



The Methodist Church

Children, Youth and Family

Methodist Recorder article by James Carver, British Youth Council Rep

*Hear my words, you wise men; listen to me, you men of learning.
For the ear tests words as the tongue tastes food. Let us discern for
ourselves what is right; let us learn together what is good.*
Job 34: 2-4

Ay up everyone. I'm James Carver from Nottingham & Derby District and I have been asked to share my work as a Methodist Youth Representative with you.

I wrote for the Methodist Recorder last June, then as a Social Justice Representative. Luckily, I am still a Rep but in a new role - on the British Youth Council, which is a collection of youth organisations working to tackle social injustice by advising and holding the Government to account.

One of the current BYC projects that intrigues me is their work on tackling stereotypes and knife crime because it ties in directly to my Criminology course, which means I understand the severity of the problems and can provide help with explaining the possible causes. All our work goes towards the betterment of society.

Since beginning the role in January the Reps met at Cliff College, where we got to know each other and started work on planning for this year's Methodist children's and youth assembly, 3Generate 2020. Unlike last year this is taking place at the Birmingham NEC, where those attending will "camp", explore a village, take part in craft and take part in activities. It is open for anyone aged 8 – 23 but, if you want to come but are no longer between these years, fear not! One of the key teams at 3Generate is our volunteers. Be assured at this weekend we follow the key Methodist protocol of having a ready supply of tea and biscuits (and even cake on the Saturday).

At the Nottingham & Derby District youth gathering back in February I had the pleasure to share the manifesto that came out the work at 3generate 2019. I was told that the presentation was to be less than two minutes and no jokes... one out of two wasn't bad! You can view the manifesto at: www.methodist.org.uk/3GenManifestos but remember to discuss it, share it and consider it in all your work.

Unfortunately, like many jobs, the Coronavirus pandemic has impacted on the work Reps have been able to do. Although we are not able to travel to other districts, we have been keeping in touch digitally though Zoom.

Video conferencing has been interesting and for those thinking of using it, three things I've found out are:

- The three sentences used most often are: "Can you hear me?", "Can you see me?" or "Have I frozen?"
- It is very tempting to start singing Queen's *Bohemian Rhapsody*.
- Although lockdown has prevented me from going on holiday, some of the video conferencing platforms have a virtual backgrounds function, which means I can be on a beach, a ship or at a chess tournament from the comfort of my own home.

As a group of Reps we are conducting a "prayer journey" where, on a weekly basis, one of us shares a prayer or suggests a way to help people with prayer. My personal form of prayer is to find a quiet place, such as my room, and hold my bible and just start talking. Instantly it feels like a great weight has been lifted from my shoulders and my head becomes clear. Over the next few days I observe what is happening around me and I find the beauty and kindness of God in all I see. You can find the prayer journey on the Reps' Twitter account: twitter.com/3genreps

Finally, I recently did my first ever live-stream Bible reading on Instagram as part of a short weekly worship session that the Reps have started to host, which you can join on a Wednesday evening.

I would like to finish with a prayer:

Lord Father,

Everything you do is for a reason, we ask that while we go forward together you will continue the fire in our hearts to speak out against injustice, to do all we can for those in need and to recognise your work in whatever form or age it appears. With your help all will be fine.

Amen