

Set apart for service in Philadelphia

June 10, 2010

My accent is not the only thing setting me apart from the people of Philadelphia, especially inhabitants of our neighborhood. I think my teammates and I are making the Olney neighborhood turn their heads quite a bit—four young white girls living in the heart of North Philly is definitely worth a double-take.

If you were to come up to me a year ago and tell me that I would be spending my summer in one of the most culturally diverse neighborhoods in Philadelphia, I probably would have called you crazy. But a beautiful Cambodian woman named Khan lives next to our house. Across from us is an older black woman. And down the street one way is a Ukrainian man. And that's just a taste of the neighborhood's diversity.

The weirdest thing about it all is that I never thought that I would be in this situation, and I especially never thought that I'd love it. I look at the people and get excited about the fact that I am going to have the chance to get to know them, share with them, listen to them and love on them. I get a huge smile on my face just thinking about it.

We are learning how to get around the city using the bus and subway system. While learning, we get to see pretty much all of Philadelphia. Sure, I'm excited about the sights, but I'm most excited about the people—just having the opportunity to see the rich diversity of the city everywhere and up close.

I have never had a love for people the way I love the people of Philadelphia. God has given me that love for these people. It's crazy when you see God moving, but it's even crazier when you can feel God moving inside of you. I

have felt it before, of course. Every Christian has, or else they wouldn't be a Christian. But feeling him give me this gift of love, passion and service for these people is overwhelming. However if I'm going to be overwhelmed, the best way is to be overwhelmed with Christ.

I'm so excited about today and this summer. God is going to do some amazing things here in Philly, but he's also going to do some amazing things in me.

Caitlin Campbell, a student at the University of Texas at Austin, is serving with Go Now Missions in Philadelphia.