

YAGM Senegal

Pastor Mytch Pierre-Noel Dorvilier
YAGM Country Coordinator

October, 2023



My name is Mytch Pierre-Noel Dorvilier. I serve as the Coordinator for the Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program in Senegal. I grew up on the beautiful Caribbean Island of HAITI, which of course is in the continent of America and the first Black Republic in the World. I am the mother of three beautiful humans. I am an ELCA coach. I served as a Parish Pastor in Central California before moving to Senegal a second time. I enjoy spending time with the three humans I claim to be my children whether on the phone or in person. I like running in the streets of Dakar, cooking vegan food in my kitchen, dancing at the sound of Senegalese and Haitian drums, practicing yoga, journaling, playing violin, struggling with languages, and immersing in other cultures.

Asalaam Walaakum!

I am delighted that you are reading my newsletter and that you are interested in getting acquainted with the YAGM program in Senegal. I serve as the Coordinator for the Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program in Senegal.

Last August, I welcomed and spent time with the cohort of six humans in Senegal. These humans have the privilege to be in this space to witness what God is up to, and to begin to understand their identity as Lutherans in the world, their understanding of the Body of Christ, and the importance of cultivating intentional beloved communities.



From left to right: Ceci, Micah, Abi, Carl, Grace & Josh

Their journey to Senegal started in March when they learned their country of deployment. Then mid-August they went through an orientation in Chicago for a few days to get ready for deployment and from there the cohort traveled to Senegal, the land of La Teranga. Let me tell you about this first part of their experience.

YAGM's first month started with intensive in-country orientation which lasted the whole month of September. During that time, they learned about the culture, different ethnic groups, and languages spoken. They were introduced to Islam and the different brotherhoods in the Islamic Religion. They were also introduced to the history of ELCA's partnership with the Eglise Luthérienne du Senegal, (ELS) and the Services Luthériens pour le Développement au Senegal, (SLDS).

Additionally, they learned the languages of the communities they are called to experience life together. For some the language was Serer and for others it was Wolof. They also learned about pre- and post-colonization in Senegal while they visited Goree Island, a space that carries a lot of pain for African and African descent.

Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) is an ELCA program that invites young adults to become the hands and feet of Jesus in the world, providing critical support to ministries and projects in communities of need. Most importantly, the volunteers are invited into a journey of self-reflection and provided space to consider their sense of identity, God's work in the world, and their place within it all.

As guests, not saviors, we need to let God be God in the communities. Our postures should always be one of learning and humility. And let the community we are invited to experience life with be the experts in their own experiences.

As you are reading this newsletter, the cohort has already been dispersed by pairs in their communities to continue experiencing what God is up to among the Senegalese people.



Micah and Grace are in Linguere supporting the dairy farm and the Primary Health Care Clinic; Abigail and Carl are in Yeumbeul supporting the Lutheran School and the communication programs of SLDS; Cecilia and Josh are in Fatick supporting the Christian Education program of ELS.

In its holistic approaches, SLDS intervenes in several suburbs in Dakar and the region of Louga in the department of Linguere. Their principal objective is to promote young girls and women, education, animal husbandry, agriculture, and primary health care.

As a midwife, ELS intervenes in the region of Fatick to promote education in the language spoken at home. The church ministry is to meet Christians and non-Christians alike in the space they are in. They also have a Christian Formation Program. These are the places our 2023-2024 cohort will be experiencing life.



Where in the World is Senegal?

The Republic of Senegal is in West Africa. Its capital is Dakar. In 1840 Senegal was declared a French possession until 1960 when it gained its independence. The two major languages are French and Wolof.

Off its coast lies Goree Island, the largest slave-trading center on the African coast from the 15th to the 19th century.

Islam is the predominant religion, practiced approximately by 96 percent of the country's population. The four percent is divided between Christians and animists.

Prayer & Generosity

I thank God for the generosity and prayers of many congregations and individuals in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). My call to the Church is meaningful because of you.

You can support Pastor Mytch's call through [ELCA Global Church Sponsorship](#).