



# South Mecklenburg PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## A Service of Worship Epiphany

January 1, 2023, 10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestreamed

### WE GATHER

#### PRELUDE

WELCOME AND CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

Dr. Whitney Bayer

#### INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP

Rebecca Guzman

One: Calling all seekers, all dreamers, all believers...

Many: **Calling all glass-half-full optimists and lighthouse keepers...**

Many: **Calling all star-chasers and bedtime prayer speakers...**

One: Bring your questions, your hope, your faith and your fear into this space.

All: **God is here.**

\*HYMN

*We Three Kings of Orient Are*

No. 151

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*unison*)

Rebecca Guzman

God of starlight, we know that faith isn't a vending machine. Good news can't be bought or manufactured. It does not arrive with a push of a button. Instead, in this noisy world, we have to look for you in our midst. We have to walk toward you, just as the Magi did. We have to believe that love really can change the world. We have to seek the stars beyond the city lights. Forgive us for forgetting that. Forgive us for seeking you with only part of our hearts. We long to be more like the Magi; may we walk your way every single day. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S GRACE

Rebecca Guzman

**\*RESPONSE OF PRAISE**

*Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.  
Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.*

**WE HEAR AND RESPOND TO THE WORD**

**CHURCH FAMILY MOMENT**

Rebecca Guzman

1. It is a prayer practice in churches all over the world to give people a star word on this Epiphany Sunday. Many of us experience prayer as talking to God as opposed to silence or contemplation. However, this prayer practice invites a new prayer rhythm of reflection and review that can be a powerful way to connect with God. During Communion today, you will be invited to select a star word. The words will be placed facedown in a basket. When you come forward, take a word, not looking to see what it is before choosing! Consider this a guiding word for the year ahead. We invite you to remember your star word often, seeking the ways God might be moving through the meanings and definitions the word contains. If you are worshiping online, please email [Rebecca@smpchome.org](mailto:Rebecca@smpchome.org) to receive your star word.
2. *The Last Straw* by Fredrick Thury tells the story of the wise men from the point of view of a camel named Hoshmakaka. He is old, achy, and cranky, but he finally realizes the importance of his task to carry gifts to the newborn baby king. Listen to a [readaloud](#) and consider what it was like for the wise men.
3. Make a star craft. You can use pipe cleaners, aluminum foil, or just paper and scissors. Hang your star somewhere to remind you to continually seek Jesus.
4. Journal, considering the following:
  - a. What can we learn from the Magi, who sought Jesus? What do they teach us about seeking Christ?
  - b. Why does Matthew include the holy family's escape to Egypt in the gospel? What does it have to say about refugees?
  - c. Look back at all of the humans involved in the story of Christ's birth as it unfolds—Mary, Joseph, Elizabeth, the shepherds, Herod, the Magi. As God intervenes in their lives (in mysterious and startling ways), what does each person seek? As we begin this new year, what are we seeking?

**CHILDREN'S LITURGY**

Rebecca Guzman

*As the children four years old through third grade gather for  
Children's Worship, the congregation is invited to sing (hymn no. 19):*

***Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay  
close by me forever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,  
and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.***

**Congregation: God be with you there.**

Children: God be with you here.

*The children will return to join their families following the sermon.*

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

Dr. Bayer

**READING FROM THE GOSPELS**

Matthew 2: 1-12

Pew Bible, p. 2; Spark Bible, p. 1058

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

**\*THE AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (*unison*)The Nicene Creed  
Rebecca Guzman

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## OFFERTORY

*As an alternative to the traditional offering plate, you may support the ministry of SMPC by giving online at [www.smpchome.org/give](http://www.smpchome.org/give) or texting SMPC to 73256.*

**\*DOXOLOGY**

*Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord,  
that hath made heaven and earth of nought,  
and with His blood our life hath bought.  
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.*

**CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER**

## INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Dr. Bayer

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Rebecca Guzman

One: The Lord be with you.

**Many: And also with you.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

**Many: We lift them to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**Many: It is right to give our thanks and praise . . .**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

## THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

## THE BREAD AND THE CUP

You are invited to come to the tables (see diagram), take the elements, and return to your seats. If you are not able to come forward, you will be served at your seat.

## COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

### THE PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Dr. Bayer

## WE GO OUT TO SERVE

### \*HYMN

*In the Bleak Midwinter*

No. 144

### \*CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Dr. Bayer

### \*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

*For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophets seen of old,  
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,  
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,  
and the whole world give back the song  
which now the angels sing.*

### POSTLUDE

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## WORSHIP SERVICE NOTES

### Leading Worship this Morning

Dr. Whitney Bayer, Associate Pastor

Rebecca Guzman, Director of Spiritual Formation

Kevin Estes, organist

**A/V Team:** Brad Alford, Joanna Alford

**Ushers:** Phil Eatherton, Frank Graham, Curt Ireland, Alice Tyler, Bob Tyler, David Wooley

A brief Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 15 after the 10:10 am worship service to fulfill the State of North Carolina's legal requirement to hold an Annual Meeting of the Corporation. The congregation will hear reports from the Funds Management, Nominating, and Personnel Committees.

Welcome to South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church! If you are joining us in person or online, are a first-time visitor, a long-term member, or anything in between, we are glad that you are worshiping with us and we want to stay connected with you. If you don't receive our emails, sent on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, contact Nancy Metzler, Director of Hospitality and Connection, [nancy@smpchome.org](mailto:nancy@smpchome.org). These emails contain a weekly devotion and information about upcoming worship services and church activities. Also, find us on Facebook: [@southmecklenburgpresbyterian](https://www.facebook.com/southmecklenburgpresbyterian) and Instagram: [@southmeckpres](https://www.instagram.com/southmeckpres).

**A note to parents:** We are so delighted that you and your children are here! Children are an integral part of our faith community, and we strive to support parents during worship. Here are some helpful things to know:

- Children are welcome in worship. We understand that means wiggles!
- We provide blue worship totes in the Narthex to help children engage in worship. Please return the totes after the service.
- There is a nursery located in the McQueen Room with dedicated staff who are happy to keep your infant - three year old safe.

- Children's Worship is provided for children ages 4 through 3rd grade. The children gather after the Church Family Moment and return after the sermon. During this time, they will explore the story interactively and engage with their peers.
- A glider and changing table are available in Room 302 for mothers who wish to have privacy while nursing.
- During worship, the service is broadcast to the parlor, where there is more space to move around if your little one becomes restless.

**Interested in joining South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church?** Our Session will gather to welcome new members on Sunday, January 22 at 11:30 a.m. To learn more, contact Nancy Metzler, Director of Hospitality and Connection, [nancy@smpchome.org](mailto:nancy@smpchome.org) or 980-265-2839.

## CONGREGATIONAL NOTES (as of December 29, 2022)

### Remember in Prayer

- Cindy and Keith Bernhardt and their family as Cindy's mother, Donna Chase, entered the Church triumphant on Christmas Day.
- All those affected by the conflict in Ukraine.
- Our mission partners in Bayonnais, Haiti.

To join the prayer chain or send a prayer request: [prayer@SMPChome.org](mailto:prayer@SMPChome.org).



## South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church

8601 Bryant Farms Road • Charlotte, North Carolina 28277 • 704.544.0404

Post Office Box 79321, Charlotte, North Carolina 28271

[www.SMPChome.org](http://www.SMPChome.org)



# HAPPY NEW YEAR!

JANUARY 1, 2023

Welcome to South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church! We hope you will consider joining one of our many classes, events, ministries or groups in 2023. For the most up-to-date list of events, please subscribe to our weekly email. Contact: Nancy Metzler, nancy@smpchome.org.

## STUDY

### JOY Class

**Sundays beginning January 8, 8:45 a.m.-9:45 a.m., Sanctuary 301**

This group will begin studying *The God of the How and When* by Kathie Lee Gifford and Rabbi Jason Sobel. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

### Sunday Morning Study

**Sundays beginning January 8, 9:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m., Chapel 206**

This group will begin a 12-week study of *Invitation to the New Testament*. Contact: Melissa White, melissawhite1018@yahoo.com.

### Conversations with Dr. Matt Brown

**Every Wednesday resuming January 11, 9:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., Zoom**

Join us as we discuss the scripture for the coming week's sermon. Contact for the Zoom ID#: Dr. Matt Brown, matt@smpchome.org.

### 2023 Adult Bible Study

**Mondays, January 23-February 13, 10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m., McQueen Room or Zoom**

This study will be based on *Teaching The Way of Jesus: Educating Christians for Faithful Living* by Jack Seymour. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

## SERVE

### Desserts for Center of Hope

**Sunday, January 8**

Bring desserts for us to deliver to the women and children who temporarily call Center of Hope home. Contact: Terry Gaines, terryg@carolina.rr.com.

### Shelter Ministry

**Thursday, January 12, 9:00 a.m., Mecklenburg Hall**

This ministry meets to fill empty medicine bottles with body wash for Roof Above. Contact: Carol Morgan, morgancc43@aol.com.

### American Red Cross Blood Drive

**Saturday, February 18, 8:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Mecklenburg Hall**

Please bring your American Red Cross Donor Card or photo I.D. Contact: Tierra Sandeen, tierrad@hotmail.com.

### Room in the Inn

**February 22, March 12 and March 22, Sardis Presbyterian Church**

We are partnering with Sardis Presbyterian Church and Trinity Presbyterian Church. Volunteers will help with dinner, overnight stays or breakfast and cleanup. Contact: Amy Matthews, amymatthews1117@gmail.com.

## SMALL GROUPS

### Handiworkers Group

**Tuesdays resuming January 3, 10:00 a.m., Palmer 104**

All knitters, needlepointers, quilters, cross-stitchers and crocheters (beginners to experts) are invited. Contact: Nancy Metzler, nancy@smpchome.org.

### Friday Morning Men's Group

**Friday, January 6, 7:30 a.m.-8:30 a.m., Chapel 204**

This group meets on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month and would love to have new folks join. Contact: Curt Ireland, irelandcurtis00@gmail.com.

### **A Caregiver's Journey**

**Tuesday, January 10, 1:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m., McQueen Room**

Finding meaning and purpose as you care for a loved one with Alzheimer's or dementia. Contact: Dr. Whitney Bayer, [whitney@smpchome.org](mailto:whitney@smpchome.org).

### **Making Space Mom's Group**

**Thursday, January 12, 7:30 p.m., McQueen Room**

Moms of all ages are invited to join us for study, service and fellowship. Contact: Allison Reeves, [allison.tarwater@gmail.com](mailto:allison.tarwater@gmail.com).

### **Food for Thought Book Group**

**Thursday, January 19, 12:30 p.m., McQueen Room**

All are welcome as we discuss the book *The Secret of Snow* by Viola Shipman. Contact: Kathy Paquette, [khesspaquette@aol.com](mailto:khesspaquette@aol.com).

### **International Dining Group**

**Thursday, January 19, 6:00 p.m., Grace O'Malley's, 157 N Trade St, Matthews, NC**

This group explores local restaurants on the third Thursday of every month. Please join us! Contact: Alice Tyler, [rrt1317@aol.com](mailto:rrt1317@aol.com).

### **C.A.R.E. (Conversation Around Race Equity)**

**Sunday, January 29, 4:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m., Chapel 206 or Monday, January 30, 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m., Zoom**

Everyone is welcome to join the conversation. Contact: Dr. Whitney Bayer, [whitney@smpchome.org](mailto:whitney@smpchome.org).

### **Supper Circles**

Supper circles meet monthly or every other month and are hosted at a restaurant or a home. Contact: Nancy Metzler, [nancy@smpchome.org](mailto:nancy@smpchome.org).

## **CHILDREN**

### **BAM! (Bible and Music)**

**Sunday, January 8, 5:00 p.m.-6:30 p.m., Sanctuary**

BAM! is our Sunday evening program for children in kindergarten through 5th grade. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, [rebecca@smpchome.org](mailto:rebecca@smpchome.org).

## **YOUTH (MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOL)**

### **Big Youth Group (BYG)**

**Sunday, January 8, 5:00 p.m.-6:15 p.m., Mecklenburg Hall**

Bible study, small group time, good food, fun games and amazing company. Contact: Lindsey Odom, [lindsey@smpchome.org](mailto:lindsey@smpchome.org).

### **Youth Mission Night**

**Sunday, January 15, 5:00 p.m.-6:15 p.m., Mecklenburg Hall**

Join us as we work on projects for Smithfield Elementary, Loaves and Fishes, and Promising Pages. Contact: Lindsey Odom, [lindsey@smpchome.org](mailto:lindsey@smpchome.org).

## **MUSIC**

### **Chancel Choir**

**Wednesdays, 7:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m.**

Do you enjoy leading worship through song? Contact: Zach Bowyer, [zach@smpchome.org](mailto:zach@smpchome.org).

## **2023 OPERATING FUND CAMPAIGN UPDATE**

Thank you to the 275 families who have committed a total of \$1.1 million in pledges to the *Sabbath: Rest. Rise. Serve.* 2023 Operating Fund campaign! To date, 25 new families have pledged for a total of \$53,165, and we have a 6.04% pledge-on-pledge increase from families that pledged in both 2022 and 2023. There is still time to pledge! Please go to [smpchome.org/give](https://smpchome.org/give). Thank you to our Stewardship Committee and SMPC staff for their hard work on this campaign!