



The Methodist Church

Children, Youth and Family



Methodist Recorder article by Charlotte Hambly, Youth Rep to Methodist Conference

As I'm sure you are aware, this year is the year of testimony in the Methodist Church. This is very exciting for us as Youth Reps because it is something that has come directly from the children and young people at 3Generate. We want to have opportunities and be encouraged to share and hear stories. As Reps, every Tuesday one of us will share our testimony on social media using #testimonytuesday. So far this has been done in a variety of ways – from drawing to writing to singing. Not only does this help us to be confident in sharing our stories with a wide audience and to think about what our testimonies are, we really hope it will encourage other people to think and share theirs too.

My turn with #testimonytuesday came after our first Rep Weekend of the year, where we met up with one another and had some planning discussions for 3Generate but, most poignantly, we also had an opportunity to reflect on our year in our roles. This changed my perspective on what my story was, and what has shaped my story over the past 22 years of my life, in an instant.

First we were handed letters that we had written to ourselves in January as we began our roles. I had scribbled mine full of questions to my future self, eager to make the most out of my new role. Were you brave? Did you make a difference? Were you #courageous? All of these questions I was able to answer simply with a 'yes' or at least an 'I tried my best'. But one question stopped me in my tracks, sending me right back to my January self and a feeling I'd forgotten. Have you stopped feeling embarrassed or annoying? Back in January, as I started my role, these were thoughts that had consumed me. I was feeling self-conscious in everything that I did. Was I asking silly questions? Was I approaching the role in the right way? Should I be emailing this person at this time? But as my year has gone on these thoughts have just disappeared. I've taken everything that my role has thrown at me in my stride and this is all down to the opportunities I have been given and the constant encouragement and support I have been given by everyone in our team.

We carried on our reflections with Youth President Thelma leading us through some Bible passages that might help us to sum up our year and ground us in scripture surrounding it. On the floor by where I was standing was a copy of 2 Timothy 1:17, "For the spirit God gave us does not make us timid but gives us power, love and self-discipline." For me this was something that just summed up my year perfectly. I realised that I had been given so many opportunities that have completely transformed my experiences, my attitude, my story and my relationship with God. I really believe that these things have been God-given as part of his plan for my life

and my story. And I believe and hope that, throughout my life, God will use me for things I don't even know about at this moment.

The opportunities I have been given throughout my life growing up in the Church have been amazing. I have been able to be a part of a church family and youth groups, meet with other young people at events like 3Generate and find space to develop my faith as my own. I have also been given opportunities to lead, to speak to Methodist Conference and to get involved with events and planning in my district. All opportunities to grow in confidence and faith, which have all come because people have invested in me and helped me to pursue things that are available to me. Without my role, I wonder if I would ever have realised how much opportunity has shaped my story and my walk with God. I now realise what a massive part of my life it has been.

So, back to #testimonytuesday. I decided to tell my testimony in just 10 words: Quiet, self-conscious, thinker... given opportunity (turned into) passionate, thoughtful, doer. Still searching. This is my story.

quiet

self-conscious

thinker



passionate

thoughtful

Do-er

