

MONTHLY CZECH-IN

English Bible Camps 2023

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



GOD'S BEAUTIFUL CREATION

During the EBCs, I drive around to each camp to check in and snap some photos of the volunteers in action. This past summer, I drove over 600 miles in Poland and the Czech Republic. I used the time in the car to listen to various podcasts, and books, but sometimes I just prayed. One thing I loved was all the beautiful scenery. Since becoming a missionary, I look at nature a little differently. Seeing a sunset here, or a family of storks gathering in their nest reminds me of God's presence, and His love and care for me.



BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS



Each year at English Bible Camps (EBCs), LCMS volunteers serve alongside locals to bring the Gospel to participants from ages 6-11. In 2023, I got to chat a little deeper with Leslie Colligan (pictured above), who has served at an English Bible Camp in Poland for 5 years in a row. Two key items stand out thinking of English Bible Camps: faith proclamation and building relationships. I asked Leslie how these two go together at English Bible Camps:

"To me, they go hand in hand. I believe sharing God's love through His Word and through service cannot be easily done without building relationships. God's Word is all about His relationship with his people. We are in Poland sharing God's love, building relationships with our Polish friends, telling others of God's love, and prayerfully strengthening their (and our) relationship with God."

Leslie has been a great help throughout the years serving at EBCs. She even wrote the craft section for the 'Jesus, Who Are You' curriculum, which was used in 2022.

"I see each curriculum strengthening my knowledge of God...The Curriculum 'Jesus, Who Are You?' is just teaching many of the I am statements about Jesus: 'I AM the light of the world, I AM the bread of life, I AM the vine, I AM the door, I AM the resurrection and the life)' It was teaching about our triune GOD, I AM. I AM is the whole Bible, summed up in two words."

EBCs are encouraging not only for the camp participants but also the LCMS volunteers. I asked Leslie how her faith has been strengthened through this experience.

"I do not hesitate to tell others of God's love and how He is working in my life and in the Poland EBC. God supplies me with everything I need to serve Him through serving others."

We thank God for Leslie and all LCMS volunteers who have served at EBCs.

EBC 2023 RECAP

In 2023, there were 11 English Bible Camps in Poland and the Czech Republic. As I traveled to each camp, I was able to see LCMS volunteers engaging with their local hosts, camp participants', and their families. Each day, the Gospel was proclaimed in English and in the participants heart language. I spoke with many local pastors about the impact the English Bible Camps have on their communities and how the ministry does not stop after the LCMS volunteers leave. Relationships and connections with these families continue throughout the year. Praise God for these great opportunities to share the Gospel and connect families to a local Lutheran parish in Central Europe.



DID YOU KNOW?!

Every day at English Bible Camp, participants learn new vocabulary words and a Bible verse. In the EBC curriculum, there are a host of activities provided for teachers to help their students review vocabulary and the daily Bible verse.

Three LCMS English Bible Camp curriculums are available for you via the link below!

<https://resources.lcms.org/general/english-bible-camp-curriculum/>

Volunteers of all ages!

It always excites me when there are volunteers of different ages serving with the LCMS. Having an intergenerational team brings different perspectives, experiences, and energy to the service opportunity. I remember when I was serving with my dad in Poland for the first time as a 7th grader, and the oldest member of our team was 80 years old! Her name was Helen. It was so encouraging and inspiring to serve with Helen as I watched her interact with participants, build relationships, and share the Gospel.

Right: LCMS volunteers from California who served in Komorní Lhotka, Czech Republic.



INTERESTED IN SERVING SHORT TERM WITH THE LCMS?

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

- The war situation in Ukraine
- EBC preparations for 2024 for the Czech Republic and Poland
- All upcoming teams

GIVE THANKS

- For you, my prayer warriors and encouragers.
- For Mission Education Opportunities that happened in the Czech Republic during the month of March
- For all volunteers who served in Eurasia in 2023
- Local EBC hosts

EBC FAMILY



Read below as LCMS volunteer Michael Olin recalls arriving in Bystřice, CZ, for the second time last summer.

“When I left home last summer, returning to Bystřice for English Bible Camp, I was excited about renewing acquaintances and seeing friends; it turned out to be so much more. It did not take long to realize that this was about so much more than friendship; it was about family. Beyond simply feeling welcome, it was as if I had never been away. There was a feeling and the comfort of home. This was also true for Sunday Worship. Even with my own language challenges, I did not feel out of place amongst the congregation. God is doing awesome things in Bystřice. I often use the sure faith, especially with young adults, as examples for my congregation. Reconnecting with the children and seeing how they had grown was amazing and the highlight of this second camp. I pray for the opportunity to serve together with our Bystřice family, my second congregation, again this summer.”

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

Contact Chelsea Irwin: chelsea.irwin@lcms.org



