



HUNGARY

LEFT: Ole Schenk **RIGHT:** Ole Schenk teaches English and religious studies to young students in Hungary

Building relationships in Hungary

Ole Schenk describes his transition to living and working in Hungary as a Young Adult in Global Mission as an incredibly fast-paced journey. "I was handed chalk and classrooms of elementary students (right away), and just as soon the students showed me their energetic appetite for learning," he explains. "The pace has been swift, but it's a joy to see how keen students bring out the best of past teaching experiences."

Originally from Canada, Schenk is making good use of his English as a Second Language certification as he teaches English to elementary students and religious studies to high school students. "Sometimes when I'm (teaching), I'm tempted to doubt that anything has been communicated. There are days when their lit-up faces remind me that the word of God lights its own fire." He is also working to build relationships with the Roma, a marginalized group in Hungary.

The men's group at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Waverly, Iowa, who have a covenant relationship with Schenk, recently had an opportunity to skype with him about this. "One of the main issues we heard about was how Ole's working to connect with and understand the Roma people, who are treated as outcasts in that society," says Paul Frantsen, director of youth and family ministry at St. Paul's. "He's looking for ways to be a bridge between that group and the rest of the population: walking alongside them, establishing trust and being a Christ-like example."

"I hear negative things about Roma people. To come to a worship service with them, and be there as brothers and sisters in Christ, all that is cleared away," Schenk explains.

The Northeastern Iowa Synod has shown strong support for the Young Adults in Global Mission Hungary country group. Schenk says: "It was stunning to us in the program to see the support from the Northeastern Iowa Synod, especially St Paul's Lutheran in Waverly, Iowa. It's a reminder of what's happening in the wider church. It reminds me of who I am and orients me here. I believe that God is calling me here."

Your gifts to ELCA Global Church Sponsorship directly fund Young Adults in Global Mission like Ole Schenk as they work hand in hand with our neighbors around the world. Learn more at <https://community.elca.org/Hungary>.



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