Mawunyo Afua Peni

Fall 2020

In this Oral History, Mawunyo is a woman in her twenties at this time. She is vibrant and full of ideas and excited about life. She tells about her growing up years in Ghana with her siblings and parents. Her most vivid memories are of her as the youngest in the family and being pampered a bit. She relates her school days, being hungry and being cared for by good friends. She describes her college experience at the University of Ghana and her subsequent National Service with a Member of Parliament for Ho West Constituency. She describes her present job with a real estate firm.

Mawunyo reminisces about her high school sports, jama, drawing. She then discusses her religious life as a girl, her father’s stringent requirements about attendance and her choice of going to church as a Christian. She belongs to the Evangelical Christian Church and still attends the same one she always has.

Mawunyo has deep faith, loves the friendships, the dancing and singing in church and after-church socials. During the lockdown and her church closure, she sometimes tuned in to the online version, but she expressed feeling “lazy” with “reduced” prayers and a “lagging religious commitment.” She described how the online format posed a real challenge for her since her phone continued to ring.

Despite her “lagging commitment”, in-person church has resumed and she is back. She now appreciates the help in-person offers her. She revealed, “The people become your watchdog.” Being with her congregation again, she describes, “It’s warming to be talking to the person face-to-face and be fellowshipped.” Although, for now, there is no dancing and “shaking your butt” in church, she is grateful to be there. She describes how her church cared for the poor during the pandemic.

Mawunyo freely disclosed that the lockdown brought to light “gaps” in her own faith. She learned more than ever how important it is to “keep our faith going and just love each other and help each other too.” She is determined to become a more self-motivated, faith-filled Presbyterian.

Mawunyo was introspective and displayed candor throughout the interview.

Diane Livingston

Interviewer

History 6420

Dr. Patrick Mason, professor

Utah State University Graduate Student

December 14, 2020

Mawunyo Afua Peni Interview, October 23, 2020

1:15 Birth

2:50 Pampered at home

4:00 School Years

6:40 National Service

9:29 Hobbies

11:34 Sports and Jama

14:57 Choosing to be Christian

22:36 Online church experience

24:41 Faith has reduced a little

26:19 Distractions while viewing online church

28:12 “Warming” to be face-to-face

30:16 Safety procedures for in-person church

32:01 Description of Church services

33:35 Charismatic church

35:31 Communion

36:46 Holding her own Communion

42:37 Positive about the opportunity to reflect on her own commitment

45:53 Operations of church in caring for needy

49:18 Final reflections on caring and loving others.