



South Mecklenburg

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Service of Worship

Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

July 26, 2026

10:10 a.m., Sanctuary & Livestream

**Please rise in body or in spirit.*

We Gather

Prelude *Festive Voluntary on "Lasst Uns Erfreuen"* Phil Lehenbauer

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

Introit *Loe De Isa* arr. Geoff Weaver

***Call to Worship** (Psalm 139:23-24)
One: Search me, O God, and know my heart;
test me, and know my thoughts.
All: See if there is any wicked way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.
One: Let us worship God!

***Hymn 327** *From All That Dwell Below the Skies* LASST UNS ERFREUEN

1 From all that dwell be-low the skies let the Cre - a - tor's praise a -
 2 In ev - ery land be - gin the song; to ev - ery land the strains be -
 3 E - ter - nal are thy mer - cies, Lord; e - ter - nal truth at - tends thy

rise:
 long: Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Let the Re - deem - er's
 word: Thy praise shall sound from In cheer - ful sound all

name be sung through ev - ery land, in ev - ery tongue.
 voic - es raise and fill the world with joy - ful praise.
 shore to shore, till suns shall rise and set no more.

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!
 Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

Prayer of Confession (*unison*)

Rev. Melissa White

Merciful God, we try to hide from your presence, knowing that we have traded your abundant life for a life of sin. We have not followed your will but instead heed other voices and pursue our own desires. We cannot always discern good from evil, making the wrong choice, choosing the wrong side. We ask for the courage to tell you truthfully what we have done. We pray for forgiveness so that we can live in

communion with you. You alone can restore us. In steadfast love, look upon us and reclothe us in your grace.

Assurance of God's Grace (1 John 1:8-9)

Rev. White

One: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." Friends, hear and believe God's good news!

All: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

***Response of Praise**

Hymn 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

Rev. Lindsey Odom

1. **Story Connection:** [Listen](#) to *No Matter What* by Debi Gliori. Small wonders whether Large will still love them after grumpy feelings, difficult behavior, and mistakes. After you listen, talk about how God loves us no matter what. Even when our choices hurt our relationships with God and others, God does not stop loving us. God helps us tell the truth, make things right, and begin again.
2. **Add cracks to your house.** In pencil, put some cracks in the walls. On the cracks, write words that represent the ways we cause hurt and separation in relationships. For example: selfishness, jealousy, dishonesty, or refusing to help. Make sure all of these are erasable! As you add the cracks, remember that God is building us into a people of welcome, grace, and love, even when things are broken.
3. **Game:** Play "Sneaky Serpent" and hide a plastic fruit, ball, or small object. One person holds a stuffed snake or rope and plays the serpent while everyone else searches. The serpent may slither, make silly noises, or give tricky clues to distract the players. Take turns being the serpent. Afterward, talk about how temptation can distract us from what is true and loving.
4. **Wonder Together:**
 - a. Why do you think Adam and Eve hid from God?
 - b. How does knowing that we are loved help us tell the truth about our mistakes?
 - c. What can we do when one of our choices hurts another person?



Children's Liturgy

Rev. Odom

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

Psalm 32:1-5

Rev. White

Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Happy are those to whom the Lord imputes no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. While I kept silence, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord," and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

Second Reading

Genesis 3:1-13

Dr. Hull

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves. They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate."

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

Sermon

"What's Our Problem?"

Dr. Hull

Hymn 427*Jesus Knows the Inmost Heart**

LOE DE ÍSÁ

Je - sus knows the in - most heart: noth - ing can be hid - den.

Je - sus knows the in - most heart: noth - ing can be hid - den.

1 This our sin - ful hearts re - quire: flame of God's re - fin - ing fire,
2 Je - sus knows our deep - est fears, knows the pain of hid - den tears.
3 When our lives are in his hand noth - ing can his work with - stand;
4 So our faith will be re - stored by the word of Christ our Lord;

work - ing in us day by day till the dross is burned a - way.
By his words of love and peace ev - ery heart can find re - lease.
his for - give - ness sets us free, saves us for e - ter - ni - ty.
for the warmth his love im - parts melts the ver - y hard - est hearts.

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

A Brief Statement of Faith

Rev. Odom

We trust in God, whom Jesus called Abba, Father. In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God's image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community. But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator. Ignoring God's commandments, we violate the image of God in others and ourselves, accept lies as truth, exploit neighbor and nature, and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care. We deserve God's condemnation. Yet God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation. In everlasting love, the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people to bless all families of the earth. Hearing their cry, God delivered the children of Israel from the house of bondage. Loving us still, God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant. Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child, like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home, God is faithful still.

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 *God, Who Stretched the Spangled Heavens* arr. C. Moklebust
Summer 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.

***Doxology**

Hymn 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**

Gracious God, even when we wander from you, you still call us home, back into the fold of your mercy and grace. Receive these gifts as signs of our gratitude and bless them. Use them to build your kingdom, to heal what is broken, and to welcome others into the home of your love. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who always leads us back to you. Amen.

We Go Out to Serve

***Hymn 725**

Oh, Jesus I Have Promised

NYLAND

1 O Je - sus, I have prom - ised to serve you to the end;
 2 O let me feel you near me! The world is ev - er near;
 3 O let me hear you speak - ing in ac - cents clear and still,
 4 O Je - sus, you have prom - ised to all who fol - low you

(C) (Am7) (Dm) (G) (C) (G7) (C)
 E^b Cm7 Fm B^b E^b B^b7 E^b

be now and al - ways near me, my Mas - ter and my friend;
 I see the sights that daz - zle; the tempt - ing sounds I hear.
 a - bove the storms of pas - sion, the mur - murs of self - will;
 that where you are in glo - ry your ser - vant shall be too.

(Am) (D) (G) (F) (G)
 Cm F B^b A^b B^b

I shall not fear the bat - tle if you are by my side,
 My foes are ev - er near me, a - round me and with - in;
 O speak to re - as - sure me, to has - ten or con - trol;
 And, Je - sus, I have prom - ised to serve you to the end;

(C) (Am7) (F) (G) (C) (Dm) (G) (C)
 E^b Cm7 A^b B^b E^b Fm B^b E^b

nor wan - der from the path - way if you will be my guide.
 but, Je - sus, draw still near - er and shield my soul from sin.
 O speak, and make me lis - ten, true guard - ian of my soul.
 now give me grace to fol - low, my Mas - ter and my friend.

***Charge and Benediction**

Dr. Hull

***Congregational Response**

Hymn 748

***Go with us, Lord, and guide the way through this
 and every coming day, that in your Spirit strong
 and true our lives may be our gift to you.***

Postlude

Tuba Tune

Carson Cooman

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

Stefanie Jacobs, Children's Worship

Summer Ringers

A/V Team: Kari Case, Xander Case

Ushers: Bob Cushman, Dean Elledge, Mary Elledge, Craig Parrish, Brett Thompson, Linda Thompson

Welcome Team: Jennifer Hurlburt, Kasia Hurlburt, Allison King, Jane Klecker, Tom Klecker

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.



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 July 22, 2026)

Remember in Prayer

- 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.
- 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

SMPC STAFF

Dr. Sandy Hull, Transitional Pastor

sandy@smpchome.org

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

lindsey@smpchome.org

Rev. Melissa White, Parish Associate

melissa@smpchome.org

Laura Black, Ministry Associate for Children and Music

laura@smpchome.org

Zach Bowyer, Director of Music & Organist

zach@smpchome.org

Rebecca Guzman, Director of Spiritual Formation

rebecca@smpchome.org

Adrienne Jaquith, Office and Database Manager

adrienne@smpchome.org

Cheryl Perry, Director of Communications

cheryl@smpchome.org

Steve Stevenson, Facility Administrator

steve@smpchome.org

Dr. Tammy Winchip, SMPC Preschool Director

tammy@smpchome.org

Mary Katheryne Zagora, Financial Administrator

mkzagora@smpchome.org

Church Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Friday: Closed

We photograph and record worship services and events for church use. We may use these materials in church communications. Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE, License #A-735003. All rights reserved.



South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church

8601 Bryant Farms Road, Charlotte, NC 28277, 704-544-0404

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

sunday
JULY 26
after
worship

Congregational Assessment Tool Survey Results - Town Hall with Holy Cow! Consulting
Immediately After Worship, Sanctuary
Thank you for completing your Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT) survey! The results are in, and we can't wait to share them with you! Emily Swanson, President and Owner of Holy Cow! Consulting, will present this invaluable data. The presentation is expected to last approximately 30 minutes, followed by a brief Q&A session. Questions? Contact the Mission Study Task Force, smpccatsurvey@gmail.com.

tuesday
JULY 28
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
JULY 30
10:30 a.m. -
12:30 p.m.

SMPC Youth Mission Opportunity - Hands of Hope at Crisis Assistance
Meet at Crisis Assistance, 500 A Spratt St., Charlotte, NC 28206, Middle and High Schoolers
Join us as we serve Crisis Assistance. Please consider bringing a donation of clothes or household items. More information and register on Realm or on smpchome.org/events. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

thursday
JULY 30
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.

sunday
AUG. 2
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.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SMPC Youth Pickleball and Popsicles with the Pastor, Monday, August 3, 7:00-8:00 p.m., Piper Glen Country Club, Middle and High Schoolers -
Whether you're an experienced player or trying pickleball for the first time, come out to play games, enjoy refreshing popsicles, and spend time connecting with your youth group friends. Register on Realm or on smpchome.org/events. Contact: Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.

Friday Morning Men's Group, Friday, August 7, 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.

American Red Cross Blood Drive, Saturday, August 8, 8:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m., The Commons - Recently, the Red Cross reported a nearly 25% drop in the national blood supply during June. Please consider donating blood or Power Red in the August blood drive. We also need volunteers to serve at the drive. Sign up via the QR code. Contact: Bill Ramsey, bill.john.ramsey@gmail.com.



Center of Hope Desserts, Sunday, August 9, Drop off before worship in the narthex - On the second Sunday of every month, we provide sweet treats for the women and children who temporarily call the Center of Hope home. Sign up via QR code. Contact: Terry Gaines, terryg@carolina.rr.com.



COMING HOME: THE BASICS OF CHRISTIANITY

We hope you're enjoying our series that explores the basics of Christianity through weekly sermons, short devotionals, website posts, simple challenges, and a paper house project. Kits are still available in the narthex! Last week's theme was the Bible. Listen to Sandy's sermon and Rebecca's website post from last Sunday via the QR code. Contact: Rebecca Guzman, rebecca@smpchome.org, or Rev. Lindsey Odom, lindsey@smpchome.org.



FROM MISSIONS & OUTREACH: LAST WEEKEND OF 'CHRISTMAS IN JULY'

Thank you to EVERYONE who donated to the drive for 13th-year students in Haiti. The link to donate will be live through the end of July, so if you haven't had a chance to donate and would like to, please scan the QR code. Contact: Judy Jones, judy21jones@gmail.com.



CREATED FOR COMMUNITY: SMPC MAHJONG



'Created for Community' is a summer series where we highlight communities founded or built by connections at SMPC! Look for this series twice a month this summer.

Stop by the church on any Tuesday morning or Thursday afternoon, and chances are you'll see tables, usually in groups of four, passing around white rectangular tiles with various numbers, shapes and characters. To the untrained eye, it might look random, but trust us: there is a lot of thought and strategy behind the movement of these tiles!

Welcome to the SMPC Mahjong groups - where friends old and new gather for this fun and sometimes complex game that has only recently gained popularity in Charlotte. Originally from China, mahjong was brought to the United States in the 1920s and rose in prominence in the 1930s, particularly within Jewish American communities.

Some of our SMPC members, like Carol Morgan, play regularly with neighbors and friends outside of church. Carol saw an opportunity to create community at SMPC with this ancient game and hosted a series of beginner mahjong lessons in the spring.

"I know how much fun I have meeting people to play during the week - it's a great way to connect with old friends, meet new people, and keep the brain active," said Carol. "I had no idea how much it would take off at SMPC, but it makes me so pleased to see people meeting regularly and with such enthusiasm."

When Carol's beginner mahjong lessons were over, participants didn't want the fun to end. They had found a new challenge - and a unique place to foster friendships - around a mahjong table!

"That's really the beauty of it," said Mary Katheryne Zagora, SMPC Financial Administrator and leader of the new mahjong groups. "People came for a class, but they stayed for community. It's become a weekly rhythm of laughter, learning, and connection."

SMPC Mahjong regularly draws 12-16 players on Tuesday mornings (10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.) and Thursday afternoons (1:15 p.m.-3:15 p.m.). All ages and skill levels are welcome. And yes, men are welcome, too! And if you are new to the game, you still belong at the SMPC Mahjong table! To get connected and on the email list, contact Mary Katheryne Zagora, mkzagora@smpchome.org.