

## **Ryan Diener**

Easygoing, single, likes pizza and hot wings and hates slow drivers...we're talking about New Song member Ryan Diener. Ryan was born in Toledo, Ohio on March 31, 1981 (that's right, his 25<sup>th</sup> birthday is this coming Friday) and grew up outside of Louisville, Kentucky along with his two younger brothers, Austin and Keaton.

When it came time for college, Ryan wanted to study government, and a good school for this was University of Maryland College Park (UMCP). He eventually grew bored with the study of government and turned to criminal justice. "I had always wanted to be a cop," said Ryan. (When asked in 1<sup>st</sup> grade what his parents did for a living, he said "My father is a policeman" – even though he was actually a doctor.) So he graduated with a degree in criminal justice and became a patrol officer in the Baltimore City Police Department where he is stationed in the Southern District. Ryan enjoys the challenge of serving as a police officer in Baltimore City, which for him is serving God and having the opportunity to serve neighborhood residents.

While at UMCP Ryan attended InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, where he grew in his faith and "learned to understand what a close community of friends is like." This community of friends included New Song members Brita, Sarah, and Penny as well as Brandon Moss. Ryan and Brandon became best friends and roommates, and Ryan credits Brandon with having a tremendous impact on his life. "Brandon challenged me to think through racial issues; I had not had any multi-cultural experience and was unaware of many things related to race. In fact, one of the main reasons I enjoy coming to New Song is because of the opportunity to experience such diversity."

Ryan and Brandon remained roommates when they moved to Baltimore after graduating from UMCP. After visiting a couple different churches including New Song, Ryan became a member of New Song because he liked the fact that "it was a small community church and the congregation was so obviously genuine and open." He has enjoyed spending time with Terrell Johnson "who has taught me so much about myself, and it is refreshing to hear about his life and culture."

Some things Ryan likes: the ocean, a good meal, a big car (he drives a 2001 Mercury Grand Marquis), and going to parks and being outside. He hates Brussels sprouts.

So what does Ryan's best friend and former roommate, Brandon Moss, have to say about him? "Ryan Diener's one of the best people I've ever known!"