



South Mecklenburg

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Service of Worship

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

July 23, 2023

10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestreamed

We Gather

Prelude

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

Introit *Creator of the Stars of Night* Saram plainsong

***Call to Worship** Bonnie Macauley

One: The Holy Spirit is our faithful guide.

Many: At all times and in all things, the Spirit of God remains at our side.

One: When we are only concerned about our needs, wants, and desires,

Many: the Spirit delivers us with a mighty hand.

One: When uncertain times make us weary,

Many: the Spirit will lead us in goodness and truth.

One: Be still and listen as we have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit, through which we are claimed as children of God.

All: Together, we come to worship the Lord our God bringing our hope, our joy, and our identity as God's beloved children.

***Hymn** *We Wait the Peaceful Kingdom* No. 378



1 We wait the peace-ful king-dom, when wolf and lamb shall lie
 2 Where is the peace-ful king-dom? When will this new day start?
 3 When wars of des-o-la-tion and hate come to an end,
 4 That lit-tle child shall lead us to walk the cho-sen way,



in gen-tle-ness and friend-ship with-out a fear or sigh,
 We long for peace and com-fort to reign with-in each heart.
 when na-tion meets with na-tion and calls the oth-er "friend,"
 to share the peace-ful king-dom, to greet God's new-born day.



when li-on shall be graz-ing, when snake shall nev-er strike;
 Yet not in our lives on-ly, nor sim-ply in our home:
 still peace in all its full-ness will on-ly have be-gun:
 The child born in a sta-ble is sent to break our chains,



a lit-tle child shall lead us both strong and weak a-like.
 we pray that all cre-a-tion will one day find sha-lom.
sha-lom for all cre-a-tion be-gins with jus-tice done.
 to bring through word and ta-ble the day when jus-tice reigns.

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Dr. Whitney Bayer

O Lord, forgive us when we have turned our backs on those in need. When we have sought after power and riches, believing that these things bring true happiness. Help us to trust in you, for you seek the very best for us. Be with us and forgive us when we have failed to love and treat others with respect and compassion. Turn our hearts back toward you, who always reaches out to us offering healing and love. These things we ask in Jesus' name. 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

Church Family Moment

Rebecca Guzman

1. "But over the hill, came the small word 'and,' so simple and sure, saying yes we can..." In the book [The Story of And: The Little Word that Changed the World](#), one little word helps a variety of opinionated shapes overcome their differences to create something entirely new. [Listen to a readaloud](#) of the book, sing along with the [single that Carrie Newcomer wrote](#) and recorded to go along with

the book, and [check out this activity page](#). In the New Testament reading from Romans today, Paul is reminding us that we have all been joined together as one family through Jesus.

2. Draw a picture that represents all the people who are God's children. Who did you include? Why? Is there anyone you left out? Think about what color skin and hair everyone might have. What ages are included? How about people who have disabilities? Make your picture as inclusive and diverse as you can!
3. Remind someone today that they are a child of God, and that means that they are valuable. Maybe you will tell them in person or on the phone, or maybe you'll send them a text or write a letter. Why is this person valuable to you?
4. Journal, considering the following:
 - a. What does it mean to you to be part of the family of faith? In happy times? How about in tough times?
 - b. Are there times when you feel that you don't belong? Why do you think that is?
 - c. Who is part of the family of God?
 - d. How can you help others to feel like part of the family of God?

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.

Prayer for Illumination

Dr. Brown

Reading from the Old Testament

Psalms 86:11-13

Teach me your way, O Lord, that I may walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart to revere your name. I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart, and I will glorify your name forever. For great is your steadfast love toward me; you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.

Reading from the New Testament

Romans 8:12-25

So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if

children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

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

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**

Collin Cushman

Holy God, with prayers of gratitude, we offer you our gifts. Receive them and use them according to your will, that your love and grace will be spread in our community and in the world. Help us always to listen to the voice of your Holy Spirit as we steward these gifts. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

We Go Out to Serve

*Hymn

Christ Is Coming!

No. 360

(stanzas 1-3)

1 Christ is com - ing! Let cre - a - tion from its groans and
 2 Earth can now but tell the sto - ry of your bit - ter
 3 With that bless - ed hope be - fore us, flutes are tuned and
 4 Long your ex - iles have been pin - ing for your prom - ised

la - bor cease; let the glo - rious proc - la - ma - tion
 cross and pain; we shall yet be - hold your glo - ry,
 harps are strung; let the might - y ad - vent cho - rus
 rest and home, but in heaven - ly glo - ry shin - ing,

hope re - store and faith in - crease: Christ is com - ing!
 Lord, when you re - turn to reign: Christ is com - ing!
 on - ward roll from tongue to tongue: Christ is com - ing!
 soon the ris - en Christ shall come. Christ is com - ing!

Christ is com - ing! Come, O bless - ed Prince of peace.
 Christ is com - ing! Let each heart re - peat the strain.
 Christ is com - ing! Let each heart re - peat the song.
 Christ is com - ing! Joy - ful, shout the vic - tory psalm.

*Charge and Benediction

Dr. Brown

*Congregational Response

Christ Is Coming!

No. 360

(stanza 4)

Postlude

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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
Bonnie Macauley, Collin Cushman, liturgists

A/V Team: Kari Case, Xander Case

Deacon/Elder of the Day: Anna Vechnak

Ushers: Frank Graham, Charlie Metzler, Craig Parrish, Alice Tyler, Bob Tyler, Sr., Michael Zagora

Welcome Team: Kathy Rasimas

The flowers in worship this morning are given by Sheila and Brent McAnally to the glory of God and in honor of our amazing SMPC staff.

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 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 July 20, 2023)

Remember in Prayer

- 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

8601 Bryant Farms Road, Charlotte, NC 28277, 704-544-0404

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smpchome.org

WELCOME!

After worship, we hope you'll join us for lemonade and cookies outside between the sanctuary and chapel buildings. 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

tuesday
JULY 25
7:30 p.m.

Men's Evening Study Group **Chapel 206**

This new group meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of every month. We are studying the book *Courage* by Tom Berlin. All are welcome. Contact: Jon Myers, jonmyers2@gmail.com.

wednesday
JULY 26
5:30 p.m. -
7:00 p.m.

SMPC Youth Pool Party at the Whites' House **11705 Smart Lane, Charlotte, NC 28277, Middle and High Schoolers**

Please bring a salty snack or dessert to share. Pizza will be provided. Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

thursday
JULY 27
10:00 a.m.

Beginning to Ring **Sanctuary**

Learn how to play the handbells while having tons of fun. Ages high school and up are welcome. Contact Zach Bowyer, zach@smpchome.org.

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

Making Space Moms' Group **SMPC Preschool Playground**

Bring the kids and join us for fellowship and fun on the playground. Contact: Allison Reeves, allison.tarwater@gmail.com.

LOOKING AHEAD

SMPC Youth Message and Macarons

Wednesday, August 2, 6:00-7:00 p.m., Amelie's in Carmel Commons

Join us for a short devotion and message, a sweet treat and fellowship! All are welcome. No registration required. Please bring a friend. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

SMPC Golf Tournament

August 10, Tee Off at 1:00 p.m., Carolina Lakes Golf Club

Due to inclement weather, the SMPC Golf Tournament was rescheduled. If you are now able to join us with the new date, we'd love to have you! Registration is back open on Realm. Contact: Ron Morgan: rbmorgan943@aol.com.

SANCTUARY FUND CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Our *From Strength to Strength 2020-2025 Sanctuary Fund* capital campaign has completed its third year, and receipts on pledges are excellent! Total pledges and gifts to the five-year campaign are \$3,100,000, and we have collected \$2,200,000, or 71%. Thank you to all our families that have faithfully supported this campaign!

The goal of the From Strength to Strength campaign is to pay off our sanctuary mortgage, and our goal is within reach! To meet our campaign goal of \$3,250,000 and be debt-free in 2025, **we need additional pledges (over the remaining two years of the campaign) or one-time gifts to this campaign totaling \$150,000.**

Here is how you can join the 255 SMPC families already supporting this campaign:

- make an online gift at www.smpchome.org/give and select the "Strength to Strength" fund.
- contribute via check with "Strength to Strength" on the memo line.
- make a pledge for the remaining two years of the campaign (campaign ends 6/30/2025) online by scanning the QR code below or by emailing Mary Katheryne Zagora at mkzagora@smpchome.org.

Again, thank you to all those currently supporting this campaign. Our goal of paying for our beautiful sanctuary and being mortgage-free is in sight!

Make a Gift



Make a Pledge



FACES OF FAITH

This summer we've launched a weekly series called "Faces of Faith" where we spotlight SMPC members and learn about how their faith and involvement in the church have impacted their lives. This week is Heather Carpenter!

Name: Heather Carpenter

Family: My husband, Rich, and our sons, Tyler, Jackson and Grayson

Years at SMPC: 15

What makes SMPC unique? SMPC truly is a place that glorifies God! We have been with SMPC through happy as well as trying times, and the church leadership and our family of friends there have been with us every step of the way. I have always felt at home at SMPC since the very beginning. It is a place where I feel



safe, loved, appreciated and energized. I sometimes feel as if the sermon was written for and directed to me at that moment in time, no matter the struggle or difficulty I may be dealing with at the time. I am sure it is not just me, as they just have a God-given gift to deliver the message in a way that we can all relate to and appreciate. The entire staff and congregation is just amazing, and I love that they are my neighbors, colleagues and fellow running friends who I see out and about around the church on a regular basis. Not everyone can say they see their pastor out logging miles, but I can. And it makes my day every single time I do.