



FRIENDS of DOHNAVUR
— UK —

VOLUNTEER PACK



The Dohnavur Fellowship - Statement of Faith and Practice

Our Foundation

We stand within the historic Christian faith and seek to follow Jesus Christ in the spirit of the earliest disciples, before rigid labels and divisions were formed. Our life and witness are shaped less by abstract formulations and more by faithful practice, prayer, and obedience to the way of Christ.

Scripture and Tradition

We receive the Holy Scriptures as a primary and trustworthy witness to God's self-giving love revealed in Jesus Christ. We read Scripture prayerfully, communally, and responsibly, informed by the worshipping life of the Church and attentive to historical, spiritual, and pastoral insight.

We honour the faith of the universal Church as expressed in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, while recognising that Christian understanding grows through lived faith, reflection, and the continuing work of the Holy Spirit.

God and the Way of Christ

We confess one God, who is love, whose nature is relational, faithful, and life-giving. We seek to follow Jesus of Nazareth—his life, teaching, compassion, suffering, death, and resurrection—as the decisive revelation of God's character and purpose. To follow Christ is to walk the path of humility, reconciliation, non-violence, truthfulness, and costly love, trusting God's redemptive work in the world.

The Holy Spirit

We acknowledge the living presence of the Holy Spirit, who guides, comforts, convicts, and renews. We value silence, prayer, and discernment, believing that God continues to speak to individuals and communities who listen with openness and faith.

The Church and Community

We understand the Church as the people of God called together for worship, formation, service, and witness.

We value both ordered worship and expectant waiting upon God, drawing from Anglican, Quaker, and wider Christian spiritual traditions.

We affirm the shared calling of all believers to live out the gospel through faithful action, mutual accountability, and loving service.

Faith Lived Out (Orthopraxy)

We believe that faith is known by its fruits. Therefore, we emphasise:

- Love of neighbour and care for the vulnerable
- Integrity, simplicity, and stewardship
- Reconciliation, peace-making, and justice
- Faith expressed through service rather than dominance
- Obedience shaped by prayer and compassion

Our theology is not merely confessed but practiced, tested in daily life, and refined through humility and love.

Hope and Mission

We live in hope, trusting God's ongoing work of healing and renewal in creation. Our mission is not to win arguments, but to bear faithful witness to Christ through lives shaped by grace, truth, and love.

We seek partnership with all who desire to follow Jesus sincerely, serve others generously, and walk humbly with God.

Love Never Fails

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at the Dohnavur Fellowship in Tamil Nadu, India.

The Dohnavur Fellowship Corporation (DFC) is a UK Charity that supports the work of the Dohnavur Fellowship (DF) in India.

This pack will give you some more information to help you prayerfully decide if you wish to apply.

If you still have any questions after reading this pack then please get in touch with our UK office.

Yours

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HISTORY

The Dohnavur Fellowship was founded by Amy Carmichael she was a missionary who with a small band of Indian Christian women, moved from place to place, preaching and teaching, and many turned to the Lord. Then in 1901, God sent to her a seven-year-old girl who had escaped from a Hindu temple. She told Amy of the practice, which is now illegal, of dedicating little girls to the gods and training them to be temple prostitutes. God told Amy to save such children, as well as others who had no one to care for them or were being abused. She was to make a home for them (and boys also from 1918-1984) and to bring them up to know and serve the Lord Jesus Christ and be His witnesses.

The need to provide for children who are unwanted or abused remains, but the government now aims to have those under the age of five adopted, so only those aged five and over are permitted to come to Dohnavur.



From the beginning, the **Children's Home** has been at the heart of the DF calling. Inspired by Amy's Christ-centred compassion, they seek to offer every child the best possible upbringing in a homely setting. Providing a secure and nurturing environment for children up to the age of 18. Ensuring good nutrition, healthcare, quality education, and emotional and mental support through mentoring and professional counselling,



Set within the green, biodiversity-rich landscape of Dohnavur, the children grow in an atmosphere shaped by Amma's eco-sensitive ideals—through poetry, nature walks, bird-watching, and star-gazing. Their witness of the quiet life of unassuming simplicity of the sisters and brothers of the Fellowship who lovingly serve them and nurture them. Helps

to form lives anchored in truth, and compassion.

In the earlier decades, the Fellowship was young, and the need for elder care was small. But today, nearly a hundred sisters are above the age of 65. Many still contribute actively; others now require continuous support, medical attention, and a safe environment. DF offers dedicated facilities such as the newly furnished **Vistara** residence and the geriatric unit near the hospital. Here, our elderly sisters receive attentive nursing, medication management, regular health checks, fall-prevention measures, and the warmth of a Christ-centred community. This ministry not only ensures safety and comfort but also affirms their God-given dignity at every stage of life.

The Dohnavur Fellowship Hospital—Parama Suha Saalai, (the Place of Heavenly Healing) — has served as a lifeline of compassionate healthcare since 1936. For generations, the mission has been simple: to offer compassionate, dignified, affordable healing to the needy and most neglected. Set within the peaceful, green landscape of Dohnavur, the hospital offers not only medical care but a naturally holistic environment where body, mind, and spirit can be restored. The hospital also serves the local community



Santhosha Vidyalaya is a key educational ministry of the DF, created to provide holistic education for the children of Christian mission workers from across India. Today, it is a vibrant residential campus hosting students from 23 of India's 32 states—truly a home away from home for children whose parents serve in challenging mission contexts.

The DF community strives to minimise waste, care for the environment, and practice **agriculture** in ways that restore the soil, protect biodiversity, and strengthen the wellbeing of everyone who calls Dohnavur home. Located in the unique Mullai landscape



of the Tirunelveli region, they follow sustainable farming methods suited to the local climate and terrain. For nearly a century they have recorded weather patterns, protected native groves, conserved groundwater, and cultivated a variety of crops—paddy, millets, vegetables, fruits, fodder, and agro-forestry species. The Dairy Farm and agricultural programmes work together as a regenerative circular economy, ensuring that the soil remains healthy, the animals are cared for humanely, and their practices remain aligned with natural rhythms, especially the monsoon on which the region depends.



Below you will find the different areas where you could volunteer

Department	Task	Duration	Ideal Time of Year
Agriculture	Sustainable Farming	2 – 6 months	September – February
	Bee Keeping	3 – 6 months	All Year
Animal Husbandry	Dairy	3 – 6 months	All Year
	Poultry	3 – 6 months	All Year
Engineering	Carpentry	1 – 4 months	All Year
	Plumbing and Electrical	1 – 4 months	All Year
	Construction	3 – 6 months	All Year
	Auto CAD	1 -3 months	All Year
Heritage	Library	2 -6 months	All Year
	Archiving	2- 6 months	All Year
	Museum	2 -6 months	All Year
Home/School	English	3 – 9 months	July – February
	Music (Instruments and Voice)	3 – 9 months	July – February
	Book Reading Mentors	3 – 9 months	July – February
	STEM Teaching Guidance	3 – 9 months	July – February
Hospital	Nursing	3 – 6 months	All Year
	Physiotherapy	3 – 6 months	All Year

AGREEMENT

You must agree to DF statement of its Basis of, its Rules and Guidelines for Guests, and its Child Protection Policy.

It is anticipated that you will be working a maximum of 40 hours per week over 5 days but may vary within and between days according to the needs of the work involved. Particularly it is expected that when it is hot, you will rest in the middle of the day, dividing your working time accordingly between the morning and afternoon/evening.

You may use a free day as you choose but may not accrue these to take periods away from DF during your service. You may of course arrange to travel for your own interest before or after the period of service, or by advance agreement as a short break of a maximum of 1 week during an agreed period of service of 5 – 6 months.

You will fund all of your travel costs, including flights, internal transfers, visas and insurance which must include repatriation in the event of a severe medical issue or death

The DF will provide for you your accommodation and food during the agreed volunteering period. Married couples will be provided with private quarters on the DF Campus.

Sunday will be maintained as a day for worship and rest and you will be expected to attend services with the DF in the House of Prayer and/or SV Chapel. If you are suitably gifted, you may be asked to assist in these services or other worship/prayer gatherings. All meals taken on Sundays will be vegetarian.

You will be supported and supervised directly by the DF department head, who will also provide a weekly meeting with a pastoral counsellor. The DFC will liaise with the DF during the placement.

LIFE IN DF

The DF is in a very remote area of southern India. The nearest airports are Trivandrum or Tuticorin, the DF will be able help to arrange transport from either of these.

The accommodation is very basic, and usually comprises of a wooden bed frame with a thin mattress, with some thin blankets and a mosquito net. You will have your own bathroom often across a small private courtyard it comprises a western style WC and sink, and a large bucket, jug and hot water are provided for washing, some rooms do have hot showers. If the room does not have air-conditioning, it will have a ceiling fan. You will need to do you own laundry by hand.

Meals are served in a communal dining room.

Further information will be provided during your interviews and on your successful application.



OTHER INFORMATION

You will need to apply to the Indian Embassy for an Employment Visa for Volunteers. (This is valid for up to 1 year, and limits earned income to a maximum of 10,000 IRS – about £100). You would need to provide proof of independent financial means, and medical/health insurance for the period of their visit. The DF will provide a letter of invitation for you so that you can apply for a visa.

ON RETURN

It would be good for you to share with your local Church about your time in DF. The DFC can provide some literature and help with this.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information please visit the DF website - www.dohnavurfellowship.org/ or the DFC's website www.friendsofdohnavur.org/ or contact the UK Office.

WHAT NEXT

If you are still interested then please complete the attached application form which must be fully completed and returned to the DFC UK office, we will then approach your references for a written reference. If the DFC directors believe that you might be suitable, we will then arrange for you to have a video interview with two of the DFC directors. If you are successful in this interview the DFC will then forward your application onto the DF, where a second video interview will be arranged between you and the DF with representatives of the DFC, where the duration and area of volunteering will be agreed.

The DFC will arrange with you to complete an Enhanced DBS Check

