

# Easter 2019



# Húsvét 2019



## Happy Easter!

As we celebrate the news of the resurrection here in Central Europe, we hope that you too are experiencing all the ways that God brings new life into the world and our lives wherever it is you are! We are grateful for your continued support of our ministry, and we hope you enjoy the latest update on the work that God has invited us into alongside our partners in mission.

Christ is Risen Indeed!

Pastors Rachel & Zach

# Pentecost in Easter

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.**

**La gracia de nuestro Señor Jesucristo, el amor de dios, y la comunión del espíritu santo sean con ustedes.**

**Az Úr Jézus Krisztus kegyelme, az Isten szeretete és a Szentlélek közössége legyen mindnyájatokkal.**

City Park Lutheran Church is a missional ministry of the Budapest-Fasor Lutheran Church, and the Lutheran Church in Hungary. As a part of our mission work in Central Europe, Pastor Rachel and I serve on the pastoral leadership team of the church, along with our Hungarian pastor colleagues.

Though the worship language of the congregation is English, our worship community is made up of a diverse group of people from all over the world. English is our shared language, but it is far from being the mother tongue of everybody. We often connect as an English language worshipping community with the larger Hungarian language congregation who also holds worships services each Sunday.

One of the most incredible acts of hospitality that I continue to experience as a missionary is being spoken to in my native language. It is an incredible privilege to be welcomed into a community as a colleague and friend, and be able to function in English. That's why it was such a joy for me to respond to this hospitality by sharing my own learning and enjoyment of the Hungarian language with the Hungarian language worshipping community.

On the first Sunday after Easter I presided and preached for my first time ever in Hungarian. With the help and support of colleagues and friends, I was prepared to serve in this meaningful way.

Nelson Mandela said, "If you talk to a person in the language they understand, it goes to their head. If you talk to them in their own language, that goes to their heart." My



Pastor Zach presiding at Worship with the Hungarian Language congregation of the Budapest-Fasori Evangélikus Egyházközség.

colleagues and friends here in Budapest and beyond have been speaking to my heart this whole time, and I am so grateful to finally be able to return the honor.



Baptismal worship that included parts in English, Hungarian and Spanish languages.

And yet, the Holy Spirit just keeps expanding my own expectations and understanding of the ways that we can be church together. On the Second Sunday after Easter was a baptism for the youngest member of our congregation, and now newest member of the body of Christ among us. The father and his side of the family are from Argentina, the mother and her side of the family are from Hungary. As a family, they speak Hungarian, Spanish and English. To help all feel welcome and able to actively participate in the baptismal service, the baptismal service was also in Hungarian, English and Spanish.

Some of you may know that before I followed Rachel to Hungary for her call as the YAGM Central Europe Country Coordinator, I was preparing for bilingual, Spanish-English ministry in the United States. Only God would've known that the first child I would baptize would be in a trilingual service.

I continue to be amazed in the ways in which the Holy Spirit reveals itself in our ministry and life here in Budapest. The incredible ways that it weaves together many aspects of our lives and experiences to build up the Body of Christ here in Central Europe and beyond. My prayer for you and your community is that you too are able to see and experience God's Spirit in your life.

**Praise be to God !**

**Alabanza a Dios!**

**Dicsőség Istennek!**

## SUPPORT US!

**Follow us on Facebook:** [facebook.com/YAGMCentralEurope/](https://facebook.com/YAGMCentralEurope/)

**Check out our blog:** [zachandrachel.wordpress.com](https://zachandrachel.wordpress.com)

**Make a donation to support our ministry:** [support.elca.org/goto/EskesenCourter](https://support.elca.org/goto/EskesenCourter)

Learn about becoming a long-term supporter of our ministry by being in touch with us:  
[Zachary.Courter@elca.org](mailto:Zachary.Courter@elca.org) and [Rachel.Eskesen@elca.org](mailto:Rachel.Eskesen@elca.org)

# Leaving Well

It feels like not that long ago we were welcoming this latest YAGM cohort to Central Europe. During their in-country orientation, we shared about the communities with which they would be serving, talked about expectations for the year, processed their fears around how they might “fit-in,” and many other natural anxieties that accompany an international year of mission service.

Now we are solidly toward the end of their year of service, and it’s time to process with our YAGM Central Europe missionaries about their upcoming departures. What does it mean to “leave well” and how do we prepare for what is next?

Saying goodbye to people and places we have come to love and cherish can be a challenge, to say the least. It can be tempting to avoid altogether the difficulty of saying goodbye. Over the past few weeks we have been meeting with small groups of our YAGM to talk about the ways they would like to say goodbye to the people that they have been serving alongside. We’ve begun to process with them the myriad feelings that arise with departing: sadness, grief, loss, hope, anxiety.



Of course, saying goodbye to their service sites and colleagues is not a one-sided affair. The people in the communities in which they YAGM serve also want to say goodbye. Even though it is quite typical for YAGM to be anxious about their goodbyes, they often find that the goodbyes themselves lead to some very enjoyable moments: celebrating shared successes, remembering funny cross-cultural learnings, reflecting on personal and community growth in which the YAGM played a role, and so on.

The YAGM year is a journey, and there are many paths one’s life can take afterwards. It’s not always easy to know “what’s next?”

For some, what is even more difficult than saying goodbye is preparing to say hello again. The unknowns of what is waiting for them upon their return to the United States, their families, and workplaces can be overwhelming. How will this new version of themselves be re-received by their family and friends? Have their values shifted during this year of

service? And if so, what does that mean for their relationships with family, friends, and co-workers in the United States? Are there new spiritual practices that they wish to continue, and will that be possible?

These are a few of the big questions that our YAGM live into as they prepare to bring their year of service to a close. As far as we can tell, there are no healthy shortcuts through this period of goodbyes and hellos. In fact, it will be in these lived human experiences that span the range of human emotion that we will continue to encounter the incarnational Jesus, who will accompany the YAGM, and all of us in the weeks and months to come.



When there are many paths that one can take next, it's important to prayerfully consider all the options.

## Holy Week: Hungary

Holy Week is a big deal here in Hungary. So much so that the literal translation of "Holy Week" is "Big Week," coming from the Hungarian "Nagyhét." Not only is it a big week, but it is filled with services and devotions every day from Palm Sunday through Easter Monday. In the past, Good Friday was seen as the most important day in the Lutheran Church in Hungary, but now Easter Sunday is the most widely attended worship service in Holy Week.

At City Park Lutheran we celebrated both Good Friday and Easter Sunday with services. The Good Friday service was a penitent, reflective service. Easter Sunday was a celebratory communion service with Pastor Rachel presiding and preaching.

Christ is risen! Christ is risen! Hallelujah!  
Az Úr feltámadt! Az Úr valóban feltámadt! Halleluja!