

Wanda B. Olive
Spiritual Autobiography

My name is Wanda B. Olive. I am a native Kentuckian, born in Winchester and raised in Lexington. After completing a Bachelor of Arts degree in Liberal Studies with Leadership emphasis and a minor in Philosophy in May 2004, I followed the call to Seminary. I completed one year of studies at Louisville Presbyterian Seminary then transferred to Lexington Theological Seminary in the Fall of 2005. I live in Lexington with my husband of nineteen years, Jim Olive, and our teenage daughter, Sarah. I bring a lifetime of work experience to ministry including sales and marketing, teaching, community service, and numerous church related activities. I am a member and elder of Maxwell Street Presbyterian Church. Currently I am serving as Youth Director of Chapel Hill Presbyterian Church. Before that I served as a Seminary Intern and Interim Youth Director at Versailles Presbyterian Church. I enjoy reading "heady" stuff, cooking, shopping with Sarah, Burnamwood, trips to the beach, and gardening.

My spiritual journey began when I met and married Jim Olive. I asked God what work I was to do and to put me where I was needed. I joined First Presbyterian Church in Middlesboro, Kentucky where Jim had been a member for several years. I became a volunteer with the Cooperative Christian Ministry (CCM) in Middlesboro. My prayer life, volunteer work, and connections within the League of Women Voters opened doors to unique opportunities to work with young people. Eventually I took a staff position in Pineville, Kentucky, which then led to my transfer back to Central Kentucky.

As had become my spiritual practice, I sought God's help and the power to discern God's will for my life in every decision that was placed before me. Open and continuous prayer has been the guidance in which I have learned to know, love, and serve God. Prayer has helped me to learn to act as God's agent in the world, sending and receiving love. Through prayer I have learned to worship God and learned how to use my God-given abilities to carry out God's plan for the world. I am confident that all of the open doors were a result of God's nudging.

In addition to prayer, I journal as a form of spiritual discipline. It was through this method that I discovered the path of God's leading. Although I do not write every day, I do try to record events, activities, and concerns. Over the years, I have become aware of the patterns of my life and of God's presence through journaling.

My call into ministry came long before I was willing to acknowledge it. Throughout the years, practice in various ministry capacities provided affirmation of my talents. When I interviewed with Versailles Presbyterian, I shared that I wanted to work through my fear of preaching. It was the one hurdle where I had not trusted God's sincerity to be with me in everything. However, with God's help I made it through several worship services without dying and grew in faith that God was with me in this process toward ordination. With God's ever abiding presence, I will go wherever I am called.