



**South
Mecklenburg**
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Service of Worship

First Sunday in Lent

February 18, 2024

10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestreamed

We Gather

Prelude *Jesus Walked this Lonesome Valley* Traditional Spiritual

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

Introit *Jesus, We Are Here* Patrick Matsikenyiri

Call to Worship Luke Estes

One: The journey to the cross calls us to praise and prayer, to song and silence.

Many: The example of Jesus calls us to hearing and healing, to service and solidarity.

One: The story of Jesus calls us to advocacy and action, to justice and joy.

Many: Holy God, may we heed your call to witness, to love, and to do justice.

All: May we open our hearts and spirits to worship the Lord our God.

Hymn *O God, Show Mercy to Us* No. 341

1 O God, show mer - cy to us, and bless us with your
2 For you will judge the peo - ples in truth and righ - teous-

grace; and cause to shine up - on us the bright-ness of your
ness, and on the earth all na - tions will your just rule con-

face, so that your way most ho - ly on earth may soon be
fess. Let all the peo - ples praise you; let all the na - tions

known, and un - to ev - ery peo - ple your sav - ing grace be
sing. Then earth in rich a - bun - dance to us its fruit will

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Rev. Lindsey Odom

Gracious God, as we begin this Lenten journey with Jesus, we confess our neglect of you and our faith. We have lists of things to do, for all the areas of our lives. Our lives are so time bound and duty bound that we feel imprisoned in them. Now we are being challenged by Christ to take a journey of discipleship. Forgive us, O God, when we place our duties in the path to serving and loving you. Reset our priorities so, that we will be ready to commit our lives to your service. Lord, help us to be ready when you call us. Help us to courageously answer your call. Let us place our trust in you in all things. Amen.

Assurance of God's Grace

Rev. Odom

Affirmation of Mercy

No. 447

We are forgiven, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.

We are forgiven, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.

We Hear and Respond to the Word

Church Family Moment

Rebecca Guzman

1. Today is the first Sunday of Lent. During Lent, we have a devotional for the whole church. There are copies in the narthex, or you can email me (Rebecca@smpchome.org) for a digital copy. Each Sunday, we will talk about one word. Today's word is "Know." You will see art in the sanctuary that has been colored by various groups in the congregation. [This book](#) tells all about what Lent is.
2. Listen and [sing along to this song](#), "God Knows Everything." What does it mean that God knows everything?
3. Consider Jesus' forgiveness. What do we do that needs to be forgiven? Maybe today you will write down something that you have done (or failed to do) that you want to ask God for forgiveness about. After you write it down, pray for God's forgiveness, and then tear it up into tiny pieces. God is always ready to forgive us!
4. Journal, considering the following:
 - a. What does it mean to be known?
 - b. Have you ever done something without knowing? What happened? How did you feel?
 - c. It is overwhelming to consider the depth of God's forgiveness. How do you begin to get your head around it?

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. 399):

God welcomes all, strangers and friends; God's love is strong and it never ends. God welcomes all, strangers and friends; God's love is strong and it never ends.

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

2 Peter 1:12-21

Rev. Odom

Therefore I intend to keep on reminding you of these things, though you know them already and are established in the truth that has come to you. I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to refresh your memory, since I know that my death will come soon, as indeed our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things. For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honor and glory from God the Father when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, my Beloved, with whom I am

well pleased." We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven, while we were with him on the holy mountain. So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

Anthem *Nobody Knows* arr. Alice Parker, Robert Shaw
Chancel Choir; Jane Royther, soloist

Second Reading Luke 23:34 Dr. Brown
[Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."] And they cast lots to divide his clothing.

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sermon Know Dr. Brown

The Affirmation of Faith (*unison*) The Apostles' Creed
Rev. Odom

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 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 *Melody* Samuel Coleridge-Taylor

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

***O suff'ring Jesus, in these forty days.
We view your sorrow, share in your distress.
Our Lenten songs are filled with muted praise;
Yet by your passion, we are truly blessed.***

***We praise the Father! We praise you, the Son!
We praise the Spirit, our God, Three in One.***

Prayer of Dedication

Harper Price

Holy God, may what we say reflect your purpose for creation, and what we do be consistent with your will. Receive now what we offer as signs of thanksgiving for all that you have done and continue to do within our lives and in our world today. Amen.

We Go Out to Serve

***Hymn**

Why Should I Feel Discouraged?

No. 661



1 Why should I feel dis - cour - aged? Why should the shad - ows come?
2 "Let not your heart be trou - bled," his ten - der word I hear,
3 When - ev - er I am tempt - ed, when - ev - er clouds a - rise,



Why should my heart be lone - ly and long for heaven and home,
and rest - ing on his good - ness, I lose my doubts and fears;
when song gives place to sigh - ing, when hope with - in me dies,



when Je - sus is my por - tion? My con - stant friend is he:
though by the path he lead - eth but one step I may see:
I draw the clos - er to him; from care he sets me free:



his eye is on the spar - row, and I know he watch - es me;



his eye is on the spar - row, and I know he watch - es me.

Refrain

I sing be-cause I'm hap-py, (I'm hap-py) I sing be-cause I'm free, (I'm free)

Charge and Benediction

Dr. Brown

*Go, my children, sins forgiven, at peace and pure.
Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.
Here you heard my dear Son's story;
here you touched him, saw his glory.
Go, my children, sins forgiven, at peace and pure.*

Postlude

Voluntary on "Thaxted"

Kevin Uppercue

*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

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

Jane Royther, soloist

Luke Estes, Harper Price, liturgists

Acolyte: Grayson Myers

A/V Team: Mary Katheryne Zagora, Michael Zagora

Ushers: Andrew Brown, Andy Burke, Richard Franseen, Jon Myers, Donna Podgorny, Bob Williamson

Welcome Team: Donna Brown

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](#).

In celebration of Black History Month, we will hear music from composers of African descent each Sunday in February. This morning, our prelude and anthem are arrangements of African American spirituals. The offertory is an original composition by Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, who was born in Holborn, London, England on August 15, 1875. He was an English composer who achieved such incredible success that he was called the African Mahler. Coleridge-Taylor's greatest success was the cantata Hiawatha's Wedding-feast, widely performed in England during his lifetime (he died in 1912), and rivaled only by Handel's Messiah and Mendelssohn's Elijah in popularity.

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 or 980-265-2839.

Congregational Notes (as of February 15, 2024)

Remember in Prayer

- Jennifer and Jon Nancarrow and their family as Jennifer’s father, Dr. Donald Ramras, entered the Church triumphant on February 7
- Kerrie Lorenzo, 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

FEB. 18

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. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

today

FEB. 18

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

SMPC Youth Board Games and S'mores

Mecklenburg Hall, Middle and High Schoolers

Bring your favorite board game to play together! Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org

tuesday

FEB. 20

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.

wednesday

FEB. 21

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.

wednesday

FEB. 21

times vary

Room in the Inn

Sardis Presbyterian Church

Volunteers will help with dinner, overnight stays or breakfast and cleanup. Scan QR code for more - **volunteers needed for future dates.** Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.



thursday

FEB. 22

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

FEB. 22

6:00 p.m.

International Dining Group

That's Amore Italian Grill, 2018 Bridgemill Drive, Suite 100, Indian Land, SC 29707

All are invited to join us for dinner and fellowship! Please RSVP to Alice Tyler, rrt1317@aol.com, by Monday, February 19.

thursday

FEB. 22

7:30 p.m.

Making Space Mom's Group

Chapel 206

Moms of all ages are invited to join us for study, service and fellowship. Contact: Allison Reeves, allison.tarwater@gmail.com.

saturday

FEB. 24

9:00 a.m. -
12:00 p.m.

Parents Morning Out

Children ages 3-5th Grade, Meet in Narthex

We'll play games, craft, watch a Bible story movie, and enjoy a delicious snack. Cost: \$10/child to cover materials. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.



sunday
FEB. 25
9:00 a.m. -
10:00 a.m.

Lenten Adult Bible Study: Seven Last Words
McQueen Room and Zoom

This study explores the seven last phrases Jesus uttered from the cross as seen and heard by those who stood near the cross. This six-week study, led by Melissa White and Rebecca Guzman, concludes on Palm Sunday, March 24. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

sunday
FEB. 25
5:00 p.m. -
6:30 p.m.

Laser Tag and Bowling
Sports Connection, 11611 Ardrey Kell Road
Middle and High Schoolers

We'll meet at Sports Connection and have fun with laser tag and bowling! Cost is \$25/person. Please bring extra spending money. Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

Men's Evening Study Group, Tuesday, February 27, 7:30 p.m., Chapel 206

This group meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month. They are watching a video series called *Strange Book of Books* that dives into the origins of different stories in the Bible. All are invited. Contact: Jon Myers, jonmyers2@gmail.com.

Walters State Community College Chamber Choir Concert, Thursday, February 29, 7:00 p.m., Sanctuary

The Chamber Choir from Walters State Community College in Morristown, TN will perform at SMPC during their stop in Charlotte for their spring tour! No cost to attend and all are invited! Contact: Zach Bowyer, zach@smpchome.org.

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

- This group meets on the first and third Fridays of every month. They are starting a new book: *The Fourth Quarter of Your Life: Embracing What Matters Most* by Matthew Kelly. All are welcome. Contact: Curt Ireland, irelandcurtis00@gmail.com.

OF NOTE

Registration for the 2024-25 school year at SMPC Preschool is now open.

Children ages 2 through TK. Contact SMPC Preschool Director Tammy Winchip, tammy@smpchome.org, for more information.



Support SMPC Youth by purchasing a SMPC t-shirt! Funds go to the SMPC youth program and youth trips. **Deadline to order t-shirts is Wednesday, February 28.** Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

MISSIONS AND OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

Room in the Inn: Wednesdays, February 21 and March 13

American Red Cross Blood Drive: Saturday, March 9, 8:00 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.

Desserts for Center of Hope: Sunday, March 10

Center of Hope Breakfast: Saturday, March 16



"SEVEN LAST WORDS": LENT AT SMPC

We hope you'll join us this Lenten season for worship, study, service and fellowship. Register for events and find out more on our website.