



South Mecklenburg

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Service of Worship

Palm/Passion Sunday

March 24, 2024

10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestreamed

We Gather

Prelude

The Palms

Jean-Baptiste Faure

Kyle Gavagan, trumpet

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

Alec White

One: Hosanna! Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord!

Many: Hosanna! Rejoice, for the Lord is in our midst!

One: He comes with joy and hope.

Many: He comes to set us free from fear.

All: Hosanna! Hosanna! Glory to God in the Highest Heaven!

Hymn

All Glory, Laud, and Honor

No. 196

Refrain




All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or to thee, Re-deem-er, King,



to whom the lips of chil - dren made sweet ho-san-nas ring!



1 Thou art the King of Is - ra - el, thou Da - vid's roy - al Son,
 2 The peo - ple of the He - brews with palms be - fore thee went;
 3 To thee, be - fore thy pas - sion, they sang their hymns of praise;
 4 Thou didst ac - cept their prais - es; ac - cept the prayers we bring,



who in the Lord's name com - est, the King and bless - ed One.
 our praise and prayers and an - thems be - fore thee we pre - sent.
 to thee, now high ex - alt - ed, our mel - o - dy we raise.
 who in all good de - light - est, thou good and gra - cious King!

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Rev. Odom

Triumphant God, we rejoice in your entry into the world and into our lives! Joining with the crowds waiting for Jesus' triumphant entry, we sing your praises and exalt your reign, but our hearts are far from true worship, and our minds are distant from true understanding. We are quick to speak of faith, but slow to live it out fully. Hosanna, Steadfast God, save us! Help us to let our fears, our doubts, and our faithlessness slip from our lives to fall at your feet, so we may stand with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who comes in your name, in your glory, and in your grace to save us. 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. Fold palms into a cross. Today, we celebrate Palm Sunday. Next week is Easter, which makes this week “Holy Week.” We have started to call today Palm/Passion Sunday because it’s hard for many people to get to worship during the week. We do want to invite you to worship on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, but we make sure to tell the whole story today, so that you can fully experience the joy of Easter! So, it is appropriate to take our palm branches and fold them into crosses. [Here is a link](#) that shows you how to prepare your leaf as well as how to fold it.
2. Our Lenten phrase for the day is “It is finished.” We can think about this in a few ways. Will Willimon, who is a theologian, said that maybe Jesus said, “it is finished” the way that Michelangelo said, “Finished!” when he had finally completed the painting of the [Sistine Chapel](#). Our Lenten devotional suggests that “we can find the strength to say ‘we are finished’ with letting fear win in our own hearts, minds, lives, and communities.” What do YOU think it means?
3. The beautiful book *He Is Risen: Rocks Tell the Story of Easter* by Patty Rokus tells the entire story of Holy Week. [Watch and listen](#). What did you notice? What story from this week is most familiar to you? Which one do you know the least? Can you make your own picture with rocks?
4. Journal, considering the following:
 - a. What does it mean that today is both Palm and Passion Sunday? [Here](#) is one possible exploration.
 - b. What would you like to be “finished” with?
 - c. How will you observe Holy Week this year?

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

John 12:12-19

Rev. Odom

The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, shouting, “Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord— the King of Israel!” Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it; as it is written: “Do not be afraid, daughter

of Zion. Look, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!" His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written of him and had been done to him. So the crowd that had been with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to testify. It was also because they heard that he had performed this sign that the crowd went to meet him. The Pharisees then said to one another, "You see, you can do nothing. Look, the world has gone after him!"

Anthem

Ride On, King Jesus

Moses Hogan

Chancel Choir; Brett Parrish, soloist; Blythe Kinsey, piano

Ride on, King Jesus, ride on, the conquerin' king.

Oh, ride on, King Jesus, ride on. No man can a-hinder thee.

I was but young when I begun. No man can a-hinder thee.

But now my race is almost done. No man can a-hinder thee.

King Jesus rides a milk white horse. No man can a-hinder thee.

The river of Jordan he did cross. No man can a-hinder thee.

He's the King and the Lord. No man can a-hinder thee.

He's the first and the last. He's the Lord of Lords.

Jesus is the Prince of Peace. No man can a-hinder thee.

Oh, ride on, King Jesus, ride on, ride on, just ride on Jesus.

Ride on, King Jesus, ride on. No man can a-hinder thee.

Ride on, Jesus!

Second Reading

John 19:14-18, 28-30 Dr. Matthew S. Brown

John 19: 14-18

Now it was the day of Preparation for the Passover; and it was about noon. He said to the Jews, "Here is your King!" They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but the emperor." Then he handed him over to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus; and carrying the cross by himself, he went out to what is called The Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha. There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, with Jesus between them.

John 19: 28-30

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfill the scripture), "I am thirsty." A jar full of sour wine was standing there. So they put a sponge full of the wine on a branch of hyssop and held it to his mouth. When Jesus had received the wine, he said, "It is finished." Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

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

Sermon

Finished

Dr. Brown

The Affirmation of Faith (*unison*)

The Confession of 1967, 9.15

Dr. Whitney Bayer

God's sovereign love is a mystery beyond the reach of the human mind. Human thought ascribes to God superlatives of power, wisdom, and goodness. But God reveals divine love in Jesus Christ by showing power in the form of a servant, wisdom in the folly of the cross, and goodness in receiving sinful men and women. The power of God's love in Christ to transform the world discloses that the Redeemer is the Lord and Creator who made all things to serve the purpose of God's love.

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

Meditations on the Cross

Michael Helman

Exultate Ringers

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

Grayson Myers

Faithful God, your Son Jesus reveals what it means to be a servant leader who trusts you fully. His commitment to you cost him his life. Yet through his amazing sacrifice, you bring healing, hope, and peace. Help us to reflect your great love in Christ through our gifts, our tithes, and our offerings. Let our words and actions point to your grace. Amen.

We Go Out to Serve

Hymn

What Wondrous Love Is This

No. 215

1 What won - drous love is this, O my soul, O my
 2 When I was sink - ing down, sink - ing down, sink - ing
 3 To God and to the Lamb, I will sing, I will
 4 And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing

soul, what won - drous love is this, O my soul! What
 down, when I was sink - ing down, sink - ing down, when
 sing, to God and to the Lamb, I will sing; to
 on; and when from death I'm free, I'll sing on; and

won - drous love is this that caused the Lord of
 I was sink - ing down be - neath God's righ - teous
 God and to the Lamb who is the great I
 when from death I'm free, I'll sing and joy - ful

bliss to bear the dread - ful curse for my soul, for my
 frown, Christ laid a - side his crown for my soul, for my
 AM, while mil - lions join the theme, I will sing, I will
 be, and through e - ter - ni - ty, I'll sing on, I'll sing

soul, to bear the dread - ful curse for my soul!
 soul, Christ laid a - side his crown for my soul!
 sing; while mil - lions join the theme, I will sing!
 on; and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing on.

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

Passion Chorale

harm. J. S. Bach

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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
Exultate Ringers
Brett Parrish, soloist
Kyle Gavagan, trumpet
Blythe Kinsey, piano
Alec White, Grayson Myers, liturgists

A/V Team: Mary Katheryne Zagora, Michael Zagora

Deacon/Elder of the Day: David Gaines

Ushers: Frank Graham, Curtis Guy, Kara Guy, Bjorn Hansen, Jonathan Mangels, Evan Mangels

Welcome Team: Blair, Brooke, and Michael Choren; Alison, Chad, and Zac Reeves

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](#).

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 March 21, 2024)

Remember in Prayer

- 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, in the midst of the chaos that has enveloped their country.

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
MAR. 24
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.

tuesday
MAR. 26
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
MAR. 26
7:30 p.m.

Men's Evening Study Group
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.

wednesday
MAR. 27
9:00 a.m. -
9:30 a.m.

Learn More About the Augustine Literacy Project
Virtual
The Augustine Literacy Project (ALP)/SMPC partnership has expanded the use of highly effective early literacy intervention to students at our partner school, Smithfield Elementary. Find more information at <https://alpcharlotte.org/riseandread2024/>. Contact: Kathy Graham, kathyspeech@carolina.rr.com.

wednesday
MAR. 27
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
MAR. 28
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
MAR. 28
6:00 p.m. -
7:00 p.m.

Maundy Thursday Supper & Communion
Mecklenburg Hall
We will share a light supper and communion and remember our Lord's gathering with His disciples on the night of His arrest when they broke bread together. Register on Realm or via QR code. Contact: Nancy Metzler, nancy@smpchome.org.



friday
MAR. 29
7:30 p.m.

Good Friday Tenebrae Service
Sanctuary and Livestream
Scripture, Taizé music, and extinguishing candles. All are welcome.

MARCH 31

9:00 a.m.

Chancel Choir and Chancel Ringers

EASTER SUNDAY

11:00 a.m.

Chancel Choir, Chancel Ringers,
Jubilate Choir, and Children's Choir

Sanctuary and Livestream

UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday Morning Men's Group, Friday, April 5, 7:30-8:30 a.m., Chapel 206 - This group is reading *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan. All are welcome. Contact: Curt Ireland, irelandcurtis00@gmail.com.

A Caregiver's Journey, Tuesday, April 9, 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.

Men's Evening Study Group, Tuesday, April 9, 7:30 p.m., Chapel 206 - This group meets for study and conversation. Contact: Jon Myers, jonmyers2@gmail.com.

Shelter Ministry, Thursday, April 11, 9:00 a.m., Mecklenburg Hall - This ministry meets to fill empty Rx bottles with body wash for neighbors at Roof Above. Contact: Carol Morgan, morganc43@aol.com.

Men's Breakfast Group, Thursday, April 11, 9:30 a.m., Big View Diner, 6637 Lancaster Hwy - Join us for breakfast and conversation. Contact: Bob Tyler, Btyler@unitedskates.com

Food for Thought Book Group, Thursday, April 11, 12:30 p.m., McQueen Room - All are welcome as we discuss the book *Funny Farm: My Unexpected Life with 600 Rescue Animals* by Laurie Zaleski. Contact: Kathy Paquette: khesspaquette@aol.com.

Making Spaces Mom's Group, Thursday, April 11, 7:30 p.m., Chapel 206 - Moms of all ages are invited to join us for fellowship. Contact: Allison Reeves, allison.tarwater@gmail.com .

Adult Bible Study: Invitation to the Old Testament, starting back Sundays beginning April 14, 9:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m., McQueen Room - This 8-week study began before Lent and resumes April 14. You can still come even if you did not attend the first four weeks! Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

BAM! Bible and Music, Sunday, April 14, 5:00-6:30 p.m., Meet in Narthex, Ages Kindergarten - 5th Grade - Children will sing, creatively engage with Bible stories, and explore various instruments. Pizza will be served. Register on Realm. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

BYG (Big Youth Group), Sunday, April 14, 5:00-6:30 p.m., Mecklenburg Hall, Middle and High Schoolers - Bible study, small group time, good food, fun games, and amazing company. Please register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

CARE (Conversations Around Race Equity) Group, Monday, April 15, 12:00 p.m., Zoom - This group is beginning a six-week study and discussion of a video series, *The Color of Compromise* by Jamar Tisby. New members to CARE are welcome and encouraged. Contact: Whitney Bayer, whitney@smcphome.org.

CARE Group Uptown Walking Tour, Sunday, April 21, 1:30-3:30 p.m., Polk Park, 501 N. Tryon St (Carpool from SMPC, meet at 12:45 p.m.) - A guided, two-hour walking tour exploring how stories of "exclusions and invisibilities" have been written into the Charlotte cityscape. Cost is \$20/person. Please register on Realm by Thursday, April 18. Contact: Whitney Bayer, whitney@smpchome.org.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL/MISSION POSSIBLE

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. **Please note Mission Possible has one spot left. We will start a waitlist when it is full!** Register on Realm. Contact: Adrienne Jaquith, smpcvbs@gmail.com.