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## Easter Traditions

On Easter Sunday, I noticed that all the grocery stores and shops were open like usual. However, on Easter Monday, everything was closed. I have learned that in the Czech Republic, for most people, Easter Monday is a bigger holiday than Easter Sunday. Easter Monday celebrates the coming spring season and the traditions of the day are largely based on fun and silly traditions.

An interesting Czech tradition that my 8th grade students taught me is the tradition of Pomlázka.

On Easter Monday, it is traditional for girls to prepare decorated Easter eggs. In preparation for Easter Monday, boys and men purchase Easter Whips (pictured above). As Easter Monday got closer, I saw several of these whips at local shops. The boys/men go to the girls/women and say a 'Hody Hody Doprovody' which is the beginning of a traditional chant which translates into requesting a painted egg. The females then provide an egg and the males hit them with the Easter whip.

Some adults whom I spoke with say that traditionally, whipping the women was seen as a way to preserve their health and wish them health for the future.

What are your Easter traditions and what do they reflect?

## April updates



### **Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

Easter is my favorite holiday. While Easter this year of course looked different than usual, thanks be to God that the joy of the resurrection is universal. I attended two church services on Easter Sunday, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The pastor of the church I attend invited me to spend Easter Day with him and his family. I was blessed to attend the two services with them, join them for Easter dinner, and spend the afternoon with them talking, laughing, and going on walks.

Similar to the churches I have attended in the States, there were church services in the Czech Republic on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. The church I attend also held a service on Easter Monday. Perhaps that is a common tradition for you and your congregation, but this was my first time attending a church service on Easter Monday. The text for the Easter Monday service was Luke 24 when Jesus appears with two disciples on the road to Emmaus. I was discussing this passage with one of my tutoring students from the Riga Luther Academy. He pointed out that this story correlates with Matthew 18:20 which says, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them" (ESV). Just as Jesus walked alongside his disciples directly after His resurrection, He also walks alongside us today. He instructs us and guides us each and every day as we celebrate His resurrection and await His return.

# Riga Luther Academy Intensive

## PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- The Riga Luther Academy students as they finish their semester
- The preparation for English Camps this coming summer
- New opportunities to reach people with the Gospel
- The ongoing Ukrainian crisis
- The students at the school where I teach as they continue in their semester
- The ministries of the local churches



## GIVE THANKS FOR:

- A blessed week in Latvia
- The body of believers near and far
- Safety and health
- You! My faithful encouragers and supporters

## GET IN TOUCH WITH ME!

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I spent the week of April 3rd-9th at the in-person Riga Luther Academy Intensive in Latvia. The first part of the week was spent in Riga, and the second part of the week was spent in Saldus. This was such a joyous week. I was able to meet students in person who I have been working with online this semester. I also was able to meet many new faces. We spent the week in lectures for two different courses. We also had daily morning chapel services with one another and were able to celebrate the Divine Service twice throughout the week. We explored old town Riga and tried traditional Latvian food. It was a truly blessed week full of learning, laughter, conversations, and fellowship. Present were participants from Africa, Italy, Latvia, America, Bulgaria, Romania, Germany, and Pakistan. How incredible that we were able to come from all over the world to gather with one another in Latvia. I loved having the honor to speak with these individuals and hear about the unique joys and struggles of their ministries. Please do continue to pray for these men as they continue to proclaim God's Word in their own parts of the world.

I absolutely love Easter hymns. One of my favorites is "Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds." Verse three is particularly striking and comforting to me. It can be found below.

*O fill us, Lord, with dauntless love;*

*Set heart and will on things above.*

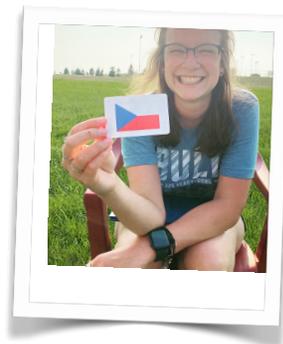
*That we conquer through your triumph;*

*Grant grace sufficient for life's day.*

*That by our lives we truly say; "Christ has triumphed! Christ has triumphed!"*

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

Christ has risen! He has risen indeed, alleluia!



- Hayden

**Prayerfully consider financially partnering with me as we work together to bring the Good News of the Gospel to those living in spiritual darkness in the Czech Republic! Thank you for your continued support!**

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