



South Mecklenburg

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**A Service of Worship
Palm/Passion Sunday
March 29, 2026
10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestream**

**Please rise in body or in spirit.*

We Gather

Prelude *Trumpet Tune in G* Jeremy Bankson
Kyle Gavagan, trumpet

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

Introit *For the Life That You Have Given* Carl Daw, Jr.

***Call to Worship** Jordan Booker

One: We gather to begin the holiest of weeks.

All: We come with hearts open, ready to follow Jesus wherever he leads.

One: Today we join the crowd along the road, waving branches, lifting our voices, and welcoming the One who comes in God's name.

All: Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

One: We shout our praise, even as the road leads toward the cross.

All: For in this journey of love and sacrifice, we find our hope and our salvation.

One: Awake, people of God, because Christ comes to us!

All: With palms held high and hearts laid before God, we worship the One who saves.

One: For God is good!

All: All the time, God is good! God's steadfast love endures forever. Come, let us worship the Lord!

***Hymn 196** *All Glory, Laud, and Honor* VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN

All glo - ry, laud, and hon - or to thee, Re-deem-er, King,

to whom the lips of chil - dren made sweet ho-san-nas ring!

1 Thou art the King of Is - ra - el, thou Da - vid's roy - al Son,
 2 The peo - ple of the He - brews with palms be - fore thee went;
 3 To thee, be - fore thy pas - sion, they sang their hymns of praise;
 4 Thou didst ac - cept their prais - es; ac - cept the prayers we bring,

to Refrain
 who in the Lord's name com - est, the King and bless - ed One.
 our praise and prayers and an - thems be - fore thee we pre - sent.
 to thee, now high ex - alt - ed, our mel - o - dy we raise.
 who in all good de - light - est, thou good and gra - cious King!

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Rev. Odom

God of mercy, you sent Jesus Christ to seek and save the lost. We confess that we have strayed from you and turned aside from your way. We are misled by pride, for we see ourselves pure when we are stained, and great when we are small. We have failed in love, neglected justice, and ignored your truth. Have mercy, O God, and forgive our sins. Return us to paths of righteousness through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

Assurance of God's Grace

Rev. Odom

One: Listen, so that you may live: the steadfast love of the Lord never fails as God forgives us, restores us and renews us for the journey so that we might become people who live into Christ' vision of new life. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

All: Hosanna! Glory be to God. Amen.

***Response of Praise**

No. 447

***We are forgiven. We are forgiven.
Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.
(sing twice)***

We Hear and Respond to the Word

Church Family Moment

Rebecca Guzman

- 1. Story Connection:** The book *He Is Risen* by Patty Rokus tells the story of Holy Week using only rocks. [Watch it here](#), then try making your own version of a Holy Week story scene using rocks, sticks, or other natural materials. Which part of the story do you know best? Which part do you want to learn more about?
- 2. Create:** Today is Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week. We remember Jesus riding into Jerusalem while the crowd cheered, waved branches, and shouted “Hosanna!” Later in the week, the story becomes harder, which is why we sometimes also call this Passion Sunday. You can remember both the joy and the journey by folding your palm into a cross. [Here’s a video to help you learn how.](#)
- 3. Activity:** Jesus’ arrival into Jerusalem was full of celebration. Make your own “praise parade” at home by crafting palm branches from paper or using real leaves. Write or draw things you want to thank or praise God for. Then walk around your home or yard, waving your branches and saying “Hosanna!”
- 4. Wonder Together:**
 - a. What do you think it would have been like to be on the very first Palm Sunday? Do you think the crowd knew what was going to happen? Do you think Jesus knew?
 - b. Why do you think Jesus rode a donkey instead of a horse?
 - c. How will you and your family observe Holy Week this year?
(Hint: we would love to see you for Maundy Thursday worship!)



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 welcomes all, strangers and friends;
God’s love is strong and it never ends.
(sing twice)***

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

Zechariah 9:9-10

Rev. Odom

Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war-horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

Anthem*Ride On, King Jesus*

Moses Hogan

Chancel Choir; Charleston Bates, tenor; Blythe Kinsey, piano

*Ride on, King Jesus, ride on, the conquerin' king.
 Oh, ride on, King Jesus, ride on. No man can a-hinder thee.
 I was but young when I begun. No man can a-hinder thee.
 But now my race is almost done. No man can a-hinder thee.
 King Jesus rides a milk white horse. No man can a-hinder thee.
 The river of Jordan he did cross. No man can a-hinder thee.
 He's the King and the Lord. No man can a-hinder thee.
 He's the first and the last. He's the Lord of Lords.
 Jesus is the Prince of Peace. No man can a-hinder thee.
 Oh, ride on, King Jesus, ride on, ride on, just ride on Jesus.
 Ride on, King Jesus, ride on. No man can a-hinder thee.
 Ride on, Jesus!*

Second Reading

Matthew 21:1-11

Dr. Hull

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, 'The Lord needs them.' And he will send them immediately." This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying, "Tell the daughter of Zion, Look, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a donkey." The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

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

Sermon

"Why Palm Sunday Matters"

Dr. Hull

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

A Brief Statement of Faith
 Rev. Melissa White

We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal.

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer Rev. White
... (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. White

Offertory *Meditations on the Cross* Michael Helman
Exultate Ringers

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.

***Lenten Doxology** FINLANDIA

***O suffering Jesus, in these forty days.
We view your sorrow, share in your distress.
Our Lenten songs are filled with muted praise;
Yet by your passion, we are truly blessed.
Praise to our God, and praise to you, the Son!
Praise to the Spirit, our God, Three in One.***

***Prayer of Dedication** Elizabeth Martin
Almighty God, we bring our palms, our songs, and our hearts to you, giving thanks for Jesus, our King, who comes in humility and love. As we shout hosanna, may our praise be more than words. Bless our offerings that they may further your kingdom in this world; through Christ we pray. Amen.

We Go Out to Serve

***Hymn 197** *Hosanna, Loud Hosanna* ELLACOMBE

1 Ho - san - na, loud ho - san - na, the lit - tle chil - dren sang;
 2 From Ol - i - vet they fol - lowed 'mid an ex - ult - ant crowd,
 3 "Ho - san - na in the high - est!" That an - cient song we sing,

through pil - lared court and tem - ple the joy - ful an - them rang.
 the vic - tor palm branch wav - ing, and chant - ing clear and loud;
 for Christ is our Re - deem - er; the Lord of heaven, our King.

To Je - sus, who had blessed them, close fold - ed to his breast,
 the Lord of earth and heav - en rode on in low - ly state,
 O may we ev - er praise him with heart and life and voice,

the chil - dren sang their prais - es, the sim - plest and the best.
 nor scorned that lit - tle chil - dren should on his bid - ding wait.
 and in his bliss - ful pres - ence e - ter - nal - ly re - joice.

***Charge and Benediction**

Dr. Hull

***Congregational Response**

No. 700, stanza 1

I'm gonna live so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!

I'm gonna live so God can use me anywhere, Lord, anytime!

Postlude

Partita on "All Glory, Laud, and Honor"

Michael Burkhardt

V. Toccata

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; Charleston Bates, tenor; Blythe Kinsey, piano

Exultate Ringers

Kyle Gavagan, trumpet

Jordan Booker, Elizabeth Martin, liturgists

A/V Team: Jordan Booker, Chris Wilcox

Ushers: Andy Burke, Mitchell Davis, Curt Ireland, Tom Klecker, Craig Parrish

Welcome Team: Kathy Galati, Allison King, Nolan King, Maria Varela

A brief Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, April 12, after the 10:10am worship service for the purpose of electing two at-large members of the Nominating Committee; Michael Choren and Susan Hicks are the nominees for these positions.

Part One of the constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) is *The Book of Confessions*, which contains twelve faith statements from throughout the history of Christianity. A Brief Statement of Faith, from which today's Affirmation of Faith is taken, was created in 1983 as part of the reunion of the two largest Presbyterian denominations in the United States.

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](https://www.instagram.com/southmeckpres) and Facebook: [@southmecklenburgpresbyterian](https://www.facebook.com/southmecklenburgpresbyterian).

Interested in joining South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church? Our Session will gather to welcome new members Sunday, April 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 March 25, 2026)

Remember in Prayer

- All those affected by conflict, displacement, and unrest around the world and at home.
- Our mission partners in Bayonnais, Haiti, that God's abundant love, grace, and mercy would bring peace and protection, provide daily bread, and grant safety, justice, and hope amidst ongoing crisis in their country.
- That God would guide us to serve others with compassion, justice, and mercy within our church, our community, and our world.

To join the prayer chain or send a prayer request:
prayer@SMPChome.org.

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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

MAR. 29

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

Youth Spiritual Practices Evening Sanctuary, Middle and High Schoolers

During this Lenten season, our youth are invited into a meaningful evening of prayer, reflection, and hands-on spiritual practices in the sanctuary. These interactive prayer stations are designed to help students slow down, listen for God and engage their faith in tangible ways. Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

SELF-GUIDED SPIRITUAL PRACTICES PRAYER STATIONS

Journey through the self-guided spiritual practices prayer stations during Holy Week. Monday, March 30-Thursday, April 2, anytime between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. Great for individuals or small groups. Please note that the sanctuary doors will be locked. Please enter through the church office. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

monday

MAR. 30

6:30 p.m. -
8:00 p.m.

DivorceCare Chapel 206

A 12-week seminar and support group that will help you heal from hurt. Led by SMPC members Janet and Jeff Goetz. Childcare available upon request. Register via QR code. Contact: Janet Goetz, janetgoetz@carolina.rr.com.



tuesday

MAR. 31

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

APR. 1

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. The group is discussing the book of Ephesians. All are welcome! If you would like to join by Zoom, please contact Adrienne Jaquith, adrienne@smpchome.org.

wednesday

APR. 1

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

Intro to Mahjong Mecklenburg Hall

Led by church member Carol Morgan and open to all those who want to learn or are just starting to learn mahjong. Contact: Carol Morgan, morgancc43@aol.com.

thursday

APR. 2

5:30 p.m. -
6:45 p.m.

Maundy Thursday Dinner and Communion, Mecklenburg Hall

Join us as we worship together and share dinner and communion just as Jesus shared with his disciples on the night of his arrest. Dinner buffet, catered by Brown Bag, will open at 5:30 p.m. and will include macaroni and cheese, salad, ham, bread and fruit. Worship and communion start at 6:00 p.m. Free to attend. Register via QR code by today. Contact: Melissa White, melissa@smpchome.org.



Friday, April 3, 7:30 p.m.
Good Friday Tenebrae Service
Sanctuary or Livestream



Easter Sunday Worship April 5, 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m., Sanctuary and Livestream

SERVICE OPPORTUNITY

Nourish Up's St. Giles Food Pantry, Wednesdays, 12:30-2:00 p.m. or Fridays, 1:00-4:00 p.m., 2027 Emerywood Drive, Charlotte, NC 28210 – Lift and deliver boxes of food from Nourish Up's St. Giles Food Pantry to cars or help with client services. The minimum age to volunteer is 14, and closed-toe shoes are required. Contact: Jane Royther, jroyther@gmail.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday Morning Men's Group, Friday, April 3, 7:30-8:30 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.

Shelter Ministry, Thursday, April 9, 9:30 a.m., 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, morganc43@aol.com.

Men's Breakfast Group, Thursday, April 9, 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.

Desserts for Center of Hope, Sunday, April 12, Before 10:10 a.m. Worship, Narthex - 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.

Third Thirty, Sunday, April 12, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Ages 60-90 - In this session, the group will explore the issues related to healing loss and will hear from audiologist and church member Allison King. You'll be able to attend this session even if you haven't attended previous sessions. A light lunch will be served. Register on Realm. Contact: Melissa White, melissa@smpchome.org.



Writing Your Legacy, Mondays beginning April 13, 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. - A workshop led by SMPC member Melinda Ferguson. Over five weeks, participants will receive guidance in writing about family memories, history and more. This workshop is open to everyone and is appropriate for new and returning group members. Register via QR code. Contact: Melissa White, melissa@smpchome.org.

A Caregiver's Journey, Tuesday, April 14, 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.

Men's Evening Study Group, Tuesday, April 14, 7:30 p.m., Chapel 206 - The group meets on the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month. New faces are always welcome! Contact: Jon Myers, jonmyers2@gmail.com.

International Dining Group, Thursday, April 16, 6:00 p.m., Wan Fu Chinese, 10719 Kettering Drive - Join this group that loves to eat out! All are welcome. Please register via Realm or scan QR code. Contact: Brenda Villa, bvilla20@carolina.rr.com.



Food for Thought Group, Thursday, April 16, 12:30 p.m., McQueen Room - This group is reading *Becoming Madam Secretary* by Stephanie Dray. All are welcome! Contact: Kathy Paquette, khesspaquette@aol.com.

STAFF SABBATICAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Easter Sunday will be Director of Music and Organist Zach Bowyer's last Sunday in worship before he begins a three-month sabbatical on Monday, April 6. He will return to the office on Tuesday, July 7, and will be back at the organ console on Sunday, July 12. Scan QR code for a letter from Dr. Sandy Hull regarding Zach's sabbatical.

