

ADVENT 2024

SOUTH MECK PRESS

SOUTH MECKLENBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Photo credit: Becca Rouse Photography

FROM OUR PASTOR

DR. MATT BROWN

“Just as water reflects the face, so one human heart reflects another.” — Proverbs 27:10

Before the event are the preparation and expectation. Yes, such seasons of planning, arrangements, and putting together can be colored with anxiety, exhaustion, and even foreboding, particularly if relatives are involved. Yet, there is an alternative revealed in the words of a traditional Advent hymn —

“Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple, set apart from earthly use for heaven's employ, adorned with prayer and love and joy.”

The image of opening portals offers a sense of allowing light in, whereas anxiety tends to take us to the dark places. The opening of the heart's portals also gives a sense of allowing grudges, what-ifs, and fears of failure to escape. Consequently, the time of preparation becomes a celebration in itself. Grandpa weaves a wreath with an enthralled and invested grandchild creating a cherished annual rite that breeds its own thrill of expectation. It is possible for anticipation to be synonymous with joy when hearts are open. In these pages we invite you to join us in the joy of preparation for a child that will once again be born in open hearts.

Grace and Peace,
Matt

**JOIN US FOR WORSHIP ON SUNDAYS AT 10:10 AM IN THE SANCTUARY
OR VIA LIVESTREAM AT SMPCHOME.ORG.
FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK: @SOUTHMECKLENBURGPRESBYTERIAN
OR INSTAGRAM: @SOUTHMECKPRES**



BE A CHRISTMAS 'ANGEL'

Please join in our church tradition this Christmas season as we collect and deliver gifts for area families in need. You can select gifts through smpchome.org/advent or choose a gift tag from one of two Angel trees - one located in the narthex, and one located outside the church office beginning Sunday, December 1. Donation tags for ham dinners will also be available on the trees or monetary dinner donations of any amount can be submitted to Mary Katheryne Zagora, mkzagora@smpchome.org.



Wrapped gifts are due to the church by Monday, December 16. Angel tags should be displayed on the OUTSIDE of the gift. Gift deliveries will be made on Monday, December 23. Contact: Kristin Colson, kscolson@carolina.rr.com.

GROW IN FAITH AT SMPC



Growing spiritually and deepening our relationship with Jesus sometimes takes intention! We hope you'll join one of the small groups or studies at SMPC. From children to adults, there is a place for you here! More can be found at smpchome.org/connect or QR code.

MAKE SOME NOISE FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Saturdays, November 30, December 7, 14 & 21, 10:00 AM-4:00 PM - Join SMPC's Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign and be a bell ringer at Belk, SouthPark Mall. Sign up at smpchome.org/advent.



Trust the Whisper: Discerning Ways to Love God and Love Neighbor
An evening with author Kathy Izard
Sunday, February 2, 5:00-6:30 p.m., Sanctuary
More to come!

Adult Bible Study: The Symbols of Advent



Join this three-week study to explore the Advent symbols, such as the dove, wreath and candle. We will explore what the symbols represent and the faith stories behind them.



Sundays, 9:00-10:00 a.m.
Beginning December 8
McQueen Room or Zoom

Women's Advent Tea

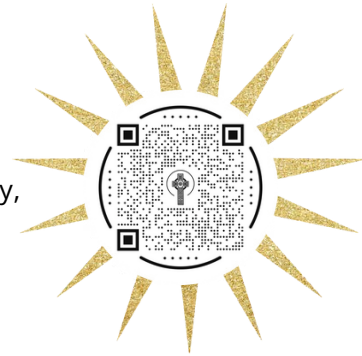


MUSIC, MEDITATION, SPICED TEA
CHICKEN SALAD CHICK, SWEETS

Saturday, December 7
10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Mecklenburg Hall
Register by November 30 on Realm or via QR code

SIGN UP FOR DAILY ADVENT DEVOTIONALS

Written by SMPC members and staff and illustrated by SMPC children, subscribers will receive SMPC Advent Devotionals in their email inbox daily beginning Sunday, December 1! Subscribe via the QR code. Contact: Terry Gaines, terryg@carolina.rr.com.



SHOP THE ALTERNATIVE GIFT MARKET



Because sometimes the best things in life aren't things.

Shop in person on Sunday, December 8, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. or online now through December 25.



SERVE OVER THE HOLIDAYS & INTO NEW YEAR

If serving others is something you and your family are focused on this Advent season and into the new year, SMPC offers many opportunities that allow you to make an impact in our church, our community, and our world.



Scan the QR code to fill out the interest form and get more details on service opportunities. Friends are always welcome! Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.



SMPC YOUTH DRIVES WITH HEART

It's a rite of passage that every teenager (and parent) must endure: behind-the-wheel driving hours. To receive your driver's license in North Carolina, you must first log 60 hours of supervised driving time with a parent or guardian -



not an easy feat for a teenager with a busy schedule. But SMPC member Ben Durham, 17, and his mom, Julie, turned this requirement into an actionable service opportunity for our community. For the last several months, Ben has donned the driver's seat as he and his mom delivered the 100 bagged lunches that SMPC donates monthly to Roof Above, a men's homeless shelter.

"It's been great to know that I am doing something good for my community while logging driving hours," said Ben. "And, it's something my mom and I can do together."

Going forward, Julie will lead our Bagged Lunches for Roof Above ministry. We extend a huge thank you to Shelby Ullman, who faithfully served in this position for five years. The opportunity to serve happens on the second Saturday of each month - you are always invited to donate bagged lunches! Sign up at smpchome.org/serve.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SATURDAYS, NOVEMBER 30, DECEMBER 7, 14, 21, 10:00 AM-4:00 PM (TWO-HOUR SHIFTS)
SMPC KETTLE RINGING AT BELK, SOUTHPARK MALL

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1, 5:00 PM.-6:30 PM, MECKLENBURG HALL, MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOLERS
BYG (BIG YOUTH GROUP) & CHRISTMAS PARTY

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 6:30-7:30 PM, LEGACY HEIGHTS, MIDDLE & HIGH SCHOOLERS
YOUTH CHRISTMAS CRAFTING

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 10:30 AM-12:30 PM, MECKLENBURG HALL
WOMEN'S ADVENT TEA

SUNDAYS, BEGINNING DECEMBER 8, 9:00-10:00 A.M., MCQUEEN ROOM OR ZOOM
ADULT BIBLE STUDY - "THE SYMBOLS OF ADVENT"

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8, 9:00 AM-12:00 PM, NARTHEX
ALTERNATIVE GIFT MARKET

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8, 5:00-6:30 PM, NARTHEX, KINDERGARTEN-5TH GRADE
BAM! BIBLE AND MUSIC

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 6:00-7:30 PM, SANCTUARY AND LIVESTREAM
FESTIVAL OF CAROLS

MONDAY, DECEMBER 16
ANGEL TREE DONATIONS DUE TO THE CHURCH

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 5:30 PM, CHAPEL
THE LONGEST NIGHT WORSHIP SERVICE

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24, SANCTUARY AND LIVESTREAM
CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP, 3:00 PM (FAMILY), 5:00 PM AND 8:00 PM (BOTH CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION)

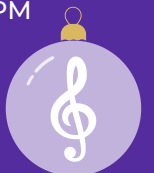
For the most up-to-date church information, please subscribe to our weekly email. Email Adrienne Jaquith, adrienne@smpchome.org to be added to the list.

FESTIVAL of CAROLS

"Dreams of the Holy Night"

Sunday, December 15 | 6:00-7:30 PM

A special worship service led by ensembles of all ages within the SMPC Music Ministry. Worship and music will be enhanced with scripture and poetry. Childcare provided.



**South
Mecklenburg**
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
8601 Bryant Farms Road
Charlotte, NC 28277
Return Service Requested

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CHARLOTTE, NC

South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church



CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

3:00 PM | Family Service

5:00 PM | Candlelight Communion

8:00 PM | Candlelight Communion

Find information about Advent worship services and events,
Advent resources and SMPC Advent Devotionals via our
website or QR code.



South Meck Press is a quarterly publication from South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church. For more worship, study, and fellowship opportunities, please visit smpchome.org.