



1 We gath - er to - geth - er to ask the Lord's bless - ing;  
 2 Be - side us to guide us, our God with us join - ing,  
 3 We all do ex - tol thee, thou lead - er tri - um - phant,

he chas - tens and has - tens his will to make known;  
 or - dain - ing, main - tain - ing his king - dom di - vine;  
 and pray that thou still our de - fend - er wilt be.

the wick - ed op - press - ing now cease from dis - tress - ing.  
 so from the be - gin - ning the fight we were win - ning;  
 Let thy con - gre - ga - tion es - cape trib - u - la - tion;

Sing prais - es to his name; he for - gets not his own.  
 thou, Lord, wast at our side; all glo - ry be thine!  
 thy name be ev - er praised! O Lord, make us free!

**Prayer of Confession** (*unison*)

Rev. Lindsey Odom

Lord of mercy and justice, you have given us so many talents and gifts to be used in your world. You have given us these gifts because you trust us to use them well, but oftentimes, we disappoint you. We fail to use our gifts for the common good and to build others up. We test the limits of your grace, constantly turning away from you and toward our own needs and desires. In a world marked by hate and fear, we are to be those who love others and trust you. So, forgive us, O God. Help us to trust in the gifts you have given to us and to trust in your guidance in using them for good. Forgive us when we are fearful, stubborn, and indifferent to the needs around us. Give us hearts for serving you all of our days. In Jesus' name we pray. 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**

### **Church Family Moment**

Rebecca Guzman

1. Listen to a [readaloud](#) of *Roller Coaster* by Marla Frazee. In the Gospel reading today we find three men that have been trusted with masters' money. Each servant must choose how much risk they are willing to take. Two of them choose to risk it all to double it, and one chooses to risk very little and keep it safe. When we choose the risk we are rewarded in some way. The men who risked it all are rewarded by their master, and the little girl who rode the roller coaster for the first time is rewarded with enjoyment. When we don't take the risk we miss out on something, like the servant who hid his money.
2. Our gifts and talents are given to us by God, and we honor God when we use them. For youth and adults, a spiritual gifts inventory is a great way to discern where and how God might be calling us to serve. Take this [online](#) one and think about what it might mean for you!
3. Thanksgiving is this week! Print and color this [Thanksgiving coloring page](#) and consider what you are grateful to God for giving you. As you pray, thank God for the many blessings that you have in your life!
4. Journal, considering the following:
  - a. Why do you think the master gave the servants money to take care of?
  - b. What do you think it felt like to be one of the servants who was praised for growing the gift? How about the one who did not?
  - c. Do you have gifts that you can use to serve God? What are they?

### **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**

Proverbs 20:4; 26:14-16; 22:13;  
6:6-8; 10:26

Rev. Odom

The lazy person does not plow in season; harvest comes, and there is nothing to be found.

As a door turns on its hinges, so does a lazy person in bed. The lazy person buries a hand in the dish, and is too tired to bring it back to the mouth. The lazy person is wiser in self-esteem than seven who can answer discreetly.

The lazy person says, "There is a lion outside! I shall be killed in the streets!"

Go to the ant, you lazybones; consider its ways, and be wise. Without having any chief or officer or ruler, it prepares its food in summer, and gathers its sustenance in harvest.

Like vinegar to the teeth, and smoke to the eyes, so are the lazy to their employers.

**Anthem**                      *Lord, For Thy Tender Mercy's Sake*                      Richard Farrant  
Chancel Choir

*Lord, for thy tender mercy's sake,  
Lay not our sins to our charge.  
But forgive that is past,  
And give us grace to amend our sinful lives.  
to decline from sin, and incline to virtue,  
That we may walk in a perfect heart,  
Before thee now and evermore. Amen.*

**Second Reading**                      Matthew 25: 14-30                      Dr. Brown

"For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well one, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.'

But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

**Sermon**

Risk Management

Dr. Brown

**\*The Affirmation of Faith** (*unison*) from A Brief Statement of Faith  
Dr. Whitney Bayer

**We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life. The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the Church.**

**The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture, engages us through the Word proclaimed, claims us in the waters of baptism, feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation, and calls women and men to all ministries of the church. In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.**

**In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"**

**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**

*The Lord is Beautiful*

Michael Burkhardt

Chancel Choir; Jubilate Choir;

Blake Randle, soloist; Blythe Kinsey, piano

*As an alternative to the traditional offering plate, you may support the ministry of SMPC by giving online at [www.smpchome.org/give](http://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**

Ben Bickett

God of new life, out of the abundance of our lives we offer these gifts to you. Through your blessing and our willingness to share, may these offerings become a source for justice and joy in our church family and in our community beyond us, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

**We Go Out to Serve**

**\*Hymn**

*I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me*

No. 700

1 I'm gon-na live so (live so)  
2 I'm gon-na work so (work so)  
3 I'm gon-na pray so (pray so)  
4 I'm gon-na sing so (sing so)  
God can use me an - y -  
where, Lord, an - y - time!  
(an - y - time!) I'm gon-na  
I'm gon-na  
I'm gon-na  
I'm gon-na  
live so (live so)  
work so (work so)  
pray so (pray so)  
sing so (sing so)  
God can use me an - y -  
where, Lord,  
(my Lord,) an - y - time!  
(an - y - time!)

**\*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.*

## Worship Service Notes

### Leading Worship this Morning

Dr. Matthew S. Brown, Pastor

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

Jubilate Choir

Blake Randle, soloist

Blythe Kinsey, piano

Felix Jaynes, Ben Bickett, liturgists

**Acolyte:** Oliver Bayer

**A/V Team:** Kari Case, Xander Case

**Deacon/Elder of the Day:** Leisa Lackey

**Ushers:** George Elledge, Mary Elledge, Dick Engle, Brett Thompson, Linda Thompson, Jim Williams

**Welcome Team:** Leanne Royster

The flowers in worship this morning are given by Kathy Yeager to the glory of God and in loving memory of Kathy's husband, Rick Yeager, and her father, Robert Dobbins.

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 worshipping 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](mailto: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 301 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](mailto:nancy@smpchome.org) or 980-265-2839.

### **Congregational Notes** (as of November 16, 2023)

#### **Remember in Prayer**

- Cindy Fisher, as she recovers from surgery.
- Pat Hopkins, as he recovers from surgery.
- 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](mailto:prayer@SMPChome.org).

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## **South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church**

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

PO Box 79321, Charlotte, NC 28271

[smpchome.org](http://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 86.3% of our campaign goal - this is a great start! Thank you to the 230 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.



### OF NOTE

The church office will be closed on Wednesday, November 22 and Thursday, November 23 for the Thanksgiving holiday.

### THIS WEEK'S CLASSES & EVENTS

today  
**NOV. 19**  
5:00 p.m. -  
6:30 p.m.

#### **BAM! Bible and Music**

#### **Kindergarten through 5th Grade, Meet in Narthex**

If your child would like participate in Festival of Carols, please plan for them to attend BAM! tonight and December 3. We will end with a pizza dinner and free play time. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

tuesday  
**NOV. 21**  
10:00 a.m.

#### **Handiworkers Group**

#### **Room 104, Palmer Building**

Knitters, needlepointers, quilters, cross-stitchers and crocheters are invited - all levels! Contact: Judy Jameson, jgjameson@gmail.com.

saturday  
**NOV. 25**  
10:00 a.m. -  
4:00 p.m.

#### **SMPC/Salvation Army Kettle Bell Ringing**

#### **Saturdays, Belk SouthPark Mall, Times Vary**

Join in on this special SMPC tradition! This is a great volunteer opportunity for families and friends. Contact: Terry Gaines, terryg@carolina.rr.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. Invite a friend! Find more information and registration links on [smpchome.org/advent](http://smpchome.org/advent) or via the QR code.

**SMPC Kettle Ringing** - Saturdays, November 25, December 2, 9, 16, Times Vary, Belk, SouthPark Mall

**Angel Tree Tags Available** - Beginning Sunday, November 26, Narthex and Online

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

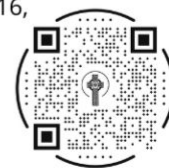
**Advent Wreath Workshop** - Sunday, December 3, 9:00 a.m., Mecklenburg Hall

**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



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Men's Evening Study Group, Tuesday, November 28, Chapel 206** - This group meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of every month and welcomes new members any time. Contact: Jon Myers, jonmyers2@gmail.com.

**Conversations with Matt Brown, Wednesday, November 29, 9:30 a.m., 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.

**Friday Morning Men's Group, Friday, December 1, 7:30-8:30 a.m., Chapel 206**

This group meets the first and third Friday of each month. They are reading the book *The Genius of Jesus: The Man Who Changed Everything* by Erwin Raphael McManus. All are welcome. Contact: Curt Ireland, irelandcurtis00@gmail.com.

**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. Register on Realm or via the QR code. Contact: nancy@smpchome.org.



**An Unlikely Advent: Adult Bible Study, Sunday, December 3, 9:00 a.m. OR Monday, December 4, 10:00 a.m., McQueen Room or Zoom**

- During this Advent season, we invite you to explore themes of hope, love, joy, and peace by sharing the lesser-known characters in the story of Jesus's birth. Each set of unexpected characters has something to teach about living faithfully on the journey to Christmas. Register on Realm or via QR code. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

**Alternative Gift Market (AGM), Sunday, December 3, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Narthex and Online**

- Find the perfect gift for everyone on your list by shopping the AGM! We'll have agencies set up in the Narthex to provide more information on how your gift will help those in need. Shop in person on December 3 or online until December 25 via the QR code. Contact: Donna Brown, donnamatt89@gmail.com.



## MISSIONS/OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

### Looking for Bread Delivery Drivers

We are looking for a few more volunteers to deliver bread to Dilworth Soup Kitchen! This is a very flexible volunteer opportunity.

The details: Every Thursday, The Food Recovery Group drops off day old bread items from Panera at SMPC. An SMPC volunteer delivers the bread to our neighbors at the Dilworth Soup Kitchen. Volunteers are needed to deliver the bread on Friday mornings. Delivery should be made before 10:00 a.m. as the Dilworth Soup Kitchen opens at 10:30 a.m. More details in the QR code. Contact: Lisa Gilleland, lsc13@cornell.edu.



### Center of Hope Breakfast Donations Needed

Each month, SMPC provides breakfast for the guests of Center of Hope. There are opportunities to donate breakfast items each month and drop them off at the church or you can also donate a monetary contribution anytime. Find more information via the QR code. Thank you for your support! Contact: Bob Williamson, bobwill31@hotmail.com

