

# Scot, Selena & Olie Brown

Serving the Lord in Hungary



## International Friendship

***"The end of the world is coming soon. Therefore, be earnest and disciplined in your prayers. Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins. Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay." 1 Peter 4:7-9. NLT***

**"International Friendship - Budapest" is to be our new name. I asked my dear brother Toby Sorrels if he would mind our using this name with it being so similar to the ministry in Gainesville he has served. He was enthusiastically supportive. This name best sums up what we are actively doing here in Central Europe to draw students to Christ.**



**After church with our Norwegian friends**

A typical week at our place involves hosting three meals with students, local academics, or fellow ministry leaders. Several individual or small group meetings for discipleship and personal evangelism where we read the Word and pray together. This is relationship development with students encouraging them to actively participate by acting on the meaning of the study by bringing a friend. We practice lifestyle evangelism daily where each person we encounter is someone Christ may have something for. We all study the word together each morning and pray together fully aware that unless the Holy Spirit is alive in us, we have nothing real to offer. Many days we begin with a feeling which if allowed to stay would lead to discouragement or being lonely. But giving Him our best of a busy day is imperative!

We have wonderful news about Sibel our student from Turkey who lost family members in the terrible earthquakes last year. She is back in Turkey doing a required year as an intern teacher. Sibel and her family's lives are incredibly difficult now living far from where the earthquake devastated their lives. Sibel's teaching internship requires her to live over five hours away from family with strangers. Her family lost everything in the earthquake, add to that she must pay to be an intern. Last year before she graduated and returned to Turkey, she was troubled and said she wanted our friendship badly but couldn't tolerate pressure or arguing about religious issues. We never did those things and she acknowledged as much but her concerns were painfully real. We suspected it was the Holy Spirit's conviction as well as the devastation she experienced losing her family and home so painfully. We listened to and reassured her we didn't base our relationship with her on her becoming a Christian and abandoning Islam. Sibel was at our home almost every day afterward. We hosted her mother from Turkey and ministered Christ's peace to her. We read Psalms to this mommy whose world was devastated by the death of her daughter and son-in-law both respected judges and her beautiful home. Their condominium was ten stories and less than five years old, Anna, Sibel and her husband on the third floor barely got out before it collapsed with the other building in the greater area. Over a hundred people in the building died. Anna was so obviously traumatized but came because she was concerned for Sibel and the American family befriending her. When we asked her if we could pray for her a Christian prayer for Yahweh's peace to comfort her, she said yes. Selena went over to her and something truly holy happened. Both women broke and the presence of the Holy Spirit transformed these ladies' countenances as they wept and held each other.



**Sibel & Marianna**



**Scot, Selena, Anna,  
Marianna and Sibel**

I'd love to tell you that once we prayed everything made sense and their lives became "normal" again, but it's not true. Sibel loved reading the Bible and our company so much she was with us almost every day. The irreconcilable loss and her confusion with a loving God allowing suffering was hard and she was beginning to escape the numbness and shock that her mind had been protected by. By Easter week she was secretly planning to deal with her sometimes overwhelming pain and hopelessness. On Easter Eve Olson had the dream and shared it with Sibel later the next day when she came over having missed church and the celebration lunch, she had confirmed she would attend. Weeks later Sibel shared with us that eve of Easter she intended to overdose with the drugs she had accumulated but kept getting texts from us and others in our little community of international friends. Selena and I had no idea of Olson's dream and have

not heard of it from Olson to this day. When Sibel came over after missing Easter she and Olie went shopping at clothing stores by our place. Olson said she had cried in her sleep because of a painful dream about Sibel. Sibel asked what her dream was. Olson told her she committed suicide, and her heart couldn't handle losing her and the pain of knowing she lost her sister and now (Olie) lost Sibel! Sibel was stunned and swore to Olson she would never do anything like that. Two weeks later the plane as we were leaving Budapest Sibel shared this with us via her farewell text. We were stunned and knew that intercessory prayer made the difference.

We've stayed in constant communication with Sibel and her family. Last Monday evening she was in an extremely hard place, and we could hear roommates crying in the background about their situation. Selena encouraged and prayed with her, Marianna, our Karabakh-Armenian friend who has no home to return to had called, encouraged, and prayed with her also. Turkish and Armenian people are like Samaritan and Orthodox Jews in their feelings for one another but these two and their parents love each other because of God's work and their mutual calamities. Sibel knows who Jesus is, reads her Bible, and will pray but has not believed in Him as her only hope for salvation yet. We are bringing her here to Budapest in February for two weeks and ask you to pray the Jesus she has acknowledged becomes her Lord and Savior.

It's very hard but we do not intervene in our students' struggles except to listen to them, read His word with and pray with them concerning the situation. If the Holy Spirit leads us to share their burden, we pray about how so we are not guilty of quenching the Holy Spirit's work in building their relationship and faith.

Marianna, Lilith, and Meri are Ph.D. students working two jobs trying to help their families who are exiles in Armenia. She and four others from her country are a part of our family here. All their families had to flee Karabakh when Azerbaijan attacked and displaced them from their homes. Six of us met Friday night for dinner at a Syrian restaurant. Of the five from Karabakh, one's father was shot and killed, and one cousin was burned alive and died with over a hundred others in a freak gasoline distribution/gas station fire. He was trying to fill up to flee before the invaders arrived. We've been praying, encouraging, and supporting their practical needs. We have been praying for the families to be able to leave Armenia where opportunities are minimal. Through the efforts of their university, the Hungarian government is granting the five students' families emergency asylum and support stipends. We had church when the students shared what had just happened for their families! They should be here in Budapest by Christmas.



**Scot, Olie, Selena,  
Marianna, Lilith and Meri  
from Karabah**

There are dozens of similar relationships we are involved with that we look forward to sharing in the future. Next month I'll be sharing more exciting developments relating to something called: Operation Joseph.