

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



CHURCH COMMUNITY



Above: Our band rehearses before playing for the monthly youth service at church.

CULTURAL CUSTOMS

When you come in the house, you take off your shoes. Maybe this is a common practice for you. In the Czech Republic, home slippers or *paupcie* as they are called in the local dialect, are a very common thing to be offered when you enter someone's home. It is even common for the host to have a basket of slippers to offer so the guest does not have to bring their own. When I arrived two years ago, my roommate made it a point to take me "home shoes" shopping as she saw it was a necessity. Whenever we have a youth lock-in, I am sure to bring my slippers along with me for the night.



This drawer is kept full of slippers at church for those entering the room for Bible Study or youth group.

When I joined the Lutheran church in Český Těšín I made sure to get involved in the youth group. In this church they have split the youth group into two groups: one for middle and high school students and the second for those who are 18 and older. After just a couple weeks of attending, the youth leader asked me to share a devotion and be in the "hot seat" as they call it. I had to answer questions about myself so the group could get to know me. I was also invited to join the praise band which helps at youth group as well as in church on occasion.

Another activity I have begun to attend is the girls' Bible study. This has been a great opportunity to not only serve at my church, but allow others to serve me. Each week we catch up and share what is going on in our own lives. What a blessing it is to know that these girls are praying for me.

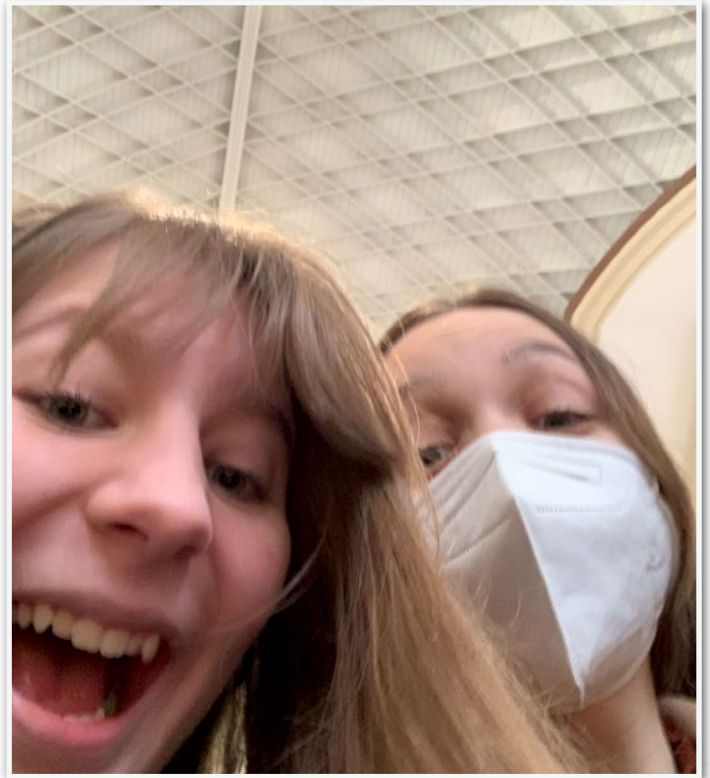
I am thankful for the warm welcome I have received so far in Český Těšín and the friendships I am beginning to build here.

To the right: Our band leading music at youth group.





As I get involved in more activities in my church I am building new relationships with the members. Below and to the left are the results of my phone being stolen by my bandmates during a praise band rehearsal. I was pleasantly surprised to open my camera after church and find these selfies. Thank the Lord for continuing to open new doors for me to make new friends and grow in Christ with the people in my church community.



Above: Missionary Becca Helge talking with students at our church's girls retreat.

Right: Every Thursday evening there is a girls' Bible study held at our church in Český Těšín. We are currently going through the book *Joy, A Study of Philippians* by Deb Burma. In this picture, Asia, our pastor's daughter plays the piano for the worship time.



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 all the youth at the church in Český Těšín.

GIVE THANKS

- For you, my prayer warriors and encouragers
- The girls' Bible study at my church.
- The opportunity to visit with the Mission Minded Students club from Concordia, NE.
- The ability to participate in the monthly youth service.

STAYING CONNECTED



Every time I am asked what my daily schedule is like, I laugh and say “It’s pretty normal, except sometimes I have meetings at midnight.” Although this is not a joke, it is one of my favorite parts of my job! This month Hayden and I joined the Mission Minded Students club from Concordia, Nebraska at 1 a.m. our time, and 6 p.m. central time. The conversation was about missionary life in the Czech Republic, and these students had some great questions! Aside from giving a tour of our apartment we also shared some of the true joys and challenges of life as an international missionary. I love encouraging college students to stay involved in God’s mission, whether it is abroad or in their own community. After some great conversation and a prayer, Hayden and I happily went to sleep. It is truly a joy to stay connected to the university that helped shape and prepare me for a life of international mission work.

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.

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(Write "Irwin/Czech Republic" on the memo line),

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

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