



November 21, 2011

Dear Members and Friends of Grand Canyon Presbytery

On Saturday, November 12, our Presbytery adopted an exciting new mission project: bringing two Young Adult Volunteers to serve on the Gila River Reservation for one year. The Presbytery also granted permission to now seek funds to underwrite this mission.

THE PRESBYTERY'S HOPE is to employ two college graduates for one year (fall, 2012 – summer, 2013), who will be part of the PCUSA's Young Adult Volunteer program. This program currently places graduates in six international and ten national settings for a year of service to those in need AND a year of supervised consideration of a vocational call to ministry. The graduates must contribute funds to cover costs and the host sites do the same. In our case, the Presbytery is asked to raise \$7,500 for each placement, or \$15,000 total. Each of the two participants will raise an additional \$5,000 from their families, friends and home church.

THE PRESBYTERY'S GOAL is to raise \$15,000 in pledges and gifts by the end of February, 2012, when the recruitment of the YAV's begins. We have a good beginning: since the Presbytery meeting, we have pledges and gifts in excess of \$2,500!

Will you help with this mission project? Would you make a personal gift towards this goal? Would you take this letter to your church's Mission Committee or Session to see if some support might be given – through a special offering or an end of the year contribution? Would you remember this project in your prayers tonight?

The Gila River Young Adult Volunteer Project of Grand Canyon Presbytery (2012-2013)

Below are the answers to a few basic questions about this project. Please send an email to Dave Wasserman (davew@pbygc.org) if you have additional questions.

Thank you for your consideration & help. Please send a check payable to Presbytery of Grand Canyon "note: Gila River YAV Project", to 4423 N. 24th Street (Suite 200), Phoenix, AZ 85016.

Sincerely,

Elder Gloria Young, Moderator,
Rev. Terry Palmer, Moderator-Elect
Rev. Karen Muenich, Council Moderator
Rev. Martha Sadongei, Native American Consultant

A Few Questions & Answers about the Gila River Young Adult Volunteer Project

1. What is the Young Adult Volunteer Program (YAV) of the Presbyterian Church (USA)?

This is one of the best kept secrets of the PCUSA these days. It is a youth service corps program for young adults, ages 18-30, who give a year of their lives in service to a community in need. Where possible, the YAVs work in teams so that during their year, they have a community of friends to study, pray and reflect with on their experience. The YAVs are supervised.

2. How many volunteer sites are there?

There are six overseas locations and ten within the United States. One of those sites is based in southern Arizona.

3. What will the Gila River YAVs do?

They will work under the supervision of the Gila Crossing Session to serve the children and young teenagers in the Gila Crossing area of the reservation (on the SW edge of the metropolitan area). They will build on a growing ministry to the children and young teenager, with after school and weekend activities, as well as summer programs.

4. Who will supervise the YAV's more specifically?

The Session of Gila Crossing will provide guidance and direction. Rev. Martha Sadongei, Pastor of Central Presbyterian Church and one of the Presbytery's two Native American Consultants, will provide supervision on a regular (weekly) basis. Rev. Brandon Wert the Director of the General Assembly's YAV program site for southern Arizona, has agreed to include our YAVs with those in Tucson for a year of community support and study, prayer, and reflection time.

5. How much does this program cost?

The student contributes \$5,000 and the host site (Grand Canyon Presbytery) contributes \$7,500.

6. How are the funds used?

The funds go to provide reimbursement for housing in the community, meals, a modest monthly stipend and support for supervisor expenses.

7. Will other funds be needed?

There may well be funds needed to underwrite program expenses, which will be addressed when needed.

8. What happens to the YAVs at the end of their year?

Many move on to the next steps in their life journeys (work, graduate students). Some have stayed for a second year of service, where that option was possible. And, some have sensed God's call to ministry through this year of service and returned to their churches and presbyteries to become an Inquirer.

9. What will happen to the Gila Cross Project after this one year?

The hope is to test the viability of this project for continued use at Gila Crossing, or for expansion to other sites on our reservations and in our communities. The first year will teach us much about future possibilities. But, one step and one year at a time.

For more information, send your questions to: Dave Wasserman (davew@pbygc.org)