



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Service of Worship

Baptism of the Lord

January 11, 2026

10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestream

We Gather

Prelude *Improvisation on "Shall We Gather at the River"* Richard Elliott

Welcome and Concerns of the Church Dr. Sandy Hull

The Lord be with you. And also with you!

Introit *I've Got Peace Like a River* African American spiritual

***Call to Worship** Paxtyn Sandeen

One: Come and see: Jesus invites us to join him on the journey.

All: **We gather to follow Jesus wherever he leads us.**

One: I wonder what Jesus wants us to see.

All: **We see a table and baptismal font, reminders of God's grace.**

One: I wonder whom Jesus wants us to see.

All: **We see God's beloved children, gathered together to worship, and God's beloved children on the margins, too often unseen, unheard, and uncared for.**

One: Come and see: we're going on a journey—together, with our Lord.

All: **Let us worship the one who names and claims us through baptism and empowers and equips us to do God's work in the world.**

***Hymn 39** *Great is Thy Faithfulness* FAITHFULNESS

1 *Great is thy faith - ful - ness, O God my Fa - ther;
 2 Sum - mer and win - ter, and spring - time and har - vest,
 3 Par - don for sin and a peace that en - dur - eth,

there is no shad - ow of turn - ing with thee.
 sun, moon, and stars in their cours - es a - bove
 thine own dear pres - ence to cheer and to guide,

Thou chang - est not; thy com - pas - sions they fail not.
 join with all na - ture in man - i - fold wit - ness
 strength for to - day and bright hope for to - mor - row:

As thou hast been thou for - ev - er wilt be.
 to thy great faith - ful - ness, mer - cy, and love.
 bless - ings all mine, with ten thou - sand be - side!

Refrain:

Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!

Morning by morning, new mercies I see.

All I have needed thy hand hath provide.

Great is thy faithfulness, Lord unto me!

Prayer of Confession (unison)

Rev. Lindsey Odom

Merciful God, in baptism you joined us to the body of Christ, promising us forgiveness of sin and newness of life. But we fail to live as forgiven people. We keep destructive habits and hold grudges; we allow our past to hold us hostage and are reluctant to welcome newness. In your loving kindness, cleanse us from sin. Remind us of the promises you have made to us in baptism, so that we may live as your people, claimed in the waters of promise.

Assurance of God's Grace (Titus 3:4-5)

Rev. Odom

One: "When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit."

Friends, hear and believe God's good news:

All: **In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!**

***Response of Praise**

*Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit, dead in the tomb
with Christ our King; one with his rising, freed and forgiven,
thankfully now God's praises we sing.*

We Hear and Respond to the Word

Church Family Moment Rebecca Guzman

1. **Story Connection:** Today we are thinking about baptism and why it matters. Megan Argabrite at [Storypath](#) suggests that a helpful story is *Always* by Alison McGhee and Pascal Lemaitre. You can watch the readaloud [here](#). In the story, a small dog protects the castle at all costs. When asked why, the answer is simple: "Because you live here." This connects to Isaiah 42, where God promises a servant who will bring justice with gentleness, and to Matthew 3, where Jesus is baptized and named beloved. Jesus enters the water to show love, commitment, and care for the world God loves.
2. **Activity:** At home, make a [Baptism of Jesus Spinner](#) from Flame Creative Kids Ministry. You print the paper, cut it out, and tape it over a straw or pencil. As you spin it, retell the story of Jesus' baptism and remember the words God speaks over him.
3. **Craft:** Create a self-portrait using whatever art supplies or household items you have at home. At the bottom of the picture, write the words, "God is proud of me."
4. **Wonder Together:**
 - a. I wonder what it felt like for Jesus to hear God call him beloved.
 - b. I wonder how baptism reminds us that we belong to God.
 - c. I wonder how knowing you are beloved might change the way you treat others.
 - d. I wonder who needs to know they are loved "always" this week.



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. Melissa White

First Reading

Isaiah 42:1-4

Rev. White

Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

Anthem

Come to the Water

arr. Lynda Hasseler

Chancel Choir; Jane Royther, soprano; Ann Carney, piano

O let all who thirst, let them come to the water. And let all who have nothing, let them come to the Lord: without money, without price. Why should you pay the price, except for the Lord? And let all who seek, let them come to the water. And let all who have nothing, let them come to the Lord: without money, without strife. Why should you spend your life, except for the Lord? And let all who toil, let them come to the water. And let all who are weary, let them come to the Lord: all who labor, without rest. How can your soul find rest, except for the Lord? And let all the poor, let them come to the water, bring the ones who are laden, bring them all to the Lord: bring the children without might. Easy the load and light: come to the Lord.

Second Reading

Matthew 3:13-17

Dr. Hull

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

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

Sermon

Wet for What?

Dr. Hull

***Hymn of Response**

No. 482

*Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit,
marked with the sign of Christ our King;
born of the Spirit, we are God's children;
joyfully now God's praises we sing.*

***Renewal of Baptism**

One: Do you renounce evil, and its power in the world, which defies God's righteousness and love?

All: I do.

One: Do you renounce the ways of sin that separate you from the love of God?

All: I do.

One: Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Lord and Savior?

All: I do.

One: Do you intend to be Christ's faithful disciple, obeying his word and showing his love, to your life's end?

All: I do.

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

The Apostles' Creed

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.

***The Lord's Prayer**

Dr. Hull

... (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.

Ordination and Installation of Elders and Deacons

Offering Invitation

Rev. White

Offertory

Baptism

Paul Cardall

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**

No. 482

Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit, cleansed by the blood of Christ our King; heirs of salvation, trusting the promise, faithfully now God's praises we sing.

***Prayer of Dedication**

Ryan Wooley

With grateful hearts we give you these gifts, O God, and with them we give you ourselves. Amen.

We Go Out to Serve

*Hymn 490 *Wash, O God, Your Sons and Daughters* BEACH SPRING

*Charge and Benediction

Dr. Hull

*Congregational Response

(Cantor sings once, all repeat twice)

*We have put on Christ;
in Christ we have been baptized.
Alleluia! Alleluia!*

Postlude

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing arr. Michael Burkhardt

Worship Service Notes

Leading Worship this Morning

Dr. Sandy Hull, Transitional Pastor

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

Rev. Melissa White, Parish Associate for Congregational Care & Connection

Zach Bowyer, Director of Music & Organist

Rebecca Guzman, Director of Spiritual Formation

Chancel Choir; Jane Royther, soprano; Ann Carney, piano

Paxtyn Sandeen, Ryan Wooley, liturgists

Gayle Ireland, Clerk of Session

A/V Team: Brad Alford, Luke Estes

Ushers: Bob Cushman, Dan DeChant, Gena DeChant, Dick Engle, Jenny Gates, Bjorn Hansen

Welcome Team: Donna Podgorny, Bob Williamson

A brief Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 18 after the 10:10 am worship service to fulfill the State of North Carolina's legal requirement to hold an Annual Meeting of the Corporation.

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 on Sunday, January 25 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 January 8, 2025)

Remember in Prayer

- Joyce Highsmith, as she recovers from a concussion.
- John Luby, as he undergoes treatment for leukemia.
- 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.

Elders, Class of 2028:

Tony Castle, ordained and installed

Kaitlyn Gaul, ordained and installed

Leisa Lackey, installed

Camdyn Sheeler, ordained and installed (class of 2026)

Dan Trimmer, ordained and installed

Deacons, Class of 2027:

Jimmy Galati, ordained and installed

Kathy Garner, installed

Clint Lackey, ordained and installed

Courtney Ritchie, ordained and installed

Russ Wenner, ordained and installed

Debi Wheeler, ordained and installed

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South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church

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smpchome.org

SMPC WEEKLY

JANUARY 11, 2026

WELCOME!

After worship, we hope you'll join us for lemonade and cookies near Coffee Grounds. Come meet friends old and new! Registry pads are located in your pews. Please sign and pass to your neighbor and perhaps introduce yourself to someone new!

THIS WEEK'S CLASSES & EVENTS

today

JAN. 11

11:45 a.m. -

1:00 p.m.

SMPC Youth Coffee and Conversation

Amelie's French Bakery, Carmel Commons, Middle and High Schoolers

We'll cover the cost of a coffee or drink for youth! Please bring extra money if you'd like a sweet treat or pastry. We can't wait to see you. Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

tuesday

JAN. 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.

tuesday

JAN. 13

1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

A Caregiver's Journey

McQueen Room

Finding meaning and purpose as you care for a loved one with Alzheimer's or dementia. Contact: Kathy Garner, kathygarner15@gmail.com

tuesday

JAN. 13

7:30 p.m.

Men's Evening Study Group

Chapel 206

The group meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month. Contact: Jon Myers, jonmyers2@gmail.com.

wednesday

JAN. 14

9:30 a.m. -

10:30 a.m.

Pastor's Wednesday Morning Bible Study

McQueen Room or Zoom

Transitional Pastor Sandy Hull leads this study that meets weekly. They are discussing the book of Ephesians. All are welcome! If you would like to join by Zoom, please contact Adrienne Jaquith, adrienne@smpchome.org.

thursday

JAN. 15

12:30 p.m.

Food for Thought Book Group

McQueen Room

All are welcome as we discuss the book *Lily's Promise* by Lily Ebert. Contact: Kathy Paquette, khesspaquette@aol.com.



thursday

JAN. 15

6:00 p.m.

International Dining Group

Mi Pueblo Mexican Grill, 1820 Sardis Road N.

This group explores local restaurants on the third Thursday of every month. RSVP on Realm via QR code. Contact: Carol Roan, candwroan@gmail.com.

thursday

JAN. 15

7:30 p.m.

Making Space Mom's Group

Chapel 206

This group meets on the first and third Thursday of every month. Moms of all ages are invited for fellowship and study. Contact: Allison Reeves, allison.tarwater@gmail.com.

friday

JAN. 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 for study and fellowship. All are welcome. Contact: Curt Ireland, irelandcurtis00@gmail.com.

saturday

JAN. 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, January 15. Monetary donations are always welcome. Sign up via QR code. Contact: Lee Martin, leewilsonmartin@gmail.com.



sunday

JAN. 18

Adult Study: "Second Thoughts About the Second Coming"
McQueen Room or Zoom

Join Rebecca Guzman and Melissa White for a six-week explorative study using *Second Thoughts about the Second Coming: Understanding the End Times, Our Future, and Christian Hope* by Ronald Allen and Robert Cornwall. Register on Realm. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

sunday

JAN. 18

Middle and High School Small Group Dinners

Middle Schoolers and High Schoolers will meet for small group dinners at hosts' homes. Please register on Realm and find each dinner's location there. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

5:00 p.m. -

6:30 p.m.

sunday

JAN. 18

BAM! (Bible and Music)

Meet in Narthex, Kindergarten-5th Grade

BAM! is our Sunday evening program for children in kindergarten through 5th grade. Please register on Realm so we know how much

5:00 p.m. - pizza to order! Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

6:30 p.m.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Men's Breakfast Group, Thursday, January 22, 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, Bob.Tyler@unitedskates.com.

Bag Lunches for Roof Above, Saturday, January 24, 9:30 a.m.,

Drop Off in Front of Mecklenburg Hall - Every month we donate 100 bag lunches to our neighbors in need at Roof Above. Please consider donating this month! Simply scan the QR code. Contact: Julie Durham, julierdurham@gmail.com.



SMPC Youth SkyZone Event, Sunday, January 25, 5:00-6:30 p.m., 10200 Centrum

Pkwy, Pineville, NC 28134, Middle and High Schoolers - Join us for a fun night at SkyZone! Cost: \$25/youth. Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.



SMPC Lunch Bunch, Tuesday, February 10, 11:30 a.m., Trio Restaurant, 10709 McMullen Creek Parkway, Charlotte, NC

28226 - This group meets four times a year for lunch and fellowship. All are invited - bring a friend! RSVP to Ruth Ann Engle by Sunday, February, 8, raengle22@gmail.com or on Realm via QR code.

ALL-CHURCH RETREAT

All-Church Retreat: 'Created for Community,' Friday, March 6-Sunday, March 8,

Montreat, NC - All ages are invited to join us as we examine how God exists in community and how God designed us to be in relationships with God and one another. More information and register on Realm. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.



SMPC PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION UPDATES!

Registration opens Tuesday, January 20 for church members. New preschool families must schedule a tour before registering. Tours are going on now through January 16. Please contact Tammy Winchip, tammy@smpchome.org, to schedule.



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