



## NEWS FROM YAGM SENEGAL

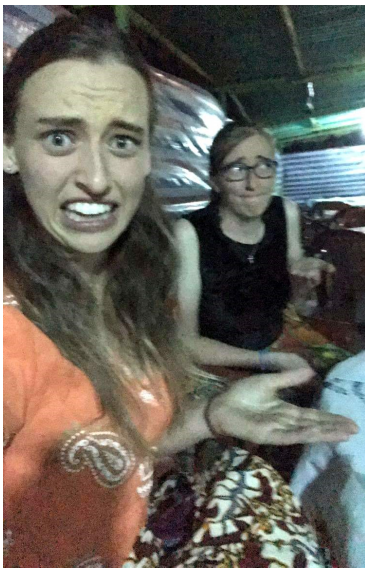
Pastor Kristin Engstrom, YAGM Country Coordinator

May, 2019

### “Live into the Discomfort”

On our long car ride home from the March YAGM retreat, we played a game where we had to come up with a “tagline” for each person in the YAGM cohort. It was decided that mine would be “live into the discomfort.” Little did I realize how much I use this phrase in my conversations here in Senegal, particularly when encouraging the YAGM to stay present, to take another look, and engage again in a difficult situation, relationship, or unjust system.

I remember telling Rachel to “live into the discomfort” when she worried that she was too much of a burden on her host family and they were too generous with what she had deemed insufficient resources.



YAGMs Rachel H & Rachel O confused and discomforted once again in Senegal.

I remember telling Andrew that I wasn’t going to answer his questions of the right way to be a YAGM because he needed to muddle through the discomfort of living out the answer.

And I have to tell myself to “live into the discomfort” when, upon returning from my trip to the US in April, friends and colleagues ask me where their present is; and I have to remember the privilege I have to travel and to be able to share with others. And most discomforting of all, since it is the cultural norm in Senegal for someone who has travelled to bring presents back for everyone, the honor of being invited to live into the often awkward-for-me cultural norms of Senegal by my friends and colleagues.

Discomfort, which I’m not even sure if a word, is a way of life for the Senegal YAGM and for myself. I’ve come to believe that living into the discomfort is good practice for living our Christian faith. After all, I never feel so uncomfortable as when the Holy Spirit sticks her nose into my life and asks me to let go of my comfort, my wants, and my way of life to follow the way of someone else—Jesus the Christ.

May we all be called to “live into the discomfort” of this Easter season.

### Accompanying YAGM Senegal

My work as an ELCA Global Missionary is possible thanks to the generosity of many congregations and individuals in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Thank you! Jerejef! Jokonjol! Jaram! You can contact me at [kristin.engstrom@elca.org](mailto:kristin.engstrom@elca.org). You are also invited to support me as an ELCA Global Missionary here.

If you would like to more closely follow YAGM Senegal, please visit our blog at <http://yagmsenegal.wixsite.com/blog>. Nio farr! (We are in this together.)



Pastor Kristin Engstrom

As an ELCA missionary, I serve as the Country Coordinator for the Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program in Senegal, West Africa.

I’m originally from the mid-western United States, and served as a parish pastor in northern New Jersey for six years prior to moving to Senegal in 2016.

### Inside Senegal

The Muslim holy month of Ramadan is May 6–June 5th this year.

Every evening, the city of Dakar comes almost to a standstill as everyone waits for the sun to disappear around 7:30pm.

Then, the daily fast that started at 4:30am can finally be broken with dates, sugary coffee, and sweet milk, followed by prayer.





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### YAGM Sightings

Glimpses of life, work, relationships, and gatherings of the Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) in Senegal over the past few months.



YAGM Senegal taking a "groupie" with Rev. Andrea Walker, ELCA Area Program Director for West and Central Africa, at the Lutheran Church of Senegal church festival day.



YAGM Maddie, Rachel O, and Rachel H lead Easter worship during the March YAGM retreat.



YAGM Hannah (right) learning to pour attaya, Senegalese sweet tea, from her host uncle Mahmadou



YAGM Zeb (bottom right) taking a break with the delegates of the Lutheran Church of Senegal Annual Assembly.