

My Faith Journey

By Nancy Waugh

My faith journey started as a young child influenced by a mother who has a wonderful faith. I was always taught that God loved me. My prayer is that I have been able to pass on that faith to my daughter.

Like all faith journeys we feel closer to God at different times and with different circumstances in our lives. I was active in my church in my thirties serving on vestry at Christ Church in Medway. I was married in Christ Church and with a job change we moved to western mass. I attended Christ Church in Rochdale briefly when we lived in Charlton in an apartment. Shortly after we bought a home in Brimfield and with the birth of my daughter I looked for the nearest Episcopal Church. I started attending HTC and my story is a little different than most. I did not feel welcome. I felt guilty about this and thought it must be me. I asked myself if I was being fair to HTC and maybe it was my feelings of loss of my childhood church. I was an excited first time mom and every time I walked in the door I was greeted with “we have a nursery you know” and in the first year I attended I read three or four times in Tidings about children’s behavior in church. Looking around being the only one with a child in church I took it very personal. After looking for another church and missing church I was invited to a cottage meeting at

HTC to meet a new rector. I listened to where God was calling me and made the decision to return to HTC to share my story so maybe the next family would be made to feel more welcome.

Returning to HTC the church was in a new place in its life cycle and I felt much more welcomed. I started to get involved in the life of the church and felt more like a member of the community. I joined the ECW and was asked to sit on the audit committee. I have made many wonderful life long relationships and found many role models for Emily. I have been supported by this community and never more supported than when my husband was sick and we were facing an uncertain future. I felt the prayers of this community and it gave me the strength to accept God's new plan for my life as a care giver. I did not have to worry how I would be able to juggle work of the Sr. Warden in a time of transition, a full time job and the new role of care giver. Tamsin offered to reverse our roles and be Sr. Warden so I could remain Jr. Warden. Truly it was God's plan for Holy Trinity and for me.

Stewardship was a big part of my faith journey when I was asked to attend a stewardship workshop. The most important lesson I learned was that stewardship was not about fund raising. Stewardship was about my relationship with God and my relationship with money. I attended the Convention as a delegate and listened to a Bishop from

the mid-west tell the story how she made a plan to tithe by increasing her giving by 1% each year. Every year I felt guilty because I felt I should be giving more and I just did not know how I could afford to. So I started increasing my commitment each year by 1% then by 1 and a half percent. I thought it would take my 7 years but to my surprise I was at a tithe in 5 years. I am convinced it was with God's help. I cannot remember anything I had to give up to get there. I learned not to stress about money, it taught me to recognize my needs vs. my wants and how grateful I am for all the blessings in my life.