



Europe

## hope for NCFI

**Pippa Peppiatt** puts our UK fellowship in its global context

I love this verse from Revelation 7:9, which describes heaven as a wonderful, multinational place, with everyone worshipping the Lord together: *'After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb.'*

We've talked in this *Spotlight* about the strength of being a united Christian community of nurses

and midwives in the UK, **A Force for Hope**. But there's an even bigger picture too!

Did you know that as a member of CMF you are also a member of Nurses Christian Fellowship International (NCFI)? CMF is the UK arm of this global fellowship.

NCFI began in 1958 when a Scottish nurse, Johan Allen, began to search out countries where there were Nurses Christian Fellowship

(NCF) groups and bring them together for mutual benefit and support. There are now nurses and midwives connected from over 30 nations – that's quite a few 'nations, tribes, people and language'!

We're part of the NCFI region of Europe, and through my time serving on the NCFI European committee, a few things have struck me:

- Europe is a very diverse region, culturally, politically, and economically. Yet despite this and the differences in language and nursing traditions, nurses and midwives in Europe are connecting and trying to support each other.
- Most of the stronger Christian nursing fellowships are in the Nordic Countries (Finland, Denmark, and Norway), the UK, and in Spain. These countries are also the more secular and wealthy nations, with well-developed nurse education and training, but where Christianity is increasingly marginal. Growing and sustaining Christian fellowships in these busy, secular climates is a real challenge.
- We are blessed that we are seeing real growth in our fellowship in the UK. This is by no means the norm for other countries in the region. We thank God and aim to pray and support other countries who are struggling.
- In Eastern Europe, nursing is slowly developing a professional identity, but is still poorly paid with low status. Yet in many of these nations, the churches are strong and growing. As more of Eastern Europe joins the European Union, more nurses from the East are working in the West and the North. Our desire is to help the East developing their own supportive communities for Christian nurses and midwives and connect those leaving to work in the West with Christian fellowships in their host countries.
- How much we can learn from each other, be blessed by each other's experiences and prayers, and truly be strengthened by journeying together.

Our own CMF dreams are reflected in these words from the NCFI website ([ncfi.org](http://ncfi.org)) that describe it as '*wanting to share with nurses the hope we have in relationship – with God, our colleagues, and the individuals and communities where we work and serve. We celebrate the hope and light of Jesus Christ that can never be extinguished but is certainly made stronger by being a **force for hope** together.*'

Or as others might say: **¡Una fuerza para la esperanza! En kraft til håp! Toivon voima!** 🍌

**Pippa Peppiat** is CMF Head of Nurses & Midwives.