



A Service of Worship
Third Sunday after Epiphany
January 25, 2026
10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestream

We Gather

**Please rise in body or in spirit.*

Prelude *Partita on "All Are Welcome": IV. Adagio* Charles Lenz

Welcome and Concerns of the Church Dr. Sandy Hull
The Lord be with you. **And also with you!**

Introit *God, You Spin the Whirling Planets* arr. Proulx

***Call to Worship** Alayna Calderwood

One: Children of God, welcome!

All: We are welcomed to this place of love and grace.

One: O magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt God's name together.

All: God invites all of us to be a part of this beloved community.

One: God invites all of us to share in the good news:

All: that we are welcome, just as we are, and we are loved, just as we are. In gratitude for all of this, let us worship God.

***Hymn 624** *I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art* TOULON

1 I greet thee, who my sure Re-deem-er art,
 2 Thou art the King of mer-cy and of grace,
 3 Thou art the life, by which a-lone we live,
 4 Thou hast the true and per-fect gen-tle-ness;
 5 Our hope is in no oth-er save in thee;

my on-ly trust and Sav-ior of my heart,
 reign-ing om-ni-po-tent in ev-ery place;
 and all our sub-stance and our strength re-ceive;
 no harsh-ness hast thou and no bit-ter-ness.
 our faith is built up-on thy prom-ise free;

who pain didst un-der-go for my poor sake;
 so come, O King, and our whole be-ing sway;
 sus-tain us by thy faith and by thy power,
 O grant to us the grace we find in thee,
 Lord, give us peace, and make us calm and sure,

I pray thee from our hearts all cares to take.
 shine on us with the light of thy pure day.
 and give us strength in ev-ery try-ing hour.
 that we may dwell in per-fect u-ni-ty.
 that in thy strength we ev-er-more en-dure.

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Rev. Melissa White

Merciful God, by your Spirit you have made us one body. Yet we fall short of your ideal. We are prone to judge one another. Pride and petty differences disrupt our relationships. Our need to be right supersedes our calling to be Christ-like. Forgive us, we humbly pray, and reshape us, individually and corporately, to live in unity and so to model your love for a love-starved world. Amen.

Assurance of God's Grace

Rev. White

*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:** Watch the [author presentation](#) of *Becoming Me* by Martin Boroson. This story resists simple explanations and is written for both children and adults. Because this is not a Christian book, it gives us a good opportunity to wonder together about how its ideas are similar to, and different from, what we believe about God, creation, and community. You may find this [conversation guide](#) helpful as you reflect together:
2. **Creative Challenge:** Imagine that every person reflects a different color of God's world. Gather 16 crayons or markers (or as many different colors as you can find) and challenge one another to create a picture that uses *every single color*. Talk about how each color adds something important to the whole image, just as every person adds something important to our community.
3. **Game:** Play a game of "Keepy Uppy" using a balloon. The goal is simple: work together to keep the balloon from touching the ground. Everyone has the same purpose, and everyone's participation matters. After you play, talk about how today's scriptures remind us that we are created for relationship and that Jesus prays for us to be one.
4. **Wonder Together:**
 - a. I wonder why God said it was not good for us to be alone.
 - b. I wonder what Jesus meant when he prayed that we would all be one.
 - c. I wonder what each person adds to our community.
 - d. I wonder how we can live more connected to one another 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. White

First Reading

John 17:20-26

Rev. White

"I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.
"Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them."

Anthem

Weave Us In Community

Karen Marroli

Chancel Choir; Ann Carney, piano

Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost, come and dwell within our hearts today.

Dispel the idols we love most, and lead us on the servant way.

*We tend toward war and bend toward will while you ask us
to break the sword and spear.*

Now let your song grow louder still: O melody of peace, draw near!

As varied voices blend and ring in harmony, your voice is heard.

So let our actions also sing a song of hearts and souls now stirred.

*Now, subject to each other's needs, each other's joys, each other's load,
we follow where the Spirit leads, to heal and offer grace bestowed.*

*When threads of love have come undone, O threefold God of unity,
Sew up our tatters, one by one, and weave us in community.*

Second Reading

Genesis 2:18-25

Dr. Hull

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken.
"Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife,

and they become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

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

Sermon

“God’s Favorite Number”

Dr. Hull

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

The Belhar Confession

Rev. Lindsey Odom

We believe that Christ’s work of reconciliation is made manifest in the church as the community of believers who have been reconciled with God and with one another. Unity is, therefore, both a gift and an obligation for the church of Jesus Christ. Through the working of God’s Spirit, it is a binding force, yet simultaneously a reality which must be earnestly pursued and sought, one which the people of God must continually be built up to attain. This unity must become visible so that the world may believe that separation, enmity, and hatred between people and groups is sin which Christ has already conquered, and accordingly that anything which threatens this unity may have no place in the church and must be resisted.

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.

Offering Invitation

Rev. Odom

Offertory

You Are My All in All

arr. Joel Raney

Laura Schelhammer, flute

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. 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**

Alayna Calderwood

Gracious God, you have created us for community and blessed us so that we might bless others. Receive these gifts as signs of our gratitude, and receive our offerings, time, and talents for the building up of your beloved community. Amen.

We Go Out to Serve

***Hymn 301**

Let Us Build a House

TWO OAKS

1 Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can
 2 Let us build a house where proph - ets speak, and words are
 3 Let us build a house where love is found in wa - ter,
 4 Let us build a house where hands will reach be - yond the
 5 Let us build a house where all are named, their songs and

(D) (A) (D) (Bm7) (Em) (A)
 F C F Dm7 Gm C

safe - ly live, a place where saints and chil - dren tell
 strong and true, where all God's chil - dren dare to seek
 wine, and wheat; a ban - quet hall on ho - ly ground
 wood and stone to heal and strength-en, serve and teach,
 vi - sions heard and loved and trea - sured, taught and claimed

(Em) (A7) (G) (D) (F#m) (Bm)
 Gm C7 Bb F Am Dm

how hearts learn to for - give. Built of hopes and dreams and
 to dream God's reign a - new. Here the cross shall stand as
 where peace and jus - tice meet. Here the love of God, through
 and live the Word they've known. Here the out - cast and the
 as words with - in the Word. Built of tears and cries and

(Em) (A) (D) (G)
 Gm C F Bb

vi - sions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the
 wit - ness and as sym - bol of God's grace; here as
 Je - sus, is re - vealed in time and space; as we
 strang - er bear the im - age of God's face; let us
 laugh - ter, prayers of faith and songs of grace; let this

love of Christ shall end di - vi - sions:
 one we claim the faith of Je - sus:
 share in Christ the feast that frees us: all are wel - come;
 bring an end to fear and dan - ger:
 house pro-claim from floor to raf - ter:

(F#m) (Em) (D) (Em) (A7) (D) (G) (D)
 Am Gm F Gm C7 F Bb F

all are wel - come; all are wel - come in this place.

***Charge and Benediction**

Dr. Hull

***Congregational Response**

No. 23, stanza 3

God, your word is still creating, calling us to life made new.

Now reveal to us fresh vistas where there's work to dare and do.

Keep us clear of all distortion. Polish us with loving care.

Thus, new creatures in your image, we'll proclaim Christ everywhere.

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
Ann Carney, piano
Alayna Calderwood, liturgist

A/V Team: Dylan Booker, Chris Wilcox

Ushers: Andy Burke, Tom Klecker, Tom Schorr, Carol Watkins, Jim Williams, Michael Zagora

Welcome Team: Grace Wooley, Ryan Wooley, Kari Wooley, Amy Zagora

This Sunday is the first in a three-sermon series, "Building Beautiful Relationships." The next two sermons will be "The Freedom of Forgiveness" on February 1 and "Jesus' Guidelines for Relationship Repair" on February 15.

Part 1 of the constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) is the Book of Confessions, which contains twelve statements of faith from various times and places throughout the history of the Christian church. The Confession of Belhar, from which this morning's affirmation of faith is taken, was developed in South Africa in the 1980s to express the church's opposition to apartheid.

Join the Welcome Team! Our Welcome Team members are often the first point of contact for those attending our worship services and special events. Friendly faces are always welcome to serve! Sign up via QR code. Contact: Kathy Galati, kathyhg118@yahoo.com.



Interested in joining South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church? Our Session will gather to welcome new members today 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 22, 2025)**Remember in Prayer**

- Barbara Goodman as she recovers from a fall.
- Juliann Cunningham as she recovers from surgery.

- Harry Lorenzo as he recovers from surgery.
- Gordon Kay 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.

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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smpchome.org

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. 25
5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
SMPC Youth SkyZone Event
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.

tuesday
JAN. 27
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
JAN. 27
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. 28
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.

sunday
FEB. 1
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
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
FEB. 1
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Third Thirty, "How Different Is It for Those Who Don't Fit the Mold?" Mecklenburg Hall, Ages 60-90
This study meets once a month over a light lunch following the worship service. They'll explore how the Third Thirty might look different for those who don't fit the typical mold, such as those who have lost a spouse or never married, those who have no children, or those who are caring for a family member with special needs. You can attend this session even if you have not attended previous sessions. Please register on Realm in advance so we order enough lunch! Contact: Melissa White, melissa@smpchome.org.

sunday
FEB. 1
5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
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 pizza to order! Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

sunday
FEB. 1
5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.
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. Please bring 12 stuffed Easter eggs for the Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, March 15. Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Making Space Mom's Group, Thursday, February 5, 7:30 p.m., 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 Morning Men's Group, Friday, February 6, 7:30 a.m., 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.

Desserts for Center of Hope, Sunday, February 8, 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. Desserts can be store-bought or homemade. Sign up at smpchome.org > Serve Our Community. Contact: Terry Gaines, terryg@carolina.rr.com.

Youth Sunday and Souper Bowl of Caring, Sunday, February 8, 10:10 a.m., Sanctuary - A youth-led worship and youth fundraiser. Please bring canned goods and dry food for Nourish Up. 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.



A Caregiver's Journey, Tuesday, February 10, 1:00-2:30 p.m. McQueen Room - Finding meaning and purpose as you care for a loved one with Alzheimer's or dementia. Contact: Kathy Garner, kathygarner15@gmail.com

Shelter Ministry, Thursday, February 13, 9:30 a.m., Mecklenburg Hall - *Notice new time!* 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.

Men's Breakfast Group, Thursday, February 13, 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, Btyler@unitedskates.com.



Room in the Inn, Sunday, February 15, Various Times, Sardis Presbyterian Church - Volunteers will help with dinner, overnight stays or breakfast and cleanup. Donations also needed. Sign up via QR code. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

All-Church Serves and Learns - Time Out Youth, Sunday, February 22, 9:00-10:00 a.m., Mecklenburg Hall, All Ages - Join us for a special intergenerational service and learning opportunity as we partner with Time Out Youth, an organization dedicated to creating affirming, supportive spaces for LGBTQ+ youth in our community. We will welcome their team to SMPC for a morning of hands-on mission, education and connection. We are collecting full-size bottles of shampoos, deodorants, body wash and other hygiene essentials like combs and socks for TOY's Life Essentials Closet. We'll be assembling hygiene kits during our hour of service and learning! Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.



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 or via QR code. Please register by Thursday, February 5. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.



SMPC PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION UPDATES!

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