

GLOBAL CHURCH

Rooted in relationships

STORIES
OF FAITH
IN ACTION
2019 • 2020

ELCA missionaries and pastors Rachel Eskesen and Zachary Courter are partners in work, life and ministry. The married couple has served in Central Europe since 2015, accompanying the Lutheran Church of Hungary (LCH) and Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Augsburg Confession in Serbia and coordinating the ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program in Central Europe.

“We’re filled with gratitude to walk alongside the YAGM volunteers and their host communities here in Central Europe.”

Eskesen and Courter oversee a small group of YAGM volunteers, who serve schools, soup kitchens, homes for those with disabilities, nonprofits, refugee organizations, Roma communities and other ministries.

“One of the things I love about our program is matching the gifts of the YAGM volunteers to the needs of the communities with which they’ll serve,” Eskesen said.

“We’re filled with gratitude to walk alongside the YAGM volunteers and their host communities here in Central Europe,” Courter added.

In addition, the couple preaches and presides at City Park Lutheran Church in Budapest and partners with its ministries.

Mission Support funding enables their work mentoring young adults and walking alongside companions in Hungary and Serbia.

Though the political environment there can be tough, Eskesen said she and Courter are inspired by the commitment of their colleagues to proclaim the gospel. The relationships they are forming — as they preach, teach, learn and receive the gifts of the global church — keep them grounded.

Eskesen appreciates how ministry abroad allows her and Courter to use their gifts and grow in faith. “We live in a global context right now that’s increasingly polarized and isolationist,” she said. “Every day, when we work with young adults, I can see how God is calling us to relationships that are bigger than any relationship we have. A big part of my daily faith experience is seeing not only how we can welcome volunteers into the communities that we love but also how we’ve been welcomed here.”

To follow this missionary couple, visit their blog (zachandrachel.wordpress.com) and [Facebook.com/YAGMCentralEurope](https://www.facebook.com/YAGMCentralEurope).



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.