



Third Sunday of Easter

May 4, 2025

10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestream

We Gather

Prelude *Lift High the Cross* John A. Behnke

Welcome and Concerns of the Church Rev. Lindsey Odom

Introit *Scherzo on Lift High the Cross* Janet Linker

***Call to Worship** Rev. Odom

One: As you walk with us, as we journey together,

Many: Lord, your Word fills our hearts!

One: As you speak with us, as your love is revealed,

Many: Lord your fire burns in our hearts!

One: As we proclaim what we have seen and heard,

Many: May all people be drawn to you, the risen Lord!

***Hymn 826** *Lift High the Cross* CRUCIFER

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ pro - claim

till all the world a - dore his sa - cred name. *Fine*

till all the world a - dore his sa - cred name.

1 Come, Chris - tians, fol - low where our Sav - ior trod,
 2 All new - born ser - vants of the Cru - ci - fied
 3 O Lord, once lift - ed on the glo - rious tree,
 4 So shall our song of tri - umph ev - er be:

the Lamb vic - to - rious, Christ, the Son of God.
 bear on their brow the seal of Christ who died.
 your death has brought us life e - ter - nal - ly.
 praise to the Cru - ci - fied for vic - to - ry.

to Refrain

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Rev. Odom

Lord God, we come to you in a manner of humility, for we often sin and mess up and we neglect to seek you in our daily lives. We get distracted from your presence, uncertain and afraid. We need help in everyday life, to pray more, to love one another despite differences, and to know you better. We all have different stories, and we do not know what every person in this room is going through, but we know you will help us and keep pursuing us with your everlasting love. Forgive us, God, when we sin, and make us new in you. Grant us more and more of the resurrection life that we may walk in its power and be strengthened through its influence. For the glory of our living Savior, Amen.

Assurance of God's Grace

Rev. Odom

***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. **Act It Out:** Today's scripture tells the story of the risen Jesus surprising his disciples while they're fishing. They've caught nothing—until Jesus tells them to try the other side of the boat. Suddenly, they catch so many fish they can barely carry them! Peter is so excited he jumps out of the boat to swim to Jesus. Try acting out the story at home with paper fish, a blanket "boat," and someone playing Jesus on the shore. How do you think the disciples felt when they saw Jesus again?
2. **Read and Reflect:** Watch *The Beautiful Oops* by Barney Saltzberg [here](#). This book reminds us that mistakes can lead to something new. Peter made a big mistake when he denied knowing Jesus. But Jesus gives him another chance, turning that "oops" into a beautiful moment. As Noell Rathbun-Cook writes, Jesus "graciously redeems and redirects" Peter's life ([Storypath source](#)).
3. **Make "Beautiful Oops" Art:** Take a piece of paper and "mess it up"—crumple it, drip water, tear it, or scribble on it. Then turn it into something beautiful. Can your scribble become a flower? A mountain? Just like Jesus helped Peter find new purpose, you can turn your oops into something creative.
4. **Journal, considering the following:**
 - a. Why do you think Jesus used the big catch of fish to get the disciples' attention?
 - b. How do you think Peter felt when Jesus gave him another chance?
 - c. Have you ever made a mistake that turned into something good?



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 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.

First Reading

Psalm 30

Dr. Brown

I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn me up, and did not let my foes rejoice over me. O Lord my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me. O Lord, you brought up my soul from Sheol, restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit. Sing praises to the Lord, O you his faithful ones, and give thanks to his holy name. For his anger is but for a moment; his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning. As for me, I said in my prosperity, "I shall never be moved." By your favor, O Lord, you had established me as a strong mountain; you hid your face; I was dismayed. To you, O Lord, I cried, and to the Lord I made supplication: "What profit is there in my death, if I go down to the Pit? Will the dust praise you? Will it tell of your faithfulness? Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me! O Lord, be my helper!" You have turned my mourning into dancing; you have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, so that my soul may praise you and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever.

Second Reading

John 21:15-19

Dr. Brown

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go." (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, "Follow me."

One: This is the word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

After the Awkward

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

In the Bulb There Is a Flower

James Biery

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. Brown

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

Rev. Odom, Dr. Brown

The Bread and the Cup

You are invited to come forward (see diagram) to receive the elements of communion by intinction. When receiving the elements by intinction, you are invited to take a piece of bread, dip it into the cup, and return to your seat. If you are not able to come forward, you will be served at your seat. Servers with gluten-free elements are located at the back of the sanctuary.

Communion of the People

The Prayer after Communion

Dr. Brown

We Go Out to Serve

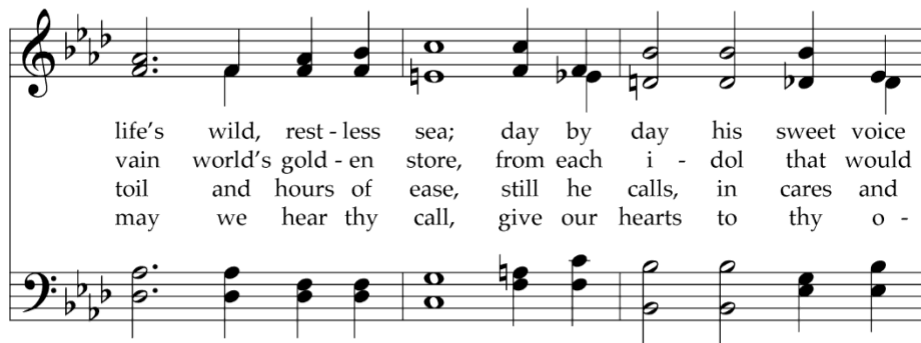
*Hymn 720

Jesus Calls Us

GALILEE



1 Je - sus calls us: o'er the tu - mult of our
2 Je - sus calls us from the wor - ship of the
3 In our joys and in our sor - rows, days of
4 Je - sus calls us: by thy mer - cies, Sav - ior,



life's wild, rest - less sea; day by day his sweet voice
vain world's gold - en store, from each i - dol that would
toil and hours of ease, still he calls, in cares and
may we hear thy call, give our hearts to thy o -



sound - eth say - ing, "Chris - tian, fol - low me."
keep us, say - ing, "Chris - tian, love me more."
plea - sures, "Chris - tian, love me more than these."
be - dience, serve and love thee best of all.

*Charge and Benediction

Dr. Brown

*Congregational Response

No. 720 stanza 4

*Jesus calls us: by thy mercies,
Savior, may we hear thy call,
give our hearts to thy obedience,
serve and love thee best of all.*

Postlude

Lift High the Cross

Charles W. Ore

Worship Service Notes

Leading Worship this Morning

Dr. Matthew S. Brown, Pastor

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

Rebecca Guzman, Director of Spiritual Formation

Ann Carney, organ

A/V Team: Kari Case, Xander Case

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

Welcome Team: Kathy Rasimas, Shelby Ullman, Amy Zagora

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 and Facebook: @southmecklenburgpresbyterian.

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 or 704-887-7488.

Congregational Notes (as of May 1, 2025)

Remember in Prayer

- Mrna Dibble as she recovers from surgery.
- 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.

SMPC STAFF

Dr. Matthew S. Brown, Pastor

matt@smpchome.org

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

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Mary Katheryne Zagora, Financial Administrator

mkzagora@smpchome.org

Church Office Hours:
Monday – Thursday: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Friday: Closed

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South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church

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PO Box 79321, Charlotte, NC 28271

smpchome.org

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

today

MAY 4

11:30 a.m. -

12:30 p.m.

Third Thirty: A Candid Spiritual Exploration of Realities and Challenges We Face in the Years 60-90 The Commons

This 12-week study meets one Sunday a month over a light lunch after worship. This is Session 2: "Introduction to 'Personal Concerns.'" Come to as many sessions as your schedule allows! More information and register on Realm or scan QR code. Contact: Melissa White, melissa@smpchome.org.



today

MAY 4

5:00 p.m. -

6:30 p.m.

BAM! Bible and Music 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. Pizza is served. Register on Realm. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

today

MAY 4

5:00 p.m. -

6:30 p.m.

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

We will welcome our fifth graders for tonight's BYG! BYG is held on the first Sunday of each month during the school year and provides an opportunity for youth to grow in faith and love through Bible study, small group time, good food, games, and amazing company. Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

tuesday

MAY 6

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

MAY 7

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, for Zoom info.

thursday

MAY 8

9:00 a.m.

Shelter Ministry Mecklenburg Hall

This group meets on the second Thursday of every month to fill empty medicine bottles with body wash for Roof Above. They are always in need of body wash and Rx vials (please, no shampoo or conditioner!) Contact: Carol Morgan, morgancc43@aol.com.

thursday

MAY 8

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.

sunday

MAY 11

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 11

10:10 a.m. .

Confirmation Sunday Sanctuary

Join us during 10:10 a.m. worship as we celebrate the SMPC Confirmation Class of 2025!

UPCOMING EVENTS

A Caregiver's Journey, Tuesday, May 13, 1:00-2:30 p.m., 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.

Men's Evening Study Group, Tuesday, May 13, 7:30 p.m., 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.

Food for Thought Book Group, Thursday, May 15, 12:30 p.m., McQueen Room - This group will discuss *Meredith, Alone* by Claire Alexander. All are welcome. Contact: Kathy Paquette, khesspaquette@aol.com.

International Dining Group, Thursday, May 15, 6:00 p.m. 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.

Making Space Mom's Group, Thursday, May 15, 7:30 p.m., 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.

Friday Morning Men's Group, Friday, May 16, 7:30-8:30 a.m., Chapel 206 - This group meets on the first and third Fridays of every month. They are reading *Amazing Grace* by Bruce Hindmarsh. All are welcome. Contact: Curt Ireland, irelandcurtis00@gmail.com.



Lunch on the Grounds, Sunday, May 18, 11:15 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Mecklenburg Hall - Everyone is welcome! Join us after worship for a delicious lunch on the grounds 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.

Family Playdate on the Playground, Sunday, May 18, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. (During Lunch on the Grounds), Ages 3-1st grade - Join us on the SMPC Preschool playground during Lunch on the Grounds! Siblings are welcome! Contact: Kaitlin Gaul, kaitlin.slanina@gmail.com.

BAM! (Bible and Music) End of Year Party, Sunday, May 18, 5:00-6:30 p.m., Meet in the Narthex, Ages Kindergarten-5th Grade - Join us for our BAM! end of year party! During BAM, children sing, creatively engage with Bible stories, and explore various instruments in peer age groups. Pizza is served. Register on Realm. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

SMPC Youth Summer Kickoff, Sunday, May 18, 5:00-6:30 p.m., Mecklenburg Hall, 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.

Graduate Sunday, June 1, 10:10 a.m. Worship - Graduates, please complete the form via QR code for the bulletin. 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.



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.



SMPC FLOWER MINISTRY

Scan the QR code to find out more about how to honor a loved one through SMPC's Flower Ministry.

