



# South Mecklenburg

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Service of Worship

Third Sunday in Lent

March 12, 2023

10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestreamed

## We Gather

**Prelude**                      *Nearer, My God, to Thee*                      arr. Richard Elliott

**Welcome and Concerns of the Church**                      Dr. Matthew S. Brown

**Introit**                      *There's a Wideness in God's Mercy*  
Frederick William Faber

**Call to Worship**                      Julia Greeson

**One:**     Who can stand before the glory of God? Who can see God's face and live?

**Many:**   **Only those who are given pardon by Christ, our Great High Priest.**

**One:**     Let us approach God's throne of grace with confidence.

**Many:**   **There, we may receive mercy.**

**One:**     There, we will discover grace to help us in our time of need.

**Many:**   **For we know and trust Jesus Christ.**

**One:**     We know Jesus, have confessed our faith in Jesus as the Son of God, and trust that by the power of Christ, we are made whole.

**All:**     **Remind us of your saving love and grace and keep us close to you this day and always. Amen.**

**Hymn**                      *God Is Calling through the Whisper*                      No. 410

# 410 God Is Calling through the Whisper



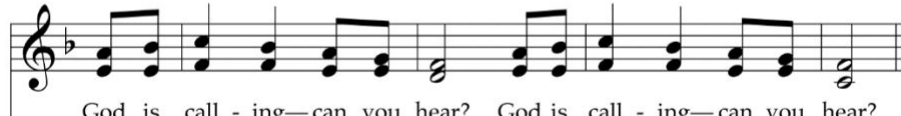
1 God is call-ing through the whis-per of the Spir - it's deep-est sighs,  
2 God is call-ing through the voic-es of our neigh-bors' ur-gent prayers,  
3 God is call-ing through the mu-sic of sub-lime and hu-man arts,



through the thrill of sud-den beau-ties that can catch us by sur-prise.  
through their long-ing for re-demp-tion and for res-cue from de-spair.  
through the hymns of earth and an-gels, and the car-ols of our hearts.



Flash of light-ning, crash of thun-der; hush of still-ness, rush of won-der:  
Place of hurt or face of need-ing; stri-dent cry or si-lent plead-ing:  
Lift of joy and gift of sing-ing; days and nights our prais-es bring-ing:



God is call - ing—can you hear? God is call - ing—can you hear?  
God is call - ing—can you hear? God is call - ing—can you hear?  
God is call - ing—and we hear! God is call - ing—and we hear!



**Prayer of Confession** (*unison*)

Dr. Whitney Bayer

**Gracious God, we come before you in need of forgiveness and grace. You call us to trust in you completely, but we do not. We are timid and fearful as we follow your lead. We justify our actions and words, though we know they are not what you require. We struggle to understand the new life Christ offers, preferring old habits to risky change. Forgive us, in Christ's name we pray. Amen.**

**Assurance of God's Grace**

Dr. Bayer

**Affirmation of Mercy**

No. 447

***We are forgiven, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.***

***We are forgiven, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.***

## **We Hear and Respond to the Word**

### **Church Family Moment**

Rebecca Guzman

1. In the Isaiah passage, we hear these words, “And when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left, your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, ‘This is the way; walk in it.’” Early Christians often called themselves, “The Way,” because they knew that following Jesus is a way of life, not just a set of things that we believe. Think about footprints this week. Maybe you will cut some footprints out of construction paper and leave them set out somewhere with markers. When you catch someone in your family “walking in the way,” write it down on a footprint and hang it up!
2. If you are worshiping from home, get permission to gather up various household members’ shoes. Try walking in them. How does it feel to walk in someone else’s shoes? What do the shoes tell you about each person? The Hebrews passage reminds us that Jesus knows what it was like to be human. He “walked in our shoes.” Why is that important?
3. One of my favorite songs that represents letting God direct our paths is titled, “Order My Steps in Your Word” by Glenn Burleigh. The Metropolitan Baptist Church choir has a wonderful recording of this song. [Listen](#) to the song with an open heart and see what the Spirit says to you.
4. Journal, considering the following:
  - a. What does it mean to walk in the way of Jesus?
  - b. Why does it matter that Jesus really became human?
  - c. How can you order your steps according to God’s word this week?

### **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. 399):*

***God welcomes all, strangers and friends; God’s love is strong and it never ends. God welcomes all, strangers and friends; God’s love is strong and it never ends.***

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

Children: God be with you here.

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

**Anthem** *Praise the One Who Makes Us One* Tom Trenney  
Chancel Choir; Ann Carney, piano

*Praise the One who breaks the darkness with a liberating light.  
Praise the One who frees the prisoners turning blindness into sight.  
Praise the One who preached the Gospel, curing every dread disease.  
Calming storms, and feeding thousands with the very bread of peace.*

*Praise the One who blessed the children with a strong yet gentle word.*

*Praise the One who drove out demons with a piercing two-edged sword.*

*Praise the One who brings cool water to the desert's burning sand.*

*From this well comes living water, quenching thirst in every land.*

*Praise the One true love incarnate: Christ, who suffered in our place.*

*Jesus died and rose for many that we may know God by grace.*

*Let us sing for joy and gladness, seeing what our God has done.*

*Praise the One redeeming glory. Praise the One who makes us one.*

**Prayer for Illumination**

Dr. Brown

**Reading from the Old Testament**

Isaiah 30:18-21

Therefore the Lord waits to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show mercy to you. For the Lord is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him. Truly, O people in Zion, inhabitants of Jerusalem, you shall weep no more. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when he hears it, he will answer you. Though the Lord may give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your Teacher will not hide himself any more, but your eyes shall see your Teacher. And when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left, your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it."

**Reading from the New Testament**

Hebrews 4:14-16

Since, then, we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

**Sermon**

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

Dr. Brown

"A word behind you"

**The Affirmation of Faith** (*unison*)

The Apostles' Creed

Dr. Bayer

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer**

Dr. Bayer



# Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us 187

1 Sav - ior, like a shep-herd lead us; much we need your ten-der care.  
 2 We are yours: in love be - friend us; be the guard-ian of our way.  
 3 You have prom-ised to re - ceive us, poor and sin-ful though we be;  
 4 Ear - ly let us seek your fa - vor; ear - ly let us do your will.

In your pleas-ant pas-tures feed us; for our use your fold pre-pare.  
 Keep your flock: from sin de - fend us; seek us when we go a-stray.  
 you have mer - cy to re - lieve us, grace to cleanse, and power to free.  
 Bless - ed Lord and on - ly Sav - ior, with your love our spir - its fill.

Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us: we are yours.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, hear your chil - dren when we pray.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, ear - ly let us turn to you.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have loved us; love us still.

Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have bought us: we are yours.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, hear your chil - dren when we pray.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, ear - ly let us turn to you.  
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, you have loved us; love us still.

Charge and Benediction

Dr. Brown

Congregational Response

***There's a Wideness in God's Mercy***

No. 435

(stanza 2)

***For the love of God is broader than the measures of the mind.***

***And the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.***

***If our love were but more faithful, we would gladly trust God's Word,  
 and our lives reflect thanksgiving for the goodness of our Lord.***

Postlude

*Finale jubilante*

Brenda Portman

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# Worship Service Notes

## Leading Worship this Morning

Dr. Matthew S. Brown, Pastor  
Dr. Whitney Bayer, Associate Pastor  
Zach Bowyer, Director of Music and Organist  
Rebecca Guzman, Director of Spiritual Formation  
Lilly McAnally, Julia Greeson, liturgists  
Chancel Choir  
Youth Choir  
Ann Carney, piano  
Blythe Kinsey, piano

**Acolytes:** Grace Wooley, Ryan Wooley

**A/V Team:** Chris Wilcox, Joe Wilcox

**Deacon/Elder of the Day:** Kim Overcash

**Ushers:** Don Ayers, Mitchell Davis, Curtis Guy, Kara Guy, Jim Williams, David Wooley

**Welcome Team:** Kathy Rasimas, Karen Williams

We light a candle in worship today celebrating the birth of Charlotte Leigh Metzler on March 9. Congratulations to parents Jessica and Andrew Metzler, brother Henry, and grandparents Nancy and Charlie Metzler!

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. To 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 Palmer Building 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.

- 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, March 26 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 March 9, 2023)

### **Remember in Prayer**

- Pam and Marcus Mobley and Pam's mother, Iris Wells, as she is under hospice care.
- 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).



# SMPC WEEKLY

MARCH 12, 2023

## WELCOME!

After worship, we hope you'll join us for coffee, lemonade and cookies (served inside at Coffee Grounds). Come meet friends old and new!

Registry pads are located on your pew. Please sign and pass to your neighbor and perhaps speak to someone you haven't met! If you would like more information about SMPC or have prayer concerns, please complete a Welcome Card located in the pew rack.

In response to the recent series of tragic earthquakes in Turkey, we are offering a link for earthquake donations through the Divan Center's disaster fund, Embrace Relief, a fully-vetted benevolent fund with direct ties to relief efforts in Turkey. Scan QR code for more.



## THIS WEEK'S CLASSES & EVENTS

today

**MAR. 12**

1:00 p.m.  
-2:30 p.m.

**Souper Sunday: Soup & Enrichment**

**Quail Hollow Presbyterian Church, 8801 Park Road,  
Charlotte, NC 28210**

Families from Smithfield Elementary School will join children, youth and adults from Quail Hollow Pres. and SMPC for food and fellowship. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.



today

**MAR. 12**

times vary

**Room in the Inn**

**Sardis Presbyterian Church**

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



tuesday

**MAR. 14**

10:00 a.m.

**Handiworkers Group**

**Palmer Building 104**

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

tuesday

**MAR. 14**

1:00 p.m.  
- 2:30 p.m.

**A Caregiver's Journey**

**McQueen Room**

Finding meaning and purpose as you care for a loved one with Alzheimer's or dementia. Facilitated by Kathy Garner (SMPC Faith Ambassador through the Alzheimer's Association). Contact: Dr. Whitney Bayer, whitney@smpchome.org.

wednesday

**MAR. 15**

9:30 a.m. &  
6:30 p.m.

**Conversations with Dr. Matt Brown**

**Zoom**

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

thursday

**MAR. 16**

12:30 p.m.

**Food for Thought Book Group**

**McQueen Room**

We are reading *The Magnificent Lives of Marjorie Post* by Alison Pataki. Contact: Kathy Paquette, khesspaquette@aol.com.

thursday

**MAR. 16**

6:00 p.m.

**International Dining Group**

**Indian Fusion Grill and Bar, 8390 Charlotte Highway, Indian Land, SC, 29707**

Everyone is welcome! RSVP by tomorrow, March 13 to Alice Tyler, rrt1317@aol.com.

**friday**  
**MAR. 17**  
7:30 a.m.  
- 8:30 a.m.

**Friday Morning Men's Group**  
**Chapel 206**  
This group meets on the first and third Fridays of each month and would love to have new folks join. We are reading *The Way I Heard It* by Mike Rowe. Contact: Curt Ireland, irelandcurtis00@gmail.com.

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**sunday**  
**MAR. 19**  
8:45 a.m.  
-9:45 a.m.

**JOY Class**  
**Room 301 or Zoom**  
This group is participating in the *All Church Reads!* We will read and discuss *The Colorful Image of God* by Katherine Martin. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

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**sunday**  
**MAR. 19**  
9:00 a.m.  
-10:00 a.m.

**Sunday Morning Study**  
**McQueen Room or Zoom**  
This group will meet weekly until April 2 to study *Invitation to the New Testament*. Come to one session or all. Everyone is welcome. Contact: Melissa White, melissawhite1018@yahoo.com.

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**sunday**  
**MAR. 19**  
10:10 a.m.

**Mr. Rogers Sunday**  
**During 10:10 a.m. worship**  
Fred Rogers was an ordained minister of word and sacrament for the PC(USA) and a pioneer in the world of Christian education and formation of young children. His birthday was in March, and SMPC is highlighting all we can learn from his work during this special worship service. We encourage everyone to wear a cardigan in his honor!



**sunday**  
**MAR. 19**  
5:00 p.m.  
-6:30 p.m.

**BAM! (Bible and Music)**  
**Ages kindergarten-5th Grade, Narthex**  
Children sing, engage with Bible stories, and explore various instruments in peer age groups. Pizza will be served. Please register on Realm by Friday, March 17. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

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**sunday**  
**MAR. 19**  
5:00 p.m.  
-6:15 p.m.

**SMPC Youth BYG (Big Youth Group)**  
**Middle and High Schoolers, Mecklenburg Hall**  
We will make sandwiches for Roof Above. Sign up to bring sandwich ingredients and register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

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## Looking Ahead

**Registration Open for Vacation Bible School!**

**Monday, July 23 - Thursday, July 27, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. (Extended day option available), Ages 3 - Rising 6th Grade**

Register on Realm. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

## Join the *All Church Reads*

Groups will meet March 12 and March 13 to discuss Part II of *The Colorful Image of God* (JOY Class is on a weekly schedule)! Come one, come all! Go to Realm for group discussion times and smpchome.org for to find supplemental reading resources.

## Holy Week at SMPC



**Palm Sunday**  
April 2, 10:10 a.m.  
Sanctuary & Livestream



**Good Friday Tenebrae Service**  
April 7, 7:30 p.m.  
Sanctuary & Livestream



**Maundy Thursday**  
Supper & Communion  
April 6, 6:00 p.m.  
Mecklenburg Hall  
Register on Realm



**Easter Worship**  
April 9, 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.  
Sanctuary & Livestream