



South Mecklenburg

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Service of Worship

Baptism of the Lord

January 7, 2024

10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestreamed

We Gather

Prelude *March on "Lauda Anima"* Kevin Hildebrand

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

Introduction of New Members Nancy Metzler

Introit *Morning Has Broken* Eleanor Farjeon

***Call to Worship** Rev. Lindsey Odom

One: In the beginning, God created the world out of a formless void.

Many: God, baptize us with your creativity.

One: After God created heaven and earth, God made every animal and plant, bird and fish.

Many: God, baptize us with thankful and grateful hearts.

One: Then, God created people in the image of God.

Many: God, baptize us with love and a willingness to serve others.

One: Let us remember what God has done!

Many: Let us remember that God calls us to be caretakers of all the earth.

One: Let us fulfill this call in a manner of faithfulness. Amen.

***Hymn** *Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty* No. 35

1 Praise ye the Lord, the Al - might - y, the King of cre -
 2 Praise ye the Lord, who o'er all things so won-drous - ly
 3 Praise ye the Lord! O let all that is in me a -

a - tion! O my soul, praise him, for he is thy
 reign - eth, shel - ters thee un - der his wings, yea, so
 dore him! All that hath life and breath, come now with

health and sal - va - tion! All ye who hear, now to his
 gen - tly sus - tain - eth! Hast thou not seen how thy de -
 prais - es be - fore him! Let the a - men sound from his

tem - ple draw near; join me in glad ad - o - ra - tion!
 sires e'er have been grant - ed in what he or - dain - eth?
 peo - ple a - gain; glad - ly for aye we a - dore him.

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Rev. Odom

Lord, we come to you today with the understanding that we have sinned against you. We know that you created us in love, to enjoy this world and you, O God. We also are aware that you created us to serve your creation and your children, and we have failed to do your will. We cannot grasp your love for us, O God, for it is unlike us to be that loving and forgiving. We become trapped by our own needs, wants, and desires and we fail to see beyond our own little circles. Turn us around, O God. Help us to see you as you see and know us. Help us to reach out as you reach out. Remind us once again of the sacredness of our ordinary, day-to-day lives. By your Spirit, mend us and make us new creations through the power and love of Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Assurance of God's Grace

Rev. Odom

***Response of Praise**

Morning Has Broken

No. 664

(stanza 2)

***Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heaven,
like the first dewfall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,
sprung in completeness where God's feet pass.***

We Hear and Respond to the Word

Church Family Moment

Rebecca Guzman

1. What do you think it would be like to live without sunlight? In the arctic circle, there is a two month long “Polar Night” every year, when the sun does not rise. Watch [this video](#) about the polar night. Why do you think God made light? Why do we need light?
2. The hymn “Morning Has Broken” is about the sun rising, just as it did on the first day of creation. [Listen and sing along](#). What does the hymn help you understand about creation? About God?
3. To help think about the difference between light and darkness, do some scratch print art. If you have scratch art paper, use it, or make your own by coloring a piece of paper with lots of different colors of crayons. Then, color very darkly on top with a black crayon. Use a pencil or toothpick to draw. Draw images that make you think of light, like a sun or a lightbulb. What else makes you think of light?
4. Journal, considering the following:
 - a. I wonder what it was like before God created light. What do you think?
 - b. I wonder how you would feel if you were there during Creation.
 - c. Do you think there was any sound when the light was created?
 - d. What other powerful things has God done that you know about?

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

Colossians 1:15-20

Rev. Odom

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things

have been created through him and for him. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

Anthem *Shall We Gather at the River?* arr. John Carter

Chancel Choir; Joanna Alford, soloist; Blythe Kinsey, piano

*Shall we gather at the river, where bright angel feet have trod;
With its crystal tide forever flowing by the throne of God?
Yes, we'll gather at the river, the beautiful, the beautiful river,
Gather with the saints at the river, that flows by the throne of God.
Ere we reach the shining river, lay we ev'ry burden down;
Grace our spirits will deliver, and provide a robe and crown.
Yes, we'll gather at the river, the beautiful, the beautiful river,
Gather with the saints at the river, that flows by the throne of God.
Deep river, my home is over Jordan,
Deep river, I want to cross over into campground.
Soon we'll reach the shining river, soon our pilgrimage will cease;
Soon our happy hearts will quiver with the melody of peace.
Yes, we'll gather at the river, the beautiful, the beautiful river,
Gather with the saints at the river, that flows by the throne of God.*

Second Reading Genesis 1:1-5 Dr. Brown

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon Origin Stories Dr. Brown

***The Affirmation of Faith** (*unison*) The Nicene Creed
Dr. Whitney Bayer

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he

was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Offertory

Water

Gary Girounard

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.*

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Invitation to the Table

Dr. Brown

Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer

Dr. Bayer

One: The Lord be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

Many: **We lift them to the Lord.**

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Many: **It is right to give our thanks and praise . . .**

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.

The Words of Institution

Dr. Bayer, Rev. Odom

The Bread and the Cup

You are invited to come forward (see diagram), take the elements, and return to your seat. Remove the wafer on the bottom of the cup before opening the juice. If you are not able to come forward, you will be served at your seat.

Communion of the People

The Prayer after Communion

Rev. Odom

We Go Out to Serve

***Hymn**

Jesus, Light of Joy

No. 673

1 Je - sus, light of joy, sur - round us; let your splen - did
 2 Now the shad - ows fall a - round us; now the eve - ning
 3 With the saints we lift our voic - es, God of pow - er,

glo - ry shine: source of ev - ery earth - ly bles - sing,
 has be - gun: still your gra - cious light is with us,
 God of might. All cre - a - tion shines with glo - ry,

heav - en's ev - er - last - ing sign. Al - le - lu - ia,
 bright - er than the morn - ing sun. Al - le - lu - ia,
 sing - ing prais - es day and night: al - le - lu - ia,

al - le - lu - ia, we a - dore you, light di - vine.
 al - le - lu - ia, God of glo - ry, Three - in - One.
 al - le - lu - ia, ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly light.

***Charge and Benediction**

Dr. Brown

***Congregational Response**

Morning Has Broken

No. 664

(stanza 3)

***Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning,
 born of the one light Eden saw play!
 Praise with elation; praise every morning,
 God's re-creation of the new day!***

Postlude

Postlude on "Lobe Den Herren"

John Dixon

Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE, License #A-735003. All rights reserved.

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 & Organist

Rebecca Guzman, Director of Spiritual Formation

Chancel Choir

Joanna Alford, soprano

Blythe Kinsey, piano

A/V Team: Kari Case, Xander Case

Deacon/Elder of the Day: Bob Cushman

Ushers: Curt Ireland, Judy Jones, Charlie Metzler, Donna Podgorny, Bob Williamson, David Wooley

Welcome Team: Emery Hicks, Shelby, Elise, and Miles Ullman

A brief Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 21 after the 10:10 am worship service to fulfill the State of North Carolina's legal requirement to hold an Annual Meeting of the Corporation.

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).

Interested in joining South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church? Our Session will gather to welcome new members on Sunday, January 28 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 January 5, 2024)

Remember in Prayer

- Alice Tyler, as she 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. 7
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. 7
5:00 p.m. -
6:30 p.m.

BYG (Big Youth Group)

Middle and High Schoolers, Mecklenburg Hall

Join us for fun, fellowship, food and games. Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

tuesday
JAN. 9
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. 9
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 (Alzheimer's Association). Contact: Whitney Bayer, whitney@smpchome.org.

tuesday
JAN. 9
7:30 p.m.

Men's Evening Study Group

Chapel 206

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

wednesday
JAN. 10
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. 11
9:00 a.m.

Shelter Ministry

Mecklenburg Hall

This ministry meets to fill empty medicine bottles with body wash for Roof Above. Empty Rx vials are always needed. Contact: Carol Morgan, morganc43@aol.com.

thursday
JAN. 11
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. Contact: Bob Tyler, Btyler@unitedskates.com.

thursday
JAN. 11
7:30 p.m.

Making Space Mom's Group

Chapel 206

We are studying *Bible Stories for Grownups*. Moms of all ages are invited! Contact: Allison Reeves, allison.tarwater@gmail.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SMPC Youth Community and Coffee at Amelie's, Sunday, January 14, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Amelie's French Bakery, 7715 Pineville-Matthews Road, Middle and High Schoolers - Let's meet for coffee and a sweet after worship. Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

Food for Thought Book Group, Thursday, January 18, 12:30 p.m., McQueen Room - All are welcome as we discuss the book *All the Broken Places* by John Boyne. Contact: Kathy Paquette, khesspaquette@aol.com.

International Dining Group, Thursday, January 18, 6:00 p.m., Zapata's Mexican Restaurant, 15130 John J. Delaney Drive - All are welcome to join as we try new cuisines around Charlotte. RSVP by Monday, January 15 to Alice Tyler, rrt1317@aol.com.

Friday Morning Men's Group, Friday, January 19, 7:30-8:30 a.m., Chapel 206 - The group meets on the first and third Fridays of every month. They are studying the book *The Genius of Jesus: The Man Who Changed Everything* by Erwin Raphael McManus. All are welcome. Contact: Curt Ireland, irelandcurtis00@gmail.com.

Adult Bible Study: Invitation to the Old Testament, Sundays beginning January 21, 9:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m., McQueen Room - This study approaches the Hebrew scriptures by inviting participants to 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 take a break during Lent and resume for 4 weeks in April. Please register on Realm. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

Youth Mission Project, Sunday, January 21, 5:30-6:30 p.m., 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.

MISSIONS/OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

Desserts for Center of Hope Sunday, January 14

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, January 20

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.



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.



**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.



WE WELCOME OUR NEWEST MEMBERS!

Harold and Diane Blackmon first joined SMPC ten years ago. After spending most of their time over the past couple of years in Garden City, SC, we're so glad they're now primarily back in Charlotte. Both are retired; they enjoy the beach, travel and spending time with their two granddaughters.



Judith Coen moved to Charlotte 1½ years ago to be near her niece, Jenny Estes, and Jenny's family. Judith is a retired professional opera singer and teacher. She studied opera in Rome and was a college and private opera teacher in New York City. She enjoys music/opera, Italian language and culture, and travel, especially in Italy and Germany.

Mike and Karen Dunker met while working in south Florida; they lived in Kansas City and Jacksonville, FL before eventually moving to Charlotte 10 ½ years ago. They have a son, Lucas, who attends college in Boston. Mike is Operations Manager with Brookfield Properties and Karen is a sales associate with Turning Point, a second chance boutique in Waxhaw.



Kevin and Jenny Estes moved to Charlotte 1½ years ago from Ft. Lauderdale, FL. They have two sons: Judah is a sophomore at Providence High and Luke is an 8th grader at South Charlotte Middle. Both are in our confirmation class and active in our youth program. Kevin was formerly a church music director and is now a physician in the process of opening his own medical practice. Jenny is an oncology nurse employed by the Cleveland Clinic.

Andrew and Whitney Gann were invited to SMPC by their friends, Tyler and Kim Overcash. They have lived in Charlotte for 15 years and have three sons: Bryson, a 3rd grader at McAlpine, Hayden, a kindergartener at McAlpine, and Austin, who is two years old. Andrew is General Sales Manager with Carolina Premium Beverage and Whitney is Director – Wholesale Rates and Regulatory Strategy with Duke Energy.



Peggy Heller is a retired teacher and has lived in the Sun City community since 2008. She has a son, Rick, and two grandchildren who live close by. Growing up, Peggy traveled around the world – her father was an Air Force pilot for 35 years. She enjoys hiking, bowling and pickleball and is a Master Gardener.

Jimmy and Nicole Jenkins discovered SMPC when their daughters participated in our Vacation Bible School program. Madi is now in 8th grade and a member of our confirmation class and Emma is in 3rd grade. Jimmy is a software engineer with Bank of America and Nicole is owner/operator of Pilates of Charlotte. They live in the Bridgemill neighborhood in Fort Mill.





Jim and Kristina Palmer moved to Charlotte in May 2023 from Tampa, FL. They have four children: Skye is a 6th grader at Community House Middle, Eamon is a 3rd grader at Ballantyne Elementary, and Taika and Sacha are 3 1/2 years old. Jim is a physician – OB/GYN with Atrium Health, and Kristina is a homemaker. Many thanks to Jon Myers for inviting them to worship at SMPC!

Brenn and Sandi Randle moved to Charlotte six years ago from outside of Los Angeles, CA. They found SMPC when they enrolled their daughter, Leah, who's now in kindergarten, in our preschool. Brenn and Sandi also have a son, Blake, who's a senior at Providence High and very active in our youth program, youth choir and youth handbell choir. Brenn is Director of Construction for Cato Corporation and Sandi is self-employed.



Bob Rosene and his wife, **Diane**, moved from Des Moines, Iowa to the Treetops community in South Carolina 2 1/2 years ago. They have family in this area, including two grandchildren and Bob's sister, our own Barb Malo. Bob is retired; he enjoys racquetball, pickleball and singing in our choir!

Justin and Katie Smigiel live in the Raeburn neighborhood, on the street where Katie grew up. Justin's work took them to Maryland and Northern Virginia before bringing them back to Charlotte in 2018. They have four children: Lilliana is in 6th grade, Mia is in 3rd grade, Zoe is in kindergarten and Eli is 3 1/2. Justin is Sales Engineer Manager with Red Canary and Katie is a homemaker and homeschool teacher.



Maria Varela is Katie's mom and grandmother to Lilliana, Mia, Zoe and Eli. She also has a daughter, Sandra, and grandson, Jameson. Maria is originally from Colombia and moved to Charlotte 32 years ago from Youngstown, OH. She enjoys reading, quilting and cross stitch and recently joined our SMPC Handiworker's Group.

●

Interested in joining South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church?

Our Session meets on the fourth Sunday of each month to welcome new members. To learn more, contact Nancy Metzler, Director of Hospitality and Connection, nancy@smpchome.org, 980-265-2839.

