



**South
Mecklenburg**
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Service of Worship
Fourth Sunday after Pentecost
June 21, 2026
10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestream

**Please rise in body or in spirit.*

We Gather

Prelude *Be Thou My Vision* Arr. Hal Hopson

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

Introit *How Very Good and Pleasant* Barbara Boertje
Sarah Abushakra, mezzo soprano and piano

***Call to Worship** Jones Woodard
One: Incline your ear to us, O God, and answer us, for we are poor and
needy.

All: We come seeking God's mercy and steadfast love.
One: There is no one like our God, whose compassion is great and
whose faithfulness never ends.

All: We come to worship the God who forgives and restores.
One: In Christ, we are invited to leave behind what harms and to walk
in newness of life.

All: We come with grateful hearts to worship God! Amen!

***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,

Great is thy faith - ful - ness! Great is thy faith - ful - ness!
 오 신 실 하 신 주 오 신 실 하 신 주

Morn - ing by morn - ing, new mer - cies I see.
 날 마 다 자 비 를 베풀 시 며

All I have need - ed thy hand hath pro - vid - ed.
 일 용 할 모 든 것 내 러 주 시 니

Great is thy faith - ful - ness, Lord un - to me!
 오 신 실 하 신 주 나 의 구 주

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Rebecca Guzman

Merciful God, we confess that we do not always live as your people. We make mistakes, hurt others, and sometimes make excuses instead of telling the truth. We choose our own way instead of your way. We hold on to habits and attitudes that keep us from loving you and our neighbors fully. Forgive us when we fall short. Give us the courage to be honest, the humility to seek forgiveness, and the grace to forgive others. Help us leave behind what separates us from you and walk in the new life you offer through Jesus Christ. In your mercy, hear our prayers and make us new. Amen.

Assurance of God's Grace

Rebecca Guzman

One: Friends, hear the good news: God's mercy is greater than our mistakes.

All: Thanks be to God!

One: When we confess, God forgives.

All: Thanks be to God!

One: Through Christ, we are freed from sin and invited into new life.

Believe the good news of the gospel: in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

All: Thanks be to God! Amen.

***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. **Story Connection:** Listen to a [readaloud](#) of *David Gets in Trouble* by David Shannon. David has an excuse for everything! In today's reading from Romans, Paul reminds us that following Jesus means turning away from sin and choosing a new way of living. Part of that is admitting when we have made mistakes instead of making excuses.
2. **Game:** Stand in a circle and toss a soft ball or beanbag to one another. When someone catches the ball, invite them to share a small mistake they made recently (something simple and age-appropriate). After they share, everyone responds, "Thank you for being honest!" or "God forgives you, and we love you!" This game reminds us that admitting mistakes is not something to fear. God loves us, forgives us, and helps us grow.
3. **Craft:** Cut a heart from construction paper and draw a crack down the middle. Talk about how our mistakes and sins can hurt our



relationships with God and with other people. Then place a Band-Aid across the crack and write words like "I'm sorry," "Please forgive me," or "God forgives." Decorate the heart with stickers, drawings, or colorful patterns. As you work, remember that God's forgiveness helps heal what is broken and gives us a fresh start.

4. Wonder together:

- a. Why do you think it can be hard to admit when we are wrong?
- b. What happens when we make excuses instead of telling the truth?
- c. How does it feel when someone forgives you?
- d. What do you think Paul means when he says we can live a new life with Jesus?
- e. How can we help others feel safe by telling the truth about their mistakes?

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. Lindsey Odom

First Reading

Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17

Rev. Odom

Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. Preserve my life, for I am devoted to you; save your servant who trusts in you. You are my God; be gracious to me, O Lord, for to you do I cry all day long. Gladden the soul of your servant, for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you. Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer; listen to my cry of supplication. In the day of my trouble I call on you, for you will answer me. There is none like you among the gods, O Lord, nor are there any works like yours. All the nations you have made shall come and bow down before you, O Lord, and shall glorify your name. For you are great and do wondrous things; you alone are God. Turn to me and be gracious to me; give your strength to your servant; save the child of your serving girl. Show me a sign of your favor, so that those who hate me may see it and be put to shame, because you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.

Second Reading

Romans 6:1-11

Rev. Odom

What then are we to say? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in

it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

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

Sermon

Grace Changes Everything

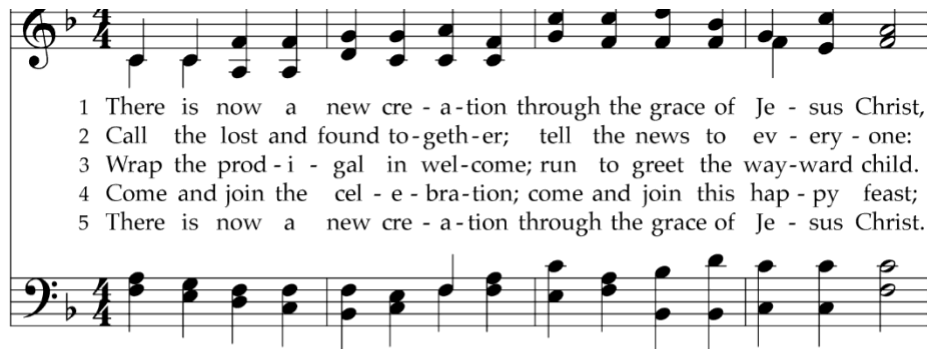
Rev. Odom

***Hymn 774**

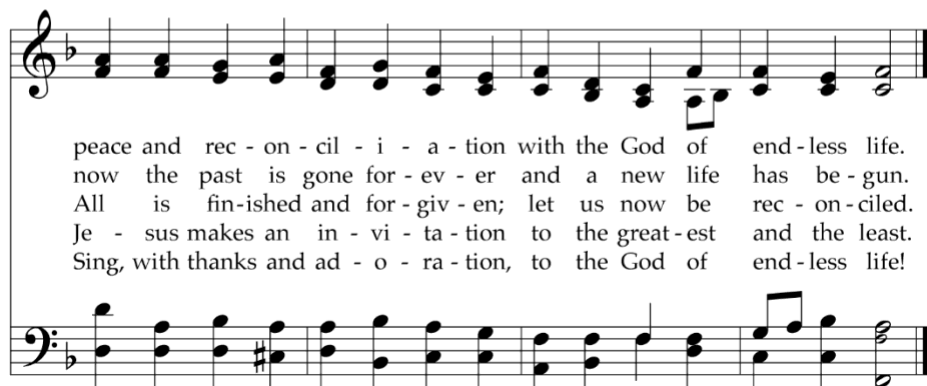
There Is Now a New Creation

STUTT GART

(Stanza 1, 2, and 5)



1 There is now a new cre - a - tion through the grace of Je - sus Christ,
 2 Call the lost and found to - geth - er; tell the news to ev - ery - one:
 3 Wrap the prod - i - gal in wel - come; run to greet the way - ward child.
 4 Come and join the cel - e - bra - tion; come and join this hap - py feast;
 5 There is now a new cre - a - tion through the grace of Je - sus Christ.



peace and rec - on - cil - i - a - tion with the God of end - less life.
 now the past is gone for - ev - er and a new life has be - gun.
 All is fin - ished and for - giv - en; let us now be rec - on - ciled.
 Je - sus makes an in - vi - ta - tion to the great - est and the least.
 Sing, with thanks and ad - o - ra - tion, to the God of end - less life!

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

A Brief Statement of Faith

Rev. White

We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life. The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the Church. The same Spirit who

inspired the prophets and apostles rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture, engages us through the Word proclaimed, claims us in the waters of baptism, feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation, and calls women and men to all ministries of the church. In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!" With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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 *Juneteenth Medley*
Mark Janney, Collin Sinclair, Dottie Dysard, Bill Ramsey

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** Harper Leigh Woodard
Generous God, all that we are and all that we have comes from you. Take these gifts and make them blessings for your people in our community and beyond. Amen.

We Go Out to Serve

Commissioning of Massanetta Youth and Adults

One: Will you pray for these youth and adult leaders, praying for safe travels, supporting them throughout this journey, and encouraging them as they use their God-given gifts to become peacemakers and bring God's peace into the darkest and most unjust places of our world?

All: **We will. Go in peace and work together to build God's peace.**

***Hymn 702**

Christ Be Beside Me

BUNESSAN

Mark Janney, guitar



1 Christ be be - side me; Christ be be - fore me; Christ be be -
2 Christ on my right hand, Christ on my left hand, Christ all a -
3 Christ be in all hearts think - ing a - bout me; Christ be on



hind me, King of my heart. Christ be with - in me; Christ be be -
round me, shield in the strife. Christ in my sleep - ing, Christ in my
all tongues tell - ing of me. Christ be the vi - sion in eyes that



low me; Christ be a - bove me, nev - er to part.
sit - ting, Christ in my ris - ing, Light of my life.
see me; in ears that hear me Christ ev - er be.

***Charge and Benediction**

Rev. Odom

***Congregational Response**

Hymn 543, stanza 1

***God, be the love to search and keep me;
God, be the prayer to move my voice;
God, be the strength to now uphold me:
O Christ, surround me; O Christ, surround me.***

Postlude

Postlude on Darwall's 148th

Charles Callahan

Worship Service Notes

Leading Worship this Morning

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

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

Rebecca Guzman, Director of Spiritual Formation

Sarah Abushakra, organ and piano

Mark Janney, Collin Sinclair, Dottie Dysard, Bill Ramsey

Harper Leigh Woodard, Jones Woodard, liturgists

A/V Team: Chris Wilcox, Mary Kathyryne Zagora

Ushers: Andy Burke, Jenny Gates, Bjorn Hansen, Evan Mangels, Jonathan Mangels, Gwen Volker

Welcome Team: Donna Podgorny, Bill Ramsey, Donna Ramsey, Bob Williamson

The *Juneteenth Medley* sung during the Offertory is comprised of four songs: *Oh Freedom*, *Keep Your Eyes on the Prize*, *Come and Go With Me*, and *We Shall Overcome*. They speak of suffering and perseverance, journeys and goals, freedom and focus, voices and unity which were

important elements of the Civil Rights rallies and marches of the 1950s and 60s. These songs continue to be sung as people work toward fairness, justice, and equality for all.

Today, we commission 26 middle school youth and 7 adult leaders as they prepare to attend the Massanetta Springs Middle School Conference 2026 in Virginia. Throughout this retreat, they will worship, learn, build friendships, and explore this year's theme, "Peace-ing Together, Peace by Piece," inspired by Romans 14:19 — "Let us then pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding." As a congregation, we send them with our prayers and blessings.

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!

Interested in joining South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church? To learn more about membership and the process of joining, contact Rev. Melissa White, Parish Associate, melissa@smpchome.org or 704-887-7488.

Congregational Notes (as of June 16, 2026)

Remember in Prayer

- Peggy Heller, as she recovers from surgery.
- The people of Bayonnais and all of Haiti, that God would bring protection from violence, healing for the injured, provision for those in need, and strength and hope in the midst of hardship.
- Zach Bowyer, Director of Music and Organist, as he enjoys time for rest, reflection and spiritual renewal while on sabbatical.
- All those affected by conflict, displacement, and unrest around the world and at home.
- 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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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

monday
JUNE 22
9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
SMPC Youth Meals with a Mission
Meet at SMPC, Rising 5th Graders -Graduated 12th Graders
We are partnering with Nourish Up to deliver hot meals to neighbors in need. More information and registration on Realm or smpchome.org/events. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

tuesday
JUNE 23
10:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.
SMPC Tuesday Mahjong
Narthex
Players of all skill levels are invited to join this group, which meets weekly on Tuesdays. Contact Mary Katheryne Zagora, mkzagora@smpchome.org, to be added to the email list.

thursday
JUNE 25
1:15 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.
SMPC Thursday Mahjong
Narthex
Players of all skill levels are invited to join this group, which meets weekly on Thursdays. Contact Mary Katheryne Zagora, mkzagora@smpchome.org, to be added to the email list.

saturday
JUNE 27
9:30 a.m.
Bag Lunches for Roof Above
Drop off at 9:30 a.m. 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
JUNE 28
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
Adult Study: 'Songs of Summer'
McQueen Room or Zoom
An eight-week series that explores familiar Presbyterian hymns and the fascinating stories behind them. Led by SMPC members Gayle and Curt Ireland. Register on Realm or smpchome.org/events. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org.

WE PRAY FOR

Please pray for our SMPC youth and adult chaperones as they travel to Massanetta Springs Camp and Conference Center Tuesday, June 23 - Friday, June 26. Please pray for safe travels and for a fun, fellowship-oriented, faith-filled time for all. May this be a time in which they deepen their relationships with God and with one another.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday Morning Men's Group, Friday, July 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.

SMPC SOFTBALL

The SMPC Softball Team (2024 Champions!) would love to have new full- or part-time players! The team plays all regular season games on the SMPC field, Mondays, 6:15 p.m. and Fridays, 7:15 p.m. Playoffs usually run through mid-August. There is a small entry fee and a team shirt will be supplied. This is a fun group of guys and a great way to build connections at church. Let's bring home the big trophy this year! Contact: Michael Choren, michaelchoren@yahoo.com, or Jimmy Galati, jamesgalati63@yahoo.com.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL & 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



WAYS TO SERVE THE CHURCH THIS SUMMER

Summer might mean a little more freedom in your schedule to try new service opportunities! There are so many ways to get connected through serving on Sunday mornings or throughout the week at SMPC!

Sunday Mornings Opportunities

- Welcome Team (Greeters) - Families welcome!
- Ushers
- Acolyte (Grades 1-5)
- Children and Youth Liturgist (Grades 3-12)
- Children's Worship Helper
- Coffee Grounds/Muffin Ministry
- Lemonade on the Lawn



Congregational Care and Support: Support members of the congregation through various life stages and events by serving in one of the following ministries.



- Baby Ministry
- Bereavement Team
- Care Mail Team
- Meals Ministry
- Prayer Chain
- Transportation Ministry
- Flowers for Worship



Find signups and more information via QR code!

Interested in serving our church? Contact Rev. Melissa White, Parish Associate for Congregational Care and Connection, to get connected: Melissa@smpchome.org

SERVE WITH THE FREEDOM SCHOOL PARTNERS

Freedom School Partners needs volunteers for its summer programming. Opportunities include serving as a Harambee Reader, being a reading buddy, volunteering at the warehouse, and helping with special events. Find out more and sign up via QR code.



MISSION STUDY TASK FORCE UPDATE

Thank you for completing the Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT) survey. We surpassed our goal with over 420 surveys completed - an amazing response!

Next steps: The Mission Study Task Force (MSTF), Session and staff are meeting with a consultant from Holy Cow on Tuesday, July 7, to go through an analysis of our results. The MSTF will share a summary of those results with the entire congregation via email. Later, the MSTF will sponsor a series of discussion sessions where the congregation can discuss the survey results and their vision for the future of SMPC. If you have any questions about the survey or next steps, please contact the MSTF, smpccatsurvey@gmail.com.