



# South Mecklenburg

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**A Service of Worship**

**Third Sunday in Lent**

**March 3, 2024**

**10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestreamed**

## **We Gather**

**Prelude**                      *Nearer, My God, To Thee*                      Lowell Mason

**Welcome and Concerns of the Church**                      Rev. Lindsey Odom  
The Lord be with you. **And also with you!**

**Introit**                      *Jesus, We Are Here*                      Patrick Matsikenyiri

**Call to Worship**                      Dr. Whitney Bayer

**One:** Here we are today, gathered together with our church family, so we can worship God.

**Many:** We are here to sing, to pray, to listen, to wonder, and to give thanks.

**One:** And we are all here because of God.

**Many:** For now is the time to make our way to the cross and follow Christ's example.

**One:** Now is the time to embrace trust and love for all of humanity.

**Many:** Now is the time to give thanks, to unload our hearts, to share our lives, and to hear the stories told throughout the Lenten journey.

**All:** So, since we are here, and God is here, may we embark on this journey and turn to worship God.

**Hymn**                      *God Is Here!*                      No. 409

1 God is here! As we your peo - ple meet to  
 2 Here are sym - bols to re - mind us of our  
 3 Here our chil - dren find a wel - come in the  
 4 Lord of all, of church and king - dom, in an

of - fer praise and prayer, may we find in  
 life - long need of grace; here are ta - ble,  
 Shep - herd's flock and fold; here as bread and  
 age of change and doubt keep us faith - ful

full - er mea - sure what it is in Christ we share.  
 font, and pul - pit; here the cross has cen - tral place.  
 wine are tak - en, Christ sus - tains us as of old.  
 to the gos - pel; help us work your pur - pose out.

Here, as in the world a - round us, all our  
 Here in hon - es - ty of preach - ing, here in  
 Here the ser - vants of the Ser - vant seek in  
 Here, in this day's ded - i - ca - tion, all we

var - ied skills and arts wait the com - ing  
 si - lence, as in speech, here, in new - ness  
 wor - ship to ex - plore what it means in  
 have to give, re - ceive: we, who can - not

of the Spir - it in - to o - pen minds and hearts.  
 and re - new - al, God the Spir - it comes to each.  
 dai - ly liv - ing to be - lieve and to a - dore.  
 live with - out you, we a - dore you! We be - lieve!

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

Dr. Bayer

**Holy God, we confess we have not been obedient to your will for us. We have sought justice for ourselves but neglected justice for others. We have insisted on our rights but have not lived rightly in our relationships. We have desired mercy for our sins, but we have not offered mercy to those who have sinned against us. By the power of your Holy Spirit free us from our sin. Help us to love as you have loved us that our lives may testify to your abounding grace though Jesus Christ. Amen.**

**Assurance of God's Grace**

Dr. Bayer

**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. Our March Year of Justice theme is Women's History. If you are worshipping with us online, you can click [here](#) for ways that you can explore women's history with a faith



lens, including a few readaloud storybooks and an exploration of the story of Queen Esther.

2. Our Lenten word for the day is “Here.” In this part of the story, Jesus tells his disciple John, to take Mary in as his own mother. One of the last things he does is to give them to each other, forming a new family. Listen to a [readaloud](#) of *The Invisible String* by Patricia Karst. In what ways are we all connected as family?
3. It seems funny for us to sing a Christmas song at Easter, but [Chris Tomlin’s song](#) Emmanuel God With Us can help us think about this scripture in a new way. Jesus, God with us, who we celebrate coming into the world at Christmas, is now about to depart the world. He knows that they’ll need each other in a new way. At the same time, God never leaves us! Listen and sing along to this song and consider how God is with us.
4. Journal, considering the following:
  - a. Read the Hebrews scripture again, noticing that all of the pronouns are plural. God only asks us to do hard things *together!* How does it help you to know that you are not alone?
  - b. Has anyone ever been “given” to you the way that Jesus gives John and his mother to each other? What was that like? What has it meant?
  - c. What does it mean to be “here?”

### **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**

Dr. Bayer

### **First Reading**

Hebrews 10:19-25

Dr. Bayer

Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh), and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us approach with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

**Anthem** *Come By Here* arr. Uzee Brown, Jr.  
Chancel Choir

*Come by here, my Lord, come by here.  
O Lord, come by here.  
Someone needs you, Lord, come by here.  
O Lord, come by here.  
Someone's prayin', Lord, come by here.  
O Lord, come by here.  
Someone's cryin', Lord, come by here.  
O Lord, come by here.*

**Second Reading** John 19:26-27 Dr. Matthew S. Brown  
When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, "Woman, here is your son." Then he said to the disciple, "Here is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

**Sermon** Here Dr. Brown

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

**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** *O Sacred Head Now Wounded* arr. Brian Childers  
Chancel Ringers

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**

*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.*

## **Celebration of the Lord's Supper**

**Invitation to the Table** Dr. Bayer

**Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer** Rev. Odom

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. Brown, Rev. Odom

**The Bread and the Cup**

**Communion of the People**

**The Prayer after Communion** Dr. Brown

## **We Go Out to Serve**

**Hymn** *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* No. 39

1 \*Great is thy faith - ful - ness, O God my Fa - ther;  
 2 Sum - mer and win - ter, and spring - time and har - vest,  
 3 Par - don for sin and a peace that en - dur - eth,

there is no shad - ow of turn - ing with thee.  
 sun, moon, and stars in their cours - es a - bove  
 thine own dear pres - ence to cheer and to guide,

Thou chang - est not; thy com - pas - sions they fail not.  
 join with all na - ture in man - i - fold wit - ness  
 strength for to - day and bright hope for to - mor - row:

As thou hast been thou for - ev - er wilt be.  
 to thy great faith - ful - ness, mer - cy, and love.  
 bless - ings all mine, with ten thou - sand be - side!

Refrain

Great is thy faith - ful - ness! Great is thy faith - ful - ness!  
오 신 실 하 신 주 오 신 실 하 신 주

Morn - ing by morn - ing, new mer - cies I see.  
날 마 다 자 비 를 베 푸 시 며

All I have need - ed thy hand hath pro - vid - ed.  
일 용 할 모 든 것 내 러 주 시 니

Great is thy faith - ful - ness, Lord un - to me!  
오 신 실 하 신 주 나 의 구 주

Charge and Benediction

Dr. Brown

Congregational Response

No. 547

*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

March in F

Alexandre Guilmant

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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 & Missions/Outreach

Zach Bowyer, Director of Music & Organist

Rebecca Guzman, Director of Spiritual Formation

Chancel Choir

Chancel Ringers

**A/V Team:** Mary Katheryne Zagora, Michael Zagora

**Deacon/Elder of the Day:** Lisa Kuszmar

**Ushers:** Jenny Gates, Frank Graham, Tom Klecker, Craig Parrish, Carol Watkins, Bob Williamson, David Wooley

**Welcome Team:** Donna Brown, Laurann Robertson

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](mailto:nancy@smpchome.org). Also, find us on Instagram: [@southmeckpres](https://www.instagram.com/southmeckpres) and Facebook: [@southmecklenburgpresbyterian](https://www.facebook.com/southmecklenburgpresbyterian).

**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. During this time, they will explore the story interactively and engage with their peers.
- 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 on Sunday, March 24 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 February 29, 2024)

### **Remember in Prayer**

- Janie Ramberger, hospitalized as a result of a car accident.
- Warren Stenvall, and his upcoming back surgery on March 6.
- 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).



## **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)

# SMPC WEEKLY

MARCH 3, 2024

## 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  
**MAR. 3**  
5:00 p.m. -  
6:30 p.m.

**BAM! Bible and Music**  
**Meet in Narthex, Children in Kindergarten-5th Grade**  
During BAM!, children sing, creatively engage with Bible stories, and explore various instruments in peer age groups. Pizza is served. Register on Realm. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

today  
**MAR. 3**  
5:00 p.m. -  
6:30 p.m.

**BYG (Big Youth Group)**  
**Mecklenburg Hall, Middle and High Schoolers**  
BYG provides an opportunity for youth to grow in faith and love through Bible study, small group time, good food, fun games, and amazing company. Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

tuesday  
**MAR. 5**  
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  
**MAR. 6**  
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.

saturday  
**MAR. 9**  
8:00 a.m. -  
12:30 p.m.

**American Red Cross Blood Drive**  
**The Commons**  
Please sign up to donate blood or volunteer at the drive. Scan QR code to find our Serve our Community page and links to donate or volunteer. Contact: Bill Ramsey, bill.john.ramsey@gmail.com.



saturday  
**MAR. 9**  
9:30 a.m. -  
9:45 a.m.

**Drop Off Bagged Lunches for Roof Above**  
**Outside the Palmer Building**  
Donate bagged lunches to Roof Above and drop off outside the Palmer Building. Sign up via the QR code.



sunday  
**MAR. 10**  
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. This six-week study concludes on Palm Sunday, March 24. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

sunday  
**MAR. 10**  
11:15 a.m. -  
12:15 p.m.

**SMPC Youth Lunch and Learn**  
**Mecklenburg Hall, Middle and High Schoolers**  
We'll discuss the sermon and more. Lunch will be served! Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

**sunday**  
**MAR. 10**  
**11:30 a.m. -**  
**12:30 p.m.**

**Believing and Belonging**  
**McQueen Room**

For all who are considering membership and/or would like to know more about being Presbyterian and SMPC. We'll explore the history and beliefs of the Presbyterian church and how God uses our gifts to create community. Lunch will be served and childcare will be available. Contact: Nancy Metzler, [nancy@smpchome.org](mailto:nancy@smpchome.org).



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**A Caregiver's Journey, Tuesday, March 12, 1:00-2:30 p.m., 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](mailto:whitney@smpchome.org).

**Men's Evening Study Group, Tuesday, March 12, 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. Contact: Jon Myers, [jonmyers2@gmail.com](mailto:jonmyers2@gmail.com).

**Room in the Inn, Wednesday, March 13, Various Times, Sardis Presbyterian Church** - Various volunteer roles. Sign up on [smpchome.org/serve-our-community](http://smpchome.org/serve-our-community). Contact: Lindsey Odom, [lindsey@smpchome.org](mailto:lindsey@smpchome.org).

**Shelter Ministry, Thursday, March 14, 9:00 a.m., 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, [morgancc43@aol.com](mailto:morgancc43@aol.com).

**Men's Breakfast Group, Thursday, March 14, 9:30 a.m., 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](mailto:Btyler@unitedskates.com).

**Making Space Mom's Group, Thursday, March 14, 7:30 p.m., Chapel 206** - Moms of all ages are invited to join us for study, service and fellowship. Contact: Allison Reeves, [allison.tarwater@gmail.com](mailto:allison.tarwater@gmail.com).

**Friday Morning Men's Group, Friday, March 15, 7:30-8:30 a.m., Chapel 206** - The group meets on the first and third Fridays of every month. They are reading the book *The Fourth Quarter of Your Life: Embracing What Matters Most* by Matthew Kelly. Contact: Curt Ireland, [irelandcurtis00@gmail.com](mailto:irelandcurtis00@gmail.com).

**SMPC Campus Workday, Saturday, March 16, 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.** - Many hands make light work! Contact: Collin Sinclair, [collinbsinclair@gmail.com](mailto:collinbsinclair@gmail.com).

**Intergenerational Trivia and Mission Night, Sunday, March 17, 5:00-6:30 p.m., Mecklenburg Hall, All Ages** - We will assemble Easter meal kits and make Easter cards for students at our partner school, Smithfield Elementary. Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, [lindsey@smpchome.org](mailto:lindsey@smpchome.org).

**SMPC Playground Family Playdate, Saturday, March 23, 1:00-2:30 p.m., SMPC Playground, Ages 3-1st grade** - Family fun on the SMPC playground. Siblings welcome! Snacks and drinks will be provided for the children. Contact: Kaitlin Gaul, [kaitlin.slanina@gmail.com](mailto:kaitlin.slanina@gmail.com).

## OF NOTE

**Vacation Bible School and Mission Possible registration now open! Monday, July 22-Thursday, July 25 at SMPC** - VBS is for children ages 3-4th grade Mission Possible is for rising 5th and 6th graders. Register on Realm. Contact: Adrienne Jaquith, [smpcvbs@gmail.com](mailto:smpcvbs@gmail.com).



### "SEVEN LAST WORDS": LENT AT SMPC

Register for events and find out more on our website. Pick up a Lenten devotional in the Connections Center or email Rebecca Guzman, [rebecca@smpchome.org](mailto:rebecca@smpchome.org).