



A Service of Worship  
Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost  
September 14, 2025  
10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestream

**We Gather**

**Prelude** *Trumpet Tune* Henry Purcell

**Welcome and Concerns of the Church** Rev. Lindsey Odom  
The Lord be with you. **And also with you!**

**Moment for Mission** Donna Brown

**Introit** *Jesus, We Are Here* Patrick Matsikenyiri

**\*Call to Worship** Alec White

One: Come, let us celebrate the forgiving, reconciling love of God.

**Many: For once we were lost and felt so far away, but now we have  
been found and are welcomed home.**

One: Know that God's love is lavished upon you forever.

**Many: We rejoice at the news of forgiveness and hope!**

**All: Come, let us celebrate and praise the God of Love.**

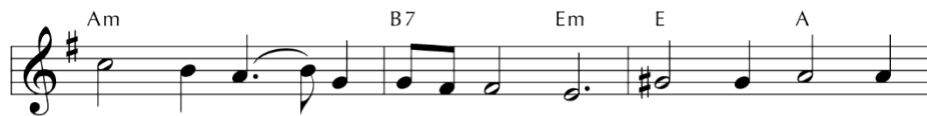
**\*Hymn 394** *Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation* WESTMINSTER ABBEY



1 Christ is made the sure foun - da - tion, Christ the head and  
2 To this tem - ple, where we call you, come, O Lord of  
3 Here be - stow on all your ser - vants what they seek from  
4 Laud and hon - or to the Fa - ther, laud and hon - or



cor - ner - stone, cho - sen of the Lord and pre - cious,  
hosts, and stay; come, with all your lov - ing - kind - ness;  
you to gain; what they gain from you, for - ev - er  
to the Son, laud and hon - or to the Spir - it,



bind - ing all the church in one; ho - ly Zi - on's  
hear your peo - ple as we pray, and your full - est  
with the bless - ed to re - tain; and here - af - ter  
ev - er three and ev - er one: one in might and



help for - ev - er, and our con - fi - dence a - lone.  
ben - e - dic - tion shed with - in these walls to - day.  
in your glo - ry ev - er - more with you to reign.  
one in glo - ry while un - end - ing a - ges run!

#### Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Rev. Odom

Loving God, we recognize how much we need you in our lives to lead us and guide us. But we often behave as if we do not know you or care about you. Remind us that you are the Shepherd who leads us safely to the fold and whose hand we can hold in every moment and time, even the most difficult moments. Forgive us for the times we have lost our way, failed to carry out justice, turned away from those in need, ignored your voice, and chosen our own paths instead of yours. We want to be among those whom you seek. Shower your mercy and grace upon us. Find us and lead us home safely to faithfulness.

#### Assurance of God's Grace

Rev. Odom

#### \*Response of Praise

No. 582, stanza 1

*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. **Story Connection:** Listen to this [read-aloud](#) of *Who Counts?* by Amy-Jill Levine and Sandy Eisenberg Sasso. As you listen, wonder together: Who is the Good Shepherd? Who are you in the story? What would it feel like to be a shepherd searching for just one missing sheep?
2. **Create:** Draw a picture of a time you lost something very special and then found it again. Share your drawings and tell each other how you felt in both moments. (You can also make this into a guessing game—hold up your picture and let others guess what was lost and found.)
3. **Activity:** Act out the story of the lost sheep. One person can be the shepherd, and others can be the sheep. Hide one sheep (under a blanket or behind a chair). Let the shepherd search until they find the lost one. When the sheep is found, everyone should shout, clap, and celebrate—just like the angels rejoice in heaven.
4. **Journal, considering the following:**
  - Who are the lost sheep in our world today?
  - How are we sometimes like lost sheep?
  - What does the word “repent” mean to you?
  - What do you think God does when we repent?



## 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

Rev. Odom

### First Reading

Psalm 51:1-10

Rev. Odom

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment. Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me. You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness;

let the bones that you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

**Anthem**

*Bow Down Low*

arr. David Bridges

Chancel Choir

*Bow down low and bend your head.  
For I've come to sweep this house,  
for to sweep the Lord's house clean.  
Yes, I've come to wash and clean  
from this floor the stains of sin.  
For, lo I've come again, and I've not come in vain.  
Sweep high, sweep low, sweep clean as you go.  
Bow down low and bend your head,  
for to sweep the Lord's house clean.*

**Second Reading**

Luke 15:1-10

Dr. Matthew S. Brown

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them." So he told them this parable: "Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance. "Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

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

**Sermon**

Ninety-nine Righteous?

Dr. Brown

**\*The Affirmation of Faith** (*unison*)      A Brief Statement of Faith, 27-51  
Rev. Odom

**We trust in God, whom Jesus called Abba, Father. In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God's image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community. But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator. Ignoring God's commandments, we violate the image of God in others and ourselves, accept lies as truth, exploit neighbor and nature, and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care. We deserve God's condemnation. Yet God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation. In everlasting love, the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a**

covenant people to bless all families of the earth. Hearing their cry, God delivered the children of Israel from the house of bondage. Loving us still, God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant. Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child, like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home, God is faithful still.

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

*Prelude (Op. 28, No. 4)*

Frédéric Chopin

Alec White, piano

*As an alternative to the traditional offering plate, you may support the ministry of SMPC by giving online at [www.smpchome.org/give](http://www.smpchome.org/give) or texting SMPC to 73256.*

\*Doxology

No. 606

***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

Will Hollingsworth

**Gracious God, out of gratitude for your boundless love and grace, we give you these gifts and our lives with thankful hearts. Use us to share your love and joy with others. Amen.**

## **We Go Out to Serve**

\*Hymn 802

***The King of Love My Shepherd Is***  
*(Stanzas 1-4)*

ST. COLUMBA

1 The King of love my shep-herd is, whose good - ness  
 2 Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow my ran - somed  
 3 Per - verse and fool - ish oft I strayed, but yet in  
 4 In death's dark vale I fear no ill with thee, dear

fail - eth nev - er; I noth - ing lack if  
 soul he lead - eth, and where the ver - dant  
 love he sought me, and on his shoul - der  
 Lord, be - side me; thy rod and staff my

I am his and he is mine for - ev - er.  
 pas - tures grow, with food ce - les - tial feed - eth.  
 gent - ly laid, and home, re - joic - ing, brought me.  
 com - fort still, thy cross be - fore to guide me.

**\*Charge and Benediction**

Dr. Brown

**\*Congregational Response**

No. 802, stanza 6

***And so through all the length of days thy goodness faileth never;  
 Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise within thy house forever.***

**Postlude**

*Festive Processional*

Gregg Sewell

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## 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 & Organist

Rebecca Guzman, Director of Spiritual Formation

Chancel Choir

Alec White, piano

Will Hollingsworth, Alec White, liturgists

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

**Ushers:** Phil Eatherton, Curt Ireland, Tom Klecker, Charlie Metzler, Colby Nutter, Carol Watkins

**Welcome Team:** Andrew Gaul, Ethan Gaul, Maddy Gaul, Kaitlin Gaul

**NEW from our Music Ministry!** Each Sunday, a Trinity Bell Toller will ring the bell three times before the prelude—a simple yet powerful reminder of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, calling us to center ourselves as worship begins. No experience necessary. More information and sign up via QR code.



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 and Facebook: @southmecklenburgpresbyterian.

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. During this time, they will explore the story interactively and engage with their peers.
- 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 on Sunday, September 28, 11:30 a.m. To learn more, contact Rev. Melissa White, Parish Associate, [melissa@smpchome.org](mailto:melissa@smpchome.org) or 704-887-7488.

### **Congregational Notes** (as of September 11, 2025)

#### **Remember in Prayer**

- Dan Gaudiano, as he recovers from surgery.
- Jim Williams, as he recovers from surgery.

- All those affected by conflict, displacement, and unrest around the world and at home.
- Our mission partners in Bayonnais, Haiti, that God's peace, protection and justice may prevail amid the crisis, chaos, and despair engulfing their country.

To join the prayer chain or send a prayer request:

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

## SMPC STAFF

**Dr. Matthew S. Brown, Pastor**

[matt@smpchome.org](mailto:matt@smpchome.org)

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

[lindsey@smpchome.org](mailto:lindsey@smpchome.org)

**Rev. Melissa White, Parish Associate**

[melissa@smpchome.org](mailto:melissa@smpchome.org)

**Laura Black, Ministry Associate for Children and Music**

[laura@smpchome.org](mailto:laura@smpchome.org)

**Zach Bowyer, Director of Music & Organist**

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**Rebecca Guzman, Director of Spiritual Formation**

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**Steve Stevenson, Facility Administrator**

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**Dr. Tammy Winchip, SMPC Preschool Director**

[tammy@smpchome.org](mailto:tammy@smpchome.org)

**Mary Katheryne Zagora, Financial Administrator**

[mkzagora@smpchome.org](mailto: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**

8601 Bryant Farms Road, Charlotte, NC 28277, 704-544-0404

PO Box 79321, Charlotte, NC 28271

[smpchome.org](http://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 in your pews. Please sign and pass to your neighbor and perhaps speak to someone you haven't met!

### THIS WEEK'S CLASSES & EVENTS

today  
**SEPT. 14**

**Scout Troops 119 and 219 BBQ & Veggie Chili Sale**  
**Church Parking Lot, Before and After Worship**  
Scouts are here taking orders today or order online via QR code. Pick up at the church on Saturday, September 20, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. and Sunday, September 21, 8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Contact: Roy Bivens, troop119clt@gmail.com.



today  
**SEPT. 14**  
11:30 a.m. -  
1:00 p.m.

**Lunch on the Grounds**  
**SMPC Parking Lot & Mecklenburg Hall**  
Join us after worship for a delicious lunch catered by Brown Bag. Adults - \$12; Children 4-11 - \$6; Children 3 and under - free. We have extra spots if your plans have changed and you can now join us. Contact: Melissa White, melissa@smpchome.org.

today  
**SEPT. 14**  
5:00 p.m. -  
6:30 p.m.

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

monday  
**SEPT. 15**  
10:00 a.m. -  
12:30 p.m.

**New Small Group! "Writing Your Legacy"**  
**McQueen Room or Zoom**  
Over five weeks this fall, participants will receive guidance in writing about family memories, history, and more. Led by SMPC member Melinda Ferguson. All are welcome. Register on Realm. Contact: Melissa White, melissa@smpchome.org.

tuesday  
**SEPT. 16**  
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  
**SEPT. 17**  
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  
**SEPT. 18**  
12:30 p.m.

**Food for Thought Group**  
**McQueen Room**  
This group is reading *How to Read a Book: A Novel* by Monica Wood. All are welcome! Contact: Kathy Paquette, khesspaquette@aol.com.

thursday  
**SEPT. 18**  
6:30 p.m.

**'Breaking Bread' with Actionnel and Yolande**  
**SouthPark Church**  
**3151 Apex Blvd., Suite 100, 4th Floor**  
Join us for a potluck dinner and an inspiring update from Pastor Actionnel Fleurisma and his wife, Yolande, leaders of our mission partnership in Bayonnais, Haiti. Dinner will feature Yolande's famous Haitian beans & rice. Please bring a dessert, salad, side or bread to share. Sign up via QR code. To carpool to SouthPark Church, please email Donna Podgorny, d\_podgorny@yahoo.com.



**thursday**  
**SEPT. 18**  
7:30 p.m. -  
8:30 p.m.

**Making Space Mom's Group Kickoff  
Fountains at Blakeney**

Join us for a drop-in, casual evening to connect with other moms and learn more about this group! This group gathers twice a month on the first and third Thursdays for fellowship, study, and service. Light refreshments, including adult beverages, will be provided at the kickoff. Contact: Allison Reeves, [allison.tarwater@gmail.com](mailto:allison.tarwater@gmail.com).

**friday**  
**SEPT. 19**  
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 *Talking to Strangers* by Malcolm Gladwell. It's the perfect time to join. Contact: Curt Ireland, [irelandcurtis00@gmail.com](mailto:irelandcurtis00@gmail.com)

**saturday**  
**SEPT. 20**  
5:15 a.m.

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

Food donations are due Thursday, September 18. Monetary donations are always welcome. Sign up at [smpchome.org](http://smpchome.org) > Serve Our Community. Contact: Bob Williamson, [bobwill31@hotmail.com](mailto:bobwill31@hotmail.com).

**sunday**  
**SEPT. 21**  
9:00 a.m. -  
10:00 a.m.

**Words of Love: A Healing Journey with the Ten Commandments  
McQueen Room or Zoom**

This ten-week, thought-provoking adult study reclaims the Ten Commandments not as a list of rules, but as a path toward healing, wholeness, and deeper love for God and neighbor. All are welcome. Register on Realm. Contact: Melissa White, [melissa@smpchome.org](mailto:melissa@smpchome.org).

**sunday**  
**SEPT. 21**  
5:00 p.m. -  
6:30 p.m.

**BAM! (Bible and Music) Kickoff  
Meet in the Narthex, 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](mailto:rebecca@smpchome.org).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**2025 SMPC Golf Tournament, Tuesday, September 23, 1:00 p.m. Shotgun Start, Sun-City Carolina Lakes Golf Club** - Open to all levels and ages. Captain's Choice Best Ball (team bogey max). Register and more info on Realm. Contact: Ron Morgan, [colronmorg@gmail.com](mailto:colronmorg@gmail.com).

**Blessing of the Animals, Sunday, September 28, 3:15 p.m., SMPC Parking Lot** - All furry and feathery friends are invited to join us for this special blessing! Please make sure pets are leashed or crated and are comfortable in social settings! Contact: Lindsey Odom, [lindsey@smpchome.org](mailto:lindsey@smpchome.org).

UPDATES ON  
PASTORAL  
TRANSITION



**Lunch Bunch, Tuesday, October 7, 11:30 a.m. Trio Restaurant, 10709 McMullen Creek Pkwy** - SMPC Lunch Bunch is an informal group that meets four times a year for lunch and fellowship. This is the first gathering of the year! All are welcome—invite a friend. RSVP by Sunday, October 5, via Realm or QR code. Contact: Ruth Ann Engel, [raengle22@gmail.com](mailto:raengle22@gmail.com)

## YOU ARE INVITED!

Dr. Matthew S. Brown is retiring as pastor of South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church! Join us as we celebrate this faithful servant and leader. Questions? Contact: Adrienne Jaquith, [adrienne@smpchome.org](mailto:adrienne@smpchome.org)

### SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22

**Parking Lot Party, 4:00-6:00 p.m.** - Food trucks, outdoor games, fellowship and fun for the whole family

**Live Music in the Sanctuary, 6:30 p.m.** - Featuring *Rowan Junction*, a bluegrass band

### SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23

**10:10 a.m. Worship with Dr. Matt Brown**

**Reception in Mecklenburg Hall, 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.** - Sweet treats, punch, and live jazz music

