

Hayden Rensner LCMS Missionary Serving the Lord in the Czech Republic

[Find out more: lcms.org/rensner](https://lcms.org/rensner)



October 2022

Theological Conference

This month, I was able to step away from my regular activities and attend a two-day theology conference in Prague. The theme of the conference was ‘Justification by the Word: Restoring Sola Fide.’ This conference was sponsored by the LCMS and the Luther Academy. I was able to learn alongside some fellow missionaries from surrounding countries, students with whom I work from the Riga Luther Academy, as well as a plethora of new faces and contacts. What a blessed couple of days of listening and learning. I am pictured below with Nathaniel, Emma and baby Agatha Jensen, fellow missionaries serving in Germany, as well as with the Jensen’s friend and fellow church member.



A month of listening

At the end of each English Group, I conclude our time together by reviewing the evening’s topic and discussion with the students. We recall things that were said in the previous hour and things that stood out to us from the conversation and activities. I then use the opportunity of reflection to share a song, Bible verse or prayer that serves as a way to connect the Gospel with our evening’s theme.

Last week, our theme was ‘Lost and Found.’ We went on a scavenger hunt to find things, we made a list of everyday items that people commonly lose, we watched a silly video, and we reflected on times that we have felt lost or been actually physically lost and the unsettled feelings that those situations bring.

Everyone is searching in some way and feels ‘lost’ at times. Recently, there has been a great influx of students who are searching for answers and feeling lost in regard to their identities as males and females. I know that, for some of you in the States, this theme has probably been present and prominent for quite a while. Yet here in our area of the Czech Republic, this is a brand new obstacle. The number of students who are searching in this way has been a very dramatic and noticeable shift compared to last semester. Please keep these students in your prayers. Please keep my colleagues and me in your prayers as we navigate situations such as being asked by students to refer to them by different names/pronouns. In challenging situations, may we all find the strength and courage to continue to point one another toward the Truth. We often feel lost at times, but we are never lost in the eyes of our Savior. He knows exactly where we are and who we are. He has created us in His image. Any search to ultimately change who He has created us to be will surely end in disappointment and frustration. In the midst of changing feelings and perspectives, may these students look toward our steadfast, unchanging God who has created them as boys and girls, men and women, perfectly and wonderfully made.

Pictured below left: Students from Bohumin

Pictured below right: Participants from my English Group in Nebory



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- *The fall semester*
- *My Czech-language learning*
- *Continued connections*
- *Students struggling with their identity*
- *Strengthened listening skills*
- *The courage to speak the truth*
- *Community*

GIVE THANKS FOR:

- *The new English Group in Nebory*
- *Continued health and safety*
- *The new school year*
- *You! My faithful encouragers and supporters*

GET IN TOUCH WITH ME!

Facebook/Instagram:
@rensnerontherun

WhatsApp: +420-731-679-308

Email:

hayden.rensner@lcms.org

Confession:

I have been reflecting on a comment that was made to me several weeks ago. I was given the opportunity to engage in deep and lengthy discussions with a man who is a very avid atheist. One comment he made has particularly stuck with me, especially now. Throughout our discussions, he said, "I don't believe in God at all. Neither does my friend. Yet, sometimes, we go to confession at the local Catholic church. I guess I don't believe anyone is really listening... yet sometimes I still go and confess."

I have been pondering this comment lately. As brothers and sisters in Christ, we have the duty and privilege to offer one another forgiveness and grace. It seems to me that if you listen closely, people confess more often than you might think. May God grant us ears to listen to the confessions of those around us and point others to the grace and forgiveness found only in Christ.

Zechariah reflection

As someone who generally loves to chat and verbalize my thoughts, the past months have sometimes felt a bit frustrating and isolating at times, as I am only able to communicate basic needs and ideas to most of the people with whom I interact. The number of words I speak has greatly decreased, but the chances to practice my listening skills have greatly increased. Not being able to freely speak the language has made me stop and consider what I want to say much more often. In some ways, this has been a great blessing and has made me realize how rashly I am prone to speak at times. This past week, I was reading the familiar story of Zechariah found in Luke. As he awaited the promised birth of his son John, Zechariah experienced a season of muteness. When his ability to speak was restored, he immediately prophesied and praised God (Luke 1:67-79). Maybe you also are finding yourself in a season of silence, or a season where the work of your ears is taking precedence over the work of your mouth. My prayer for myself is that in the midst of the frustrations, I would use this time as an opportunity to listen better. And when given the opportunity and ability to speak, my prayer is that my words would echo the praises and prayers of Zechariah. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel. His mercies are tender. He delivers us. He guides our feet into the way of peace.

May God continue to bless and keep you all in His gracious care.

- 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!

Send checks with 'Rensner-Czech' in the memo line to:

*The Lutheran Church Missouri-Synod
P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861*

OR

*Mission Central
40718 Highway E-16
Mapleton, IA 51034*

