



South Mecklenburg

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Service of Worship

Fifth Sunday in Lent

March 26, 2023

10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestreamed

Prelude *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* arr. Douglas Wagner

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

Introduction of New Members Nancy Metzler

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

***Call to Worship** Caroline Guy

One: Lazarus, though dead, was called to life by Jesus Christ.

Many: May we be called to the light of righteousness.

One: As others witnessed this resurrection, they believed in Jesus.

Many: May we, who have heard, believe in the power of Jesus to overcome our fears and doubts.

One: Praise be to God who has given us Jesus Christ.

Many: Praise be to Jesus who has given us life, new life.

One: All this is the gift of God's love to us.

Many: Let us celebrate the gift of God's new life,

ALL: and come to worship praising God now and forever. Amen.

***Hymn** *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* No. 39

1 *Great is thy faith - ful - ness, O God my Fa - ther;
 2 Sum - mer and win - ter, and spring - time and har - vest,
 3 Par - don for sin and a peace that en - dur - eth,

there is no shad - ow of turn - ing with thee.
 sun, moon, and stars in their cours - es a - bove
 thine own dear pres - ence to cheer and to guide,

Thou chang - est not; thy com - pas - sions they fail not.
 join with all na - ture in man - i - fold wit - ness
 strength for to - day and bright hope for to - mor - row:

As thou hast been thou for - ev - er wilt be.
 to thy great faith - ful - ness, mer - cy, and love.
 bless - ings all mine, with ten thou - sand be - side!

Refrain

Great is thy faith - ful - ness! Great is thy faith - ful - ness!
오 신 실 하 신 주 오 신 실 하 신 주

Morn - ing by morn - ing, new mer - cies I see.
날 마 다 자 비 를 베 푸 시 며

All I have need - ed thy hand hath pro - vid - ed.
일 용 할 모 든 것 내 러 주 시 니

Great is thy faith - ful - ness, Lord un - to me!
오 신 실 하 신 주 나 의 구 주

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Dr. Whitney Bayer

Lord, you know who we are. You know everything we have done. We thirst for things that will never satisfy us. We commit ourselves to things that will never last. We worship things that will never bring salvation. Still, you offer us the gift of eternal life. Forgive us, O Lord, and have mercy on us we pray. Cover us with your grace, and re-create us in your image, through Jesus Christ our Savior. 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 passage from Lamentations, the writer has been through a very difficult time. In [The Rough Patch](#) by Brian Lies, Evan loses his dog. He is devastated, but he eventually comes to understand that there is beauty even in the bleakest places. Similarly, the writer of Lamentations comes to realize that God has not abandoned him and sits with him in his grief and sadness. Listen to the book and consider how God is with us, even in our worst moments.
2. The passage from Hebrews lists several “Faith Heroes.” Think about your faith heroes. Who are they? Maybe your faith hero is someone who is well-known like Ghandi or Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Perhaps your faith hero is someone who isn’t famous! Draw a picture or write about your faith hero and why you admire them so much.
3. Sing along to [this hymn](#) and think about who your “saints” are.
4. Journal, considering the following:
 - a. How do you know God is with you in your sadness?
 - b. Where do you find hope? What gives you hope?
 - c. Who are your faith heroes?

Children’s Liturgy

Rebecca Guzman

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

Open Wide the Door of Mercy

arr. Brad Nix

Chancel Choir; Ann Carney, piano; Diane Carrouth, cello

Open wide the door of mercy, let all be welcomed in.

Let compassion, love, and healing, the work of Christ begin.

Open wide the door of mercy, let all division end.

May we be a door of mercy until He comes again.

All who enter in the threshold, longing for release,

Will know of their redemption, receive His gentle peace.

Come, all those who feel unworthy, those who’ve been betrayed,

Receive the gift of mercy, do not be afraid.

All who linger in the shadows, full of doubt and shame,

Pass now through the doorway, and call upon His name.

Come, all those who feel forgotten, those weighed down by sin,

Receive the gift of mercy, be restored again.

Prayer for Illumination

Dr. Brown

Reading from the New Testament

Hebrews 12:1-3

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us

run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or lose heart.

Reading from the Old Testament

Lamentations 3:19-33

The thought of my affliction and my homelessness is wormwood and gall! My soul continually thinks of it and is bowed down within me. But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him." The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. It is good for one to bear the yoke in youth, to sit alone in silence when the Lord has imposed it, to put one's mouth to the dust (there may yet be hope), to give one's cheek to the smiter, and be filled with insults. For the Lord will not reject forever. Although he causes grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love; for he does not willingly afflict or grieve anyone.

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

"...there may yet be hope"

Dr. Brown

***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

. . . (unison) **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.**

Offertory

Somebody's Knockin' at Yo' Door arr. Moses Hogan

Joanna Alford, soprano

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

***Doxology**

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him,
all creatures here below; praise him above ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

***Prayer of Dedication**

Natalie Guy

O God, just as Jesus released Lazarus from the hands of death, may our ministry give to others the promise of new life. Accept our gifts, our tithes, and our offerings that we offer to proclaim your love. Use our talents in ways that will set others free. May the liberating truth of Christ's gospel be heard anew within our world today. Amen.

We Go Out to Serve

***Hymn**

My Shepherd Will Supply My Need

No. 803

1 My shep-herd will sup- ply my need; Je - ho - vah is his name.
2 When I walk through the shades of death your pres-ence is my stay;
3 The sure pro - vi - sions of my God at - tend me all my days;

In pas - tures fresh he makes me feed, be - side the liv - ing stream.
one word of your sup - port - ing breath drives all my fears a - way.
O may your house be my a - bode, and all my work be praise.

He brings my wan - dering spir - it back when I for - sake his ways,
Your hand, in sight of all my foes, does still my ta - ble spread;
There would I find a set - tled rest, while oth - ers go and come;

and leads me, for his mer - cy's sake, in paths of truth and grace.
my cup with bless - ings o - ver - flows; your oil a - noints my head.
no more a strang - er, or a guest, but like a child at home.

***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

Make a Joyful Noise

Mary McDonald

(Psalm 100: 1-2, 4)

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.

Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise.

Give thanks to him, bless his name.

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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

Nancy Metzler, Director of Hospitality and Connection

Caroline Guy, Natalie Guy, liturgists

Chancel Choir

Joanna Alford, soloist

Ann Carney, piano

Diane Carrouth, cello

A/V Team: Kari Case, Xander Case

Deacon/Elder of the Day: Emily Brown, Erin Cook

Ushers: Phil Eatherton, Jonathan Mangels, Evan Mangels, Brett
Thompson, Linda Thompson, Gwen Volker

Welcome Team: Allison, Chad, and Zac Reeves; Tonya, Addison, and
Cameron Fraser

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. These emails contain a weekly devotion and information about upcoming worship services and church

activities. Also, find us on Facebook: [@southmecklenburgpresbyterian](#) and Instagram: [@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 today at 11:30 a.m. To learn more, contact Nancy Metzler, Director of Hospitality and Connection, nancy@smpchome.org or 980-265-2839.

Congregational Notes (as of March 23, 2023)

Remember in Prayer

- Kay Dano, as she recovers from a recent hospitalization.
- George Garner, as he recovers from a recent hospitalization.
- Miranda Rhodes, as she awaits further surgery.
- 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



South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church

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smpchome.org

WELCOME!

After worship, we hope you'll join us for coffee (served inside at Coffee Grounds) and lemonade and cookies (served outside). 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.

THIS WEEK'S CLASSES & EVENTS

today

MAR. 26

5:00 p.m.

-6:15 p.m.

Family Trivia Night

Mecklenburg Hall

All families with children and youth are invited to attend (adults included!). You will pick your team when you arrive. Please bring a device such as a smartphone or laptop to access Kahoot. A prize awaits the winning team! Please register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

tuesday

MAR. 28

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.

wednesday

MAR. 29

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.

sunday

APR. 2

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.

sunday

APR. 2

9:00 a.m.

-10:00 a.m.

Sunday Morning Study

McQueen Room or Zoom

This is the final Sunday that the group will study *Invitation to the New Testament*. Everyone is welcome. Contact: Melissa White, melissawhite1018@yahoo.com.

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



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Looking Ahead

BAM! Bible and Music

Sunday, April 2, 5:00-6:30 p.m., 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 31. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

April BYG (Big Youth Group)

Sunday, April 2, 5:00-6:15 p.m., Middle and High School Youth, Meck Hall

BYG provides an opportunity for youth to grow in faith and love through bible study, small group time, good food, fun games, and amazing company. The theme for BYG that we will focus on is "Proclaiming the Resurrected One." Pizza will be served! Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

Maundy Thursday Supper and Communion

Thursday, April 6, 6:00-7:00 p.m., Mecklenburg Hall

Join as we continue our journey through Holy Week. We will share supper and communion and remember our Lord's gathering with his disciples on the night of his arrest when they broke bread together. Our supper will include meats, cheeses, fruit and bread. Register on Realm. Contact: Nancy Metzler, nancy@smpchome.org.

Friday Morning Men's Group

Friday, April 7, 7:30-8:30 a.m., 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 a new book starting this meeting: *Searching for Happiness* by Martin Thielen, author and retired methodist minister. Contact: Curt Ireland, irelandcurtis00@gmail.com.

Desserts for Center of Hope

Sunday, April 9

Slots are open to bring desserts for the women and children who temporarily call Center of Hope home. More information and sign up at smpchome.org/community. Contact: Terry Gaines, terryg@carolina.rr.com.

New! Men's Evening Study Group

Beginning Tuesday, April 25, 7:30 p.m., Chapel 206

This new group will meet the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month. All are welcome. Contact: Jon Myers, jonmyers2@gmail.com.

Registration Open for Vacation Bible School!

Monday, July 23 - Thursday, July 27, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. (Extended day avail.),

Ages 3 - Rising 6th Grade

Ready for some fun with the ultimate hero team? Hero Hotline VBS invites children of all ages to answer the call to serve God together. Rising 5th and 6th graders participate in a concurrent program, Mission Possible. Register on Realm. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

It's not too late to join the *All Church Reads!*

Groups will meet today, March 26, and tomorrow, March 27, to discuss Part III 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.

Also, please save the date for April 23 at 5:00 p.m. for "An Evening with Katherine Martin" in Mecklenburg Hall. All are invited to attend!

