



# Proclaiming the Praises of Christ in Prague



December  
2019



## Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,  
Born to set Thy people free.  
From our fears and sins release us;  
Let us find our rest in Thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation,  
Hope of all the earth Thou art,  
Dear desire of ev'ry nation,  
Joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver;  
Born a child and yet a king!  
Born to reign in us forever,  
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By Thine own eternal Spirit  
Rule in all our hearts alone;  
By Thine all-sufficient merit  
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

Text: Charles Wesley  
Lutheran Service Book #338

Art: Medieval Woodcut



The *Betlem* or nativity in *Staroměstské náměstí*  
(Old Town Square) in Prague

## Veselé Vánoce Merry Christmas

Prague—indeed, the whole Czech Republic—is festooned with Christmas markets. Every square in town has at least a few sheds set up to sell decorations, treats, gifts, or seasonal foods. Czechs love this time of year and seem to celebrate it with great joy. But that does not mean they get what it is all about.

Recently, we were shopping for some Christmas decorations. There were decorations of lovely stars, angels, and *Betlems* (nativities). But then the merchant pointed us to a basket filled with horseshoes, pigs, and shamrocks; all these here are considered tokens for good luck in the coming year. He explained to us that by hanging these on the tree we will be lucky. And then Suzanne spoke up, “We don’t need luck. We’re Christian.” At first, it seemed harsh, but, after further thought, perhaps it was the perfect answer. The merchant stumbled to apologize. But we added that Jesus was what we needed more than anything.

This time of year much of the world comes, at the very least, to the fringes of our faith. They talk about Jesus’ birthday. They mention the humbleness of the whole scene as recorded in the Scriptures. They may even know the words to “Silent Night.” And still others may be able to recount accurately the events of that first Christmas. However, that does not mean they understand what this holiday, and all its festiveness, is all about. But they can when we open our mouth and tell them.

On that first Christmas, there were a lot of mouths opening. The angelic herald came to the shepherds to tell them what had happened. The hosts of heaven joined him to sing praises to God who would undertake the salvation of mankind. And the shepherds, having come and seen, went and told what had been reported to them concerning this child. And then those same shepherds opened their mouths to praise and glorify God. This opening of the mouth concerning this event is not over. It continues when we open our mouths to share the hope and confidence we have because of the birth of the baby, who is God in flesh.

We are here to share that faith. And you are where you are to do the same. We are all missionaries in one sense. It is the joy of the Christian faith to declare the wonderful deeds that the God of heaven and earth has done in order to make us forgiven and pure, cleansed from sin and its curse, and brought into the family of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This has happened because the unthinkable happened: God took on human flesh so that we could be the children of God. Thanks be to God!



The Christmas markets in the main square of Olomouc, Moravia (eastern Czech Republic)



We thank the Lord for all of the people and ministries that support us. This month, we especially give thanks for:

Redeemer Lutheran  
Nashville, TN

St. John Lutheran  
Seward, NE

Peace Lutheran,  
Grand Island, NE

Our address in Prague:  
Rev. Dale and Suzanne Kaster  
Bubenečská 365/41  
160 00 Praha 6  
Czech Republic

The church address in Prague:  
St. Michael's Lutheran Church  
V Jirchářích 14/152  
110 00 Praha 1  
Czech Republic

Please, pray for the conversion of many people here in the Czech Republic.

Please, pray for many to come to church during the coming holiday season.

Please, pray for many people to see our advertisements we are placing in news sources.

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

Our email address is  
[Dale.Kaster@lcms.org](mailto:Dale.Kaster@lcms.org)



### American Thanksgiving in Prague

We have a number of Americans associated with our parish here. And we also have a few non-Americans who just like to eat! So, while we could not do it on Thanksgiving Day (everyone is at work!), we still gathered and shared a delicious

Thanksgiving meal with all the trimmings. It was a great afternoon of fellowship and feasting, and we did not mind at all that it was on a Saturday and there was not any American football. We thank the Hubers who opened their home to our gathering, and we hope yours was just as great as ours!

### An Update on Dale's Ear Surgery

We visited the doctor recently who says that everything is coming along very nicely. The surgical work is about 90% healed. And a quick test showed that there has been some great strides in regaining hearing in the ear. We just have to be patient as the ear continues to resume function. Our next appointment is six months away, and he will conduct a formal hearing test at that time.



### ECAV Meets in Annual Convention

During the month of November, the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession (ECAV) met in their annual convention. We heard a lot of reports and projections for the coming year(s). One thing missing was an emphasis on outreach to the many Czechs who do not trust in Jesus Christ. Please, pray for the work and the hearts of the ECAV, that a zeal for outreach and evangelization would take hold. Also, pray for the Holy Spirit to bring many Czechs to the faith of Jesus Christ.



### Velvet Revolution Anniversary

November 17 is the anniversary of the Velvet Revolution, when Czechs rose up against the communist system and, without any bloodshed, ushered in the current politics of a free and open society. Usually, we would have avoided the crowds; but since our church building is right around the corner from where the students and police met, and since it fell on a Sunday, we were in the thick of it. It is, on one hand, an inspiring story of man's innate yearn for freedom, but it is also sad that so many Czechs find freedom outside of Christ.

### A Look Ahead

Makeshift memorial for freedom  
Deacon Martin Damašek and Dale will be traveling to the Ft. Wayne seminary in January to attend the theological symposium (January 21-24). If you would like to meet with them, just send a note, and they would be happy to share some time with you and talk about the work here in the Czech Republic.

We commend you and your Christmas celebration to Christ!

Rev. Dale and Suzanne Kaster

*Your Missionaries to the Czech Republic*

To support the LCMS through the work of the Kastars, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod **OR**  
P.O. Box 66861  
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861  
Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod or LCMS. Include "Kaster – Czech Republic," in the memo line. Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website at [www.lcms.org/kaster](http://www.lcms.org/kaster).

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