



Focus on Faith

Olivia Waits grew up in the small town of Georgetown in Brown County, a rural part of Ohio east of Cincinnati and nearly two hours from Oxford. Church has always been a part of her life, growing up in an ELCA Lutheran church that her mother's family had been a part of for years. Church made her feel grounded and while in junior high she became very active in church youth group where her aunt was the youth leader. The group did many servicetype activities including caroling to shut-ins at Christmas, helping to pack food baskets at Thanksgiving, and assisting in a congregational Valentine's Dinner. As the youth became high schoolers, they took on greater responsibilities for services such as the Easter Sunrise Service and Easter breakfast and keeping their Cross-Lit Pantry box (similar to our little library), filled with non-perishable items every Sunday to help those in the community.

Olivia Waits



Their youth group was not only active locally but also participated in Quake, an annual Lutheran youth gathering in Cincinnati for youth from Northern Kentucky and the Cincinnati area as well as attending the ELCA National Gatherings. Once again, the service activities that were incorporated into these events were very meaningful for Olivia.

When it came time to attend college, Olivia chose Miami. She was an only child and a bit nervous about leaving home and moving into a new community. Her pastor assured her there would be an ELCA church home for her in Oxford and she definitely found that to be so. She attended a couple of CRU (Campus Crusade) activities before deciding it was not the right fit for her. She found that Faith was very similar to her home church, it made her feel grounded as well, and she related well to the college students who were attending. It seems that Olivia always finds an opportunity to take on a leadership role and she did so early on at Faith by becoming one of our campus ministry interns, and by leading their group Bible Study and T-shirt fund raising activity. Olivia is not only active at Faith but is also an RA and hopes to continue in that role until she graduates in December of 2024.

Future plans will send her to medical school, probably somewhere in Ohio where there are many great medical schools to choose from. Professional football is her favorite spectator sport and if you talk to Olivia you will find she knows a great deal about the sport and its players, especially the Bengals. Her interest in football has made her determined to become an orthopedic surgeon with an NFL team.

Olivia has been a real gift to our congregation, and you will surely enjoy getting to know her better around the refreshment table after worship on Sunday morning.