

1 A might - y for - tress is our God, a bul-wark nev - er
 2 Did we in our own strength con - fide, our striv - ing would be
 3 And though this world, with dev - ils filled, should threat - en to un -
 4 That word a - bove all earth - ly powers, no thanks to them, a -

fail - ing. Our help - er he, a - mid the flood of
 los - ing, were not the right man on our side, the
 do us, we will not fear, for God hath willed his
 bid - eth. The Spir - it and the gifts are ours through

mor - tal ills pre - vail - ing. For still our an - cient foe doth
 man of God's own choos - ing. Dost ask who that may be? Christ
 truth to tri - umph through us. The Prince of Dark - ness grim, we
 him who with us sid - eth. Let goods and kin - dred go, this

seek to work us woe. His craft and power are great, and
 Je - sus, it is he. Lord Sab - a - oth his name, from
 trem - ble not for him. His rage we can en - dure, for
 mor - tal life al - so. The bod - y they may kill; God's

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Dr. Bayer

Lord of hosts, Jesus of Galilee, Holy Spirit, forgive us for the ways we have fallen short. You ask us to look to the margins and care for the lost; we center ourselves. You ask us to give away; we grab for more. You ask us to love one another; we cannot see beyond our divisions. Forgive us. We call on you, our beloved, our help, our God, our hope. Amen.

Assurance of God's Grace

Dr. Bayer

***Response of Praise**

Hymn 582

*Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen*

We Hear and Respond to the Word

Church Family Moment

Rebecca Guzman

1. Have you ever been at a family gathering or a party with adults and had them keep saying, "Oh my goodness, you've grown up so much!" or telling you stories from when you were little over and over? Did you feel like they weren't seeing you for who you really are? That you were still a little kid in their minds and always would be? This is kind of like what happens with Jesus in the gospel passage today.
2. Listen to a [readaloud](#) of *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus* by Mo Willems. I bet it is a favorite for many of you! When pigeon is not allowed to drive the bus, he becomes extremely angry and flies into a rage. Similarly, when Jesus challenges the people in his hometown, they become filled with rage and try to throw him off a cliff! What do you think a faithful response is when we become angry?
3. Print out and color this coloring [page](#). Or you might do a [word search](#), [crossword](#), or [decoder](#) as you think about this story. It can be a troubling story to read, and it's helpful for us to process difficult scriptures.
4. Journal, considering the following:
 - a) Who are the people in the synagogue/temple?
 - b) What does Jesus say to them? Why does this make them angry?
 - c) What do they do to Jesus in response?



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.

Anthem

I Believe

Mark Miller

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

*I believe in the sun, even when it's not shining.
I believe in love, even when I don't feel it.
I believe in God, even when God is silent.*

Reading from the Gospels Luke 4:16-30

Dr. Brown

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, "Is not this Joseph's son?" He said to them, "Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, 'Doctor, cure yourself!' And you will say, 'Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.'" And he said, "Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown. But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian." When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Provocateur?

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 *Here I Am, Lord* arr. Janet Linker
Ann Carney, piano; Laura Schelhammer, flute; Zach Bowyer, organ

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**

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him,
all creatures here below; praise him above ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

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. (Pastor's prayer)

. . . (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.**

The Words of Institution Dr. Bayer, Dr. Brown

The Bread and the Cup

You are invited to come forward (see diagram), take the elements, and return to your seat. Remove the wafer on the bottom of the cup before opening the juice. If you are not able to come forward, you will be served at your seat.

Communion of the People

The Prayer after Communion Dr. Brown

We Go Out to Serve

***Hymn 162** *O Carpenter, Why Leave the Bench* LAND OF REST
(stanza 1: all; stanza 2: low voices; stanza 3: high voices; stanza 4: all)

1 O car - pen - ter, why leave the bench where
 2 O car - pen - ter, why leave the tools to
 3 O car - pen - ter, why leave the world of
 4 O car - pen - ter, why leave re - pairs with
 5 O car - pen - ter, who else could do the

wood yields to your art, and take in - stead, to
 car - ry out your plans, and go in - stead to
 ta - ble, bed, and house, to face the em - pire's
 wood and clamp and glue, and rise from death to
 work that you have done? What can we do but

try your skill, the ston - y hu - man heart?
 do God's work with emp - ty, o - pen hands?
 car - pen - try, to lift a Ro - man cross?
 seek in - stead to make the whole world new?
 sing your praise, O Sav - ior, Mar - y's son!

***Charge and Benediction** Dr. Brown

***Congregational Response** Hymn 162, stanza 5

***O carpenter, who else could do
 the work that you have done?
 What can we do but sing your praise,
 O Savior, Mary's son!***

Postlude *Reformation Suite* arr. James Pethel
IV. A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

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
Laura Schelhammer, flute
Brett Parrish, soloist
Ann Carney, Blythe Kinsey, piano

A/V Team: Kari Case

Ushers: Andrew Brown, Frank Graham, Judy Jones, Craig Parrish, Donna Podgorny, Bob Williamson

Welcome Team: Donna Brown, Caeden Myers, Crystal Myers, Grayson Myers, Jon Myers, Kathy Rasimas

We light a candle in worship today celebrating the birth of Allison Annette Jones on January 25. Congratulations to Bree and Nick Jones and big brother Cayden!

There are several options to remember or honor a loved one with the SMPC Flower Ministry! Find more details and sign up to reserve a Sunday via the QR code. Contact: Karen Malmut, karenmalmut@yahoo.com.



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 Adrienne Jaquith, Office and Database Manager, adrienne@smpchome.org. Also, find us on Instagram: [@southmeckpres](https://www.instagram.com/southmeckpres) and Facebook: [@southmecklenburgpresbyterian](https://www.facebook.com/southmecklenburgpresbyterian).

Interested in joining South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church? Our Session will gather to welcome new members on Sunday, February 23 at 11:30 a.m. To learn more, contact Dr. Whitney Bayer, Associate Pastor, whitney@smpchome.org or 980-265-2835

Congregational Notes (as of January 30, 2025)

Remember in Prayer

- Stuart, Wendy and Leigh Wardlaw as their son and brother, Stephen Wardlaw, entered the Church triumphant on January 27.
- Kay Dano, as her son, David Dano, passed away on January 28.
- All those affected by the wildfires in Southern California.
- All those involved in the continued hurricane recovery efforts.
- All those living with uncertainty in the Middle East.
- All those affected by the conflict in Ukraine.
- Our mission partners in Bayonnais, Haiti, amid the chaos that has enveloped their country.

To join the prayer chain or send a prayer request:
prayer@SMPChome.org.

SESSION

Class of 2025
Emily Brown
Rich Fuller
Adrienne Jaquith
Bill Ramsey

Class of 2026
Dave Gaines
Caroline Guy
Lisa Kuszmar
Jon Myers
Gayle Ireland
Clerk of Session

Class of 2027
Alicia Bickett
Kara Guy
Manny Villa
Bob Williamson

BOARD OF DEACONS

Class of 2025
Michael Choren
Richard Franseen
Susan Hicks
Marge Kruse
Tom Massey
Crystal Myers

Class of 2026
Gena DeChant
Tim Maguire
Lee Martin
Josh Schardt
Carol Stillerman
Dana Hefner

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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 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. 2
5:00 p.m. -
6:30 p.m.

All Church Reads and Author Talk/Reflection Sanctuary
Read the book *Trust the Whisper* by Kathy Izard and join us for an evening with Kathy Izard. After sharing the story behind the book, Kathy Izard will answer questions and lead a short "Find Your Whisper" exercise. Children are also invited to a special program with Director of Spiritual Formation Rebecca Guzman featuring Kathy's children's book, *Grace Heard a Whisper*. Casual reception to follow. Registration on Realm is appreciated but not required. Invite a friend! Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

today
FEB. 2
5:00 p.m. -
6:30 p.m.

February BYG (Big Youth Group) Mecklenburg Hall, Middle and High Schoolers
BYG is held on the first Sunday of each month during the school year. BYG provides an opportunity for youth to grow in faith and love through Bible study, small group time, good food, fun games and fellowship. Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

tuesday
FEB. 4
10:00 a.m.

Handiworkers Group Palmer Building, Room 104
All levels of knitters, needlepointers, quilters, cross-stitchers and crocheters are invited. This group meets weekly to work on projects. Contact: Judy Jameson, jgjameson@gmail.com.

wednesday
FEB. 5
9:30 a.m.

Conversations with Dr. Matt Brown McQueen Room or Zoom
We will discuss the scripture for the coming week's sermon. All are welcome! Contact Matt Brown, matt@smpchome.org, for Zoom info.

thursday
FEB. 6
5:30 p.m. -
7:00 p.m.

SMPC Preschool Fundraiser at Brixx Pizza Brixx at Blakeney
Brixx will donate \$4 for every adult entree and \$1 for every kid's meal you buy on SMPC's behalf. Scan the QR code to download the flyer or pick up a copy in the Connection Center. Contact: Tammy Winchip, tammy@smpchome.org.



thursday
FEB. 6
7:30 p.m.

Making Space Mom's Group McQueen Room
Moms of all ages are invited to join us on the first and third Thursdays of every month for study, service and fellowship. Contact: Allison Reeves, allison.tarwater@gmail.com.

friday
FEB. 7
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 Ruthless Elimination of Hurry* by John Mark Comer. All are welcome. Contact: Curt Ireland, irelandcurtis00@gmail.com.

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

New! Adult Study: 'Wonder' McQueen Room/Zoom
Join us for a unique Sunday School series that bridges the gap between faith and science. Over six classes, we'll explore how these two ways of understanding the world can complement and enrich one another. Through thought-provoking discussions and reflections, we'll delight in the beauty of discovery—both in the natural world and in our spiritual journeys. Register on Realm. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

sunday
FEB. 9
10:10 a.m.

Desserts for Center of Hope
Drop off before worship in the narthex
On the second Sunday of every month we provide sweet treats for the women and children that temporarily call Center of Hope home. Desserts can be store-bought or homemade. Sign up at smpchome.org > Serve Our Community. Contact: Terry Gaines, terryg@carolina.rr.com.

sunday
FEB. 9
10:10 a.m.

Souper Bowl Sunday and Youth Sunday
Sanctuary/Narthex
We'll be collecting canned goods and monetary donations for Nourish Up in our annual Souper Bowl of Caring initiative, and we will be celebrating the blessings of our amazing Youth Ministry during Youth Sunday! Our Youth will lead us in worship and will be hosting an important fundraiser for its scholarship program. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

sunday
FEB. 9
4:00 p.m. -
5:00 p.m.

BAM! Bible and Music
Narthex, Children in Kindergarten-5th Grade
NOTE DIFFERENT TIME DUE TO THE SUPER BOWL! WE WILL NOT HAVE DINNER DURING THIS BAM! During BAM!, children sing, creatively engage with Bible stories, and explore various instruments in peer age groups. Register on Realm. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

A Caregiver's Journey, Tuesday, February 11, 1:00-2:30 p.m. McQueen Room -
Finding meaning and purpose as you care for a loved one with Alzheimer's or dementia. Contact: Dr. Whitney Bayer, whitney@smpchome.org.

Men's Evening Study Group, Tuesday, February 11, 7:30 p.m., Chapel 206 -
The group meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of every month. New faces are always welcome! Contact: Jon Myers, jonmyers2@gmail.com.

Shelter Ministry, Thursday, February 13, 9:00 a.m., Mecklenburg Hall -
This group meets on the second Thursday of every month to fill empty medicine bottles with body wash for Roof Above. Contact: Carol Morgan, morgancc43@aol.com.

Men's Breakfast Group, Thursday, February 13, 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.

Center of Hope Breakfast, Saturday, February 15, Meet in the church parking lot at 5:15 a.m. - On the third Saturday of each month, SMPChome preps, cooks and serves breakfast for guests at the Center of Hope. Volunteers are back at the church around 9:00 a.m. Food donations are due Thursday, February 13. Monetary donations are always welcome. Sign up on smpchome.org > Serve Our Community. Contact: Bob Williamson, bobwill31@hotmail.com.

Beginner Chrismon Ornaments Class, Saturday, February 15, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Chapel 202, Ages 10 and Up - Learn how to make Chrismon ornaments! Cost is \$5.00 to cover materials, and you will complete a dragonfly ornament during the class. Register on Realm. Contact: Donna Brown, donna matt89@gmail.com.

Room in the Inn, Sundays, February 16 and March 2, Sardis Presbyterian Church - There are spots open for food donations and volunteers to help with dinner, overnight stays or breakfast and cleanup. Sign up via QR code. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.



We continue to pray for Southern California! Please consider donating to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance through the PC(USA). Donate via QR code or go to pcusa.org/donate.

REGISTRATION OPEN FOR VBS & MISSION POSSIBLE

Vacation Bible School, Monday, July 21-Thursday, July 24, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., VBS: Ages 3-4th grade; Mission Possible: Rising 5th and 6th Grade - Register on Realm. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.