

A Young Adult Volunteer: Miriam Foltz Belfast, Northern Ireland, 2010-2011.

Who am I?

I am a senior at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. In May, I will graduate with a Bachelors of Art in Music and History. I grew up in O'Fallon, IL, and I am a member of First United Presbyterian Church in Belleville, IL. I have also been an affiliate member of Williamsburg Presbyterian Church since Spring 2007.

What is the YAV program?

It is a missions program of the PC(USA) church that engages young adults between the ages of 18 and 30 in a year of service. There are 16 national and international sites and over 60 young adult volunteers.

The goals of the program include:

- for the volunteers to experience living in an intentional Christian community while seeking to lead a more simple life,
- to focus on spiritual formation,
- to engage young adults in the church's mission — The church seeks to provide opportunities for young adults to serve the church and their communities,
- to assist YAVs in vocation discernment.
- to be present in communities of need and to facilitate young adults' engagement in communities of need.

For a wealth of more information, check out: <http://www.pcusa.org/yav/>

What exactly will I be doing in Northern Ireland?

I will be assigned to a church and a community organization in Belfast. Depending on where I am placed, I could be serving inner city youth, low-income seniors, or people of all ages in need within Belfast. While much of the violence has subsided since 1998, there continues to be hatred and suffering beneath the surface. Northern Ireland is not a developing country, but the Troubles continue to effect much of the population. While I will be serving primarily on the "Protestant" side, as an American, I will be an outsider with the opportunity to observe the lasting effects of the Troubles on daily life for Belfast residents.

What am I asking of you?

Your thoughts and prayers are extremely appreciated as I live abroad in a new culture, far from my friends and family, and face new challenges to my faith and ideals. I also need to raise \$9,000 by July 2011, with the main milestone of \$2,500 by July 15, 2010.

Why am I fundraising?

I am asking you to join me in my year of service! I will be giving of my time during this next year, and I invite you to participate through both moral support and financial support. This is an outreach program through the Presbyterian Church (USA), and the program is an opportunity for us to serve together in faith as a body of Christ, by carrying out his ministry in the world. Every size of donation is very much appreciated! As in the story of the feeding of the 5,000, miracles can happen when many give a little.

What should you expect from me?

I will be keeping a blog! You will be able to follow the challenges and adventures of my life in Belfast at <http://themermurs.blogspot.com/>. Additionally, you will be welcome to follow posts by other YAVs which will be linked through the YAV website. In my writings, I will share what I am learning and witnessing during my year there, and I invite you to grow and learn more with me.

How should money be donated to my year of service?

There are several ways to donate. The main number to remember is: E210104. This is my ECO number for the YAV program. You can donate through the YAV website (<http://www.pcusa.org/yav/support.htm>) and make an electronic transaction. Or, checks may be written out to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with my name and ECO number on the check and then mailed to this address:

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Individual Remittance Processing
P.O. Box 643700
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

Many thanks for your support! In peace, through Christ - Miriam

