

GATHERING

Advent Reading and Opening Prayer

The Carden Family

*SONG	Joy to the World	All
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*SONG	Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee	All
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PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE Tracey Wimpy

CELEBRATIONS AND CONCERNS

The concerns are followed by:
ALL: Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayers.

PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER All

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever. AMEN

***SONG** **Graves into Gardens** McEver Singers

THE WORD Tracey Wimpy

Isaiah 35:1-10 (CEB)

¹ The desert and the dry land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom like the crocus. ² They will burst into bloom, and rejoice with joy and singing. They will receive the glory of Lebanon, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon. They will see the Lord's glory, the splendor of our God. ³ Strengthen the weak hands, and support the unsteady knees.

⁴ Say to those who are panicking: "Be strong! Don't fear! Here's your God, coming with vengeance; with divine retribution God will come to save you." ⁵ Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf will be cleared. ⁶ Then the lame will leap like the deer, and the tongue of the speechless will sing. Waters will spring up in the desert, and streams in the wilderness. ⁷ The burning sand will become a pool, and the thirsty ground, fountains of water. The jackals' habitat, a pasture; grass will become reeds and rushes. ⁸ A highway will be there. It will be called The Holy Way. The unclean won't travel on it, but it will be for those walking on that way. Even fools won't get lost on it; ⁹ no lion will be there, and no predator will go up on it. None of these will be there; only the redeemed will walk on it. ¹⁰ The Lord's ransomed ones will return and enter Zion with singing, with everlasting joy upon their heads. Happiness and joy will overwhelm them; grief and groaning will flee away.

PRAYER

SERMON **An Image of Joy** Pastor Tyler

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1. What “deserts” in your life need the watering presence of God?
2. How can you help strengthen someone else’s weak hands or knees this week?
3. Where have you seen God’s joy turn grief into singing?

GIVING OPPORTUNITY Pastor Tyler

DOXOLOGY

OFFERTORY PRAYER Pastor Tyler

*SONG	I've Got the Joy	All
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BENEDICTION Pastor Tyler

The wilderness rejoices and blossoms with joy. We will sing in the desert and dance in the dust.

**All: God's joy makes streams flow in dry places. We go rejoicing,
for the Holy Way leads us home as we Love Christ, Love People,
and Help People Love Christ. Amen**

Notes & Take Aways

Giving Thanks Season December

The Leadership Team decided to make November and December “Giving Thanks” months to help support different charities that need our help. Four charities will be highlighted in December.

The display on the table up front will have sticks for each group. Simply pick-a-stick for the group you wish to help.

DECEMBER

- HUGS – Fifteen \$50 Christmas present tags to purchase new clothes for HUGS students.
- MRUMC Children's Ministry - Outside play structure. (All donations in by December 31st)
- Everwood Elementary School or West Hall High School – Teacher Appreciation gift cards, \$10-\$25 for Restaurants, Stores, Amazon, Visa Gift Cards. (All donations in by today)

Announcements and Events

Hello McEver Road Church Family!

We're excited to invite you to a
Christmas Movie Night Under the Stars
on **December 19th from 6–9 PM!**

We'll gather out on the lawn for a cozy Christmas movie on the big screen. Bring your lawn chairs, blankets, and your favorite people to celebrate the season together.

- We'll have:
- Hot chocolate
 - Popcorn
 - S'mores
 - A cookie-decorating station

It's a simple way to slow down, enjoy fellowship, and soak in the joy of this season of hope.

If you feel led to volunteer, please reach out to **Zoe Ruzek** at family@mceverumc.org.
We can't wait to share this special evening with you!

Staff Love Offering

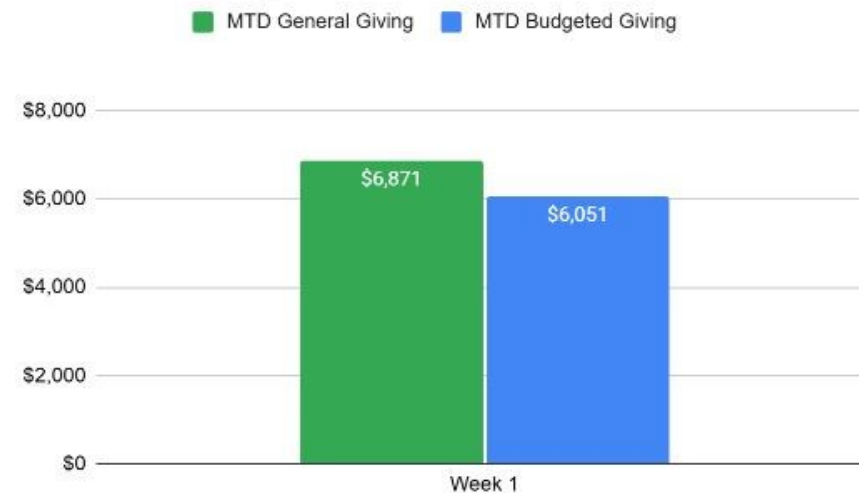
It's time to recognize our staff with our annual love offering. We appreciate our staff and all they do for McEver Road UMC. Please mark your contribution "Staff Christmas" and mail or bring it to the church NO LATER THAN Sunday, December 21st. Thank you!

Nancie Daugherty, Chair
Staff Parish Relations Committee

Christmas Eve Worship Wednesday, December 24th, 5:00PM Christmas Story & Carols

Join us as we reflect on the story of Christmas as told in the Scripture in a family-friendly, interactive way. Traditional carols will be sprinkled throughout the service, ending with a magical congregation-wide candle lighting while we close out the evening by singing "Silent Night."

MTD General Giving and MTD Budgeted Giving



Now it's easy to make your donation online!

Simply scan this QR code with your phone's camera and complete the online form!

OR you can visit our giving page at:
www.mceverumc.org/give

Today's Greeters

11:00am: Pam McLamb and Suzanne Terwilliger

Church Wi-Fi: MCEVER
Password: 5226McEver

Follow us on Facebook: facebook.com/McEverUMC
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/mceverumc/mceverumc.org>



Loving Christ Loving People Helping People Love Christ

Welcome! We are truly glad you're here!

No matter your background, status, or story—you are welcome. Whether you feel like you have everything or nothing, have strong family bonds or feel like the "odd-one-out," are young or simply young at heart, we embrace you just as you are. Regardless of who you are or whatever box/label someone gave you, we strive to see the image of God in everyone. If you are struggling, seeking, doubting, or carrying wounds from the past, know that God meets us where we are. And today, we are grateful to meet you exactly where you are.

Welcome to McEver Road United Methodist Church
We're so glad you're here!

Tips for New Worshipers:

Coming to a new space with new people can be overwhelming. Let us help you feel more comfortable and at ease:

- Enjoy refreshments at the snack table and coffee bar at anytime
- Bathrooms are located in the back of the Pavilion (where you are now) with additional ones located inside the Bagley House.

Tips for New Families:

All ages are welcome to worship with us during this worship hour. That being said, we know each family has different needs:

- If your family chooses to stay in the Pavilion, we have green worship bags available for younger ages to use (At the end of the service, please return them so we can reuse them next week!)
- If you need nursery care (0-3 years old), then we have a wonderful space and trained volunteers ready to love on them in the Nursery Room located downstairs inside the Bagley House
- If your children (K-5th) would like to participate in Kids Worship for a fun, engaging experience, please join them in the Kids Area, downstairs inside the Bagley House

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