WHAT IS THE COTHRAN CENTER?

• The Cothran Center for Vocational Reflection encourages students to reflect upon their lives, including their purpose (or calling,) and offers programs and resources to support that reflection.

• We initiate opportunities for thoughtful and open dialogue as we explore these 3 essential life questions:
  • Who am I – most authentically?
  • What do I believe – most deeply?
  • What does the world need – from me?
WHAT IS FOCUS?

- **FOCUS** is a travel program that occurs over spring break. In years past, groups have traveled to Cuba, Mexico, and New York City. Since 2014, we have traveled to Northern Ireland.

- This program is designed for **sophomores** at Furman, but this year we are also including **juniors** since they were unable to participate last year.

- The “focus” is on **vocational exploration and reflection**. While visiting Northern Ireland, students hear stories from those involved in justice and reconciliation efforts in the area, visit cities and communities, and participate in personal and group vocational reflection sessions and discussions.
NORTHERN IRELAND

THE CONTEXT
WHY NORTHERN IRELAND?

• The topic of historic conflict in Northern Ireland and ongoing peace, understanding, and reconciliation efforts provide a great point of study for our program.

• We have a connection and partnership with The Corrymeela Community in Ballycastle, a center that emerged from the work of reconciliation efforts in Northern Ireland.
ABOUT NORTHERN IRELAND

• Population of almost 2 million
• Part of the United Kingdom (U.K.)
• Shares the island with the Republic of Ireland. It was partitioned from Ireland in 1921.
• History of Conflict in Northern Ireland
  • Protestant and Catholic communities
  • Unionists/Loyalists and Nationalists/Republicans
  • Intertwined conflict amongst these and other communities
• The Good Friday Agreement (1998) brought greater freedom and hope for the area in regard to relationships between the sides.
THE CORRYMEELA COMMUNITY
MISSION OF THE COMMUNITY

Corrymeela's mission is: embracing difference, healing division and enabling reconciliation. Our vision is of a peaceful and sustainable society based on social justice, positive relationships and respect for diversity. The Corrymeela Community strives to embody these values in every aspect of our lives.
A VIDEO INTRODUCTION

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7rKlzuC8OU
WHAT WILL WE DO IN NORTHERN IRELAND?

- **Participate** in sessions on topics such as team building, identity, conflict resolution, understanding differences, artistic expression, etc.
- **Learn** about the work of The Corrymeela Community
- **Listen** to stories from those involved in peace and reconciliation efforts in Northern Ireland
- Set aside time to **reflect**, both individually and in community
- **Share** in community through optional worship experiences and opportunities to engage with others at meal times
- **Join** in guided visits to cities such as Belfast and Derry/LondonDerry
- **Visit** cultural and tourist sites, such as Giant’s Causeway, Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge, *Game of Thrones* sites, etc.
WE WILL NOT . . .

• Spend time as volunteers, doing hands-on work, with organizations/charities
• Be on a “mission trip”
• Be on vacation, with tons of “free time”
• Spend time attached to our digital devices (i.e., mobile phones, laptops, tablets)
• Receive academic credit for the program
• Consider group activities and day travel optional (we participate in the entire program)
PHOTOS FROM FOCUS

A LOOK AT THE ADVENTURE
a sign
an airport
Arrivals' and 'Departures' lounge / BTS 6QU
the hamlet that never sleeps / a cup of tea and a chat that has lasted 47 years to date
home away from home / respite / challenging
comforting / meeting the stranger / uncontrolled laughter / headspace / a peaceful vision / where I hear my heart again / where I find my humanity / peace in progress / a place to be you / a projection of collective hope / about trying to make God's kingdom come / peace / a civic elder / finding possibilities and fulfilling potential
two / a sea / life changing but challenging / now and not yet / an experience / a safe space / no strings attached / a memory / a dream / a vision
a shadow of our future selves / intense / a people place / my fourth / God's memory
where I grew into who I am today / a moment of insight and awakening of the Holy Spirit and the community support
soul searching
APPLICATION PROCESS

HOW DO YOU APPLY?

http://www2.furman.edu/academics/center-for-vocational-reflection/Our-Student-Programs/Pages/FOCUS.aspx
APPLICATION PROCESS

• Completed application, including personal statement, video, or artistic piece, signature page, AND recommendation letters, must be submitted by **Friday, October 15th at 5:00 pm**.

• Group Interviews will take place between **October 18th - November 12th**.

• Notification of participation in the program on or before **Friday, November 19th**.

• Notify the Center of your participation by **Monday, November 29th**.

• **Required** orientation and debriefing sessions for participants will be (almost) every other Monday in December 2021-March 2022 (+ *Furman Engaged* in April).
FOCUS PROGRAM STRUCTURE

• Orientation Sessions (December-March)
  • Get to know one another
  • History and Topics for Program Preparation
  • Vocational Reflection Guidance
  • Logistics for Travel

• Travel Program (March)
  • In Northern Ireland (UK)

• Debriefing Sessions
  • Group Reflection & Conversation
  • Exit Interviews

• Furman Engaged Presentation
  • Tuesday, April 12th
What about Covid-19?

We will follow the protocols set forth by Furman, Northern Ireland (UK), and Corrymeela.
QUESTIONS?

ASK QUESTIONS NOW...OR CONTACT US LATER!