

Money Handling Procedures for Events & Projects at Messiah Lutheran Church

There are three roles for people who handle monies and their record keeping here at Messiah:

- Counters (monies that come in loose or in offering envelopes; cash or checks are counted and recorded by our volunteers—generally on Sunday after worship).
- Financial Secretary records donations and offerings towards our tax-exempt, not for-profit ministry so that the donors can get an accurate record for personal purposes and for tax purposes.
- Treasurer is responsible for writing checks and paying bills on behalf of Messiah.

Financial best practices preclude partners or spouses from serving together in the counter role. Likewise, the Financial Secretary and Treasurer are also precluded from directly handling offerings.

The work of these folks is intended primarily to handle offerings, gifts, and monies so that we may endow our ministry and tend to expenses and bills related to our ministry budget. The handling of other monies, accounting, and reporting is kept to a minimum.

1. If you are organizing an event that requires collecting a fee that will be passed on to another entity, designate someone to collect all the money and then pay it directly to the entity. Checks should be made out to that entity directly rather than going through church financial processes.

2. If there is a need to have a check cut in advance and then collect the money after the fact (perhaps selling something as a fundraiser) then arrangements should be made with the treasurer for the check in advance. Money should then be collected and turned in all at once or in a few increments.

3. It is important to understand not all monies that pass through the church qualify to be counted as part of one's official record of giving. If any goods or services are received by the individual in return for the donation, by tax law that cannot be reported as charitable giving. If that is a concern, it should be clarified with the Treasurer before the money is submitted.

Finally, not all Messiah donations need to be given through the church. If you choose to give a donation to an entity sponsored by the church, your cancelled check serves as your receipt and does not need to be recorded on your church financial giving statement. If you have questions about anything above or something you think is not clearly covered, please contact our Treasurer or our Financial Secretary.

Approved at November 2025 Council Meeting