



Fourth Sunday of Easter  
Confirmation Sunday  
May 11, 2025  
10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestream

**We Gather**

**Prelude**                      *Chorale Prelude (Psalm 23:4)*                      Douglas Wagner

**Welcome and Concerns of the Church**                      Dr. Matthew S. Brown

**Introit**                      *Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us*                      William Bradbury

**\*Call to Worship**                      Grace Wooley

One: Through every age and in every place, Christ, in whose name we gather, calls disciples with a simple invitation and words of challenge: "Come and follow me."

**Many: And where is it that we go with Christ?**

One: Christ leads us among enemies and strangers, causing us to regard all persons as beloved friends.

**Many: Christ leads us into uncharted places of spiritual wilderness where the word and will of God are the only reliable guides.**

One: Christ leads us to love ourselves and others, so we might be found, and grace would become real.

**All: And Christ leads us to new life. We gather to worship Christ who leads. May we gain the wisdom and courage to follow.**

**\*Hymn 268**                      *Crown Him with Many Crowns*                      DIADEMATA

1 Crown him with man - y crowns, the Lamb up - on his throne;  
 2 Crown him the Lord of love; be - hold his hands and side,  
 3 Crown him the Lord of peace, whose power a scep - ter sways  
 4 Crown him the Lord of years, the po - ten - tate of time;

hark, how the heaven-ly an - them drowns all mu - sic but its own!  
 rich wounds, yet vis - i - ble a - bove, in beau - ty glo - ri - fied:  
 from pole to pole, that wars may cease, ab - sorbed in prayer and praise.  
 cre - a - tor of the roll - ing spheres, in - ef - fa - bly sub - lime.

A - wake, my soul, and sing of him who died for thee,  
 no an - gel in the sky can ful - ly bear that sight,  
 His reign shall know no end; and round his pierc - ed feet  
 All hail, Re - deem - er, hail! For thou hast died for me;

and hail him as thy match - less King through all e - ter - ni - ty.  
 but down - ward bends his burn - ing eye at mys - ter - ies so bright.  
 fair flowers of par - a - dise ex - tend their fra - grance ev - er sweet.  
 thy praise shall nev - er, nev - er fail through - out e - ter - ni - ty.

**Prayer of Confession (unison)**

**Dr. Brown**

O God of still waters and green pastures within whose merciful love we encounter the Good Shepherd's care, we confess our susceptibility to other solicitous voices promising green pastures that turn quickly brown and attentive care they will never provide. Easily tempted, we keep chasing futility while ignoring the abundant care you so freely give. Forgive our fleeting hearts and seal our spirits to your heart so that our lives may reflect the grace of the Good Shepherd who will not forsake his sheep. To Christ be all Glory. Amen.

**Assurance of God's Grace**

**Dr. Brown**

**\*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**

**Church Family Moment**

Rebecca Guzman

**1. Read and Reflect:** Listen to [The Kissing Hand by Audrey Penn](#), a sweet story about a raccoon who learns he's never alone—even when he can't see his mom. She gives him a kiss in his hand to remind him he's always loved. As Briana Stewart writes, "The security Jesus offers—'no one will snatch them out of my hand'—is echoed in the mother's gesture." Both the story and the Gospel remind us that God's love is always with us, guiding us on our journey. (Source: [Storypath, Fourth Sunday of Easter, Year C](#))



**2. Create a Cotton Ball Sheep:** Draw a simple outline of a sheep or print one out. Then glue cotton balls onto the body to make a fluffy sheep. As you create, talk about what it means to be part of Jesus' flock—and how He knows each one of us by name.

**3. Play "Follow the Shepherd":** Play a listening game and choose one person to be the "shepherd." Everyone else is a "sheep" and closes their eyes or turns around. The shepherd gives quiet directions (like "take two steps forward" or "turn right") and the sheep must listen closely and follow. This helps us practice hearing and trusting the shepherd's voice—just like we listen for Jesus.

**4. Wonder Together:**

- What do you think Jesus' voice sounds like?
- How do we know we belong to Jesus?
- When have you felt really safe or really loved?
- Why do you think Jesus calls us "sheep"?

**Sacrament of Baptism**

**Della Madeline Becker**

Daughter of Stephanie Becker and Jared Becker, sister of Cami Becker,  
granddaughter of Kristen and Kevin Curtis

Representing the Session: Nancy Metzler

Representing the children: Grace and Ryan Wooley

**Baptismal Response**

***Child of blessing, child of promise, baptized with the Spirit's sign,  
with this water God has sealed you unto love and grace divine.***

***Child of joy, our dearest treasure, God's you are, from God you came.***

***Back to God we humbly give you: live as one who bears Christ's name.***

*The children will return to join their families following the sermon.*

**Prayer for Illumination**

Dr. Brown

**First Reading**

Psalm 23:1-6

Dr. Brown

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff— they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

**Anthem***Leaning on the Everlasting Arms*

arr. Eric Nelson

Chancel Choir; Laura Schelhammer, flute;  
Jeffrey Lang, cello; Blythe Kinsey, piano

*What a fellowship, what a joy divine, leaning on the everlasting arms;  
what a blessedness, what a peace is mine, leaning on the everlasting  
arms. Leaning, leaning, safe and secure from all alarms; leaning,  
leaning, leaning on the everlasting arms. Oh, how sweet to walk in this  
pilgrim way, leaning on the everlasting arms. Oh, how bright the path  
grows from day to day, leaning on the everlasting arms. Through many  
dangers, toils, and snares, I have already come. What have I to dread,  
what have I to fear, leaning on the everlasting arms? I have blessed  
peace with my Lord so near, leaning on the everlasting arms.*

**Second Reading**

John 10:1-18

Rev. Lindsey Odom

"Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers." Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. So again Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one

flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."

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

**Sermon** "In the Frame of the Shepherd's Care" Rev. Odom

**Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer** Caroline Guy  
... (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** *Tower Sounds* John Behnke  
Gaudete Ringers

*As an alternative to the traditional offering plate, you may support the ministry of SMPC by giving online at [smpchome.org](http://smpchome.org) 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.***

**\*Prayer of Dedication** Ryan Wooley  
**Glorious God, may these gifts bring glory to you and grace to your world. May our lives and our ministry reflect your love, and may we spread your message of love throughout the world. Amen.**

## **We Go Out to Serve**

**Presentation of Confirmands** Rev. Odom

**Scripture Reading** 1 Peter 2:9 Dr. Brown  
"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people,[a] in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

**Profession of Faith** Rev. Odom

Recognizing that all are sinners, dependent on the mercy of God, do you profess your faith in Jesus Christ as Lord of all and Savior of sinners, and do you confess your dependence upon Christ for your salvation?

Do you now resolve and promise, depending on the grace of the Holy Spirit, that you will seek to live as a follower of Christ?

Do you declare your intention to participate actively and responsibly in the worship and mission of the church?

**Questions to the Congregation**

Caroline Guy

**\*The Affirmation of Faith** (*unison*)

**The Apostles' Creed**

Caroline Guy

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**\*Hymn 377**     *I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light*

HOUSTON



1 I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to fol - low  
 2 I want to see the bright-ness of God. I want to look at  
 3 I'm look-ing for the com - ing of Christ. I want to be with



Je - sus. God set the stars to give light to the world. The  
 Je - sus. Clear Sun of righ-teous-ness, shine on my path, and  
 Je - sus. When we have run with pa-tience the race, we



*Refrain*



star of my life is Je - sus.  
 show me the way to the Fa - ther. In him there is no dark-ness at  
 shall know the joy of Je - sus.



all. The night and the day are both a - like. The Lamb is the



**Prayer of Confirmation and Laying on of Hands**

Rev. Odom

**Welcome to Discipleship**

Gayle Ireland

One: By publicly professing their faith, the students of the Confirmation Class of 2025 have expressed their intention to continue in the covenant God made with them in their baptism. Let us welcome them as they join with us in the worship and mission of the church.

**All: With joy and thanksgiving we welcome you to share with us in the ministry of Christ, for we are all one in Christ.**

**\*Charge and Benediction**

Rev. Odom

**\*Congregational Response**

No. 377, refrain

*In him there is no darkness at all.  
The night and the day are both alike.  
The Lamb is the light of the city of God.  
Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.*

**Postlude**

*Festival Trumpet Tune*

Mark Thewes

## **Worship Service Notes**

### **Leading Worship this Morning**

Dr. Matthew S. Brown, Pastor

Rev. Lindsey Odom, Associate Pastor of Youth & Missions/Outreach

Zach Bowyer, Director of Music and Organist

Rebecca Guzman, Director of Spiritual Formation

Chancel Choir

Laura Schelhammer, flute; Jeffrey Lang, cello; Blythe Kinsey, piano

Gaudete Ringers; Helen Castle and Gayle Ireland, co-directors

Grace Wooley, Ryan Wooley, liturgist

Caroline Guy, Gayle Ireland, representing the Session

**Acolytes:** Miles Ullman, Ryan Wooley

**A/V Team:** Brad Alford, Luke Estes

**Ushers:** Bob Cushman, Mary Elledge, Richard Franseen, Curt Ireland

Tom Klecker, Charlie Metzler

**Welcome Team:** Donna Podgorny, Geena Woodard, Jones Woodard,

Michael Woodard, Rue Woodard

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](mailto: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, May 25 at 11:30 a.m. To learn more, contact Melissa White, Director of Hospitality and Connection, [melissa@smpchome.org](mailto:melissa@smpchome.org) or 704-887-7488.

### **Congregational Notes** (as of May 8, 2025)

#### **Remember in Prayer**

- Argen Aycock, as she begins treatment for skin cancer.
- All those affected by conflict, displacement, and unrest around the world and at home.
- Our mission partners in Bayonnais, Haiti, as they navigate the chaos and challenges engulfing their country.

To join the prayer chain or send a prayer request:

[prayer@SMPChome.org](mailto:prayer@SMPChome.org)



## SMPC Confirmation Class of 2025

### Confirmand

Lanie Bolick  
Dylan Davis  
Alex Earp  
Aaron Eberhardt  
Natalie Guy  
Nolan King  
Claire Latzke  
Colin Lee  
Emily Mitchell  
Katie Powell

### Mentor

Amy Zagora  
Jeana Lee  
George Elledge  
Tom Klecker  
Amy Zagora  
Steve Williams  
Kathy Graham  
Dean Elledge  
Sandra Carr  
Leanne Royster

*Join us in the narthex after worship to greet the confirmands and celebrate them with cake!*

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**South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church**

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# CONFIRMATION SUNDAY

## MAY 11, 2025

### MEANING OF CONFIRMATION

#### Rev. Lindsey Odom

Confirmation is a significant step on one's journey of faith. It is when a young person explores and engages questions of theology, including who God is and who we are in relation to God. Confirmation builds on baptism when we are named and claimed by God. In confirmation, youth are confirming the promises made on their behalf by their parents and the congregation at their baptism and are professing faith in Jesus Christ for themselves. Confirmation is more than a personal decision to join the church, it is also a commitment to live one's life for God, and each one of these confirmands and their Statements of Faith have reflected this.

Through confirmation, these youth have learned what it means to be a Christian and are now being ushered into lives of faithful discipleship. It has been a joy and a privilege to walk alongside them in this part of their journey of faith. Our class times have been filled with thoughtful conversations, honest questions, deep reflections, and laughter and fun, too. I am especially proud of the powerful and heartfelt Statements of Faith they have written. They have worked hard, not just to complete an assignment, but to really express who they are as followers of Christ. It's clear that God is moving in their lives, shaping their hearts, and guiding their steps. I am especially thankful to all of our confirmands that they have declared their faith and are now desiring to share with us in our common ministry.

I am excited to present to you the Class of 2025 SMPC Confirmands.

#### 2025 SMPC CONFIRMANDS

1. Lanie Bolick
2. Dylan Davis
3. Alex Earp
4. Aaron Eberhardt
5. Natalie Guy
6. Nolan King
7. Claire Latzke
8. Colin Lee
9. Emily Mitchell
10. Katie Powell

## WELCOME!

After worship, we hope you'll join us for lemonade and cookies outside. 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

**tuesday**  
**MAY 13**  
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](mailto:jgjameson@gmail.com).

**tuesday**  
**MAY 13**  
1:00 p.m. -  
2:30 p.m.

**A Caregiver's Journey**  
**McQueen Room**

For those caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's or dementia. Meets monthly on the second Tuesday. Contact: Kathy Garner, [kathygarner15@gmail.com](mailto:kathygarner15@gmail.com).

**tuesday**  
**MAY 13**  
7:30 p.m.

**Men's Evening Study Group**  
**Chapel 206**

This group meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month. New faces are always welcome! Contact: Jon Myers, [jonmyers2@gmail.com](mailto:jonmyers2@gmail.com).

**wednesday**  
**MAY 14**  
9:30 a.m.

**Conversations with Dr. Matt Brown**  
**McQueen Room or Zoom**

Join us as we discuss the scripture for the coming week's sermon. All are welcome! Contact Matt Brown, [matt@smpchome.org](mailto:matt@smpchome.org), for Zoom info.

**thursday**  
**MAY 15**  
12:30 p.m.

**Food for Thought Book Group**  
**McQueen Room**

This group will discuss *Meredith, Alone* by Claire Alexander. All are welcome. Contact: Kathy Paquette, [khesspaquette@aol.com](mailto:khesspaquette@aol.com).

**thursday**  
**MAY 15**  
6:00 p.m.

**International Dining Group**  
**Great Wall of China South, Carmel Commons**

All are welcome to join this group as it samples different cuisines around town! Sign up on Realm or contact Alice Tyler, [rrt1317@aol.com](mailto:rrt1317@aol.com).

**thursday**  
**MAY 15**  
7:30 p.m.

**Making Space Mom's Group**  
**Chapel 206**

This group meets on the first and third Thursdays of every month. All moms are welcome! Contact: Allison Reeves, [allison.tarwater@gmail.com](mailto:allison.tarwater@gmail.com).

**friday**  
**MAY 16**  
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 beginning the book *Life Is Hard. God Is Good. Let's Dance.: Experiencing Real Joy in a World Gone Mad* by Brant Hansen. All are welcome. Contact: Curt Ireland, [irelandcurtis00@gmail.com](mailto:irelandcurtis00@gmail.com).

**saturday**  
**MAY 17**

**Center of Hope Breakfast**  
**Meet at SMPC at 5:15 a.m.**

On the third Saturday of each month, SMPC preps, cooks and serves breakfast for guests at the Center of Hope. Food donations are due Thursday, May 15. Monetary donations are always welcome. Sign up via QR code. Contact: Bob Williamson, [bobwill31@hotmail.com](mailto:bobwill31@hotmail.com).



**sunday**  
**MAY 18**  
9:00 a.m. -  
10:00 a.m.

**Adult Study: The Wired Word  
McQueen Room or Zoom**

A three-week series that brings scripture into conversation with today's headlines. Register on Realm. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

**sunday**  
**MAY 18**  
11:15 a.m. -  
1:00 p.m.

**Lunch on the Grounds  
Church Parking Lot & Mecklenburg Hall**

Join us after worship for a delicious lunch catered by Brown Bag. We'll enjoy sliced grilled chicken breast, spinach salad with berries and mandarin oranges, mac 'n cheese, rolls, brownies, tea and lemonade. Register on Realm or via QR code. Adults: \$12; Ages 4-11: \$6; Ages 3 and under: Free. Contact: Melissa White, melissa@smpchome.org.



**sunday**  
**MAY 18**  
11:30 a.m. -  
12:30 p.m.

**Family Playdate on the Playground  
During Lunch on the Grounds, Ages 3-1<sup>st</sup> grade**

Join us on the SMPC Preschool playground during Lunch on the Grounds! Siblings are welcome! Contact: Kaitlin Gaul, kaitlin.slanina@gmail.com.

**sunday**  
**MAY 18**  
5:00 p.m. -  
6:30 p.m.

**BAM! Bible and Music End of Year Party  
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. Let's celebrate all the fun we had this year! Pizza will be served. Register on Realm. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

**sunday**  
**MAY 18**  
5:00 p.m. -  
6:30 p.m.

**SMPC Youth Summer Kickoff  
Middle and High Schoolers**

We'll have an inflatable waterslide, corn hole, Spikeball, food and fellowship! Pizza will be served. Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

## IMPORTANT REMINDER FOR CLASS OF 2025

**DUE TODAY, MAY 11! Graduate Form** - Graduates, please complete the form via QR code for the bulletin on Graduate Sunday, June 1. High school graduates are also invited to Senior Breakfast before worship (9:00-10:00 a.m.) on June 1 in Mecklenburg Hall. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Men's Breakfast Group, Thursday, May 22, 9:30 a.m., Big View Diner, 6637 Lancaster Hwy** - This will be the last meeting for this group before it takes a summer break. They will reconvene on Thursday, September 12. Contact: Bob Tyler, Btyler@unitedskates.com.

**Bag Lunches for Roof Above, Saturday, May 24, 9:30 a.m., Drop off in front of the Palmer Building** - On the fourth Saturday of each month, SMPC provides 100 bag lunches for Roof Above to help feed those in need. Sign up to bring bag lunches via QR code. Contact: Julie Durham, julierdurham@gmail.com.



**Believing and Belonging, Sunday, June 8, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., McQueen Room** - For visitors, new members and anyone who would like to know more about being Presbyterian and SMPC. Lunch will be provided and childcare available. Register on Realm or via QR code. Contact: Melissa White, melissa@smpchome.org.