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**November 2023**

Dear Members and Friends:

We are now entering the holiday shopping period. Have you completed your shopping yet? I hope that you have had a blessed year and that your Christmas Celebration is extra special!

As you know, it has been nearly four years since the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Pandemic disrupted every aspect of everyone's lives. This includes everything from going on vacation, going to work and even to attending church. When it comes to church, all aspects have been affected from the administrative day-to-day operations, to worship, to ministries. Sadly, many churches have had to close due to the financial stress of maintaining a facility and the change in worship attendance, and the list goes on and on.

Churches like MCC NoVA are totally dependent upon the generosity of their community of members and friends. Here, at MCC NoVA, I am pleased to report that we have survived. MCC NoVA has held expenses to the minimum and our Treasurer projects that year end revenue will be under year end expenses. We also have good reserves. This is a blessing. BUT we still have much to do. All of us must remember that this is our church, in fact it is yours, mine and ours! Simply put, we all need to accept a degree of ownership in its continued survival.

The Board of Directors depends upon the Stewardship Campaign to determine what your church can and can't afford the next calendar year. For 2024, our current pledges are approximately 20% short of the revenue needed to keep and maintain the facility and meet the community's financial obligations. This underscores the need of consistent and faithful giving. So, if you haven't been able to do so, please complete a pledge form, or send our Treasurer, Kate Gilligan, a note providing your pledge information. Her email address is: [Kategilligan18@yahoo.com](mailto:Kategilligan18@yahoo.com). We can't survive without your continued generosity.

Further, I would also like to ask that you prayerfully consider giving the church a special Christmas donation by December 31 this year to help offset this year's shortfall. During 2023, the church has strived to continue to minister despite the challenges dealt us with residual COVID fallout. The church has continued ministry to folks from the community. We've still helped to feed the homeless with **FACETS**. Our In-Person Sunday worship has expanded in attendance and continues to slowly grow. We continue to attract new people. We've married folks. We've conducted funerals. We've provided support to those individuals that have struggled with their sexuality. We continue to partner with the Transgender Education Association of Greater Washington to provide spiritual fellowship and support to those who struggle with coming out and transition-related issues—including spouses, children, and teens. We've been active with various school systems in our area to provide a strong voice for diversity. We've provided a safe space for LGBTQ+ groups to meet. The list goes on.

We are calling this initiative **"MERRY CHRISTMAS MCC NoVA."** Could you take a moment and see if there is something you'd like to give to the church as a "thank-you" gesture for all the work it has done during this year, despite the challenges posed by COVID? There are no small amounts -- every bit helps. Please designate it as "Merry Christmas MCC NoVA!"

Your yearend gift will help MCC NoVA begin 2024 on a better and more solid footing. If we all pull together, we can make it past this hump. If you have not offered a pledge, please consider it. MCC NoVA would be so grateful.

Sincerely,  
**FRANK D. VANCE, JR.**  
Vice-Moderator.