



## Advent Story Nurses

by Greg Snyder

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Who volunteers to work for you on Christmas Day?

When I was a child, my mother worked most of her career as a secretary in several departments in a hospital. She did not work in healthcare, but she was surrounded by doctors, nurses, and other healthcare workers all the time. It was a large public hospital which cared for people who had no other places to go to be cared for.



Nurses at Douglas County Hospital (Omaha, Neb.), Christmas 2010

We lived in a city in the Midwest that was, by far, predominantly Christian. My mother often told me stories about happenings at the hospital. The story I remember most fondly was how full of awe she'd be every year when the Jewish nurses volunteered to work extra shifts on Christmas Day so that other nurses could have the day off to spend with their families. Even though this happened every year, my mother was always greatly impressed by their kindness and sacrifice.

As she would tell me this story, my mother made it clear to me that she thought that those nurses were performing their own miracles every Christmastime. When I was a child and heard this story, I remember thinking how "Christian" the actions of the nurses were.

I like to think of Christmas being broader than just for Christians. So during Advent, when I recall the story of Christ's birth, I remember this story from way back in my childhood. It helps me to remember that we all perform miracles, even if we don't think we are.

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Advent Scripture Reference Lectionary  
[Psalm 146:5-10](#); [1 Samuel 2:1-8](#); [Luke 3:1-18](#)

Advent Hymn Reflection  
"[The Holly and the Ivy](#)"  
British folk Christmas carol, performed by Natalie Cole (1994)



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