



**South
Mecklenburg**
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

**A Service of Worship
Third Sunday of Easter
Confirmation Sunday
April 19, 2026
10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestream**

**Please rise in body or in spirit.*

We Gather

Prelude *Lord, I Want to Be a Christian* Gilbert Martin

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

“Paws” for the CAT Shelby Ullman

Introit *Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying* Ken Medema

***Call to Worship** Alayna Calderwood, Paxtyn Sandeen
One: The Lord is the True Vine, and we are the branches.

All: We gather to abide in Christ, so that we may bear much fruit.

One: Apart from him, we can do nothing.

**All: But in him, we are pruned and nurtured to grow in faith, hope,
and love.**

One: Let us worship the One who holds us close,

All: the God who gardens our souls, the True Vine, Jesus Christ!

***Hymn 611** *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee* HYMN TO JOY



1 Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love!
 2 All thy works with joy sur-round thee; earth and heaven re-flect thy rays;
 3 Mor-tals, join the hap-py cho-rus which the morn-ing stars be-gan.



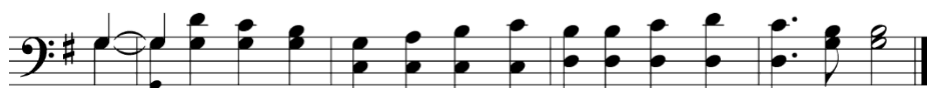
Hearts un-fold like flowers be-fore thee, o-pening to the sun a - bove.
 stars and an-gels sing a-round thee, cen-ter of un-bro-ken praise.
 Love di-vine is reign-ing o'er us, join-ing all in heav-en's plan.



Melt the clouds of sin and sad-ness; drive the dark of doubt a - way.
 Field and for-est, vale and moun-tain, flower-y mead-ow, flash - ing sea,
 Ev - er sing-ing, march we on-ward, vic - tors in the midst of strife.



Giv - er of im - mor-tal glad-ness, fill us with the light of day.
 chant - ing bird and flow-ing foun-tain, call us to re - joice in thee.
 Joy - ful mu - sic leads us sun-ward in the tri-umph song of life.



Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Julia Nancarrow, Caitlin Vaughan

Gracious and merciful God, we thank you for Jesus Christ, the True Vine, whose life is rooted eternally in you. By your grace, you have grafted us into him and called us to bear the fruit of your love. Yet we confess that all is not well with the way we live. We have not abided in you as we ought. We have trusted in ourselves instead of your grace. We have resisted your pruning and turned away from the life you offer. The fruit of our lives is often thin, and our love for you and neighbor falls short. Have mercy on us, O God. Forgive us, renew us, and restore us. By your Spirit, draw us again into Christ, that we may abide in him and he in us. Shape us to bear the fruit of your love in

every season of our lives, for your glory and for the sake of the world.
We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Assurance of God's Grace

Grace Wooley

One: Hear the good news. Jesus says, "Abide in me as I abide in you."

God does not abandon the branches but tends to us with mercy and love. We are promised that God's goodness and mercy will follow us all the days of our life. Friends, in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven, restored, and made new.

All: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Thanks be to God.

*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. **Create:** In today's Gospel scripture, Jesus tells us that we are the branches connected to the vine (Jesus). Create a "faith tree" or vine and branches to remind you of this connection. You can use [this one](#) if you like! On each leaf, write the name of a person or group that grows because of their connection to Jesus. As you make it, think about how staying connected to Jesus helps you grow.
2. **Story Connection:** This is an especially powerful passage for young people. Listen to a dramatic reading that has been set to art [here](#). Listen to it at least twice since the video is so short. What do you hear in the passage? What are Jeremiah's reasons for not hearing God's call? How does God respond?
3. **Game:** Play a game similar to "Simon Says." One person calls out an action (hop on one foot, clap three times, spin in a circle, etc.). Before doing the action, everyone must say, "**With God's help, I can!**" If someone forgets to say it first, they pause until the next round. This reminds us that we don't do things alone, God helps us.
4. **Wonder Together:**
 - a. I wonder how God is calling you, like Jeremiah.
 - b. I wonder what it means to stay connected to Jesus, the vine.
 - c. I wonder when you have needed God's help to do something hard.
 - d. I wonder how we can help one another grow in faith.



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.

First Reading Jeremiah 1:4-10 Blake Stockstill

Now the word of the Lord came to me saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations." Then I said, "Ah, Lord God! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy." But the Lord said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a boy'; for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and you shall speak whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord." Then the Lord put out his hand and touched my mouth; and the Lord said to me, "Now I have put my words in your mouth. See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant."

Anthem *I Am the Vine* Allen Pote

Chancel Choir; Sarah Abushakra, piano

I am the vine and you are the branches, abide in me and I will abide in you.

Then you will bear much fruit for without me you can do nothing,

abide in me I will abide in you. As the Father has loved me, so I love you.

Go then and love one another. Keep this commandment, for no greater love

have you, than to lay down your life for your friends.

I am the vine and you are the branches, abide in me and I will abide in you.

Love one another as I have loved you. I am the vine, you are the branches,

go then and bear much fruit, go abide in my love.

Prayer for Illumination Jordan Booker

Second Reading John 15:1-8 Owen Bickett, Jordan Booker

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

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

Gracious God, we give thanks that you have called us to be your branches, connected to Christ, so that we might bear the fruit of faith, hope, justice, and love in our world. We bring these gifts as a sign of our gratitude and commitment, trusting that you will use us and these gifts to bear fruit for your glory. Amen.

We Go Out to Serve

Service of Confirmation (see insert)

*Charge and Benediction Rev. Odom

*Congregational Response No. 547, stanza 2

“Go, my children, sins forgiven, at peace and pure.

Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.

Here you heard my dear Son’s story; here you touched him, saw his glory. Go, my children, sins forgiven, at peace and pure.”

Postlude *Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah* arr. Hal H. Hopson

Worship Service Notes

Leading Worship this Morning

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

Dr. Sandy Hull, Transitional Pastor

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

Rebecca Guzman, Director of Spiritual Formation

Chancel Choir

Sarah Abushakra, organ and piano

Mark Janney, tenor and guitar

Liturgists: Hannah Angerer, Owen Bickett, Mason Briganti, Jordan Booker, Alayna Calderwood, Hannah Heath, Braxton Kasmer, Blake Stockstill, Julia Nancarrow, Tuuli Ritchie, Paxtyn Sandeen, Caitlin Vaughan, Grace Wooley

A/V Team: Dylan Booker, Chris Wilcox

Ushers: Andy Burke, Curt Ireland, Tom Klecker, Tom Maguire, Elizabeth Rose, William Rose

Welcome Team: Allison King, Nolan King, Courtney Ritchie, Steven Ritchie

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 Thursday mornings, contact Adrienne Jaquith, Office and Database Manager, adrienne@smpchome.org. SMPC uses Realm as a church directory and

for event registrations. If you are new to Realm or have questions about it, please contact Adrienne Jaquith, and she will be happy to help!

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.
- A glider and changing table are available in Room 301 for mothers who wish to have privacy while nursing.
- 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 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 April 15, 2026)

Remember in Prayer

- Our Confirmands as they choose to affirm their faith and join more fully in the life and ministry of the church.
- Zach Bowyer, as he enjoys time for rest, reflection and spiritual renewal while on sabbatical.
- Sue Slezycki 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 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

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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PO Box 79321, Charlotte, NC 28271
smpchome.org

Facebook: @southmecklenburgpresbyterian; Instagram: @southmeckpres

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

APR. 19

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

BAM! Bible and Music

Sanctuary, Ages 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

APR. 19

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

April BYG (Big Youth Group)

Mecklenburg Hall, Middle and High Schoolers

We're excited to host *Spotlight on Sandy: Ask the Pastor Night*. This will provide SMPC Youth an opportunity to get to know our transitional pastor, hear some of his stories, and ask any questions they'd like.

Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

monday

APR. 20

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

Writing Your Legacy

McQueen Room

Led by SMPC member Melinda Ferguson. Over five weeks, participants will receive guidance in writing about family memories, history and more. Open to everyone and is appropriate for new and returning group members. Register via QR code. Contact: Melissa White, melissa@smpchome.org.



monday

APR. 20

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

APR. 21

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

APR. 21

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

New! SMPC Tuesday Mahjong

Narthex

All levels of mahjong players are invited to join this new group that will meet weekly on Tuesdays. Contact Mary Katheryne Zagora, mkzagora@smpchome.org, to be added to the email list.

wednesday

APR. 22

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.

thursday

APR. 23

1:15 p.m. -
3:15 p.m.

New! SMPC Thursday Mahjong

Narthex

All levels of mahjong players are invited to join this new group that will meet weekly on Thursdays. Contact Mary Katheryne Zagora, mkzagora@smpchome.org, to be added to the email list.

saturday
APR. 25
9:30 a.m.

Bag Lunches for Roof Above
Drop off in front of Mecklenburg Hall

Each month, SMPC provides 100 bag lunches for Roof Above to help feed those in need. Sign up to bring bag lunches via QR code. Contact: Julie Durham, julierdurham@gmail.com.



sunday
APR. 26
9:00 a.m. -
10:00 a.m.

Adult Study: 'Slow Theology'
McQueen Room or Zoom

An 8-week class where we'll practice slowing down, asking deeper questions, and listening more carefully to Scripture, tradition and one another. This is not about having the right answers, but about growing in curiosity, trust, and faith. Register on Realm. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

sunday
APR. 26
4:00 p.m. -
5:30 p.m.

4th and 5th Grade Bowling and Arcade
Spare Time Bowling, Pineville

Join us for bowling, pizza and arcade fun! Cost is \$25. Register on Realm. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

sunday
APR. 26
5:00 p.m. -
6:15 p.m.

SMPC Youth TCBY Night
TCBY Blakeney

Frozen yogurt, a short devotional and fellowship! Hope you can join us. Register on Realm. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS



SMPC American Red Cross Blood Drive, Saturday, May 2, 8:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m., The need for blood and blood supplies is great. Please register, roll up your sleeve and donate. Sign up to donate or volunteer at the drive via QR code. Contact: Bill Ramsey, bill.john.ramsey@gmail.com.

Third Thirty, Sunday, May 3, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., The Commons, Ages 60-90 - In this session, the group will explore wills and estate planning. You can 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.

Lunch Bunch, Tuesday, May 5, 11:30 a.m., The Office Craft Bar and Kitchen, Stonecrest - This is an informal group that meets four times a year. All are welcome - invite a friend! Register on Realm or via QR code. Contact: Ruth Ann Engle, raengle22@gmail.com.



Lunch on the Grounds, Sunday, May 5, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Mecklenburg Hall and Church Grounds - Everyone is welcome! Join us after worship for a delicious lunch on the grounds catered by Brown Bag. We'll enjoy sliced grilled chicken breast, salad, mac 'n cheese, rolls, brownies, tea and lemonade. More information and register via QR code or Realm. Contact: Melissa White, melissa@smpchome.org.

Nourish Up Warehouse Service - Saturday, May 30, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Nourish Up Warehouse, 901 Carrier Drive, Ages 13 years and older - Volunteers will help support food distribution efforts that make a real difference for neighbors in need. Please first register via the QR code, then follow the instructions there to register on the Nourish Up site. Space is limited to 20 volunteers. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL AND MISSION POSSIBLE

Monday, July 20-Thursday, July 23, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. VBS is a FUN week of exploring the Bible through play, art, science and music! Mission Possible is our program for 5th and 6th graders that involves a week of fun and service. **Register on Realm or go to our website, smpchome.org/vacation-bible-school to learn more.**

Vacation Bible School: Ages 3 (Potty-Trained)-Rising 4th Graders
Mission Possible: Rising 5th & 6th Graders

Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org

We need Youth VBS volunteers! Scan QR code to fill out a form to let us know your availability and VBS volunteer interests this summer!



CONFIRMATION SUNDAY

APRIL 19, 2026

Confirmation is a significant step on one's journey of faith. It is when a young person explores and engages questions of theology, including who God is and who we are in relation to God.

Confirmation builds on baptism when we are named and claimed by God. In Confirmation, youth are confirming the promises made on their behalf by their parents and the congregation at their baptism and are professing faith in Jesus Christ for themselves.

Confirmation is more than a personal decision to join the church, it is also a commitment to live one's life for God, and each one of these confirmands and their Statements of Faith have reflected this. Through Confirmation, these youth have learned what it means to be a Christian and are now being ushered into lives of faithful discipleship.

SMPC CONFIRMATION CLASS OF 2026

CONFIRMAND

Hannah Angerer
Owen Bickett
Jordan Booker
Mason Briganti
Alayna Calderwood
Hannah Heath
Braxton Kasmer
Julia Nancarrow
Skye Palmer
Tuuli Ritchie
Paxtyn Sandeen
Austin Stockstill
Blake Stockstill
Caitlin Vaughan
Grace Wooley
Jake Zagora

MENTOR

Alicia Bickett
Dan Webb
Zach Bowyer
Steve Williams
Brynn Holder
Rebecca Guzman
Karen Keough
Alyson Vaughan
Jane Brookshire
Helen Castle
Angela Skeen
Bill Ramsey
David Gaines
Kari Wooley
Shelby Ullman
Michael Zagora

