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Since the age of 16, M.Div. student Kalyn Stewwing felt God calling her to ministry. While at a weekend youth group event at Camp Crestfield a speaker reinforced her calling. “That sent me into a complete panic because I did not, at all, ever want to be a pastor,” said Kalyn. She continued ignoring God’s call. But in 2009 she connected with the Seminary’s World Mission Initiative at the New Wilmington Mission Conference.

“For me, NWMC is home. People talk about thin places, where God is so close that it’s as though his robes are filling the temple. NWMC is a thin place for me,” she says. “NWMC is the event that showed a teenager with low self-esteem, depression, and anxiety that God loves us as we are and wants to be in a relationship with us. I realized that our God is a relentless God, who loves his children and is calling me to love them too.” About her M.Div. program, Kalyn says, “PTS has proven to be focused on reaching outside the Seminary to the places where many people would rather not go.”

In her two years of service as a Young Adult Volunteer through the PCUSA—in New Orleans, La., and South Korea—Kalyn realized that ministry does not only mean doing parish work. “Ministry is being present with God’s people in many different ways—parish ministry, food justice, social work, and nonprofits. I want to be present with others in their sorrow, joy, anger, and laughter,” she says.

As a PTS student, Kalyn has participated in cross-cultural trips with WMI and had that chance to do just that. When she traveled to Southeast Asia, she witnessed the reconciliation of two groups of Christians who hadn’t spoken in nearly four years because of disagreement about music in worship and the name they should use for “Jesus.” “One elder stood up and finally hushed everyone as she said that it didn’t matter what name was used for Jesus, but that they needed to be united in loving each other and sharing the gospel. In response, the long-alienated pastors embraced, and when I saw that happen I knew the Holy Spirit was there in that room,” Kalyn says.

Regardless of where God calls her next, Kalyn will be present—listening, talking, laughing, crying, being in others’ lives and sharing the love of Christ. “That’s my call in ministry,” she says.

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