

Enid Appiah '26  
Mein Chapel - May 15, 2026

Growing up, church was never just a place I went on Sundays—it was part of who I was. Even before I could walk, every Sunday my mom would take me to Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Church. It was a family affair. My mom, my sister, my aunts, cousins, and grandmother would all gather there together.

What I remember most about that church wasn't only the sermons or the traditions—it was the music. Everything revolved around it. Music filled every part of the service. Our pastor had a habit of breaking into song during his sermons. Somehow, we would take a regular hymn and stretch it out so that it lasted double the amount of time. I remember thinking that the soloists were a little bit extra: they would add runs and riffs to simple harmonies, turning unremarkable songs into passionate covers. We would even sing the benediction and our offertory prayer. There was so much music that it was impossible not to feel something. Even if I sometimes fell asleep during a sermon, the music was how I connected: through sound, through emotion, and through the shared experience of singing beside people who felt like family. It was at Metropolitan AME that I found my voice, both literally and figuratively. I sang my first solo in the church choir. I performed violin in front of a congregation that cheered me on like family. I learned how to stand in front of people and speak confidently, whether reciting scripture or making announcements. I even sold Girl Scout cookies in the church hallways, building relationships with people who rooted for my success. Through all of those experiences, I grew into the person I am today: a leader, a musician, and someone who values connection and community deeply. Being surrounded by people unafraid to let their voices be heard, made me feel confident enough to share my own.

But as I got older, my relationship with religion became more complicated. I struggled with anxiety and depression, and in my darkest moments, I started asking questions I couldn't easily answer. Why would God let me feel this way? When would it end? Why did God make me the way I am? Why was I here? I struggled with faith in ways I never had as a child. Before, I was certain about the God I was praying to. But at a certain point, I stopped believing.

Being surrounded by people of faith at St. Andrew's, I thought I could easily be convinced. I remember asking Leo, Brooke and Claire how they knew God was real.

Their answers were so beautiful and certain that they brought me to tears. I even remember checking out a book at the library called *How to Believe in God*. But no matter how hard I tried, no matter how many conversations I had, I couldn't convince myself. I'm still looking for answers. When I was asked to write this talk about my experience with our chapel program, I was honestly scared. What could a person so uncertain about her own beliefs offer? But then, I thought about what I do know. Coming to St. Andrew's, I realized our chapel program was very different from the church I grew up in. The traditions, structure, and even the atmosphere weren't the same. But despite those differences, there was one thing that still felt familiar: How it made me feel. No matter how much my beliefs changed, I never lost the feeling I got when I heard religious music or listened to Rev G's sermons that spoke about hope, compassion, and humanity. I believe that there is something powerful about being surrounded by voices singing together with honesty and emotion. Even now, while I am still questioning what I believe and whether God is real to me, I cannot deny that I feel something in those moments. I feel God in the music. In Indodana, in the LEVAS, and even when we sing *When the Saints Go Marching in*, wrapping our arms around each other and singing completely off rhythm. I feel God in Rev G's words and his wisdom when he shares stories about his life and offers his own reflection. I feel God in the powerful connection that chapel creates, even among people who are so different from each other. For me, chapel here has not been about having all the answers. Instead, it has reminded me that faith can also exist in moments—in music that moves people, in communities that support one another, and in conversations that encourage us to think more deeply about ourselves and the world around us. So maybe faith does not always have to begin with certainty. Maybe sometimes it begins with connection. Maybe it begins with feeling seen, supported, or understood. Maybe it begins in moments when we sing together, listen to one another, or sit next to each other in silence.

I am no where near being certain about what I believe, but my time here has taught me that even in uncertainty, there can still be meaning. So in moments of uncertainty or instability, I encourage you to think about what you know and what you feel. When I'm in this community surrounded by love, I know I feel God.