



South Mecklenburg

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Service of Worship

24th Sunday after Pentecost

November 12, 2023

10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestreamed

We Gather

Prelude *Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme* (BWV 645) J. S. Bach

Welcome and Concerns of the Church Rev. Lindsey Odom

Introit *Steal Away* African American spiritual

***Call to Worship** Madi Vechnak

One: Get ready! The time is coming when the Lord will be brought near to us.

Many: Christ is coming into our lives in a new way.

One: Are you awake? Are you alert? Are you watching the signs?

Many: Christ is coming into our lives in a new way.

One: Do you see new opportunities for ministry? Do you see and try to help the poor, the homeless, the hungry, the needy?

**All: Let us remember, Christ is coming into our lives in a new way.
Let us worship and work to further the kingdom of God.**

***Hymn** *Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers* No. 362

1 Re - joice! Re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear;
 2 See that your lamps are burn - ing; re - plen-ish them with oil;
 3 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;

the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing and dark - er night is near.
 look now for your sal - va - tion, the end of sin and toil.
 a - rise, thou Sun so longed for, a - bove this shad - owed sphere!

The Bride-groom is a - ris - ing and soon he will draw nigh.
 The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the gates wide o - pen stand;
 With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see

Up, watch with ex - pec - ta - tion; at mid - night comes the cry.
 a - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the Bride-groom is at hand!
 the day of earth's re - demp - tion, and ev - er be with thee!

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Rebecca Guzman

We admit the ways that we snuff out your holy light in ourselves and others, God. When we let negative thoughts and old stories overtake us, show us the light of love. When we let criticism and doubt overtake our communities, show us the light of hope. When we let impatience and aggravation overtake wisdom, show us the light of your word. When we worship ourselves and our own ideas, show us the light of your powerful reign. All this we ask in Christ's name. Amen.

Assurance of God's Grace

Rebecca Guzman

***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. In today's Gospel lesson, Jesus talks about waiting. [Listen to a readaloud](#) of Wait! by Antoinette Portis. In the story, the boy teaches his mother a lesson about the value of waiting. We are about to enter a season of waiting, Advent. What is valuable about waiting?
2. Do you know the song "Give Me Oil in My Lamp?" [Here](#) is a version that you can sing along with! This song is based on the parable for today. Do you know how an oil lamp works? If not, ask an adult to explain it to you! What does it mean to ask God to give us oil for our lamp?
3. Play "Be Ready," a game similar to Red Light/Green Light. Stand on a line. The leader will say, "BE READY!" Then, when she says, "GO!" everyone will walk quickly until the leader says, "Stop!" When everyone has reached the "finish line" the game is over.
4. Journal, considering the following:
 - a. What did you like about today's scripture? What do you have questions about?
 - b. What do you think the parable means? What could it be telling us for today?
 - c. What does this parable teach us about being the people of God?

Sacrament of Baptism

Harper Anne Chatterton and Emilie Paige Chatterton

Children of Melissa and Lindsey Chatterton

Grandchildren of Patty and Steve Stevenson

Callen Kirk Stevenson and Kenna Carmen Stevenson

Children of Robert and Katie Stevenson, siblings of Riley and Adalyn

Grandchildren of Patty and Steve Stevenson

Representing the Session: Patty Stevenson

Representing the children: Miles Ullman

Baptismal Response

*Child of blessing, child of promise, baptized with the Spirit's sign,
with this water God has sealed you unto love and grace divine.*

Child of joy, our dearest treasure, God's you are, from God you came.

Back to God we humbly give you: live as one who bears Christ's name.

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

Prayer for Illumination

Rev. Odom

First Reading

Psalm 78: 1-7

Rev. Odom

Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, things that we have heard and known, that our ancestors have told us. We will not hide them from their children; we will tell to the

coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done. He established a decree in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our ancestors to teach to their children; that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and rise up and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.

Anthem

Keep Your Lamps

arr. Andre Thomas

Chancel Choir

*Keep your lamps trimmed and burning,
The time is drawing nigh.
Children, don't get weary 'til your work is done.
Christian, journey soon be over,
The time is drawing nigh.*

Second Reading

Matthew 25: 1-13

Dr. Whitney Bayer

"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, "Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, "Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise replied, "No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, "Lord, lord, open to us.' But he replied, "Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Living Expectantly

Dr. Bayer

***The Affirmation of Faith** (*unison*) from A Brief Statement of Faith
Rev. Odom

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 Rev. Odom
... (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 *Sometimes a Light Surprises* arr. Brenda Austin
Chancel Ringers; 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.*

***Prayer of Dedication** Miles Ullman
Lord, we return a portion of all the gifts that you have given to us in remembrance and in gratitude for the many blessings you give to us. Use these gifts to support ministries of healing and hope, for we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

We Go Out to Serve

***Hymn** *Soon and Very Soon*

1 Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.
 2 No more cry - ing there: we are going to see the King.
 3 No more dy - ing there: we are going to see the King.
 4 Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.

Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.
 No more cry - ing there: we are going to see the King.
 No more dy - ing there: we are going to see the King.
 Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.

Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.
 No more cry - ing there: we are going to see the King.
 No more dy - ing there: we are going to see the King.
 Soon and ver - y soon we are going to see the King.

Hal - le - lu - jah, hal - le - lu - jah, we're going to see the King!

*Charge and Benediction

Dr. Bayer

*Congregational Response

Soon and Very Soon

No. 384

(stanza 4)

*Soon and very soon we are going to see the King.
 Soon and very soon we are going to see the King.
 Soon and very soon we are going to see the King.
 Hallelujah, hallelujah, we're going to see the King!*

Postlude

Fanfare on "Wachet Auf"

David Cherwien

Worship Service Notes

Leading Worship this Morning

Dr. Whitney Bayer, Associate Pastor
Rev. Lindsey Odom, Associate Pastor of Youth and Missions/Outreach
Zach Bowyer, Director of Music and Organist
Rebecca Guzman, Director of Spiritual Formation
Chancel Choir
Chancel Ringers
Laura Schelhammer, flute
Madi Vechnak, Miles Ullman, liturgists

Acolyte: Daniel Lee

A/V Team: Brad Alford, Michael Zagora

Deacon/Elder of the Day: Dick Engle

Ushers: Andy Burke, Richard Franseen, Frank Graham, Donna Podgorny,
Carol Watkins, Bob Williamson

The flowers in worship this morning are given by Kristin and Jeff Colson to the glory of God and in honor of Opa's 86th birthday and Kinsley's 17th birthday.

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](#).

Congregational Notes (as of November 9, 2023)

Remember in Prayer

- Helen Brame, as she recovers from a broken arm.
- Cindy Fisher, as she recovers from a broken arm.
- Jordan Losen, as he recovers from surgery.
- Logan Soderland, as he recovers from pneumonia.
- All those caught in the crossfire of warfare in Israel and Gaza.
- 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.

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South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church

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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!

2024 Operating Fund Campaign: Everything Good

We are currently at 81.6% of our campaign goal - this is a great start! Thank you to the 213 families who have already made a financial commitment for 2024. If you have not had a chance to make a pledge, you can make one online via the QR code or contact Mary Katheryne Zagora, mkzagora@smpchome.org.



THIS WEEK'S CLASSES & EVENTS

today
NOV. 12
5:00 p.m. -
6:30 p.m.

Intergenerational Mission Project
Mecklenburg Hall

All ages welcome! We will make Thanksgiving meal kits for Smithfield Elementary School students and their families. Please register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

tuesday
NOV. 14
10:00 a.m.

Handiworkers Group
Room 104, Palmer Building

Knitters, needlepointers, quilters, cross-stitchers and crocheters are invited - all levels! We meet weekly to work on projects (to keep & to donate). Contact: Judy Jameson, jgjameson@gmail.com.

tuesday
NOV. 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: Whitney Bayer, whitney@smpchome.org.

tuesday
NOV. 14
7:30 p.m.

Men's Evening Study Group
Open Tap, 5010 Carmel Rd.

Join us for our fall social! This group meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of every month and welcomes new members any time. Contact: Jon Myers, jonmyers2@gmail.com.

wednesday
NOV. 15
9:30 a.m.

Conversations with Matt Brown
McQueen Room and Zoom

We will discuss the scripture for the coming week's sermon. Contact: Matt Brown for the Zoom ID#, matt@smpchome.org.

thursday
NOV. 16
12:30 p.m.

Food for Thought Book Group
McQueen Room

We are celebrating author Charles Martin's birthday! Read any Charles Martin book. All are welcome. Contact: Kathy Paquette, khesspaquette@aol.com.

THIS WEEK'S CLASSES & EVENTS

thursday
NOV. 16
6:00 p.m.

International Dining Group

Lam's Kitchen, 3016 Weddington Road, #100, Matthews

All are welcome! RSVP by Monday, November 13 to Alice Tyler, rrt1317@aol.com.

friday
NOV. 17
7:30 a.m. -
8:30 a.m.

Friday Morning Men's Group

Chapel 206

This group is starting the book *The Genius of Jesus: The Man Who Changed Everything* by Erwin Raphael McManus and will discuss the introduction and first two chapters on November 17. All are welcome. Contact: Curt Ireland, irelandcurtis00@gmail.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS

BAM! Bible and Music, Sunday, November 19, 5:00-6:30 p.m., 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.

Save the Date! Women's Holiday Tea, Saturday, December 2, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Mecklenburg Hall

Join us for music, meditation, spiced tea, Chicken Salad Chick and sweets. Registration details coming soon. Contact: nancy@smpchome.org.

BYG (Big Youth Group), Sunday, December 3, 5:00-6:30 p.m., Mecklenburg Hall, Middle and High Schoolers

We will have an Advent devotion and decorate gingerbread houses and holiday cookies. More information and register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

Save the Date! Lunch Bunch, Tuesday, December 5, 11:30 a.m., Ruby Sunshine, 12330 Johnston Rd - Lunch Bunch is meeting for brunch! All are welcome. RSVP to Ruth Ann Engle, raengle22@gmail.com

THE ADVENT SEASON AT SMPC

We look forward to celebrating the Advent season as a faith community. Here are a few event highlights to mark on your calendar. Friends are welcome! More details coming soon.

SMPC Kettle Ringing - Saturdays, November 25, December 2, 9, 16, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Belk, SouthPark Mall

Women's Holiday Tea - Saturday, December 2, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Mecklenburg Hall

Angel Tree Tags Available - Sunday, December 3, Narthex and Online

Advent Wreath Workshop - Sunday, December 3, 9:00 a.m., Mecklenburg Hall

Alternative Gift Market - Sunday, December 3, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Narthex

Festival of Carols - Sunday, December 10, 6:00 p.m., Sanctuary and Livestream

The Longest Night Service, Tuesday, December 19, 5:30 p.m., Sanctuary and Livestream

Christmas Eve Worship - Sunday, December 24, 10:10 a.m. (Family), 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. (both Candlelight Communion), Sanctuary and Livestream