



South Mecklenburg

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Service of Worship

Fifth Sunday of Easter

April 28, 2024

10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestreamed

We Gather

Prelude *Prelude on "Slane"* Paul Fey

Welcome and Concerns of the Church Dr. Matthew S. Brown
The Lord be with you. **And also with you!**

Introit *As Those of Old Their Firstfruits Brought* R. V. Williams

Call to Worship Madi Jenkins

One: God is the True Vine,

Many: and we are the branches.

One: Connected to God and to each other.

Many: Connected to bear fruit.

One: Connected to bear love, justice, and joy.

Many: We come to worship God, who is the True Vine.

All: God, teach us how to remain connected so that we might bear good fruit!

Hymn *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee* No. 611

1 Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love!
 2 All thy works with joy sur-round thee; earth and heaven re-lect thy rays;
 3 Mor-tals, join the hap-py cho-rus which the morn-ing stars be-gan.

Hearts un - fold like flowers be - fore thee, o - pening to the sun a - bove.
 stars and an - gels sing a - round thee, cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.
 Love di - vine is reign - ing o'er us, join - ing all in heav - en's plan.

Melt the clouds of sin and sad-ness; drive the dark of doubt a - way.
 Field and for - est, vale and moun-tain, flower-y mead-ow, flash - ing sea,
 Ev - er sing-ing, march we on-ward, vic - tors in the midst of strife.

Giv - er of im - mor - tal glad-ness, fill us with the light of day.
 chant - ing bird and flow-ing foun-tain, call us to re - joice in thee.
 Joy - ful mu - sic leads us sun-ward in the tri-umph song of life.

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Dr. Whitney Bayer

Gracious God, our hearts are restless until they find their home in you. Forgive our pursuit of things that separate us from you. We pursue success, realizing it will never be enough. We desire more possessions, knowing they are empty. We turn toward the world and hope we will find peace, knowing the world cannot provide it. Forgive us, we pray, and may our wandering hearts find their rest in you alone. Amen.

Assurance of God's Grace

Dr. Bayer

Response of Praise

Gloria Patri

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen. Amen. Amen.

We Hear and Respond to the Word

Sacrament of Baptism

Madison Rayne Jenkins

Emma James Jenkins

Children of Nicole and Jimmy Jenkins
Representing the Session: Lisa Kuszmar

Church Family Moment

Rebecca Guzman

1. Listen to [this song](#). Maybe you will sing along. Compare the lyrics of the song to the scriptures for today. What's similar? What's different?
2. Go outside and look for a vine. What can looking at the vine teach you about this scripture passage?
3. Print and color [this page](#) that illustrates our verse. In each of the leaves, write or draw the names of people who are part of your faith story. Put your name on a leaf too! For example, perhaps your parents, mentors, church friends, and others. What does it mean that Jesus is the vine and we are the branches?
4. Check out a [word search](#), [decoder](#), and [coloring page](#) for the passage. If you are worshipping in person, some of these are on the worship cart!
5. Journal, considering the following:
 - a. What stood out for you in this story?
 - b. Who is the vine in the story? Who are the branches?
 - c. Who is on your vine?
 - d. What does it mean to "abide" in Jesus?

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

Dr. Bayer

First Reading

Isaiah 5:1-7

Dr. Bayer

Let me sing for my beloved my love-song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it? When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes? And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be

devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his pleasant planting; he expected justice, but saw bloodshed; righteousness, but heard a cry!

Anthem *I Am the Vine* Allen Pote
Chancel Choir; Laura Schelhammer, flute; Blythe Kinsey, piano

*I am the vine and you are the branches,
Abide in me and I will abide in you.
Then you will bear much fruit for without me you can do nothing,
Abide in me I will abide in you.
As the Father has loved me, so I love you.
Go then and love one another.
Keep this commandment, for no greater love have you,
Than to lay down your life for your friends.
I am the vine and you are the branches,
Abide in me and I will abide in you.
Love one another as I have loved you.
I am the vine, you are the branches,
Go then and bear much fruit,
Go abide in my love.*

Second Reading John 15:1-8 Dr. Brown
"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples. This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**

Sermon Viticulture Dr. Brown

The Affirmation of Faith (*unison*) The Confession of 1967, 9.54-56
Rev. Lindsey Odom

Biblical visions and images of the rule of Christ, such as a heavenly city, the household of God, a new heaven and earth, a marriage feast, and an unending day culminate in the image of the kingdom. The kingdom represents God's triumph over all that resists the divine will and disrupts God's creation. Already God's reign is present as a ferment in

the world, stirring hope in all people and preparing the world to receive its ultimate judgment and redemption.

With an urgency born of this hope, the church applies itself to present tasks and strives for a better world. It does not identify limited progress with the kingdom of God on earth, nor does it despair in the face of disappointment and defeat. In steadfast hope, the church looks beyond all partial achievement to the final triumph of God.

“Now to him who by the power within us is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. 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 arr. Joel Raney
On Eagles' Wings
Laura Schelhammer, flute

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 No. 712
*In gratitude and humble trust we bring our best today,
to serve your cause and share your love with all along life’s way.
O God who gave yourself to us in Jesus Christ your Son,
help us to give ourselves each day until life's work is done.*

Prayer of Dedication Emma Jenkins
Holy God, we ask that you abide within us. Transform us into branches of your love. Help us to bear fruit that feeds and nourishes a world hungry for your good news. May these gifts presented today help us live in you and live as your abiding presence in the world. Amen.

We Go Out to Serve

Hymn No. 450
Be Thou My Vision



1 Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
 2 Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true Word;
 3 Rich - es I heed not, nor vain, emp - ty praise;
 4 High King of Heav - en, my vic - to - ry won,

(A) (D) (G) (A)
 B[♭] E[♭] A[♭] B[♭]

naught be all else to me, save that thou art;
 I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord;
 thou mine in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways;
 may I reach heav - en's joys, O bright heaven's Sun!

(G) (D) (F[♯]m7) (G) (A)
 A[♭] E[♭] Gm7 A[♭] B[♭]

thou my best thought, by day or by night,
 thou my soul's shel - ter, and thou my high tower;
 thou and thou on - ly, first in my heart,
 Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,

(Bm) (D/F[♯]) (G) (D)
 Cm E[♭]/G A[♭] E[♭]

wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
 raise thou me heaven - ward, O Power of my power.
 High King of Heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.
 still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

Charge and Benediction

Dr. Brown

Congregational Response

No. 712

***A world in need now summons us to labor, love, and give,
 to make our life an offering that all may truly live.***

***The church of Christ is calling us to make the dream come true:
 a world redeemed by Christ-like love, all life in Christ made new.***

Postlude

Toccata on "Hymn to Joy"

Paul Fey

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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 for Youth and Missions/Outreach

Zach Bowyer, Director of Music and Organist

Rebecca Guzman, Director of Spiritual Formation

Chancel Choir

Laura Schelhammer, flute

Blythe Kinsey, piano

Madi Jenkins, Emma Jenkins, liturgists

A/V Team: Chris Wilcox, Joe Wilcox

Deacon/Elder of the Day: David Gaines

Ushers: Curt Ireland, Tom Klecker, Judy Jones, Charlie Metzler, Craig Parrish, Jim Williams

Welcome Team: Chuck Griffiths, Lina Griffiths, Jack Hess

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 Sunday, May 26 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 April 25, 2024)

Remember in Prayer

- Cathy Janney, 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, 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

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smpchome.org

WELCOME!

After worship, we hope you'll join us for lemonade and cookies outside between the sanctuary and chapel buildings. 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!

BRYANT FARMS ROAD EXTENSION PROJECT UPDATE

Beginning tomorrow, April 29, the small section of Blakeney Heath Rd between Bryant Farms Rd/Elm Ln and Park Farms Ln will be closed as the City starts work on the new traffic circle. Bryant Farms Rd/Elm Ln will remain open, but you will not be able to turn onto Blakeney Heath Rd at the gas station to turn into the church. During construction, access to the church will only be available coming from Blakeney Shopping Center on Blakeney Health Rd or via Park Farms Ln. For more info, go to smpchome.org/construction-2024 or scan QR code.



THIS WEEK'S CLASSES & EVENTS

today

APR. 28

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

BAM! Bible and Music

Meet in Narthex, Ages Kindergarten - 5th Grade

Children sing, creatively engage with Bible stories, and explore various instruments. We will serve pizza. Register on Realm.

Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

today

APR. 28

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

SMPC Youth High Seas Miniature Golf

High Seas Mini Golf, 10001 Charlotte Hwy, Fort Mill, SC, Middle and High Schoolers

Join us for mini golf fun! \$12 per person. Dropoff and pickup from High Seas. Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

monday

APR. 29

12:00 p.m. -
1:00 p.m.

CARE (Conversations Around Race Equity) Group Zoom

This group is conducting a six-week **virtual** 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.

tuesday

APR. 30

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

MAY 1

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.

friday

MAY 3

7:30 a.m. -
8:30 a.m.

Friday Morning Men's Group Chapel 206

This group meets on the first and third Fridays of every month. They are reading the book, *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan. All are welcome. Contact: Curt Ireland, irelandcurtis00@gmail.com.

saturday
MAY 4
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.



sunday
MAY 5
9:00 a.m. -
10:00 a.m.

**Adult Bible Study: Invitation to the Old Testament
McQueen Room and Zoom**

This 8-week study concludes on Sunday, May 5. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

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

**BYG (Big Youth Group)
Mecklenburg Hall, Middle and High Schoolers**

Join us for a Bible study, small group time, food and fellowship. Please register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

Men's Evening Study Group, Tuesday, May 7, 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 welcome. Contact: Jon Myers, jonmyers2@gmail.com.

Shelter Ministry, Thursday, May 9, 9:00 a.m., Mecklenburg Hall - This ministry meets to fill empty Rx bottles with body wash for our neighbors at Roof Above. Contact: Carol Morgan, morgancc43@aol.com.

Men's Breakfast Group, Thursday, May 9, 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.

Making Space Mom's Group and Rain or Shine "Mash Up", Thursday, May 9, 7:30 p.m., Foxcroft Wine Company, Waverly - Fellowship and connection is what it's all about! All are welcome. Contact: Allison Reeves, allison.tarwater@gmail.com.

Bagged Lunches for Roof Above, Saturday, May 11, 9:30 a.m., Outside the Palmer Building - Donate bagged lunches to Roof Above. Sign up on smpchome.org/serve.

Desserts for Center of Hope Shelter for Women and Children, Sunday, May 12, 10:10 a.m. - We collect desserts on the second Sunday of every month to deliver to Center of Hope. Go to smpchome.org/serve to sign up. Contact: Terry Gaines, terryg@carolina.rr.com.

Lunch Bunch Spring Gathering, Tuesday, May 14, 11:30 a.m., Trio Restaurant, 10709 McMullen Creek Pkwy - Join the Lunch Bunch for a yummy lunch and fellowship! Everyone is welcome. Please RSVP by Sunday, May 12 to Ruth Ann Engle, raengle22@gmail.com.

SAVE THE DATE



Augusta Youth Chorale, Wednesday, May 29, 7:00 p.m., Sanctuary - Join us for this special guest performance! Free to attend and everyone is welcome! Contact: Zach Bowyer, zach@smpchome.org.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL/MISSION POSSIBLE

Vacation Bible School and Mission Possible, 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.