“The St. Mark community has been wonderful to us and our entire family. St. Mark has offered us, and given us, more than we had ever imagined.”

Background: The talented McCollum-Van Hoosear (McV’s) family has been attending and involved in the life of our congregation since 2010.

Greg McCollum was born in Ft. Walton Beach, FL (Eglin Air Force Base) and is the second oldest in a family of four children. His family later moved to Texas, where he received a bachelor’s degree in business administration-finance from University of Texas at Austin.

Greg began his career in 1989 working for MetLife as a financial analyst in the managed care division. After the division was sold to United Health Care in Minneapolis, he was offered the option of relocating there or a severance package. “This was the perfect opportunity for me to return to school and study my passion, landscape architecture,” he says. Greg received a master’s degree in landscape architecture from Cal Poly Pomona. He worked for a small firm in Orange County and then took a fundraising position with The Nature Conservancy and says it was “perhaps the most interesting job I have ever experienced.” He traveled extensively to pristine natural areas throughout the U.S., Mexico and Canada. The demanding travel schedule, however, made it challenging as he and Jeff started their family, so he left the organization to become a stay-at-home parent.

Jeff was born in Coldwater, Michigan and is the oldest of four children—Jeff, Janice, Jed and Jayson with parents Jim and Joanne. Jeff notes, “Apparently, such a naming practice was common in the 1960s.” He received a BA in political science from Beloit College in Beloit, WI, and his JD degree from Boston University School of Law in Boston, MA. He began practicing law at an intellectual property (IP) law firm in Chicago in 1986. Jeff moved to Orange County in early 1989 to work for IP firm Knobbe, Martens, Olson & Bear, where he is a partner. He’s handled trademark and copyright law matters for a diverse
range of clients over the past 30 years, including surf culture apparel and sporting goods (i.e., Quicksilver, Roxy, Oakley, Mossimo); and now also works in foods and beverages, jewelry, cosmetics, home decor, software, and service industries.

He was just selected for inclusion in the *World Intellectual Property Review 2016* directory of World IP Leaders. He has also been recognized by *The World Trademark Review 1000* as a leading trademark lawyer, and also named in the *Guide to the World’s Leading Trademark Law Practitioners*.

**Finding St. Mark:** The McV’s are new to the Presbyterian church. Jeff grew up in the Baptist denomination in southern Michigan and says his former church had neither open arms nor open minds. Greg was raised a Methodist in Houston, TX. Jeff discovered St. Mark through members Cathy Miskelly Benedict and Wendy Peterson, who is also a colleague at Knobbe Martens. He did a reading at Cathy’s wedding at St. Mark, and met our former pastor, Gary Collins. A year later, Wendy encouraged him to attend a worship service, when Gary’s sermon focused on how we should follow the lead of Jesus and be inclusive. He said, “It was clear to me that St. Mark truly was a place of open arms and open minds. It was the church that I had been looking for.” He has since served as an Elder on Session, and represented St. Mark at the Presbytery of Los Ranchos. He is a member of the Adult Discipleship and Nurture Commission and the Social Events Committee.

**Family Life:** Greg and Jeff are proud parents to Lucas, age 12 (just accepted to OC School of the Arts!), and Kate, age 8. Greg kiddingly says, “I’m an Uber driver for private clients…as I seem to spend a great majority of my time driving them around town to their various activities.” The couple says that their “Greatest joy is watching and fostering our children in their respective areas of interest. Kate is on a gymnastics team and is excited to be moving up to Level 4 this year. Lucas is into dance—specifically ballet—and is most content when he is on stage.” The McV’s household also includes rescue dog Wolley (yellow spelled backwards), Moonlight (rescue part-Siamese cat), two rabbits, four chickens, several finches, and several koi.

**Hobbies and Interests:** Greg continues his passion for garden design, and recently re-landscaped their front yard in a drought tolerant Santa Fe, New Mexico style. Jeff modestly calls himself a “hobby baker” and we at St. Mark have sampled many of his delicious treats at The Alternative Christmas Market and other St. Mark events. The couple loves to cook and entertain.

*How blessed we are that the McHoosears discovered St. Mark!*