



Wisconsinite Matt Pleshek bought six Bibles for Prague distribution.

BIBLE DONATIONS

After several flight delays, missed connections and lost luggage, Matt Pleshek finally arrived in Prague after traveling more than 24 hours. He was on his way to volunteer in the eastern part of Silesia at one of our LCMS-sponsored English Bible Camps.

Matt had contacted me before the trip after reading about our Bible distribution in the Prague “knihodobudkas” and asked if he could provide some Czech Bibles for the program. I was thrilled with his offer and agreed to meet him early July 5 for coffee. Many coffee shops in Prague open at 6am, but I had forgotten it was a Czech holiday, so we did a little city walking tour before one finally opened.

Matt shared how he took public transportation to the Christian bookstore in Prague to buy Bibles in the requested version. Thank you, Matt, for your diligence in bringing God’s Word to the Czechs and partnering with our missionaries in your service.



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Eurasia Regional Retreat in Latvia



Eurasia missionaries and their families at the regional retreat in Jūrmala, Latvia.

During Aug. 14-18, Eurasia missionaries and their families gathered in Jūrmala, Latvia for our Eurasia Regional Missionary Retreat. This was my fourth and final regional meeting, with previous retreats held in Lithuania (2018), Ukraine (2019), and Greece (2022).

The week flew by with morning worship and education, afternoon meetings and evening meals, but it was great to spend time with fellow dedicated missionaries and their families whom I rarely get to see. About 80 people attended the regional meeting from throughout Europe and the United States.

As I reflect on the week together, I remember with joy the daily worship services and closing Divine Service in English. I also enjoyed the beautiful location for daily fellowship and meals with my colleagues and their families.

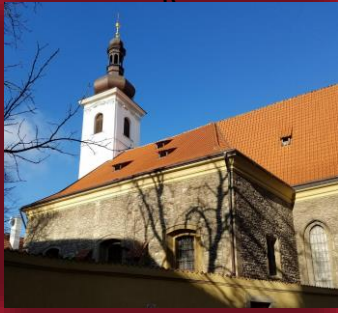
One free afternoon, I went hiking with five other missionaries along a 5.5 km wooden plank trail through the bogs of Ķemeru National Park.

The bogs are surrounded by a beautiful pine forest.

But one of the main highlights this year was the rich teaching by our guest, the Rev. Dr. Joel Biermann. He is the Waldemar A. and June Schuette Professor of Systematic Theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and a faculty member since 2002. Biermann teaches doctrinal theology with an emphasis on ethics and the correct role of the Law in the life of the believer. His topic for our retreat was on Work and Leisure.

Biermann talked about the emptiness of our mechanized world and how people are seeking re-enchantment. All of this exists in the fullness of God that includes truth (Logos), goodness (Ethos) and beauty (Pathos). He shared teaching on vocation and how leisure includes an awareness of our relationship with God and those around us. A Christian lives not in himself, but in Christ and in his neighbor.

On the last retreat day, Biermann’s talk concluded with a standing ovation.



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- Safe travels as I return to the States for my retirement.
- A smooth cultural transition without daily public transportation, and help in finding a safe, reasonable vehicle, as well as patience and grace as I relearn how to drive daily on roads with others.
- The hundreds of Czechs who received Bibles, that they may come to faith, be baptized and join the body of Christ.

GIVE THANKS FOR:

- Lifelong friends and co-workers in the Eurasia region.
- Every prayer warrior, financial donor and letter writer who supported and encouraged me on this mission journey.
- God's protection and guidance during my service as a missionary in Prague.

PRAISE GOD FOR:

- His everlasting faithfulness.

Time to retire



I will miss many friends from the mission field, but especially Deaconess Kim Bueltmann (center), who started the same day as me, and her roommate, Rachel Krause, both serving in Leipzig, Germany.

When God first stirred in my heart to serve abroad as a missionary more than six years ago, I trusted and committed to follow where he led me. Now, it is time to follow His prompting and return home to Wisconsin and retire from my missionary service in Prague, Czech Republic. During my time abroad, I have missed a lot of family time and transitions—both of my parents went to their heavenly home, I have a new son-in-law, and three new grandsons were born. Though I can retire from serving as a missionary in a foreign country, my vocation as mother and grandmother will always remain. I look forward to spending more time

with my family and will continue to honor our gracious God with complete trust and obedience to His will for me.

Thank you for all your prayers and support while I served in Prague. Your notes of encouragement brightened many days. I praise God for you and for all the blessings received while I lived in Prague—blessings far too numerous to mention here. I will certainly miss the people I have worked with here in our journey to proclaim the Gospel in the most atheistic part of the world. But I also know and trust God to provide opportunities to continue to proclaim His glory in new and exciting ways. I have learned that there will always be mission fields in which to serve, sometimes in a foreign country, but often in our neighborhoods and communities or through our churches and homes. We are blessed to be blessings to those around us.



This month we remember how God plans our future:

**For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."
Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)**

- Cindy Zirbel Wrucke



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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