



# teaching

*"I will always look back on this experience with pride and fondness—especially when I think about those students whose teacher I was lucky enough to be." (Mitch MacDonald, 2021-2023)*

English is the language of business, tourism, media, and so much more. Native speakers are in high demand as teachers of English and have the advantage of natural grammar and vocabulary. Lutheran schools in Central Europe have partnered with the ELCA to bring native speakers of English into their classrooms to boost the confidence of students and provide cultural exchange.

Central Europe Teachers works with high schools in Slovakia, most of which have bilingual programs; several have elementary or middle school programs as well. Native speakers teach conversation and culture; some teach literature, grammar, religion, or other subject areas in English. Teaching may include preparing for the intense school-leaving exam.

Trained teachers or those who want to explore teaching can practice in a novel environment and add to their resumes. Those who are not trained as teachers before joining the program learn quickly and are supported through training and a school and teacher community.

Time commitment: orientation in July in Chicago, then mid-August through June 30; preparation and teaching 18-22 classes a week

Financial commitment: teachers pay expenses beyond a basic salary, including travel for enjoyment during time of service; flight and transportation to and from the country of service, stipend (500-1,000€ per month), housing, and insurance provided. Assistance with loan deferment available as needed.



Central Europe Teachers are usually in transition: recent college graduates or ending service in a program like Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM), empty-nesters, close to retirement, or experiencing family structure or job changes. They work in partnership with the **church**, have at least a **Bachelor's Degree** (Master's Degree preferred) and an **openness to sharing their gifts**. They are **flexible, sensitive to cultural differences, communicate well, and want to collaborate, build relationships, and explore**. Teaching experience is a plus, but not necessary.

If this sounds like you, please visit [www.elca.org/Our-Work/Global-Mission/Global-Service/Volunteer](http://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Global-Mission/Global-Service/Volunteer) for more information or contact [naomi.sveholm@elca.org](mailto:naomi.sveholm@elca.org).

*"If you are adventurous, love traveling and meeting new people then you should definitely get involved!" (Rachel Bossuyt, 2019-2021)*

# explore the cultures of Central Europe: teach with a mission and a supportive community



## Central Europe Teachers





# mission

Accompaniment is walking together, using each person's gifts for mutual benefit. In the CET program, American teachers act as role models and improve the confidence and language abilities of students, as well as prestige for the schools; schools provide community, salary, housing, and teaching support; students and European teachers offer cultural exchange and encouragement. Together, the result is greater than any one part.

The church is one body with many members. We all have different gifts, called to serve in different ways.

***“Not everyone is called to the ministry and I'm glad to have the opportunity to serve the church using skills that I actually have.”***

*(Nick Sveholm, CET since 2017)*



# community

***“I love my school. I love my vice principal. You don't always know the questions you need to ask, but there are always people around who can help with something.”***

*(Stephanie Black, 2017-2020)*

Each school is unique, but all have community space for teachers and opportunities for engagement with other teachers and with students. Many schools have an initiation/integration event for new students and sometimes teachers.

Beyond the classroom, there are local and international church and social communities, and CETs have their own WhatsApp group chat and get-togethers throughout the year. When teachers want to get involved, there are always volunteer opportunities and school projects.

Our partner schools in both Slovakia and Poland are hosting Ukrainian refugees and continue to collect donations for the ongoing crisis. The school in Martin, Slovakia started a community center which continues to serve over 150 families weekly.

Schools also advocate for human rights through the Global 16 Days Campaign against gender-based violence, Write for Rights, and Model UN. Students often raise awareness around other issues and volunteer as well.

Teachers support students academically and emotionally with school pressures and mental health concerns. It is increasingly meaningful as students develop greater trust in their teachers, especially following the distance learning of the pandemic and the stress leading to the graduating classes' green-ribbon ceremonies and school-leaving exams. It is also a joy to see students grow and succeed.

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# exploring

***“I wanted to explore the world a bit coming out of university. I felt that it would help me be a better social studies teacher. I knew I would learn about the culture of wherever I ended up and get to explore many interesting places.”***

*(Jack Kent, 2019-2021)*

The CET program has multiple sites in Slovakia. Some are urban, others surrounded by mountains; the program is intentional in matching candidates with sites where both the needs of the teacher and school will be met.

Life in Central Europe is both familiar and eye-opening. Perhaps you will find grocery stores overwhelming, staff meetings confusing, and the High Tatras thrilling. However you engage with partner schools and communities, you will learn more about yourself, gaining understanding that will follow you beyond Central Europe. There are also many opportunities for joining school field trips and traveling to nearby countries.

***“The challenges and benefits of expanding one's own cultural awareness are uniquely refreshing.”***

*(John Rogers, 2011-2023)*

