



Typical camp lunch of pork, potatoes and cabbage.

CAMP LUNCH

Each day at Teen English Camp (TEC), Czech grandmas from the church came in to cook lunch for about 75 students and volunteers.

Lunch started with a prayer and then large pots of steaming soup were brought out. The soups were different each day, including tomato, garlic, potato and vegetable. The campers were familiar with this tradition and consumed large bowls of the brothy soup.

After the soup, campers went up to the kitchen to get the main course. The grandmas prepared typical Czech cuisine, such as goulash, chicken, pork, potatoes, dumplings, vegetables and fruit compote. We even had Czech *bábovka*, which was marble cake made in pan forms, kind of like bundt cakes.

The food was delicious, and we all ate very well. Many of the teen boys eagerly took their plates up for second or third helpings. Lunch is normally the largest meal of the day for Czechs and supper is usually much lighter.



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Summer Camp



My week of summer camp Bible class included nine Czech students and three helpers.

I still remember the fun and learning I had each summer at Vacation Bible School (VBS) when I was a child. I loved the Bible stories, recess games and crafts. So, when I was asked to teach at the Teen English Camp (TEC) in Třinec, Silesia, Czech Republic, I imagined a similar experience. I left the week in July with an even richer experience.

Instead of the normal half-day of VBS, TEC ran from 9:00am to 3:00pm daily. Each morning started with 15 minutes of group exercise, followed by chapel time. After chapel, we went to our classrooms for a deeper look at the day's Bible lesson. After the hour of Bible lessons, the students could choose sports or crafts, followed by a huge lunch. After lunch, students spent an hour learning more about the English vocabulary from the Bible lesson, followed by another sport or craft, then a final wrap-up all together. In addition to teaching the Bible and English lessons, I also helped the students with crafts.

While most VBS students in America know about Jesus and likely go to

church with their families, the TEC students were not all familiar with Jesus. Some of my students, 12-14 years old, had never been to church. We spent the week answering the question of, "Who is Jesus?" through Scripture. Each day the lesson looked at an "I AM" statement of Jesus—Light of the world, Bread of life, the Vine, Good Shepherd, and the Resurrection, Way, Truth and Life. The lessons were taught in English, but we read the Scripture passages in both Czech and English. I had three Czech helpers, including the vicar at the church in Třinec, to help translate. They were all invaluable.

TEC normally invites American volunteers who travel here just for short-term mission work, but Covid restrictions prevented that this year. The six American teachers, including myself, all currently live in the Czech Republic. Two of them, Ben Helge and Chelsea Irwin, are fellow LCMS missionaries serving in Silesia. Hopefully, next year will be open for travel and you are welcome to come and help share the love of Jesus.



Bibles for Campers



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- The students from summer camp, that they would continue to learn about Jesus as their Savior.
- The new missionaries who have been called to serve in Eurasia.
- Kája, as she discovers the treasure of her first Bible.

GIVE THANKS FOR:

- Answered prayers that the Czech Republic and EU have recognized the validity of my American CDC vaccine certificate.
- The high vaccination rates and easing of the pandemic in the Czech Republic.
- The beautiful summer weather we have been enjoying in Prague.

PRAISE GOD FOR:

- His abundant blessings in our lives.

Kája, left, learned many new things at summer camp and received her first Bible

On the last day of Teen English Camp (TEC), we were told that the Lutheran church that was hosting the camp had enough Bibles available so that each student, if they wanted, could have a Bible.

I had nine students in my classroom. We had been reading from the Bible each day in class, in Czech and English, and several of the students had volunteered to help with reading the verses. When I asked how many students had Bibles at home, two boys raised their hands. We talked about how the Bible could help us learn more about Jesus and help guide us throughout our lives. I then told them that they each could have a Bible to take with them if they

wanted. Only one student, 12-year-old Kája, raised her hand. When I talked with some of the Czech helpers later, I learned that some of the students may be from unbelieving families, and it would be difficult for them to bring a Bible into their homes. Some of the parents may have signed the kids up for camp to help with their English or to be with their friends.

Kája also attended the craft sessions with her friend, Kiki, who invited her to camp. I taught them both how to knit and had a chance to get to know them a little better. At the end of the last craft session, Kája asked one of the Czech helpers to translate something for me. She said she was happy about all that she had learned during the week and was excited to be visiting her grandmother for the weekend. She was planning to share with her grandma all that she learned during the week at camp.

This month we remember the importance of staying connected to Jesus:

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

John 15:5 (ESV)



There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at lcms.org/service. Click on "Service Opportunities."

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