



*Together, Our Gifts Multiply
Unexpected Joy Follows*

Southport Presbyterian Church

October 16, 2024

If you have ever driven past a sunflower field, no doubt you have marveled at the beauty and wonder of one of our Creator's most beautiful flowers. Planted in God's earth, and warmed by God's sun, a single seed becomes a sunflower that yields thousands of seeds as it grows and matures.

In the same way, our gifts and talents grow and mature, giving life to a community of believers who tend to one another and to the world around us, just as the Creator tends to the garden. **Without a doubt, this is unexpected joy.**

2024 has been full of unexpected joy. We have celebrated the beginnings of faith through baptisms and witnessed the completed faith in remembering our loved ones. Our hands have worked together in service for the marginalized among us: the unhoused, the hungry and the vulnerable. We have offered hope to young students through scholarships and welcomed first-time homeowners through Habitat for Humanity. And we had fun doing it all!

It is in these acts of service that we are the seeds. We helped purchase a shower trailer, first homes and transitional housing. We donated flashlights, water, food and charcoal for those who experience homelessness. The seeds we spread take root in Southport and beyond as we support Amani Beads in Kenya and disaster assistance, most recently in Western North Carolina.

As a Matthew 25 Church, we recognize our interconnectedness as we freely give of ourselves for one another. *Well done, good and faithful servants.*

We understand that giving is a prayerful promise between you and God. Whether big or small, every donation of time, talent, and treasure comes from the center of our personal faith story to join others in growing God's garden of joy. At times this looks like a financial gift during stewardship season, one which will assist the leadership in preparing a transparent and working budget. Much has changed this past year, much has been accomplished, and the pastoral leadership and ruling elders give thanks for the strength and growth in our community of faith.

In 2025, Southport Presbyterian has visions of fields of sunflowers growing in God's light, nourishing all of God's creatures and pointing towards God. You are invited to be a part of this vision.

Enclosed is your 2025 pledge card. The pledge amount needed to support this faith budget is a 5.7% increase from last year's pledges. We ask that you prayerfully consider your commitment so leadership can continue to be good stewards of all that God has entrusted to us.

We give thanks for your past generosity, and we look forward to nourishing what God has planted and what God has planned next for us here at Southport Presbyterian.

With Gratitude and Prayer,

Pastors Carrie Evans and Joanna Hipp
The Southport Presbyterian Session