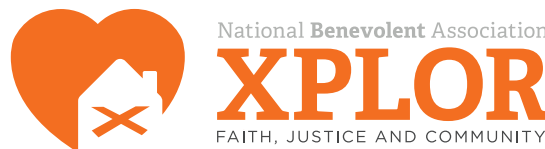


XPLOR Inspired Me...

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Like most people, I enjoy my space. I really don't like sharing small rooms with people—I mean that was fine in college and all, but I thought I was done with that after graduation.

Cold is cold. I grew up in Illinois, but every time winter comes around, it still gives me the chills. I would much rather live somewhere warmer—like southern California!

I tried tutoring for a while. Who knew how hard it is to remember how to do long division, let alone try to teach it to a fourth grader?! That was tough enough, but now you want me to have conversations with youth about God? I'd wager even Pascal would be in over his head trying to do that.

And now you're asking me to preach? What am I supposed to talk about? Shoot, I haven't even read a call to worship in church before.

Okay, I give up. This is too much. No space, no salary, no sermon—I'm in over my head.

I guess sometimes God puts you in situations that, on your own, you just don't know how to handle. But it's funny how things turn out. Come to think of it, I'm really thankful I wasn't alone in my room. Turns out Blaine is the best roommate a dude could ever ask for, and he, along with my other housemates Meka and Kim, helped me get through a year that I could never have survived on my own.

I still don't like the cold—but huddling up around a space heater and playing Catchphrase can really bring a house together!

Middle schoolers are great—not as scary as they may appear at first glance. And, what's even more exciting, is that they teach you at least as much about God and faith as you teach them. Students don't have to be the only ones getting an education.

And preaching? Well, that turned out okay too. You don't have to be eloquent, you don't have to have a commanding presence, but you can still proclaim the good news. Just ask the Apostle Paul.

What am I trying to say with all of this? Well, I don't have a great answer, but I guess I'd encourage you to go out on a limb and step outside of your comfort zone, even if it's not a place you think you want to go. You never know what you'll be able to do, or who will be there to inspire you. But whether you succeed or fail (and trust me, plenty of failing happens), you'll have a good story to tell and some laughs to share.

*NBA XPLOR is a 10-month service residency opportunity for young adults ages 21-30, with the purpose of empowering young adults to discern and develop a "heart for care" as they live together in simple community, engage in direct service and justice work, engage in leadership development, and discern their vocational calls to honor the various communities they are called to serve. **Learn more at nbacares.org/xplor.***