



South Mecklenburg

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Service of Worship

15th Sunday after Pentecost

September 10, 2023

10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestreamed

We Gather

Prelude *Pastorale* Raymond Haan

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

Introit *God Reigns! Let Earth Rejoice!* Arthur Messiter

Call to Worship Bryson Gann

One: Christ is calling us as disciples to leave our comfortable ways and venture forward with him.

Many: Lord Jesus, we are so often afraid, it is easier for us to stay put.

One: Jesus knows our fears and offers us healing.

Many: Lord Jesus, open our hearts and teach us your ways. Help us to follow you faithfully.

All: Lord Jesus, give us the courage to follow you all our lives, even here and now in this time of worship. Amen.

Hymn *Earth and All Stars!* No. 26

1 Earth and all stars! Loud rush - ing plan - ets!
 2 Trum - pet and pipes! Loud clash - ing cym - bals! Sing to the
 3 En - gines and steel! Loud pound - ing ham - mers!
 4 Knowl - edge and truth! Loud sound - ing wis - dom!

Hail, wind, and rain! Loud blow - ing
 Lord a new song! Harp, lute, and lyre! Loud hum - ming
 Lime - stone and beams! Loud build - ing
 Daugh - ter and son! Loud pray - ing

snow - storm!
 cel - los! Sing to the Lord a new song! God has done
 work - ers!
 mem - bers!

mar - vel - ous things. We too sing prais - es with a new song!

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Rev. Lindsey Odom

God of compassion and mercy, you know our every gift, and you know our every flaw. You crafted our lives with purpose and gave each of us a voice. By your grace, you have named us and claimed us as your own. Forgive the ways that we stray from your path. For we are constantly distracted by our own struggles and focused on ourselves that we accidentally tune out your great love for us. Help us to mirror your love rather than our own mistakes. We pray these things in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Assurance of God's Grace

Rev. Odom

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

1. Jonah does exactly the opposite of what God asks him to do. Play an "Opposite Game" like Simon says, but instead, do the opposite of what the leader asks. For example, if the leader asks you to sit down, stand up. If the leader says to run around, stay still. What does it feel like to do the opposite of what you are supposed to do?
2. Jonah doesn't want to go to Nineveh, because he does not like the people there. But God knows that everyone is worthy of a second chance, and so he asks Jonah to go. Think about the people in our world who are like the Ninevites—people nobody wants to give a second chance. Maybe people who are experiencing homelessness, maybe people who have a different color skin, maybe the kid who wears the wrong clothes, maybe the kid who is a bully. Write or draw these kinds of people, and then go back and draw a heart around their name or drawing as a reminder that God's love extends to every single person.
3. Have you ever wanted to run away from something that you knew you should do? Write a prayer that you could say to God when you feel like running away.
4. Journal, considering the following:
 - a. Why do you think Jonah runs away?
 - b. What is it like to be in a big storm?
 - c. Can you imagine being inside a big fish? What would it look like inside?
 - d. When have you done exactly the opposite of what you were supposed to do?

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

Rev. Odom

First Reading

Psalm 139: 7-12

Rev. Odom

Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast. If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night," even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you.

Anthem *Eternal Father, Strong to Save* arr. Dan Forrest
Chancel Choir; Blythe Kinsey, piano

*Eternal Father, strong to save, whose arm hath bound the restless wave,
who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep its own appointed limits keep;*

Oh, hear us when we cry to thee for those in peril on the sea.

*O Christ! Whose voice the waters heard and hushed their raging at Thy
word, who walkedst on the foaming deep, and calm amidst its rage did
sleep: Oh, hear us when we cry to thee for those in peril on the sea.*

Second Reading Jonah 1: 1-17 Dr. Brown

Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah son of Amittai, saying, "Go at once to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before me." But Jonah set out to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid his fare and went on board, to go with them to Tarshish, away from the presence of the Lord. But the Lord hurled a great wind upon the sea, and such a mighty storm came upon the sea that the ship threatened to break up. Then the mariners were afraid, and each cried to his god. They threw the cargo that was in the ship into the sea, to lighten it for them. Jonah, meanwhile, had gone down into the hold of the ship and had lain down, and was fast asleep. The captain came and said to him, "What are you doing sound asleep? Get up, call on your god! Perhaps the god will spare us a thought so that we do not perish."

The sailors said to one another, "Come, let us cast lots, so that we may know on whose account this calamity has come upon us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Jonah. Then they said to him, "Tell us why this calamity has come upon us. What is your occupation? Where do you come from? What is your country? And of what people are you?" "I am a Hebrew," he replied. "I worship the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land." Then the men were even more afraid, and said to him, "What is this that you have done!" For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them so. Then they said to him, "What shall we do to you, that the sea may quiet down for us?" For the sea was growing more and more tempestuous. He said to them, "Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will quiet down for you; for I know it is because of me that this great storm has come upon you." Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring the ship back to land, but they could not, for the sea grew more and more stormy against them. Then they cried out to the Lord, "Please, O Lord, we pray, do not let us perish on account of this man's life. Do not make us guilty of innocent blood; for you, O Lord, have done as it pleased you." So they picked Jonah up and threw him into the sea; and the sea ceased from its raging. Then the men feared the Lord even more, and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows. But the Lord provided a large fish to swallow up Jonah; and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Exit Plan

Dr. Brown

The Affirmation of Faith (*unison*)

from A Brief Statement of Faith

Dr. Whitney Bayer

We trust in God, whom Jesus called Abba, Father. In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God's image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community. But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator. Ignoring God's commandments, we violate the image of God in others and ourselves, accept lies as truth, exploit neighbor and nature, and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care. We deserve God's condemnation. Yet God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation. In everlasting love, the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people to bless all families of the earth. Hearing their cry, God delivered the children of Israel from the house of bondage. Loving us still, God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant. Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child, like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home, God is faithful still.

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

Eternal Father, Strong to Save

arr. Dan Forrest

Chancel Choir; Blythe Kinsey, piano

*Most Holy Spirit, who didst brood upon the chaos dark and rude,
and bid its angry tumult cease, and give, for wild confusion, peace.*

Oh, hear us when we cry to thee for those in peril on the sea.

*Oh Trinity of love and power! Our brethren shield in danger's hour;
from rock and tempest, fire and foe, protect them wheresoe'er they go.
Thus evermore shall rise to Thee glad hymns of praise from land and sea.*

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

Xander Case

God of the seas, sky and land, when Jonah turned to run from you, you showed him that nothing and no one could hide from your presence. You are in all things, and you love all things. Show us the gift of your presence and help us to use these gifts and offerings to serve wherever God calls us, bringing love, compassion and grace to all the world. Amen.

We Go Out to Serve

Hymn

Let All Things Now Living

No. 37

1 Let all things now liv - ing a song of thanks-giv - ing
 2 By law God en - forc - es, the stars in their cours - es,

G C G D G

to God our Cre - a - tor tri - um - phant - ly raise;
 the sun in its or - bit o - be - dient - ly shine;

G D G Am D

who fash-ioned and made us, pro - tect - ed and stayed us,
 the hills and the moun-tains, the riv - ers and foun-tains,

G C G D G

by guid - ing us on to the end of our days.
 the depths of the o - cean pro - claim God di - vine.

Harmony G E Am D

God's ban-ners are o'er us; pure light goes be - fore us,
 We too should be voic - ing our love and re - joic - ing;

G Em D A7 D

a pil - lar of fire shin - ing forth in the night:
 with glad ad - o - ra - tion, a song let us raise,

till shadows have vanished, all fearfulness banished,
till all things now living unite in thanksgiving:
G C G D G
as forward we travel from light into light.
to God in the highest, hosanna and praise!

Charge and Benediction

Dr. Brown

Choral Response

Eternal Father, Strong to Save

arr. Dan Forrest

Chancel Choir; Blythe Kinsey, piano

Postlude

Ceremonial March

Raymond Haan

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Worship Service Notes

Leading Worship this Morning

Dr. Matthew S. Brown, Pastor

Dr. Whitney Bayer, Associate Pastor

Rev. Lindsey Odom, Associate Pastor of Youth & Missions/Outreach

Zach Bowyer, Director of Music and Organist

Rebecca Guzman, Director of Spiritual Formation

Chancel Choir

Blythe Kinsey, piano

Bryson Gann, Xander Case, liturgists

A/V Team: Mary Katheryne Zagora, Michael Zagora

Ushers: Don Ayers, Andy Burke, Jonathan Mangels, Evan Mangels, Craig Parrish, Gwen Volker

Welcome Team: Jennifer Hurlburt, Kasia Hurlburt

In lieu of flowers in worship this morning, a donation has been made to the Sanctuary Fund by Dan and Connie Gaudiano to the glory of God and in memory of Dan and Ruth Gaudiano.

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. Also, find us on Instagram: [@southmeckpres](https://www.instagram.com/southmeckpres) and Facebook: [@southmecklenburgpresbyterian](https://www.facebook.com/southmecklenburgpresbyterian).

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. 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 September 24 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 September 7, 2023)

Remember in Prayer

- Rosemary Hawver and family, as her husband, Jerry Hawver, entered the Church triumphant on Friday, September 1.
- 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

PO Box 79321, Charlotte, NC 28271

smpchome.org

A Congregational Meeting for the purpose of electing elders and deacons will be held on Sunday, September 17 at 11:15 a.m. Nominations put forth by SMPC's Nominating Committee follow.

Nominations for the Office of Elder



Dave Gaines and his wife, Terry, joined SMPC in 2004. Dave is an ordained elder and has previously served on the Session at SMPC. Dave has served as chairperson for the Stewardship Committee and two capital campaigns. Dave currently serves on the Funds Management Committee. Dave has volunteered for years with BSA Troop 219, which meets at SMPC. Dave and Terry have two adult children, Natalie and Eric, who grew up at SMPC. Dave is a retired banking executive and enjoys traveling, hiking and fishing.



Gayle Ireland and her husband, Curt, joined SMPC in 1994. Gayle is an ordained elder and has previously served on the Session at SMPC. Gayle has chaired and served on the Outreach, Stewardship and Capital Campaign committees. She has also taught adult Sunday School and co-chaired the last Music Director Search Committee. She is a member of the Chancel Choir and Chancel Ringers. Curtis and Gayle have one son, Parker, who grew up at SMPC and lives in Charlotte with his wife, Amanda. Gayle is CEO of Vocci, LLC, a market research firm (and is looking forward to retirement in the next few months!).



Lisa Kuszmar and her husband, Ed, joined SMPC in 2016. Lisa has served on the Capital Campaign Committee and currently serves on the Stewardship Committee. She recently joined the Chancel Choir and often makes meals for new mothers at SMPC. Lisa and Ed have two children, Katherine (8th grade) and Courtney (5th grade). Lisa is senior vice president of marketing at Amwins and enjoys spending time with her family (all members of SMPC - parents, Kurt and Rose Weinheimer, and sisters, Kristen Angerer and Jenny Gates), as well as reading and making soup.



Lillian McAnally has attended SMPC since her birth in 2007. Lillian is an active member of the SMPC Youth Group and has attended several youth retreats including Massanetta and Montreat. Lillian has served as youth representative on the Children's and Vision Planning Committee for 3 years and is a confirmation mentor this year. Lillian is a junior at Ardrey Kell High School and is on the cross country team. She rides and shows horses under the dressage discipline and will be participating on the Virginia Interscholastic Equestrian Association team this winter.



Jon Myers and his wife, Crystal, joined SMPC in February 2015. They have two boys, Grayson (8) and Caeden (6). Jon leads the Tuesday Evening Men's Group and serves on SMPC's Membership Committee. Jon works in healthcare administration in a leadership role at Atrium Health in the Medical Group Division.

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Nominations for the Office of Deacon



Michael Choren grew up at SMPC and has been a member since he was confirmed in 1999. Michael and his wife, Marla, have two daughters, Blair (5) and Brooke (2). Michael serves on the Stewardship Committee, and has played on SMPC's Men's Softball Team for over 10 years. Michael, Blair and Michael's mom (church member Lina Griffiths) can often be spotted on Sunday mornings serving on the Welcome Team!



Richard Franseen joined SMPC in 2022. Richard and his late wife, Dolores, came to Charlotte from Houston in 2007 to be near their daughter's family. Their previous church home was Westwood Baptist Church in Springfield, VA, where Richard served as a deacon and taught Sunday school. Richard received first communion as a youth in the Catholic Church in New Orleans, earned Eagle Scout at 14 in Dallas, holds BA and BSME degrees from Rice University, served as an Army Lieutenant during Vietnam years, and retired from federal service in 1995. His second full-time career as a professional engineer ended in 2015, and his third as a consulting engineer is ongoing.



Susan Hicks and her husband, Wyatt, joined SMPC in 2008. She previously served as chairperson of the Board of Deacons. Susan has also served as a VBS volunteer, chairperson of the Missions/Outreach Committee, and member of the Nominating Committee. She currently serves on the Food and Transportation ministries and as a confirmation mentor. Susan and Wyatt have three daughters, Brooke (17), Addison (17) and Emery (13). Susan works as a nurse with Novant Health and enjoys attending her daughters' sporting events, reading and spending time with family and friends.



Marge Kruse and her late husband, Dick, joined SMPC in 2012. Marge has enjoyed being the snack lady for VBS for a few years, sings in the Chancel Choir and volunteers on the Hospitality Committee. Marge is retired from Bank of America, and she enjoys family time, reading, traveling and pool workouts.



Tom Massey and his wife, Sarah, joined SMPC in 2016. Tom has participated in Matt Brown's Wednesday Morning Bible Study for years and served as a greeter pre-Covid. Tom is an ordained elder, and in a previous congregation he taught Confirmation, wrote welcome letters to visitors, and inaugurated and managed in-home communion for home-bound church members. Tom and Sarah have one son, Tom Jr., who lives in Aberdeen, NC, with his wife, Kristen, and their two daughters, Payton and Rebecca. Tom is a retired Air Force pilot, instructed US Airways pilots, and taught High School English. He enjoys golf, aviation, guitars and writing.



Crystal Myers and her husband, Jon, joined SMPC in 2015. They have two boys, Grayson (8) and Caeden (6). Crystal is a member of the Rain or Shine Mom's Group. She has served on the Nominating Committee, assisted with Common Ground, and led the Baby Ministry in the past. Crystal is a physical therapist and the founder of an independent practice - Meaningful Movement.

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

today
SEPT. 10
5:00 p.m. -
6:30 p.m.

BAM! (Bible and Music) Fall Kickoff
Narthex, Children in K-5th Grade
During BAM!, children will sing, creatively engage with Bible stories, and explore various instruments in peer age groups. Pizza will be served. Please register on Realm. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

today
SEPT. 10
5:00 p.m. -
6:30 p.m.

BYG (Big Youth Group)
Mecklenburg Hall, Middle and High Schoolers
Middle and high schoolers are invited to join us for the first BYG of the year! Pizza will be served. Please bring some school supplies for our partner school, Smithfield Elementary. Please register on Realm. Contact Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

tuesday
SEPT. 12
10:00 a.m.

Handiworkers Group
Room 104, Palmer Building
All knitters, needlepointers, quilters, cross-stitchers and crocheters (beginners, experts, and anything in between) are invited. We meet weekly to work on projects (to keep and to donate). Contact: Judy Jameson, jgjameson@gmail.com.

tuesday
SEPT. 12
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: Whitney Bayer, whitney@smpchome.org.

tuesday
SEPT. 12
7:30 p.m.

Men's Evening Study Group
Chapel 206
This 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
SEPT. 13
9:30 a.m.

Conversations with Matt Brown
Chapel 206 and Zoom
We will discuss the scripture for the coming week's sermon. Evening session resume date to be determined. Contact: Matt Brown for the Zoom ID#, matt@smpchome.org.

thursday
SEPT. 14
9:00 a.m.

Shelter Ministry
Mecklenburg Hall
This ministry meets to fill empty medicine bottles with body wash for Roof Above. Contact: Carol Morgan, morganc43@aol.com.

thursday
SEPT. 14
9:30 a.m.

Men's Breakfast Group
Big View Diner, 6637 Lancaster Hwy.

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

friday
SEPT. 15
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 a new book: *UFO of God: The Extraordinary True Story of Chris Bledsoe* by Chris Bledsoe. Contact: Curt Ireland, irelandcurtis00@gmail.com.

saturday
SEPT. 16

Center of Hope Breakfast

Servers and food donations needed this month! Food donations due by Thursday, September 14. Sign up via QR code. Contact: Bob Williamson, bobwill31@hotmail.com.



sunday
SEPT. 17
9:00 a.m.

New Adult Study: The Gospel of Mark
McQueen Room

Join us as we walk through the Bible's earliest source for the life of Jesus - the Gospel of Mark. This six-week study will be led by Melissa White and Rebecca Guzman. Please sign up on Realm. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

C.A.R.E. (Conversations Around Race Equity), Sunday, September 17, 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., Chapel 206, and Monday, September 18, 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m., Zoom - Current C.A.R.E. Groups only. If you would like to join a new group starting this fall, please scan the QR code for more information. Contact: Whitney Bayer, whitney@smpchome.org.



Follow-Up Meeting for Smithfield Reading/Math Buddies and Tutors, Sunday, September 17, 8:00-8:30 p.m., Zoom - You do not have to have attended the initial Zoom meeting. Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

Food for Thought Book Group, Thursday, September 21, 12:30-1:30 p.m., McQueen Room - We are reading *The Violin Conspiracy* by Brendan Slocumb. Everyone is welcome! Contact: Kathy Paquette, khesspaquette@aol.com.

International Dining Group, Thursday, September 21, 6:00 p.m., Waldhorn Restaurant, 12101 Lancaster Highway, Pineville, NC 28134 - This group loves to eat out! RSVP by Tuesday, September 19 to Alice Tyler, rrt1317@aol.com.

Making Space Mom's Group, Thursday, September 28, 7:30-8:30 p.m., Patio at Starbucks at Stonecrest - Drop in anytime. For moms of all ages! Learn more about the study we'll do this fall, meet other moms and find out more about the group! We'll have refreshments, too! Contact: Allison Reeves, allison.tarwater@gmail.com.

Dinner, Done! Scouts Troops 119 and 219 Annual BBQ Sale
Scouts Troops 119 and 219 are selling BBQ and veggie chili in the church parking lot today, next Sunday and online anytime! Scan QR code to order and get more info on BBQ and chili pickup!



2023 CROP Hunger Walk Date Announced - Join the Team or Donate Now!

We will host our own walk on the SMPC grounds on October 22. We'll gather at 2:00 p.m. and walk at 2:30 p.m. We hope you'll join us! Contact: Bob Cushman, rtcushman@yahoo.com.