



A Service of Worship

World Communion Sunday

October 5, 2025

10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestream

We Gather

Prelude

Let All Things Now Living
Gaudete Ringers

arr. Jason Krug

Welcome and Concerns of the Church

Dr. Matthew S. Brown

The Lord be with you. **And also with you!**

Moment for Mission

Lisa Kuszmar

Introit

*Come, O people, God's great family, gathered in this holy place;
here we meet in joyful worship, here we stand in love and grace.
God receives us, God receives us, hearts renewed in hope's
embrace, hearts renewed in hope's embrace!*

***Call to Worship**

Dr. Brown

One: The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it.

Many: People will come from east and west,

One: and from north and south,

Many: and will eat in the kingdom of God.

One: What shall we return to the Lord for all the good things God
has done for us?

**Many: We will lift the cup of salvation and call on the name of the
Lord.**

All: Thanks be to God for welcoming us all to the table.

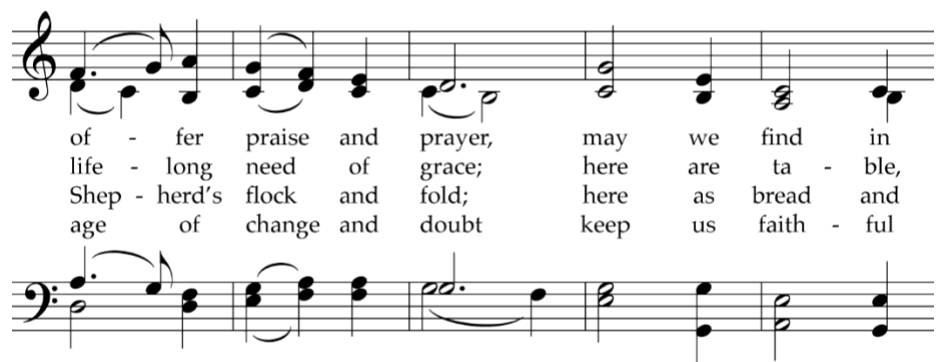
***Hymn 409**

God Is Here!

ABBOT'S LEIGH



1 God is here! As we your peo - ple meet to
 2 Here are sym - bols to re - mind us of our
 3 Here our chil - dren find a wel - come in the
 4 Lord of all, of church and king - dom, in an



of - fer praise and prayer, may we find in
 life - long need of grace; here are ta - ble,
 Shep - herd's flock and fold; here as bread and
 age of change and doubt keep us faith - ful



full - er mea - sure what it is in Christ we share.
 font, and pul - pit; here the cross has cen - tral place.
 wine are tak - en, Christ sus - tains us as of old.
 to the gos - pel; help us work your pur - pose out.



Here, as in the world a - round us, all our
 Here in hon - es - ty of preach - ing, here in
 Here the ser - vants of the Ser - vant seek in
 Here, in this day's ded - i - ca - tion, all we

var - ied skills and arts wait the com - ing
 si - lence, as in speech, here, in new - ness
 wor - ship to ex - plore what it means in
 have to give, re - ceive: we, who can - not

of the Spir - it in - to o - pen minds and hearts.
 and re - new - al, God the Spir - it comes to each.
 dai - ly liv - ing to be - lieve and to a - dore.
 live with - out you, we a - dore you! We be - lieve!

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Dr. Brown

Redeeming Lord, we confess before you that we are habitually bothered by minor irritations that do not warrant the space we give them in our minds. Petty grievances, minor slights, wounded pride, deferred gratification, slow service, underwhelming affirmation — Such annoyances when watered with resentment bloom with kudzu quickness, while life's gifts and graces only muster our indifference and sense of entitlement. Forgive us in your mercy, O God. May your Spirit weed out our resentments so that gratitude may flourish in the light of your steadfast love, and may Christ be praised. Amen.

Assurance of God's Grace

Dr. Brown

*Response of Praise

*Glory be to God, the Father, glory be to Christ, the Son,
 Glory to the blazing Spirit, ever three and ever one!
 God almighty, God almighty, may your work through
 us be done, may your work through us be done!*

We Hear and Respond to the Word

Church Family Moment

Rebecca Guzman

1. It is World Communion Sunday, which means that Christians all over the world will be celebrating Communion today. We sometimes call Communion the Lord's Supper. Here are some basic things that Presbyterians believe about the Lord's Supper:
 - a. It's more than a symbol, but we don't believe the bread actually becomes Jesus' body.
 - b. Jesus is mysteriously present with us.
 - c. We are united with "all the saints of every time and place," or all Christians who are alive and the ones who are no longer with us.
 - d. It fills us up with what we need to go out and serve in the world!
 - e. Everyone is welcome at the table, regardless of age or faith background.
2. Print and color this reflective [coloring page](#). Coloring can be a spiritual practice. As you color, think and pray about what Communion means to you and what it means to be part of a worldwide family of people who follow Jesus.
3. Listen to a [readaloud](#) of the book *We Gather at This Table*. What did you learn about Communion today?
4. Journal, considering the following:
 - a. Have you seen people take food, give thanks to God for the food, and share it with others? Share about your experience.
 - b. Who makes the food you eat most days?
 - c. Have you seen someone who was hungry? What was it like?
 - d. When did you use something God gave you to help somebody else?
 - e. Have you thought about how your food grows or gets made and comes to your table?



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.

Prayer for Illumination

Dr. Brown

First Reading

Lamentations 3:19-26

Dr. Brown

The thought of my affliction and my homelessness is wormwood and gall! My soul continually thinks of it and is bowed down within me. But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him." The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.

Anthem *Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ* arr. Robert Hobby
Chancel Choir; Charles Smith, steel drum; William Rose, congas; Jordan Booker, claves; Laura Black, maracas; Gayle Ireland, tambourine

*Let us talents and tongues employ, reaching out with a shout of joy:
bread is broken; the wine is poured; Christ is spoken and seen and heard.
Jesus lives again; earth can breathe again; pass the Word around: loaves
abound! Christ is able to make us one; at the table he sets the tone,
teaching people to live to bless, love in word and in deed express.
Jesus calls us in, sends us out, bearing fruit in a world of doubt,
gives us love to tell, bread to share: God (Immanuel) everywhere!*

Second Reading Luke 17:5-10 Rev. Lindsey Odom
The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" The Lord replied, "If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you. "Who among you would say to your slave who has just come in from plowing or tending sheep in the field, 'Come here at once and take your place at the table'? Would you not rather say to him, 'Prepare supper for me, put on your apron and serve me while I eat and drink; later you may eat and drink'? Do you thank the slave for doing what was commanded? So you also, when you have done all that you were ordered to do, say, 'We are worthless slaves; we have done only what we ought to have done!' "

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

Sermon Faith Feeds the Journey Rev. Odom

***The Affirmation of Faith** (*unison*) Belhar Confession
Dr. Brown

We believe in one holy, universal Christian church, the unity of the communion of saints of the entire human family. And we believe that that this unity of the people of God must be manifest and active, in that we love one another; that we give ourselves willingly and joyfully to one another, that we are share one baptism together, that we eat of one bread and drink of one cup together, that we confess one name, one Lord, for one cause, with one hope, which is the height and the breadth and the depth and the love of Christ, forever and ever. Amen.

Offertory *Think of Me and Remember* Joel Raney
Lori Schellin, soprano; Collin Sinclair, tenor

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 the Source of every blessing, praise to Christ who sets
us free, praise the Spirit, ever calling, shaping us in unity.
God of glory, God of glory, all our thanks we give to Thee,
All our thanks we give to Thee!***

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 529**

Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether

UNION SEMINARY

1 Draw us in the Spir - it's teth - er, for when hum - bly
 2 As dis - ci - ples used to gath - er in the name of
 3 All our meals and all our liv - ing make as sac - ra -

in your name two or three are met to - geth - er,
 Christ to sup, then with thanks to God the giv - er
 ments of you, that by car - ing, help-ing, giv - ing,

you are in the midst of them. Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -
 break the bread and bless the cup, Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -
 we may be dis - ci - ples true. Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -

lu - ia! Here we touch your gar - ment's hem.
 lu - ia! so now bind our friend - ship up.
 lu - ia! We will serve with faith a - new.

***Charge and Benediction**

Rev. Odom

***Congregational Response**

*Called to serve in love and justice, sent to share the hope
 we know, we will live as Christ has taught us, shining light
 where'er we go. Go in Spirit, go in Spirit, let God's grace
 and mercy show, let God's grace and mercy show!*

Postlude

Mfurahini, Halleluya

Tanzanian, arr. Kerr

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

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

Charles Smith, steel drum

Laura Black, Jordan Booker, Gayle Ireland, William Rose, percussion

Lori Schellin, soprano; Collin Sinclair, tenor

A/V Team: Kari Case, Xander Case

Ushers: Andrew Brown, Mary Elledge, Frank Graham, Curtis Guy, Judy Jones, Bob Williamson

Welcome Team: Nancy Maguire, Tim Maguire, Eamon Palmer, Jim Palmer, Kristina Palmer, Sacha Palmer, Skye Palmer, Taika Palmer, Amy Zagora, Jake Zagora

We light a candle celebrating the birth of Wesley “Wes” Graham Biehl on September 29. Congratulations to Megan and Matt Biehl and big brother, Hayes.

A Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, October 12, at the close of the 10:10 a.m. worship service for the purpose of electing officers and to act upon Dr. Matthew S. Brown’s request to conclude his call at South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church for the purpose of his retirement from ministry. Matt’s retirement is effective December 1, 2025, and his last Sunday in worship is November 23, 2025.

All service music in today’s worship service is originally written by Zach Bowyer and set to the tune CWM RHONDDA by John Hughes

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.

Interested in joining South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church? Our Session will gather to welcome new members Sunday, October 26, at 11:30 a.m. To learn more, contact Rev. Melissa White, Parish Associate, melissa@smpchome.org or 704-887-7488.

Congregational Notes (as of September October 2, 2025)

Remember in Prayer

- David Nichols, as he recovers from a hospitalization.
- Debi Wheeler, as she recovers from surgery.
- Phil Eatherton as he recovers from a hospitalization.
- Diane Rosene 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, 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

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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 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!

2026 OPERATING FUND CAMPAIGN

Today we kick off our 2026 Operating Fund Campaign, *Called to Community*, inspired by 1 John 4:7. The Operating Fund Campaign is SMPC's primary fundraising campaign and supports all our ministries and programs--everything you love about our church is funded by the annual Operating Fund Campaign. Over the next four weeks, we hope you'll join us in person during our 10:10 a.m. worship services or via livestream to see and hear how your pledge makes a difference. Please pick up your campaign packet in the narthex. Make a pledge by returning a pledge card or by scanning the QR code.



THIS WEEK'S CLASSES & EVENTS

today

OCT. 5

11:30 a.m. -
12:30 p.m.

The Third Thirty - "End of Life Decisions and Advanced Directives"

The Commons, Ages 60-90

Join us for the sixth session of this series! We'll enjoy a light lunch, conversation and knowledge! All are welcome - you don't have to attend every session. Register on Realm. Contact: Melissa White, melissa@smpchome.org.

today

OCT. 5

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

BAM! (Bible and Music)

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.

today

OCT. 5

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

October 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. We'll also be stapling bag tags for our Nourish Up Food Drive! Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

monday

OCT. 6

10:00 a.m. -
12:30 p.m.

"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

OCT. 7

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, jgjamason@gmail.com.

tuesday

OCT. 7

11:30 a.m.

Lunch Bunch

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 today, October 5, via Realm. Contact: Ruth Ann Engel, raengle22@gmail.com.

wednesday

OCT. 8

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
OCT. 9
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
OCT. 9
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
OCT. 12
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. Register on Realm. Contact: Melissa White, melissa@smpchome.org.

sunday
OCT. 12
10:10 a.m. **Desserts for Center of Hope**
Before 10:10 a.m. Worship
On the second Sunday of every month we provide sweet treats for the women and children that temporarily call Center of Hope home. Sign up at smpchome.org > Serve Our Community. Contact: Terry Gaines, terryg@carolina.rr.com.

sunday
OCT. 12
10:10 a.m. **Nourish Up Food Drive Bags Available**
Narthex
We are collecting canned and dry goods for the Nourish Up food pantry! Items needed include: canned meat (tuna, chicken, salmon); canned fruit (no sugar added or in juice); canned vegetables (no salt added or low sodium); pasta (canned or dry boxed); whole grain cereals; beans; peanut butter; rice; diapers and wipes. Return bags through Sunday, November 2. Monetary donations also appreciated. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

sunday
OCT. 12
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. **Believing and Belonging**
McQueen Room
For all who are considering membership and/or would like to know more about being Presbyterian and SMPC, join us for Believing and Belonging! Lunch will be served and childcare will be available. Register on Realm or via QR code. Contact: Melissa White, melissa@smpchome.org.



sunday
OCT. 12
5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. **SMPC Youth - Operation Sandwich**
Mecklenburg Hall
The youth will make sandwiches for Roof Above, a men's homeless shelter. Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchom.org.

FROM MISSIONS/OUTREACH

Thank you for sponsoring students in Bayonnais, Haiti!

Our ministry partner, Ewo, has set up a sponsorship page just for our church. Please scan the QR code to see the children in need of sponsorship. You can make a difference in the life of a child by investing in their education and in their future! Contact: Judy Jones, judy21jones@gmail.com.



LET'S CELEBRATE PASTOR DR. MATTHEW S. BROWN'S RETIREMENT!

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

**UPDATES ON
PASTORAL
TRANSITION**



Reception in Mecklenburg Hall, 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Sweet and savory bites, punch, and live jazz music