

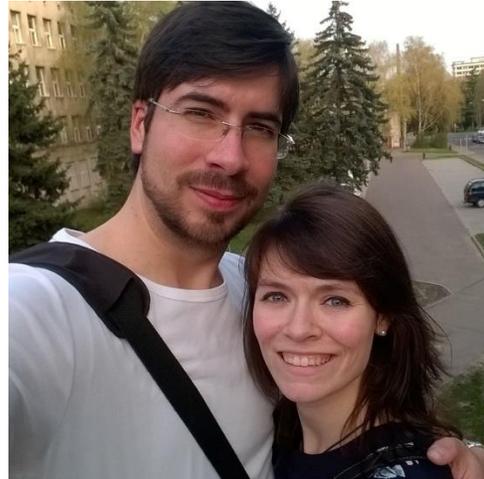
## Ready for the Next Thing

By Viki Rife with Rebekah Szucs

*The school day had finally ended. The children were gone. The second-grade teacher sank into her chair wearily.*

*She had never had to deal with so many hard-to-love kids in one classroom before. The job she loved had turned into a challenge to just keep going.*

*“They need you, Lord,” Rebekah prayed silently. But this was a public school—how could she hope to ever have opportunities to share with her students what they needed most.*



*She walked over to the desk where her most difficult student usually sat. Placing her hand on the desk, she prayed for the child. The anger in her heart melted away, and a new love flowed into her. She walked around the room, praying at the desk of each child. When she was done, her heart was renewed. She actually felt eager to pour into them again.*

*Shortly after that, a friend approached her at church with an invitation to “participate in an opportunity” in the school where Rebekah taught. Several women in the congregation had a heart for the girls of the community, and wanted to start offering SMM, a girls’ discipleship ministry, after school.*

The group began to pray. They were willing to wait if necessary, but wanted to be ready as opportunities opened up.

“I’m amazed at how God orchestrated everything,” Rebekah shares. “For example, a woman who had recently started coming to our church was asking God how He wanted her to serve. She was reminded of how much her daughter had benefitted from SMM when she was younger. When she saw the poster asking for volunteers, she knew that’s what she was called to do.

“God gave us favor with the school principal and with community leaders anxious to see children experience opportunities to develop healthy mentor relationships with adults.”

As they got closer to startup, the church started to pray for 30 girls to join the group. It seemed an audacious number. The first day, however, 32 girls showed up. The group has continued to grow, almost doubling its original size.

Other teachers in the area, seeing the potential to truly help their students, have been anxious to add SMM at their schools. When they held their first end-of-the year gathering of all SMM girls and their families, over 200 filled the gym they were using.

Asked about her most memorable highlight, Rebekah answers, “Hands down, it’s the singing! The image of the girls singing at the very top of their lungs is seared in my brain. I get goosebumps, thinking, ‘This is what we’ll be doing around the Throne!’” She adds, “I want to influence girls so they are bowing the knee by choice, not force.”

As a little girl growing up in the Marion, Ohio, Grace Brethren Church, Rebekah had many women invest in her. She remembers when she was four begging to be allowed to attend SMM, until finally they allowed her to start a year before she was actually old enough.

She is thankful that she was encouraged to get involved in ministry as a child. "It takes away the fear of ministry so you aren't so intimidated as you get older," she shares. "I was mentored all the way up through high school. Even in college, I did a summer internship with one of the women who had invested in me. It showed me the inner workings of a life dedicated to ministry. I was especially inspired by the amount of prayer that is involved in effective ministry."

She adds, "The girls around us have so much potential! We need to be aware of that, pray, and be ready for the next thing."

For Rebekah, the "next thing" is adjusting to living in Hungary. Last year she married Bence Szücs, a Hungarian lawyer she met while visiting a friend there. She currently works in a bilingual school where she can teach in English. She feels a passion for reaching children in her school and church, but realizes she first needs to learn the language.

Asked about what advice she would give to those who care about girls, she answered, "Pray! Then be willing to wait while God orchestrates the details, and be ready for the next thing He brings."