

# Advocating

Partnering together in mission today

**REACH**  
Renewing, Engaging  
and Advocating Churches

**Session 3**

## Refugees with the Face of Jesus: A Story from Hungary

*Szabina Sztojka and Rev. Balázs Ódor*

Worldwide there are 250 billion immigrants, 15 billion refugees living abroad and another 15 million that have fled within their own countries. Since Hungary is part of the Schengen area (an area comprising 26 European countries that have abolished passport and other types of border control at their common borders), it has become more and more popular as a transit country. This year, more than 10 thousand people arrived in the country because of an amended legislation. The majority of them are from Serbia and trying to pass the Green Border illegally in order to come to Hungary. The helpless people who have been on the road for months – many of them unaccompanied youth – are set up in refugee camps where they wait months for applications to be processed.

If they are lucky, people claiming refugee protection can receive refugee status, so they are not deported but their difficulties are not over. They should learn the language. They should integrate into a new culture and they should be treated for their traumas. The employees and volunteers of the Refugee Ministry of the Reformed Church in Hungary have been trying to help with this for a decade now.

### From suffering to blessing

Our mission – providing help for internationally protected persons and for recognized refugees to begin their lives in Hungary – cannot be successful without the cooperation of the hosting society. That is why it is important for them to present the realities of daily life.



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## Acompañamiento: A Story from Chile *(continued)*

Abraham, Sarah, Joseph and his brothers, Moses – there are many scriptures that tell stories about somebody who lives in a foreign environment under force. Newcomers were not always met with a warm reception, but from those stories it turns out that God is especially close to refugees, stands by them and may shape their suffering into blessing.

The memory of Egypt's imprisonment, the experience of being a newcomer enabled the Jewish to be hospitable to foreigners. Foreigners live around us, too. Do they experience God's love through us?