

# Dear Church Family,

*"For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."*

- Isaiah 9:6

When a baby cries in worship, I remember Christmas Eve worship 1980, 4th grade to be exact. A Nativity Scene was in front of the altar. The lights were low. We quietly sang hymns. And I think that I remember a spotlight right on the baby in the manger. The scene was serene, until ... a baby started crying in the back rows of the church. Adults around me tried not to look back, but they did. The baby wasn't crying very loudly but it was enough that we all could hear him over the hymns. At the end of that hymn, when music was no longer muffling the crying, the mother stood up to take the baby out of the sanctuary. In this very moment the pastor said: "Please don't leave. A crying baby is exactly why we are all here tonight!"

Yes, that crying baby grew up to be our Savior, the Jesus in OUR heart that we want to share with the world! We want to share our Jesus because we know the Good News he brings to all! The Good News of great joy that in a broken and hurting world full of abandonment, loss, brokenness, and failure ... In a world full of abuse, poverty, wars, and tragedy, God sent his Son Jesus to be our "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." We have certainly experienced this power of Christ this year as a congregation as we found ourselves half the size yet three times as mighty by the power of the Holy Spirit working through each and every one of YOU!

This Advent season, in anticipation of Christ's birth on Christmas day, I invite you to step close to the manger with me. Let us step close to the manger and remember all the powerful and personal reasons why we love Jesus and why we want to share the Jesus in our hearts with others! On 12/17, we will celebrate our annual "Walk to the Manger" Christmas offering. All financial gifts designated to "Walk to the Manger", check, online ([colliervilleumc.org/giving](http://colliervilleumc.org/giving)), or placed in a Christmas envelope (see baskets at each worship location) will go toward the General Fund Budget so our church can continue to serve our community one block at a time.

Some examples of current budget needs include:

- \$44,000 to replace two HVAC systems - Rooms 24 & 27
- \$10,000 for Youth and Children's ministry enhancements - Growing these programs is critical to our future
- \$10,000 to improve our communication strategy and reach - Connecting with people in new and vital ways

This Christmas, may you know and experience in extra powerful ways the depth and breadth of Jesus in YOUR heart as our "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace"!

Hope & Peace!

*Deborah C. Suddarth*

Dr. Deborah C. Suddarth,  
Senior Pastor

## Some Important Notes:

- On 12/17, our children are sharing the Nativity Story at 11am worship! Don't miss it!
- If you can't join us on 12/17, here are other ways you can make your financial gift before the end of the year:
  - Online ([colliervilleumc.org/giving](http://colliervilleumc.org/giving))
  - Deposit box (inside Entrance 4)
  - Bring it with you to a Christmas Eve Service or on 12/31
    - we will have Christmas Offering envelopes available and the manger will be out ([colliervilleumc.org/walktothemanger](http://colliervilleumc.org/walktothemanger) for full details)
- Check here: [colliervilleumc.org/pledge](http://colliervilleumc.org/pledge), for more information on year-end contribution reminders, giving reporting for 2023, giving stock, securities, or mutual funds, and avoiding capital gains taxes. Or if you are 70.5 or older; how to make a qualified charitable distribution directly from your IRA without it being considered taxable income for you.

12/24

11 am & 5 pm

LESSONS & CAROLS

Poplar

454 W. POPLAR AVE.

7 pm

Outdoor Gazbo

96 N CENTER ST.

5 pm\* | 7 pm | 10 pm

JOIN US FOR COMMUNION, CAROLS, PRAYER, SCRIPTURE AND REFLECTION EACH SERVICE.

\*THIS SERVICE IS OPEN HOUSE STYLE

Sanctuary ON THE Square

104 N. ROWLETT ST.



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