



testimony

serving as a nurse in community

Denise Blough share the challenges and rewards of being a nurse in a Christian community

Photo: Danny Burrows

I was born in my parents' home town in New York but spent most of my childhood in Australia. After high school I decided to take a gap year and spend some time with my grandparents who lived in the UK. I'm still here and just starting my final year of nursing school at King's College London.

I suppose I did not grow up in a 'typical' setting. My parents are members of the Bruderhof community, an international community movement based in the USA but with communities all over the world. It operates on two simple rules: love your neighbour and share everything (OK, maybe not your toothbrush).

Members pool income, talents and energy to take care of one another and reach out to others in order to create an embassy for God's kingdom here on earth. This requires a life of discipleship and sacrificial commitment, but peace and justice become a reality when we truly love our neighbour as ourselves. For me nursing is an extension of loving your neighbour and a way of serving God while on this earth.

I decided I wanted to be a nurse when I was about two years old and never changed my mind. I always had big dreams of being a

missionary nurse in a resource-poor third world country – and maybe I still will but one thing I have learned during nursing school is that all you have to do to be a missionary is step into a hospital. The current Covid 19 crisis has highlighted this in a way that few other situations could. Whether patients have Covid or not, being stuck in a hospital without family and friends visiting is a frightening experience. I have found many opportunities over the last weeks to be that friend to the patients on the wards. God has given us nurses and midwives the unique opportunity to be his hands and feet to the most vulnerable in our society.

As a member of the community I have promised to go wherever I may be needed. This could mean staying here in the UK or moving to the States, Australia, Germany or South America. Each of our communities has unique nursing opportunities such as caring for mothers and babies, older people, or members with other illnesses or health needs. Unlike other nurses I will not be able to choose my career path, but I have chosen the path that matters to me most and will bring me the most peace - that of serving Jesus and my brothers and sisters in Christ. 🌱

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