



March, 2021

Dear Member of Metropolitan Community Church of Knoxville,

This letter is being sent to every person on our membership rolls. Yes, this is a form letter, yet I want you to know that I value each of you, even if we still have not met personally. I pray for those who are actively participating in MCKK, for those who once were active, and for those with whom we will connect in the months and years ahead.

*As the apostle Paul says in Philippians 1:3-6 (The Message) "Every time you cross my mind, I break out in exclamations of thanks to God. Each exclamation is a trigger to prayer. I find myself praying for you with a glad heart. I am so pleased that you have continued on in this with us, believing and proclaiming God's Message, from the day you heard it right up to the present. There has never been the slightest doubt in my mind that the God who started this great work in you would keep at it and bring it to a flourishing finish on the very day Christ Jesus appears."*

I am so grateful for the work that God has done and is doing in and through each person who has been associated with MCC Knoxville. This congregation has impacted many lives. I believe God has more great things in store for us! We will be a blessing to many and receive many blessings. Do you believe this?

COVID has changed how we worship and challenged many assumptions about what church looks like and how we are church. The times are changing yet again as more and more people are vaccinated moving us toward being together in-person while continuing our online outreach.

As we approach Easter and then our spring congregational meeting, we ask that each of you prayerfully consider your membership commitments. In reviewing your membership vows, you may reach the conclusion that you are right on target with what you committed to do and be as an active member. You might reflect that your commitment is strong in one area but you might be able to do more in another. Your process of reflection/review/evaluation is yours! I simply ask that you do this prayerfully.

When each of us became a member, we vowed to support this congregation with our prayers, our presence, our participation and our offerings.

- 1) Do you regularly pray for this church, for its leadership, its ministries, those that attend here, our outreach and our impact in the community and the world? Might you be able to pray more specifically, intentionally or frequently?
- 2) Do you attend worship regularly? Yes, it has been online for the last year and you might not have been a fan of Zoom or Facebook Live. We also had outdoor worship at 9am last fall for several months. If you did not participate in any of those, ask yourself why not. We can worship God anywhere but most of us do not! Will you attend worship when we begin meeting in-person again either outdoor or in the building? Might you continue joining worship online?
- 3) We have also offered midweek discussion groups such as Tuesday Touchstone (Tuesdays at noon), the Gratitude study, and the current Dine & Discern Wednesday evening series.



One of our membership commitments was to attend to our own spiritual growth. How have you grown spiritually in this last year? What are you doing to nurture your spiritual growth? Sharing with others builds community as well as spirits.

- 4) Do you share your spiritual gifts, your talents and your time? Do you volunteer in or through the church or with A Place At The Table or another community organization? Is there something that God has been calling you to and you are resistant for some reason? Is there a new ministry you would like to start or participate in? Talk to me about it.
- 5) With the economic challenges of this year with COVID, we have been very blessed by those who have supported this ministry. Thank you! At this time of personal membership review, it is a good time to look at your giving and to once again invite God into your financial management. This is between you and God. Where is God in your finances? Do you have a budget? Does it include your tithe? Ask God's direction to review or make a budget. Perhaps you have been giving occasionally and this review might move you to commit to more consistent giving.

These all impact our personal spiritual growth in some way - prayer, worship, education, the sharing of our gifts/time and the giving of our financial offerings. No, they are not the only things that impact our spiritual growth! Our commitments to prayer, presence, participation and financial support are critical to our forward movement together. God blesses our faithfulness.

If you are struggling spiritually or personally in any area of life, there are people here to support you. The Deacons, our Intern, and I are here to talk with you, pray with you / for you, to offer pastoral counsel, or to help you identify other supportive resources. Please reach out. There are people in this congregation who have resources and support to offer as well. You have gifts to share! Our financial records are always available so you can see exactly how your donations are used. We would be glad to help you find meaningful volunteer service. Just let us know how we might be supportive. We cannot help if we do not know.

We are called to support one another in our journey of faith so that together we might demonstrate the inclusive, empowering love of God. Our prayers, presence, voluntarism, and offerings are all gifts of love and service to God.

Thank you for taking the time to, prayerfully and honestly, reflect on your membership vows and commitments. Thank you for all that you do and who you are! I look forward to an overall increase in our combined active commitments, spiritual growth and impact by this community of faith in the world!

Blessings on the journey,

Rev. Colleen Darraugh,  
Lead Pastor