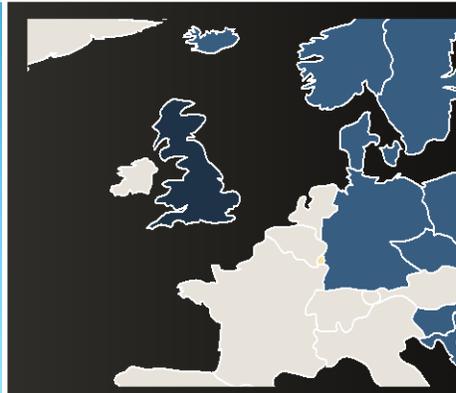


Mission of the Month

STORIES FROM THE GLOBAL CHURCH

2014 NO. 8



ENGLAND

LEFT: Katharine Ritzi
BELOW LEFT: Katharine (front row, left) with fellow young adults from her country program.

BELOW RIGHT: Katharine having fun with her colleagues.



The gift is you

Katharine Ritzi, who recently returned home after her year of service as an ELCA Young Adult in Global Mission, reflects on what her experience as a reading tutor in London has meant to her.

“As I was preparing for this year of service, my pastor spoke to me words that I couldn’t comprehend until living through this journey. He said, ‘Ultimately, the gift is *you*.’”

“As Young Adults in Global Mission, we teach English, we work in churches and we lead youth groups. We work in centers for social justice and we serve in rehabilitation centers. But ultimately, no matter what we may be doing, we are building relationships.

“As we intentionally allow ourselves to become vulnerable, we are humbly learning that we are the gift, as well as the people we are walking beside. We are learning that we did not *become* missionaries by being accepted into the program; we are realizing we’re all *born* missionaries.”

The ELCA hopes that Young Adults in Global Mission will be a transformative experience for each of the participants so that they will return ready to be leaders in transforming the ELCA. As Katharine says, “I once heard it said that the ELCA sends out YAGMs to be messed with, so when we come back home we’ll mess with the church.

“But no matter how it’s phrased, we will return home with a greater understanding of how God is rejoicing and weeping in every corner of the world.”

Get involved!

To learn more about Young Adults in Global Mission or how you or your congregation can sponsor one, visit www.ELCA.org/YAGMsupport or email globalchurch@elca.org.

Expanding the Young Adults in Global Mission program is a priority of Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA. Learn more about this Campaign at www.ELCA.org/campaign.



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