

## McEvoy Family Stewardship

MCC 2018

It's my turn to stand up and talk about giving. Looking out into the congregation there are faces I recognize and some I don't. There are some here that don't know me. Some who might recognize my face but don't know much about me. So before diving into our family giving story, let me share a bit of my personal journey.

I grew up going to church, Methodist. Participated in all the different activities...choir, youth group, community outreach. It's safe to say church was a very important part of my childhood, and I have amazing memories. Yes, I admit, sometimes I would say to my parents, do we have to go to church every Sunday? So, when my five and seven-year-old daughters say that to me now, it makes me laugh. Fast forward through college, a job in NY that lead me to CA, where I met my husband Mike, and now to Monroe CT where we've lived for 15 years. Even though we were living in San Francisco, Mike and I got married in VT, near where I went to college. We travelled the farthest for our own wedding. Our wedding day was the best day of my life. One of the things that made it so special, was that my youth pastor, who I hadn't been in touch with for over 15 years, agreed to co-officiate the ceremony. Reverend Washburn, or Rev Wash as we used to call him, was a staple in my faith journey. My faith journey hasn't always included a specific church. And while Mike was born to Catholic parents, the church was never part of his life growing up. An important part of my journey worth sharing is directly related to where giving comes in. Growing up I was taught...go to school, work hard, get a great job, make a lot of money, and you'll be happy. Right? In theory maybe...at least for me. After college in VT I moved to NY, got a job with a big publishing company, worked hard, and was very successful. But in the core of my being...something was missing. I was receiving...but I wasn't giving. So, I decided to volunteer as a mentor to a girl in foster care. This girl changed the course of my life in a way I never could have imagined. When Mike and I came to Monroe in 2002 I left the business world, and the nice paycheck, behind, knowing I was being called to do something even greater. In between that something greater and my former business life, I

spent three years as a wine consultant...which was great fun. And then I found it. An ad in the paper that read...make a difference in the life of an abused or neglected child by advocating for their best interest in juvenile court. So, I went through the training and became a volunteer court appointed special advocate. That was in 2005. Twelve years later I have co-founded a nonprofit that gives every day to kids and families. Personally, and professionally, giving is at the core of who I am...and who I will be for the rest of my life. It's not in my repertoire to say no, but rather, how can I help?

Yes, giving is personal. And it's understandable why some make the choice to give in private. It's also understandable that some, ok maybe most, people look at their annual income and then allocate a percentage to giving. Who and what they give to is broken down from there. It's hard to stand up here and share, because there is always a fear of thinking, am I giving enough. Or, will someone judge, one way or another.

When I first saw the insert in the bulletin about the 2018 stewardship campaign, my instinct was to see where our family fit in to the overall puzzle of giving at MCC. Sadly, we live in a world where it's an instinct to compare ourselves to others. So as others have done in previous weeks, I'm making the choice to be vulnerable, because it's necessary for growth.

Mike and I support many different causes during the year and the amount isn't driven by our financial situation...it's driven by the heart...and what matters to our family and who we want to help. MCC matters to our family and we love and are grateful for the fellowship, community focus, and overall group of great people.

Our family has been coming to MCC off and on for almost 10 years and we finally became members in October 2016. We made a pledge to MCC for 2017 with very little to base the decision on. Before we became members, anytime we came to church we would always put either \$10 or \$20 in the offering plate. Our pledge for 2017 was \$100 a month, so a total of \$1200. Over the course of 2017 we have given to a variety of different causes, both local, and national. As a founding member of Empowering Children and Families, a startup non-profit, much of my heart, soul, resources, and time are dedicated to getting it off the ground. As we look towards 2018, the McEvoy's are committed to stepping up and moving up a

level on the giving ladder of MCC. We are almost doubling our pledge from \$100 to \$175 per month, coming in at \$2100 for the year.

One final thought. Earlier this year I worked with the Board of Outreach on the annual tag sale. At the end of the day, after working very hard, I thought to myself, wow after almost 15 years in Monroe, I knew I had found my faith family. Thank you for welcoming us in to your house of worship.

Peace.