



My refurbished hand luggage, ready for travel.

REKLAMACE

This Czech word translates to “complaint,” but for me it really means getting free repairs or replacement on most purchases in the Czech Republic for two years. For example, I bought this smaller piece of luggage in Prague and, fortunately, kept the original receipt. After many trips throughout Europe and three months of home service in the United States last year, the wheels were shot and an inside zipper broke.

When I brought the worn luggage to the store in Prague where it was purchased 18 months ago, they were obligated to fix it or replace it. I filled out a “reklamace” form and showed them the receipt. Within a week, I got a text message that the luggage was repaired and ready to pick up. The clerk made sure that I was satisfied with the repairs, which turned out to be brand new wheels and a zipper that zips again.

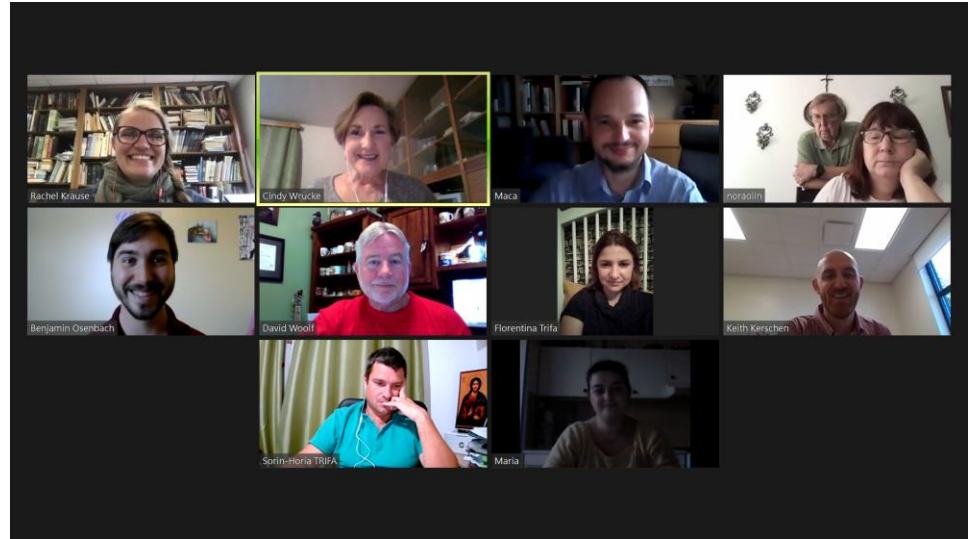
I am now very careful to save all my receipts, just in case I may need one for a “reklamace.”



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Cynthia.Wrucke@lcms.org

Unexpected Blessings



American LCMS volunteers help tutor Eurasia church workers with English skills.

We all know that life changed when COVID appeared, including travel restrictions, quarantines and facemasks. How we work also changed, but God continues to bless our mission work in exciting new ways.

Part of my work in Prague includes helping church leaders improve their English skills so that they can connect better with other confessional Lutherans in Eurasia. This is more challenging than you might think—students are over 40 years old and didn’t learn English in a traditional classroom. Their English proficiency varies greatly, which makes it difficult to teach everyone in the same class. Yet, it is impractical to tutor individually because they work full-time with limited time off.

When I heard that short-term mission teams couldn’t serve abroad this year but could help online, I wanted to find out more. I attended a few Zoom meetings with Anne Gonzalez, DCE, manager of short-term mission training & engagement, who pilot tested a program for virtual English tutors.

Using American volunteers to help teach conversational English is wonderful for my students. Each week,

I host a Zoom meeting with five students, five LCMS volunteers scattered throughout America, and my missionary co-host Rachel Krause, who is awaiting deployment to Germany. We have a theme or topic and I provide suggested questions for discussion.

After a short introduction and prayer, students get 40-45 minutes of individual tutoring with their American volunteers in breakout rooms. Rachel and I stop in each room during this time for extra help. We meet again as a group at the end of the hour and close with Luther’s evening prayer.

Connecting across the Atlantic

Some of the students and tutors have great connections. For example, our Czech church business manager works with a business professor in New York. An alliance missionary pastor works with a professor at Concordia in Seward, NE. Our Czech deacon with military experience works with a lay deacon in Virginia who is retired from the military.

I am in awe at how God has provided more than we could have imagined by blessing our church workers in Eurasia and helping with their English skills.



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- The Czech people to yearn to know Jesus.
- Safety and protection in my work, as the Czech Republic leads the EU in increased COVID cases and a state of emergency was recently declared.
- Continued improvement in my arm healing and mobility.

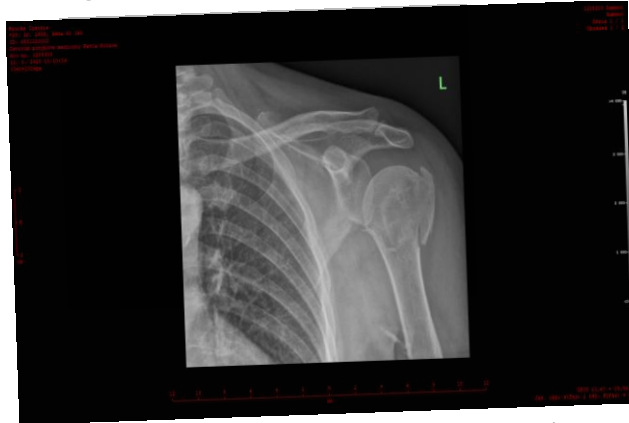
GIVE THANKS FOR:

- The American LCMS volunteers who help teach English virtually.
- Technology that allows us to work together in mission across continents.
- All of God's unexpected blessings in our daily life.

PRAISE GOD FOR:

- Opening doors to share the Good News with Czechs.

My Broken Arm



Arm x-ray in May 2020

I was hoping to keep my broken arm a private matter, but God has brought blessings and opportunities through this accident that I wanted to share with you.

The first day after our quarantine lockdown ended in May, I fell and broke my arm on a subway escalator on my way home from teaching English class. It was later in the evening, so I didn't have an x-ray until the next morning. I was immediately put in an immobilization brace for nine weeks.

ABUNDANT HELP

Some of my colleagues, and my Czech tutor and her family, helped tremendously. They brought food, flowers, visited me, sent people to

clean my apartment, and arranged taxi services for doctor visits and church on Sunday. The 20-minute rides to the orthopedist appointments provided wonderful opportunities to witness to some of the taxi drivers.

At a recent visit to one of my physiotherapists, he told me how I am so different from his other patients. Though I may never regain full use of my arm, I am happy with any progress and thankful for his help. He appreciates a patient with a positive perspective. He is also looking forward to learning more about Jesus after I gave him a Czech Bible.

I never imagined a broken arm would open doors to reach Czechs with the Gospel, but I am thankful it has. I am also thankful the break was only in my left arm and I am right-handed.

This month we thank God for unexpected blessings:

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!

Psalm 107:1 (ESV)

- Cindy Zirbel Wrucke



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

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