

Christ-Centered Community

Making a Difference in Your Life and the World

2026 Ministry & Stewardship Appeal

For 250 years, Morning Star has been leaning into God's eternal faithfulness and the promise of abundant life that is ours through Jesus Christ. We are each witnesses to the powerful, even life-changing difference that is made when a congregational family is willing to give of itself for the sake of the Gospel.

MSLC members and friends give thousands of hours each year to the ministry we share - as part of a Mission Team, a musical ensemble; as a worship volunteer, a study leader, office helper, or one of dozens of ways that this congregation gets ministry done. If you've given of your time and talent—thank you!

We are also called to financially support the mission that happens at and through Morning Star. We are each blessed to share a portion of what God has abundantly given us. Joyful, generous giving is part of how we live out a grateful and faithful life. Your financial gifts make ministry happen and every gift makes a difference.

Help us build a 2025 plan for ministry that provides a place for All to Worship, to Serve, to Grow in Faith, and to find Community. We cannot do it without you.

“Morning Star is making a difference... we need to be aware that our church affects more people than we could ever imagine. I thank you, and everyone who is making a difference to people here and in the community. I am honored to be a part of this church. Great job!” - long time MSLC member



Morning Star Lutheran Church



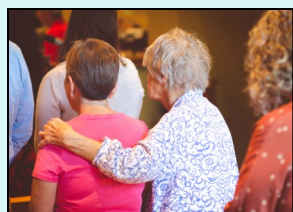
A Worshipping Community for All

Worship is the heartbeat of our community. Each week, we gather to praise and worship the God who made us, claimed us, and saved us. We receive God's Word, share the Lord's Supper, pray for one another and the world, and then are sent as empowered disciples into the world to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed.

We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation, inviting all people, regardless of family

shape, orientation, skin tone, gender expression, marital status, history with organized religion, etc., to join us in song, prayer, worship and service.

Our fantastic music ministry welcomes anyone who wants to help praise God with voice or instrument. Children, youth and adults are all encouraged and invited to share their gifts for worship leadership through our many ensembles and choirs. Our congregation doesn't watch worship - it lives it and shares it - as a community.

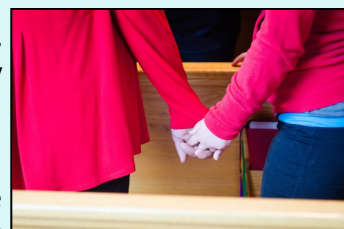


Each year, over 120 worship services are held at Morning Star. We average almost 200 people in worship each week. We celebrate milestones of faith and life together: baptisms, confirmations, weddings, funerals and so much more. Our worship connects our life's journey with the One who accompanies us each and every day.

Our community's worship is sustained by the efforts of more than 100 volunteers and staff members throughout the year. Worship takes a great deal of planning, effort and commitment but we wouldn't do it any other way.

Supporting our Community's Worship requires approximately 41.4% (\$329,385) of our current annual plan for ministry (including staff, building expenses, utilities, administration costs, etc.)

“This is a ‘move-worthy’ church!” - Out of state Sunday worship visitor



A Servant Community

Morning Star is a tithing congregation, and we share 10% of our offerings as mission support to the NC Synod and the ELCA; allowing camps, seminaries, world-wide ministries, feeding programs, refugee resettlement, educational opportunities, advocacy work and so much more to happen in the name of Jesus Christ.



Beyond our tithe are the offerings that you share on behalf of the community near and far. We are a long-time partner with the Matthews Help Center, Roof Above, Greater Matthews Habitat for Humanity, Servant's Heart, One Blood/Red Cross, Kairos prison ministry, Adopt a Street and so many more groups that serve our neighbors and community. Every 2nd Sunday, hundreds of pounds of food are collected to feed our neighbors. At Thanksgiving and Christmas, almost 100 complete meals are shared with local schools and agencies. What a difference these offerings make in service to the community!

Stephen Ministry is a one-to-one accompaniment and support ministry, offered by trained care givers. Care receivers are prayerfully and consistently supported through a challenging chapter of life. Stephen Ministers are a part of a caring community that walks together in faith.

stephen
MINISTRY

Room in the Inn Homeless Ministry is the largest servant ministry at Morning Star, counting the number of volunteers and the hours spent providing hospitality, a warm bed, a good meal, a shower, laundry service and compassion.

The two nights a month serving at the Charlotte Men's Shelter are off campus but the impact is surely felt at MSLC.

Financially supporting a Servant Community requires approximately 20.5% (\$163,101) of our current annual plan for ministry, including staff, building expenses, utilities, administration costs, etc.

"I was driving in the cold, early morning. I passed many churches that were dark. My destination was our church and it was all lit up, providing warmth and welcome to unhoused guests just now waking up from a safe sleep, greeted by cheerful volunteers." - an RIT hostess

A Faith Community

Faith is caught more than it is taught. We show our grandchildren how to pray before meals by doing it every day. Children and young people grasp the wonder of worship when they are surrounded by people who sing out, show all the emotions of life, and are examples of welcome. Our youth see themselves as today's disciples when the congregation supports their gifts within our shared ministry. Disciples of all



ages and stages grow in faith and service when they feel safe to ask questions, probe boundaries, and wonder what might be for them as followers of Jesus Christ.

Online Bible studies happen each week at MSLC. Via de Cristo weekends and reunions continue to enrich the lives of participants. Centering Prayer opens hearts to the presence of God in each moment of life. Labyrinth walks, Caring Conversations, the weekly prayer list, and much more foster and empower faith that grows.

A faith community is a living, Spirit-filled experience for all participants. This doesn't happen on its own. Large and small groups for every age are a part of Morning Star's life. Groups for children, youth and adults that appropriately dive into prayer, the Scriptures, difficult questions, challenging answers, possibilities for Christian action and more allow for us to enrich our faith and grow as disciples.

Providing a Community in which Faith grows at each age and stage of life requires approximately 20.4% (\$162,305) of our current annual plan for ministry, incl. staff, building expenses, utilities, admin costs, etc.

"It's a wonderful way to learn and grown in our faith. I feel like I'm becoming a better disciple by attending these sessions." - Tuesday Night Bible Study participant

Building (and Empowering) Community

We are blessed by our facilities and blessed to share them for the sake of community. At Morning Star, groups and organizations of all sorts are invited to build healthy community. AA (meeting five days every



week), school groups, La Leche support groups, TOPs, Scouts, Lutheran Men in Mission, two circles of Women of the ELCA, AM Stars, the Gallery at Morning Star and many others make regular use of space at Morning Star so that they might enjoy and more rich experience of community.



Morning Star members are leaders of the Charlotte/Matthews branch of Coming to the Table, a cross-racial community building effort. MSLC members are also involved with Mecklenburg Metropolitan Interfaith Network, Charlotte Pride, We Speak, NC Synod committees, and other groups that build community. Being a Reconciling in Christ congregation speaks to the value we place on living into community that reflects each and every soul that God has created.



Supporting Building Community requires approximately 17.6% (\$140,028) of our current annual plan for ministry, including salaries, building expenses, utilities, admin costs, etc.

“Thank you, Morning Star, and your members for being so welcoming and loving to us (AA). I’ve been coming to meetings at Morning Star for 8 years and also became a Christian. I wouldn’t be alive today if it weren’t for Morning Star.” - a member of the AA community

How Might MSLC Grow in Ministry?

What could we do in terms of ministry if our annual giving grew?

As each household grows incrementally toward tithing (giving 10% of what we receive), and we give generously and joyfully, Morning Star’s ministry will reflect that Spirit-filled discipleship.

If every household became regular, monthly givers through auto-draft or bank transfer, Morning Star would have enough to consider one or more of the following exciting possibilities!

- Host a **community** summer Day Camp with Agape or Lutheridge counselors.
- Connect with our **neighboring schools** to tutor, support staff, or host school activities like concerts or special events.
- Add a part-time **Communications/Social Media** staff member
- Improve Worship Center **video cameras and systems** to improve participants’ online experience.
- Support Charlotte-area ELCA seminarians by serving as an Experiential Learning Location.



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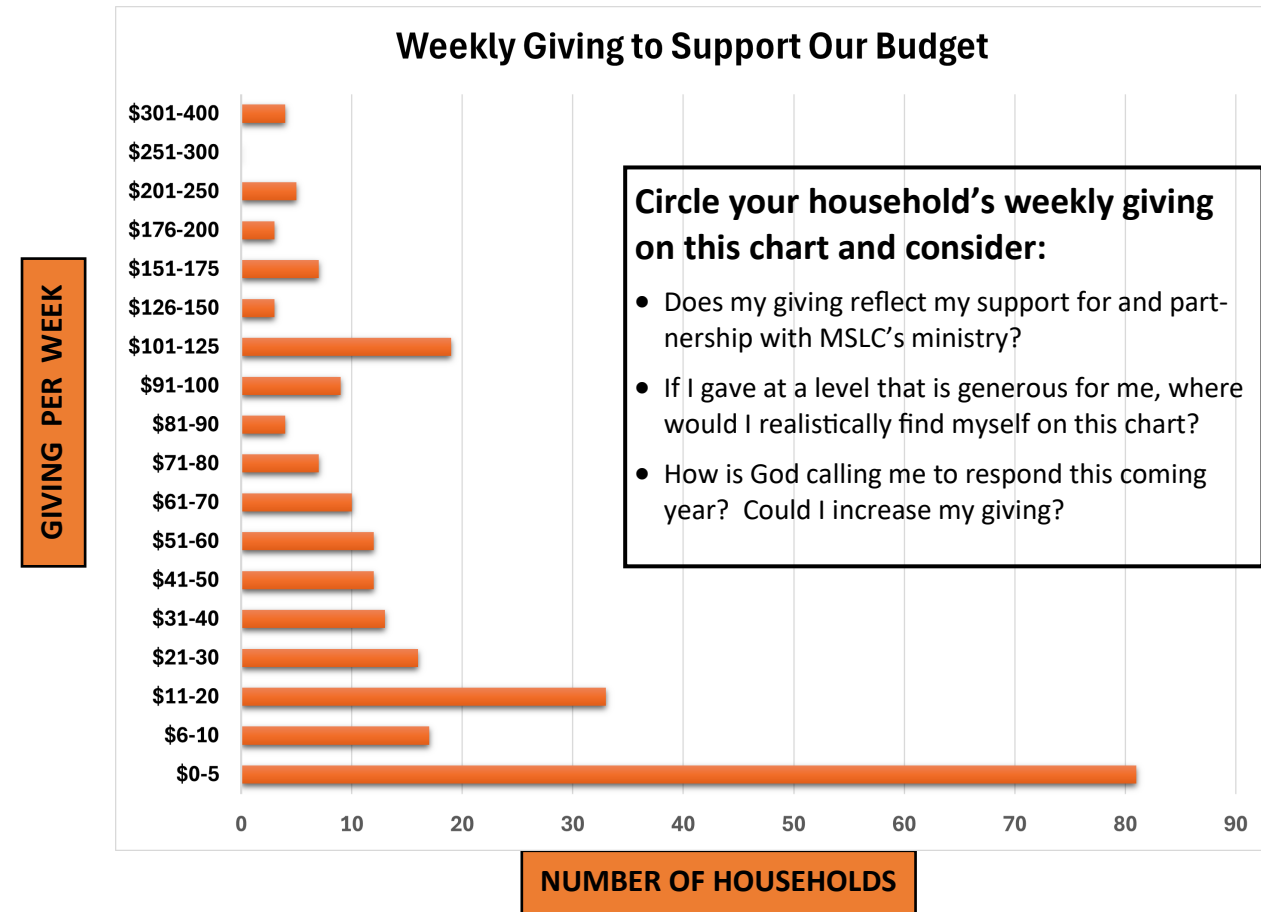
12509 Idlewild Road

Matthews, NC 28105

704.847.4502 mslcnc.org

Our Giving As a Congregation

Here is a breakdown of our congregational giving during 2024. We trust that every household will prayerfully consider moving up just one giving level in order to grow spiritually as a giver and disciple. Automated giving of just \$10-15 per week or \$50 a month by 50-60 of our households would *greatly* increase the ministry we share. Set up your automated giving today!



Invitation and Response

We are all a part of an exciting chapter of God's ministry at Morning Star. This brochure is the first step.

Pray for the ministry of Morning Star Lutheran Church and your commitment to be a part of it. Soon, you'll get a letter from your Stewardship Mission Team that will inform you of giving tools and the need for generosity this next year as we seek to grow in ministry. Growing in stewardship is a spiritual goal as well as a spiritual gift.

This leads us all to Commitment Sunday, **September 28**, when we will return our completed Commitment Cards in worship. Fill it out online, if you wish, using the QR code that will be shared everywhere. Generosity brings joy so if you're not smiling as you fill out your commitment card, keep increasing your commitment to giving!

Enroll in automated giving through your bank or credit union for most consistent giving in 2026. Consider required retirement withdrawals or directed stock/security sales to amplify your regular giving and be tax savvy.

Together, we can express our deepest gratitude to God for our many blessings and make ministry happen.

The Stewardship Team and Pastor John are always ready to share information about Estate Planning and creative planned giving opportunities that will ensure powerful and faithful ministry throughout the years.

"It's giving until the giving feels like receiving." - To Begin With, The Sweet Grass by Mary Oliver