospel with others, whether in their own community or abroad.

Monica's comment when I first joined the Zoom call sticks in my memory. "Today we have a special guest. It's *our* missionary Chelsea!" I am so honored to have so many students in Lutheran schools all over the country praying for me, and continuing to learn about LCMS International Mission.



Left: At the end of December we welcomed missionary Hayden Rensner to our Silesia team in the Czech Republic.

Hayden and I both attended Concordia University, Nebraska so we already knew each other when she arrived! What a joy it has been to have Hayden here and experience missionary life in the Czech Republic together. Hayden is working with the Silesian church here in Silesia through English Education. She is also tutoring some students from the Riga Luther Academy in English.



Right: After coming back from home service I began worshipping at the local Lutheran Church in my city, Český Těšín. This particular church is right on the Czech/Polish border and holds services in Polish. Polish is actually my second language. I began learning it when I was 13 after attending English Camp for the first time in Poland. God has prepared me for many things in this missionary role, even going to church in Polish! Please pray for me as I begin to build relationships with the members at my new church.



Left: My family has always been extremely supportive of my role as a missionary. They are constantly encouraging me, and praying for me and the ministry in the Czech Republic. After Christmas, my family was able to come to the Czech Republic to meet some of the people I have been working with for the past two years. It was such a blessing to show them around, and experience missionary life with them.

Pictured on the left is Matthew (my brother), Pastor James Irwin (my dad), Carleen Irwin (my mom), Niki (my friend from Hungary).

On the right side of the picture are missionaries Pastor Dale Kastor, his wife Suzanne, and me.

YOU CAN SERVE WITH THE LCMS TOO!

There are many opportunities to serve as a short-term or GEO missionary. Check out the current list and download an application at [lcms.org/service](https://www.lcms.org/service). Click on "Service Opportunities."

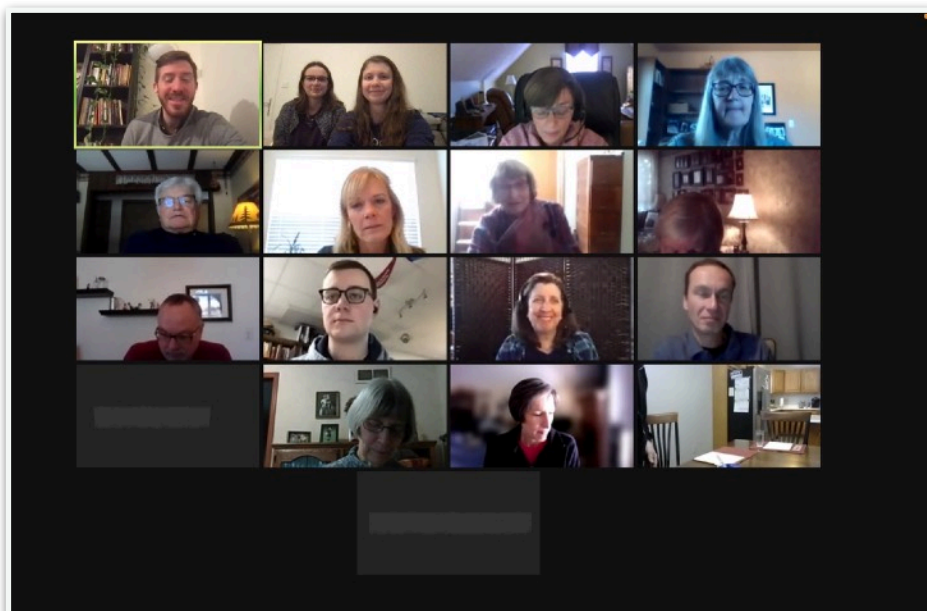
PRAY

- That God would provide volunteers to fill our team for the English Bible Camps this summer
- For our new missionary, Hayden Rensner as she adjusts to life in the Czech Republic

GIVE THANKS

- For you, my prayer warriors and encouragers
- The English Conversation Partners Program
- The opportunity for my family to visit the Czech Republic

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION



In January we held an orientation for our next round of the English Conversation Partners program. It was great to see some familiar faces of people who have served in this program before. We had one conversation about building relationships with the students and helping those interested in getting connected with the local church here. During this conversation Susan Roling shared a story of one student she met last year while participating in this program.

“We have talked on the phone every week since last year, and now she is one of my best friends!” Susan stated cheerfully.

This story of impact reminded me that God continues to work even after this program is finished. Pray that God would work through this program to connect us to more non-believing Czechs.

God continues to bless this ministry through your prayers and financial support. Prayerfully consider partnering in God's mission to the Czech Republic and Eurasia through a financial gift.

Send checks to:

LCMS International: P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861
(Write "Irwin/Czech Republic" on the memo line),

You can also send your support to the wonderful people at:

Mission Central
407818 Highway E-16
Mapleton, Iowa 51034

Give online: lcms.org/irwin

Contact Chelsea Irwin: chelsea.irwin@lcms.org



