

1 Glo - rious things of thee are spo - ken, Zi - on, cit - y of our God.
 2 Round each hab - i - ta - tion hov - ering, see the cloud and fire ap - pear
 3 See, the streams of liv - ing wa - ters, spring - ing from e - ter - nal love,
 God, whose word can - not be bro - ken, formed thee for a blest a - bode.
 for a glo - ry and a cov - ering, show - ing that the Lord is near.
 well sup - ply thy sons and daugh - ters and all fear of want re - move.
 On the rock of a - ges found - ed, what can shake thy sure re - pose?
 Thus de - riv - ing from their ban - ner light by night and shade by day,
 Who can faint while such a riv - er ev - er flows, their thirst to as - suage?
 With sal - va - tion's walls sur - round - ed, thou may'st smile at all thy foes.
 safe they feed up - on the man - na which God gives them when they pray.
 Grace, so like the Lord the giv - er, nev - er fails from age to age.

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Rev. Odom

Holy One, what a blessing and privilege we share here in this sacred space and among this loving community. We know that others are longing and thirsting for what we know and experience. Forgive us for our reluctance to open our doors and open our hearts to others, some like us and some not. Turn us away from our selfishness and turn us back to you, O God: to love one another, to lift up one another, to seek the well-being and wholeness of our neighbors so that we might also experience wholeness and healing in your beloved community. We ask for forgiveness, and we pray that we might truly repent and turn back to you, the One who Forgives, Heals, and Restores. Amen.

Assurance of God's Grace

Rev. Odom

***Response of Praise**

No. 582

***Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
 and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
 and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.
 As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.***

We Hear and Respond to the Word

Church Family Moment

Rebecca Guzman

1. In just the first three verses of our Psalm today, God is rock, fortress, and refuge. Look up pictures of these three things and think about what their purposes are. After you figure that out, make a list of the ways that God is like each one of these things. [This link](#) might help you to think about the ways that God is our rock.
2. Print and color [this art](#) that reminds us that God is our fortress. As you color, consider what that means. You can even use coloring as a time of silent prayer. Sometimes, if we are very quiet, even in our minds, God will speak to us.
3. Listen to a [readloud](#) of *The Happy Owls* by Celestino Piatti. Our passage in Philippians highlights the importance of finding joy in life, giving thanks rather than worrying as we approach God in prayer. In the story, the owls share similar wisdom about finding joy with the other birds. What other connections do you see?
4. Journal, considering the following:
 - a. What does it mean to think about God as our rock, fortress, and refuge? How have you experienced God in one of these ways?
 - b. Where do you think true joy comes from? How can you cultivate joy?
 - c. How can we put our trust in God, rather than in things that will ultimately fail us?

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

Philippians 4:4-7

Rev. Odom

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Anthem

Rock of Ages

Michael Burkhardt

Chancel Choir

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,

*let me hide myself in thee;
Let the water and the blood
from thy riven side which flowed,
be of sin the double cure,
cleanse me from its guilt and power.*

*Nothing in my hand I bring;
simply to thy cross I cling;
naked, come to thee for dress,
helpless, look to thee for grace;
foul, I to the fountain fly;
wash me, Savior, or I die.*

*While I draw this fleeting breath,
when mine eyelids close in death,
when I soar to worlds unknown,
see thee on thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
let me hide myself in thee.*

Second Reading

Psalm 62

Dr. Matthew S. Brown

For God alone my soul waits in silence; from him comes my salvation. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall never be shaken. How long will you assail a person, will you batter your victim, all of you, as you would a leaning wall, a tottering fence? Their only plan is to bring down a person of prominence. They take pleasure in falsehood; they bless with their mouths, but inwardly they curse. For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken. On God rests my deliverance and my honor; my mighty rock, my refuge is in God. Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us. Those of low estate are but a breath, those of high estate are a delusion; in the balances they go up; they are together lighter than a breath. Put no confidence in extortion, and set no vain hopes on robbery; if riches increase, do not set your heart on them. Once God has spoken; twice have I heard this: that power belongs to God, and steadfast love belongs to you, O Lord. For you repay to all according to their work.

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

The Rock

Dr. Brown

***The Affirmation of Faith** (*unison*)

The Apostles' Creed

Dr. Whitney 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 *Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us* arr. Robert J. Powell
Ann Carney, recorder

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** Julia Greeson
Loving God, help us to remember that you alone are our rock and our salvation, and that we do not go through life alone. Instead, we are created and called to be in relationship with God and our neighbors. So, make us beacons of light to show others the way of your light and love, O God, through our time, talents, and gifts. Amen.

We Go Out to Serve

***Hymn** *How Firm a Foundation* No. 463

1 How firm a foun - da - tion, ye saints of the Lord,
 2 "Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dis - mayed,
 3 "When through the deep wa - ters I call thee to go,
 4 "When through fi - ery tri - als thy path - way shall lie,
 5 "The soul that on Je - sus hath leaned for re - pose,

is laid for your faith in God's ex - cel - lent Word!
 for I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
 the riv - ers of sor - row shall not o - ver - flow;
 my grace, all suf - fi - cient, shall be thy sup - ply;
 I will not, I will not de - sert to its foes;

What more can be said than to you God hath said,
 I'll strength - en thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
 for I will be near thee, thy trou - bles to bless,
 the flame shall not hurt thee; I on - ly de - sign
 that soul, though all hell should en - deav - or to shake,

to you who for ref - uge to Je - sus have fled?
 up - held by my righ - teous, om - nip - o - tent hand.
 and sanc - ti - fy to thee thy deep - est dis - tress.
 thy dross to con - sume, and thy gold to re - fine.
 I'll nev - er, no, nev - er, no, nev - er for - sake."

Congregational Meeting

Closing Prayer

Dean Elledge

***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.

Postlude

Postlude on Austrian Hymn

John Dixon

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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 and Missions/Outreach
Zach Bowyer, Director of Music and Organist
Rebecca Guzman, Director of Spiritual Formation
Chancel Choir
Ann Carney, recorder
Dean Elledge, Clerk of Session
Grayson Carpenter, Julia Greeson, liturgists

Acolyte: Ryan Wooley

A/V Team: Mary Katheryne Zagora, Michael Zagora

Deacon/Elder of the Day: Erin Cook, Adrienne Jaquith

Ushers: Andy Burke, Bob Cushman, Mitchell Davis, Jonathan Mangels, Craig Parrish, David Wooley

Welcome Team: Aarik, Amy, and Aaron Eberhardt; Kennedy Colson, Donna Brown, Paxton Sandeen

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 January 17, 2024)

Remember in Prayer

- Jeni, Dave, Hank and Lily Claire Jacobus, as Jeni's mother, Marcia Ingle, entered the Church triumphant on January 14.
- Ron Wise, 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.



South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church

8601 Bryant Farms Road, Charlotte, NC 28277, 704-544-0404
PO Box 79321, Charlotte, NC 28271
smpchome.org

WELCOME!

After worship, we hope you'll join us for lemonade and cookies in Coffee Grounds, located in the narthex. 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!

THIS WEEK'S CLASSES & EVENTS

today

JAN. 21

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

BAM! Bible and Music

Kindergarten through 5th Grade, Meet in Narthex

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

JAN. 21

5:30 p.m. -
6:30 p.m.

Youth Mission Project

Legacy Heights Senior Living Community, 11230 Ballantyne Trace Ct, Middle and High Schoolers

We'll play board games and make door hangers with residents. Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

tuesday

JAN. 23

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.

tuesday

JAN. 23

7:30 p.m.

Men's Evening Study Group, Tuesday, January 23, 7:30 p.m.,

Chapel 206 - This group meets the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of every month. Contact: Jon Myers, jonmyers2@gmail.com.

wednesday

JAN. 24

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

JAN. 25

9:30 a.m.

Men's Breakfast Group

Big View Diner, 6637 Lancaster Hwy

This group meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays each month to enjoy breakfast and conversation. Contact: Bob Tyler, Btyler@unitedskates.com.

sunday

JAN. 28

9:00 a.m. -
10:00 a.m.

Adult Bible Study: Invitation to the Old Testament

McQueen Room and Zoom

Hear the story of God and God's calling of the people of Israel through the many voices of the biblical text. This 8-week study will meet for 4 weeks, take a break during Lent and resume for 4 weeks in April. Please register on Realm. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.



UPCOMING EVENTS



Room in the Inn, Sunday, February 4, Various Times, Sardis Presbyterian - We are partnering with Sardis Presbyterian Church and Trinity Presbyterian Church to help with Room in the Inn on February 4, February 21 and March 13. Volunteers will help with dinner, overnight stays or breakfast and cleanup. Food donations also needed. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

Lunch Bunch, Friday, February 9, 11:15 a.m., Narthex - Join us for a first person historical presentation of Martha Washington by Nora Brooks followed by a delicious catered lunch. Cost is \$8 per person. Please register on Realm by February 6. All are welcome. Contact: Ruth Ann Engle, raengle22@gmail.com.



Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, Tuesday, February 13, 5:30-7:00 p.m., Mecklenburg Hall - Bring your family and friends for a pancake feast! We will enjoy fellowship time as we prepare to journey through the Lenten season together. We will collect food donations to support our Center of Hope ministry. Items needed include pancake mix, syrup, Tang drink mix and quick grits. \$5/person (maximum family cost of \$20) will defray meal costs. Register on Realm. Contact: Nancy Metzler, nancy@smpchome.org.



Parents Morning Out, Saturday, February 24, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. - We invite all children ages 3 to 5th grade to join us for a fun-filled morning. We will play games, create crafts, watch a Bible story movie, and enjoy a delicious snack. The cost for each child to participate is \$10, which will cover the materials needed for the activities. We look forward to having a great time together! Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

MISSIONS/OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

Room in the Inn

February 4, February 21 and March 13, Sardis Presbyterian Church

We are partnering with Sardis Presbyterian Church and Trinity Presbyterian Church. Volunteers will help with dinner, overnight stays or breakfast and cleanup. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

Desserts for Center of Hope

Sunday, February 11

Bring desserts for us to deliver to the women and children who temporarily call Center of Hope home. Contact: Terry Gaines, terryg@carolina.rr.com.

Breakfast for Center of Hope

Saturday, February 17

On the third Saturday of each month, SMPC preps, cooks and serves breakfast for guests at the Center of Hope. There are opportunities to serve breakfast or donate items. Contact: Bob Williamson, bobwill31@hotmail.com.

American Red Cross Blood Drive

Saturday, March 9, 8:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Mecklenburg Hall

Please bring your American Red Cross Donor Card or photo I.D. Contact: Bill Ramsey, bill.john.ramsey@gmail.com.

**SCAN QR CODE FOR DETAILS
AND SIGNUPS**

