



The Methodist Church

Children, Youth and Family

Methodist Recorder article by Verity Wilde, Youth Rep to Methodist Conference

My main role this year has been to represent the children and young people of the Church at Methodist Conference. Although I was apprehensive at first, being able to witness and participate in the discussions that went on was a truly amazing experience. Especially significant for me was speaking to the Conference about the importance of the involvement of young people in the upcoming marriage and relationships discussions. There was a lot to learn about how Conference worked. Sometimes it was hard to follow and the discussions were long and often difficult. However the support from the other Youth Reps, the Youth President and everyone else at Conference made it a truly unforgettable experience. A personal highlight of the week was the communion service on the Wednesday morning. The atmosphere of the room, with everyone worshipping and sharing in communion together, was incredible. I was honoured to be asked to assist in serving the elements to the congregation.

As well as attending Conference I had the pleasure of being asked to attend the Church of Scotland's National Youth Assembly (NYA). I didn't know what to expect as I made the journey to Stirling. Naturally my train was delayed, as I think every train I have travelled on as Rep has been, but as I arrived at Gartmore house, where the event was being held, I received a warm welcome and was even given an NYA 2019 mug. Over the course of the weekend three main themes were discussed: missionary buildings, confirmation and testimony, and hate speech. There were many very interesting and thought-provoking ideas raised but what was really special were the times delegates shared ideas from their own church communities.

We discussed how the Church can raise awareness of hate speech, how it can support those who have been affected by it and how we can best make use of our buildings and ensure they are accessible for all. We also spoke about the importance of testimony, which was particularly interesting as it is currently the year of testimony in the Methodist Church. Alongside this we took part in a variety of forms of worship over the weekend, from a reflective Taize style to the Sunday morning worship at the local parish church. The weekend was very fulfilling and I was saddened to find it would be the last NYA. It was an honour to be able to attend and I have already been invited to Aberdeen to meet up with some of the friends I made over the weekend.

I have attended two weekends (with the third fast approaching) where the whole Rep Team and the Youth President get together. We have discussed the 3Generate manifesto, heard what all the other Reps have been up to and, most importantly, taken part in compulsory fun! It has been wonderful to see the impact young people have on the Church across the country and to share in fellowship with some amazing and inspirational people. Going on from this year, as I start university and a new chapter of my life, I hope to attend Methodist Conference again as a Representative from my district. Alongside that I hope to reapply to be a Youth Rep for a different role as I have found this year so fantastic and would love to continue representing the children and young people of the Church.