

Our History is Part of Who We Are



1839-1910 Missionaries bound for Palestine need to return after one falls off a camel. Travelling via the Danube, they stop in Budapest and receive an invitation from Archduchess Maria Dorothea to do mission work in the city. A new delegation is sent and the Scottish Mission is founded to encourage Hungarian Protestants, educate Jews living in Budapest, and minister among the Scots living there.

1910-1950 The Mission grows and a girls' school is built on Vörösmarty utca. With Jewish and Christian girls living together, the place is known for its religious tolerance and high standards. Because of her work here, Jane Haining, the Scottish matron of the school, is arrested and later killed in Auschwitz. During the second World War, the school shelters Jewish refugees, but is eventually evacuated and, for a time, the Arrow Cross Party uses the gymnasium to detain prisoners. In 1946 instruction resumes in the building and two years later the school is nationalised.

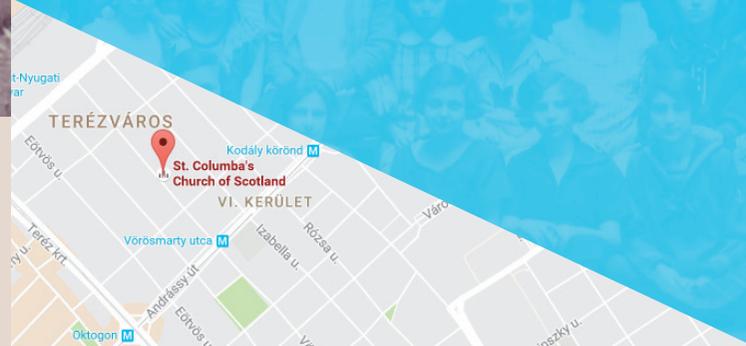
1950-1989 Despite the tensions and restrictions of the Cold War Era, Hungarians continue ministry with regular services in Hungarian and occasional services in English.

1989-TODAY Political changes allow free travel and the congregation becomes the international community it is today. Today, the Scottish Mission serves as an international congregation preserving its Reformed identity and has become a spiritual home not only for Hungarians but for international students living in Hungary, employees of multinational corporations, diplomats and refugees.

Whether your first meeting
with us is online or in person...

whether you are interested in worship,
a cultural event or a cup of coffee...

we think the Hungarian phrase for
“Welcome” is very fitting: “Isten hozott” which,
translated, means “God brought you here.”



St. Columba's Church OF SCOTLAND

1064 BUDAPEST, VÖRÖSMARTY UTCA 51,
near the Oktogon stop from either the 4/6 tram or the M1 metro

WORSHIP EVERY SUNDAY AT 11:00

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Check out our website to access a full walking tour
of almost a dozen sites around Budapest
that are connected to the history
of our church!

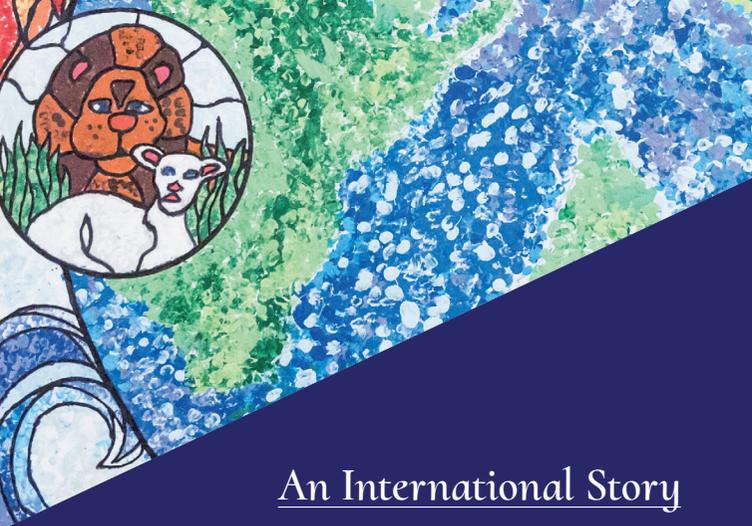
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St. Columba's Church OF SCOTLAND

SCOTTISH MISSION IN BUDAPEST SINCE 1841



An International Story

The international, eclectic character of today's congregation is a part of our identity that goes all the way back to our beginnings!

Our congregation belongs to the Church of Scotland and the Reformed Church in Hungary and we are at home in both churches. Just as Scots were building bridges in Budapest so many years ago, we hope we, too, can continue to build bridges between the two churches to which we belong.

Coming from a wide variety of nationalities and religious backgrounds, our members include people who were born in Hungary, people who have chosen to come here for study or work, and people who have come fleeing persecution in their home country. Some of us come from English-speaking countries, many do not.

No particular church background is necessary to take part in our services, and we welcome people from other religious backgrounds or with no clear religious identity to worship with us. What connects the members of our community is a desire to connect with God and with each other in an English-speaking context. We are a "mixed multitude" (Exodus 12:38).

A Home Away From Home

Working with refugees is not just something that we do; it is part of who we are. As a gathering of people from other countries, it is only natural that some of our members will include people forced to flee their homeland.

Members of our church were instrumental in the launching of the Refugee Mission of the Reformed Church in Hungary around 2005, and since then we have cooperated on multiple occasions.

More recently our main partner in this outreach has been Kalunba Social Services, who set up the Salaam Overnight Shelter in our space in 2015 to welcome families who would have otherwise slept at railway stations. We have also given space for their language lessons, social support services, clothing drives and community programmes.

As a mixture of foreigners and Hungarians in Budapest, we take to heart the words of scripture: *And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt.* (Deuteronomy 10:19)

Outreach of Love



Community life

A large part of our mission is to provide community for one another. This is done in a number of ways. In addition to worshipping together, on Sundays we enjoy a coffee and tea time after the service. We also try to develop small groups and keep children involved through a Children's Church program during the service each week.

Though our programming changes from time to time, based on what members are interested in, the goal is always to provide opportunities for people to get to know each other better, developing networks that can make living in Hungary feel more like home.

