



Some of the birthday mail I received.

THANK YOU!

Having a birthday during a COVID lockdown wasn't what I expected. It was actually better than I ever could have imagined! Though I wasn't able to enjoy cake and coffee with friends or attend church in person, I was showered with wonderful greetings from so many of you.

Thank you for the thoughtful birthday cards and the abundant email greetings. Thanks for the phone calls, voice messages, Facetime and video chats with family and friends. Thank you to my foreign friends who sent birthday songs in their native languages. Thank you to the many congregations that included me in their prayers and even sang Happy Birthday to me during their virtual services!

I was even more surprised to receive a birthday gift via parcel, which then gave me an excuse to leave my apartment to collect it from Customs at the central post office.

I am so overwhelmed by your love and support from far away; your love and kindness will remain in my heart forever.



To be added to or removed from this mailing list, send an email message to Cynthia.Wrucke@lcms.org with the word ADD or REMOVE in the subject line.

Cynthia.Wrucke@lcms.org

Learning the liturgy



St. Michael Lutheran Church in Prague, Czech Republic.

Try to imagine attending a Lutheran church service blindfolded. How would you follow along with the liturgy? How would you know when to sit or stand? How would you know what to expect throughout the service?

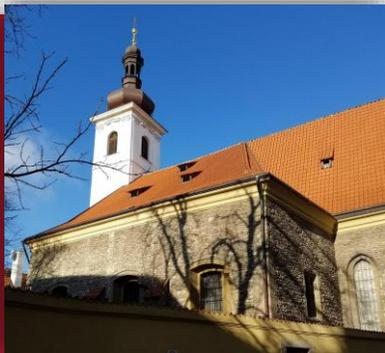
That's how life has been for Martin, a blind Czech man who attends our church in Prague. Earlier this year, he asked if I could tutor him on the Lutheran liturgy so that he could more fully participate in our church services. We had been meeting every Thursday morning at a coffeeshop near his house until we entered lockdown again in mid-October.

Martin was born blind. He could distinguish between light and dark as a child but now everything is dark. Thankfully, our liturgy in Prague is chanted and Martin is a professional musician; he teaches guitar and piano. At first, I thought it would be difficult for him to memorize the entire service, but I am impressed by how quickly he attaches words to the music. I also thought it would be strange to be singing parts of Lutheran liturgy in a public coffeeshop in the most atheistic country in the world, but we have become regulars at the café and not one

person has ever complained, though we sometimes do get a few "looks."

In addition to learning the words and music, Martin also had questions about which Scripture is tied to each part of the liturgy. He also wanted to learn when to sit and stand, and when to make the sign of the cross. By mid-October, he had learned most of the Divine Service for the Pentecost and Trinity season. He now wants to memorize the Nicene Creed. Hopefully, the pandemic restrictions will end soon, the coffeeshop will reopen and his studies can continue. Martin is already thrilled with his greater participation in church.

Martin and his family have also become dear friends of mine, especially his wife, Jana. Martin and their young adopted son, Tomašek, are baptized but Jana isn't. I got to know Jana better when she started attending my ladies group fellowship at church earlier this year. I was able to talk with her about Baptism and to provide her *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation* in Czech. Martin Damašek, our Czech deacon, is helping her prepare for Baptism. I am looking forward to the day that Jana can be baptized by one of our Lutheran pastors and join the body of Christ.



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- *Martin, as he learns the liturgy, and his wife, Jana, as she prepares for Baptism.*
- *My visa renewal process to be completed easily and quickly.*
- *Pandemic restrictions to be lifted soon, so that we can worship in person, meet in fellowship and move freely in the city.*

GIVE THANKS FOR:

- *All of the individuals and congregations that support my work in the Czech Republic.*
- *My continued good health and safety.*
- *The abundance of mushrooms, apples and fall produce in season here.*

PRAISE GOD FOR:

- *His grace and mercy.*

Visa renewal time



Czech Ministry department entrance

This month, I completed gathering all my official documents for my visa renewal and successfully submitted my application to the Czech Ministry.

Many documents were required, most in the Czech language, including:

- employment and health insurance verification
- letter of invitation from the ECAVvČR (Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in the Czech Republic)
- bank account verification
- current photo
- apartment lease
- passport
- application and fees

FOLLOW-UP REQUIRED

Fortunately, we work with a Czech representative who schedules the required appointments and attends with us. He then follows up on any additional or missing documents requested. He also tracks the renewal progress since there is no automatic notification when your visa is renewed.

Because of the pandemic, the Czech Ministry department in my district is only open two days a week for five hours each day. When we went for my appointment, the place was eerily quiet and only about half the normal personnel are currently working. Hopefully, the time it takes for visa renewal isn't prolonged or delayed.

This month I am thankful for YOU, for your prayers, financial support and continued encouragement:

In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the Gospel from the first day until now.

Philippians 1:4-5 (NIV)

- 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."

To support the LCMS through the work of Cindy Zirbel Wrucke, you may send a tax-deductible gift and make checks payable to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
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Mark checks "Wrucke-Czech Republic Support."

Or, you can make checks payable and send to:

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