



ribes how her faith provided her with an inner-confidence.

Photo credit: Huw Ryden

At the age of 13, I started struggling quite a lot with anxiety. I have always loved to sing and that is a massive part of who I am. I wanted to be on stage but that made me feel more anxious and fearful and feel unwell.

My relationship with Jesus made a massive difference to that. Through praying and reading the Bible I felt God's sense of security and peace. It helped me find the courage to seek help with anxiety and to be confident in my identity and who I am as a person.

In 2021 I was approached to be on the TV show *The Voice* and I was picked by Tom Jones. It was amazing to be able to do that having struggled so much with anxiety when I was younger. The creative industry can push you into being something you're not, but I have a beautiful grip of peace in my life and I can rest in who I am, in God. I'm not trying to be something I'm not. I hear God through lots of different ways - art, music, books and nature – but particularly through silence, rest, stillness and the quiet.

*Esther Cole is from Plymouth and is now a worship leader at [St Gregory's Church](#) in Newquay. Her story is part of the [Diocese of Exeter](#) **This is My Story** photo exhibition, a series of personal testimonies of faith. The exhibition is touring churches and schools in the county.*

Watch Esther's audition on *The Voice* (the Church of England is not responsible for the content of external sites):

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