



**South
Mecklenburg**
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Service of Worship
Fifth Sunday of Easter
May 7, 2023

10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestreamed

We Gather

Prelude *Variations on Aurelia: IV. Pastorale* Janet Linker

Welcome and Concerns of the Church Dr. Whitney Bayer

Introit *Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life*
Ralph Vaughan Williams

***Call to Worship** Dr. Bayer

One: Gather us, O God.

Many: There is room for us all.

One: Dwell with us, O God.

Many: Show us the way.

One: Guide us, O God.

All: We give thanks and praise for Christ as our way, truth, and life.

***Hymn** *Source and Sovereign, Rock and Cloud* No. 11

1 Source and Sov-ereign, Rock and Cloud, For-tress, Foun-tain, Shel-ter, Light,
 2 Word and Wis-dom, Root and Vine, Shep-herd, Sav-ior, Ser-vant, Lamb,
 3 Storm and Still-ness, Breath and Dove, Thun-der, Tem-pest, Whirl-wind, Fire,
 Judge, De-fend-er, Mer-cy, Might, Life whose life all life en-dowed:
 Well and Wa-ter, Bread and Wine, Way who leads us to I AM:
 Com-fort, Coun-selor, Pres-ence, Love, En-er-gies that nev-er tire:
 May the church at prayer re-call that no sin-gle ho-ly name
 but the truth be-hind them all is the God whom we pro-claim.

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Dr. Bayer

You send us, God of the Great Commission, but we hedge and hesitate. Forgive our fear and our excuses. We are witnesses of your grace and glory but allow others to silence our praise. We imprison ourselves with doubt and shame and fail to shine your light for all to see. Forgive our fears. Free our testimony. Amen.

Assurance of God's Grace

Dr. Bayer

***Response of Praise**

Gloria Patri

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen. Amen. Amen.

We Hear and Respond to the Word

Sacrament of Baptism

Connor Glenn Sheeler

Camdyn Taylor Sheeler

Children of Cyndi and Cory Sheeler

Representing the Session: Leanne Royster

Church Family Moment

Rebecca Guzman

1. Today is a communion day! It's a good idea to talk about communion each time we receive it. [This readaloud](#) of *At God's Table* by Maria Eugenia Cornou, Carrie Steenwyk, and John D. Witvliet, illustrated by Joel Schoon-Tanis, gives us some good ideas about what communion is and some great conversation starters.
2. In the gospel passage from John, Jesus tells the disciples that if they have seen him, they have also seen God. This helps us know that by learning the stories of Jesus, we can also learn about God. One of my very favorite songs is "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus." Check out [this video](#) that also includes lyrics and some scenes of Jesus's life. What do they teach us about who God is?
3. What is something that seemed really hard, but you can now do? Maybe it is riding a bike on two wheels, or memorizing your multiplication tables. Maybe it was passing the swim test or learning how to read. Draw a picture of yourself as you were learning, and then draw a picture of Jesus right beside you. Another lesson from the scripture passage is that Jesus is right there with us when we are doing hard things. Hang your picture up as a reminder the next time you have to do a hard thing.
4. Journal, considering the following:
 - a. Why do you think Jesus had to tell the disciples not to be afraid?
 - b. What are some of the things the disciples did after Jesus went to heaven?
 - c. What about times we pray for something that seems very good, like for someone we love to get well, and it does not happen? Does that mean that we were not praying in the right way?

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):

***God of great and God of small, God of one and God of all,
God of weak and God of strong, God to whom all things belong,
Alleluia, alleluia, praise be to your name.***

Congregation: God be with you there.

Children: God be with you here.

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

Anthem*Be Not Afraid*

Lee Dengler

Chancel Choir; Julia Chandler, violin; Diane Carrouth, piano

*Let not your hearts be troubled.**Believe in God; believe in Me.**Be not afraid. I have prepared a place for you.**Be not afraid, for where I go you will be
in my home for eternity.**Be not afraid.**Be not afraid. I will be with you and give you peace.**Be not afraid. Take courage now. Trust in me,
till that day when My face you'll see.**Be not afraid.**I will bring hope to make hearts rejoice again.**Though, in this world, there are times of grief and pain;
be not afraid.***Prayer for Illumination**

Dr. Matthew S. Brown

Reading from the Old Testament

Psalm 31:1-5

In you, O Lord, I seek refuge; do not let me ever be put to shame; in your righteousness deliver me. Incline your ear to me; rescue me speedily. Be a rock of refuge for me, a strong fortress to save me. You are indeed my rock and my fortress; for your name's sake lead me and guide me, take me out of the net that is hidden for me, for you are my refuge. Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God.

Reading from the Gospels

John 14:1-11

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him." Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves.

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon "How can we know the way?" 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.

Offertory *As the Deer* arr. Joel Raney
Laura Schelhammer, flute

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.***

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Invitation to the Table Dr. Brown

Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer Dr. Bayer

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

Communion of the People

We Go Out to Serve

*Hymn

The Church's One Foundation

No. 321

1 The chur-ch's one foun-da - tion is Je - sus Christ her Lord.
 2 E - lect from ev - ery na - tion, yet one o'er all the earth,
 3 Though with a scorn - ful won - der this world sees her op - pressed,
 4 Mid toil and trib - u - la - tion, and tu - mult of her war,
 5 Yet she on earth has un - ion with God, the Three in One,

She is his new cre - a - tion by wa - ter and the word.
 her char - ter of sal - va - tion: one Lord, one faith, one birth.
 by schis - ms rent a - sun - der, by her - e - sies dis - tressed,
 she waits the con - sum - ma - tion of peace for - ev - er - more:
 and mys - tic sweet com - mu - nion with those whose rest is won:

From heaven he came and sought her to be his ho - ly bride.
 One ho - ly name she bless - es, par - takes one ho - ly food,
 yet saints their watch are keep - ing; their cry goes up: "How long?"
 till with the vi - sion glo - rious her long - ing eyes are blest,
 O hap - py ones and ho - ly! Lord, give us grace that we,

With his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.
 and to one hope she press - es, with ev - ery grace en - dued.
 And soon the night of weep - ing shall be the morn of song,
 and the great church vic - to - rious shall be the church at rest.
 like them, the meek and low - ly, may live e - ter - nal - ly.

Congregational Meeting

*Charge and Benediction

Dr. Brown

*Congregational Response

Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place, I can feel his mighty power and his grace. I can hear the brush of angels' wings, I see glory on each face. Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place. Amen.

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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
Chancel Choir
Diane Carrouth, piano
Julia Chandler, violin
Laura Schelhammer, flute

A/V Team: Kari Case, Xander Case

Deacon/Elder of the Day: Amy Zagora

Ushers: Judy Jones, Donna Podgorny, Brett Thompson, Linda Thompson, Carol Watkins, Bob Williamson

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](https://www.facebook.com/southmecklenburgpresbyterian) and Instagram: [@southmeckpres](https://www.instagram.com/southmeckpres).

Interested in joining South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church? Our Session will gather to welcome new members on Sunday, May 28 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 May 3, 2023)

Remember in Prayer

- Nancy and Charlie Metzler and family as Nancy's mother, Ann Long, is receiving 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.

SMPC WEEKLY

MAY 7, 2023

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
MAY 7
5:00 p.m.
-6:30 p.m.

BAM! Bible and Music

Ages Kindergarten-5th Grade, Narthex

Please note 5th graders are invited to May BYG tonight! Children sing, engage with Bible stories, and explore various instruments in peer age groups. Pizza will be served. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

today
MAY 7
5:00 p.m.
-6:15 p.m.

May BYG (Big Youth Group)

Mecklenburg Hall, Middle and High Schoolers AND 5th graders

Fifth graders are invited to this month's BYG! The theme for BYG is "Calling people to the banquet table." Pizza will be served! Please register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

tuesday
MAY 9
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
MAY 9
11:30 a.m.

May Lunch Bunch Meeting

Firebirds Restaurant, Stonecrest

All are invited! Please RSVP to Ruth Ann Engle by today, May 7, raengle22@gmail.com.

tuesday
MAY 9
7:30 p.m.

New! Men's Evening Study Group

Chapel 206

This new group will meet the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. All are welcome. Contact: Jon Myers, jonmyers2@gmail.com.

wednesday
MAY 10
9:30 a.m. &
6:30 p.m.

Conversations with Dr. Matt Brown

Zoom or Chapel 206 (9:30 a.m. only)

Join us as we discuss the scripture for the coming week's sermon. We welcome new participants. Hybrid option for 9:30 a.m. class only. Contact for the Zoom ID#: Dr. Matt Brown, matt@smpchome.org.

thursday
MAY 11
9:00 a.m.

Shelter Ministry

Mecklenburg Hall

This group refills empty Rx bottles with body wash for our neighbors in need at Roof Above. All are welcome. Contact Carol Morgan, morganc43@aol.com.

thursday
MAY 11
9:30 a.m.

Men's Breakfast Group

Big View Diner, 6637 Lancaster Hwy, Charlotte

This group meets on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month to enjoy breakfast and conversation. All are welcome. Contact: Bob Tyler, Btyler@unitedskates.com.

Sunday
MAY 14
9:00 a.m.

Book of Revelation Study Group
McQueen Room

No expertise necessary—we'll be learning together! No books or materials to purchase. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

Looking Ahead

Confirmation Sunday

Sunday, May 14, During 10:10 a.m. Worship/Reception to follow in Narthex

Food for Thought Book Group

Thursday, May 18, 12:30 p.m., McQueen Room

We are reading *The Searcher* by Tana French. All are welcome! Contact: Kathy Paquette, khesspaquette@aol.com.

International Dining Group

Thursday, May 18, 6:00 p.m., Kabuto Japanese Steakhouse, 7724 Pineville-Matthews Rd, Charlotte

This group loves to eat out! All are welcome. RSVP to Alice Tyler at rrt1317@aol.com by Sunday, May 14.

Reception for SMPK Preschool's Carol Watkins & Mary Lynn Rawls

Sunday, May 21, After 10:10 a.m. Worship, Narthex

Help us celebrate Carol's and Mary Lynn's exceptional careers with our preschool and wish them well in retirement!

Beginning to Ring!

Learn how to play the handbells while having tons of fun. Ages high school and up are welcome. We are organizing the schedule now. Please contact Zach Bowyer, zach@smpchome.org.

Missions & Outreach Opportunities for Center of Hope

Center of Hope Welcome Home Baskets: As women and children move out of the shelter and into permanent housing, we celebrate this transition with the gift of a laundry basket filled with critical items needed to establish a new home. During the month of May, as we honor all mothers, we will collect new kitchen items and cleaning supplies and fill 12 Welcome Home Baskets. Find more information (including a shopping list) and sign up via the QR code. Contact: Terry Gaines, terryg@carolina.rr.com.



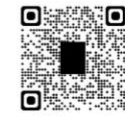
Welcome Home Baskets

Center of Hope Breakfast (Food Donations and Servers): After a break because of COVID, we are once again serving breakfast at Center of Hope on the third Saturday of every month beginning Saturday, May 20! **Food donations are due on Thursday, May 18.** Sign up to donate food or serve breakfast via the QR code. Contact: Bob Williamson, bobwill31@hotmail.com.



Center of Hope Breakfast

Center of Hope Desserts: On the second Sunday of each month, we provide sweet treats for the women and children who temporarily call Center of Hope home. Sign up via the QR code. Contact: Terry Gaines, terryg@carolina.rr.com.



Center of Hope Desserts



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