

# MONTHLY CZECH-IN

March, 2022

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



## IN THE CLASSROOM



**Above:** First graders listen to a story and sing along with the book, reviewing numbers and colors in English.

## CULTURAL NUGGET

During the mid-18th century, Czech puppetry (specifically marionette puppets) became a cultural phenomenon around the Czech lands. Puppeteer families would make puppets usually carved out of wood, go to a city, set up a booth, and put on puppet shows for the community. Today there are nine professional puppet theaters keeping this mode of story telling alive in the Czech Republic. This month I visited one amateur theater and saw a typical Czech fairy tale performed with marionette puppets. I would give the performance a 10 out of 10, and I will definitely go to another puppet show soon!



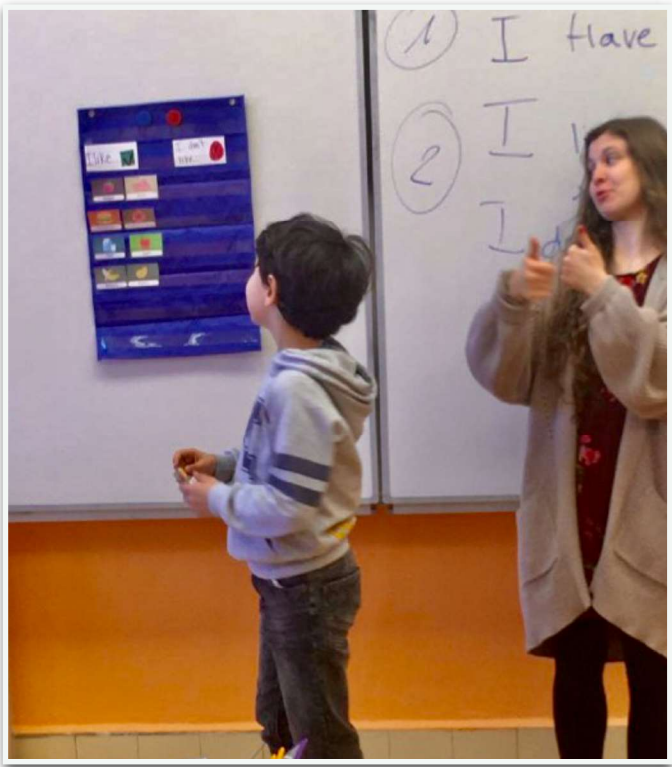
Marionette puppets from a museum exhibit I visited in Opava, Czech Republic.

For some people, teaching a classroom full of children may sound like an exhausting occupation. For me, I am energized and refueled when I spend time in the classroom. When I came back from home service I was asked if I would be interested in teaching at the Christian elementary school in the city of Třinec. Early Childhood Education is a major passion that God has placed on my heart, so when I was asked to teach 1st-3rd graders I immediately said yes!

Every Monday I travel to the school in Třinec, which is about 40 minutes away (by bus) from where I live. Despite the school being Christian and connected with the Lutheran Church in Třinec, many of the students do not regularly attend church and may not be Christian. Each Monday I share Christ's love with the students during their English lesson.

From games about prepositions to reading stories together, God blesses each lesson. First to third graders are certainly not English experts (not counting several students who are fluent English speakers), so this also gives me an opportunity to practice my Czech. I will often explain a game in English and then translate myself into Czech so the students can hear both languages. Using my Czech from time to time also allows me to build better relationships with the students.

Praise God for opening a door for me to teach, and serve in this capacity!



**Left:** When I was first packing to deploy as a missionary I brought a lot of teaching supplies. I didn't know when or where I would use them, but God had a plan for each item on my shelf. Slowly I am dusting off tools that sat still during the Covid lockdowns and finding ways to incorporate them into my lessons. Pictured here a second grader practices speaking about foods he likes and dislikes, by sorting pictures on a pocket chart that I brought from home.

**Right:** Elevator signs labeled in Ukrainian at the train station in the city of Bohumín. This train station along with many others has been a major refugee receiving point. Many members of the local churches here are volunteering their time, donating items, and offering housing for incoming Ukrainian refugees.



**Below:** Artwork from the elementary school outside the English teacher's classroom



**Above:** Every Friday during Lent our youth group attends the Lenten service together, invites the weekly guest pastor to share during our devotion time and then we engage in some special program. Here we are learning some traditional dances!

## 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://lcms.org/service). Click on "Service Opportunities."

## PRAY

- For Hayden and I as we begin an English group for Ukrainian refugees as well as look for other opportunities to help.
- For all the students at the elementary school.
- For the teams that will be coming this summer for the English Bible Camps in the Czech Republic and Poland.

## GIVE THANKS

- For you, my prayer warriors and encouragers.
- Encouraging conversations with people like Tymek.

## AN ENCOURAGING CONVERSATION



In my new role, I have the privilege of working with different individuals who request LCMS volunteers to come and serve in Eurasia. Pictured here is our Polish partner, Tymek. Tymek works for the organization in Poland called Centrum Misji i Ewangelizacji which translates to Center for Mission and Evangelism (CME). This organization is an extension of the Evangelical (Lutheran) Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland. One of the events that they organize is the English Bible Camps.

In one meeting, Tymek shared part of his vision for CME and what ministry might look like in the future. It was encouraging to hear new ideas and share the many ways that God is working in Poland. As we prepare for the English Bible Camps this coming summer, Tymek continues to express his excitement and thankfulness that LCMS volunteers are willing to partake in this Gospel sharing opportunity.

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](https://lcms.org/irwin)

Contact Chelsea Irwin: [chelsea.irwin@lcms.org](mailto:chelsea.irwin@lcms.org)





