



Foreword

Greetings in the name of the Living God – the God of hope, new life, and fresh possibilities! In your hands is a rich and wonderful history of the faith community that is Wallingford United Methodist Church. Through these stories and personal reflections, it is easy to sense God’s Spirit moving through this congregation in powerful and life-giving ways!

Upon arriving at Wallingford, I found a community unlike any I had previously served. I was immediately struck by the rich diversity. More than half of the membership came from faith traditions other than United Methodist. People from all walks of life came to be a family for one another sharing their talents and hearts and lives. I found a church that challenged injustice and advocated for the poor and marginalized. I found a church that welcomed all persons equally and sought the full inclusion of sexual minorities in the church at large. There was a high level of investment and commitment among the laity, a congregation truly empowered to enact the love of Christ in the world.

Having found a community of faith that both cared for one another as a spiritual family and sought to bear witness to God’s love to those outside its walls, I wondered how Wallingford came to be the church it is today. Who were the personalities that guided this congregation? What challenges encouraged growth? How did its members experience God’s presence in the unfolding of this faith

community? Chuck, Elsa, and Laura have gifted the church with an informative and inspiring history that seeks to answer these questions.

It is sometimes difficult to see God at work in the events of daily life. Taking a step back offers a fresh vantage point to perceive God's Spirit moving through the church and transforming lives along the way. God has used this faith community in powerful ways. Wallingford has been a sanctuary and refuge for many who have felt excluded by other churches. This church has not been afraid to confront the status quo and challenge systemic injustice. As I read this history, I see God working through the lives of people to bring about change and new life! And I wait eagerly to see how God will continue to use this highly gifted congregation in seeking to share the hope and love of Christ with all people.

In faith,

Jim Carter

Pastor

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