

Thursday, October 22, 2020

SMPC Now

OUR JOURNEY THROUGH A TRYING TIME

"The farmer plants the Word ...The seed cast in the weeds represents the ones who hear the kingdom news but are overwhelmed with worries about all the things they have to do and all the things they want to get. The stress strangles what they heard, and nothing comes of it." - Mark 4:14, 18-19 (The Message Translation)

Sigh! Big Sigh!! Periodically, you will read something that makes you question the wisdom of the whole human experiment. When God sees how far from the mark we so regularly aim and how restlessly we run in the wrong direction, does our Lord feel a tinge of regret? After all, it wouldn't be the first time (Danger! Flash flood warning! Watch out for animals running in pairs!). Could it be that Edvard Munch's *The Scream* is the closest thing we have to an authentic portrait of God?

Ruth Barrett, in an insightful article in *The Atlantic*, explores *The Mad, Mad World of Niche Sports Among Ivy-League Obsessed Parents*. We meet Sloane, of Fairfield County, Connecticut, who's a bit stressed over her daughter's junior-squash rating. I didn't even know there was such a thing. Well, if the daughter doesn't maintain a 5.0 rating as a squash player, she's going to wind up at a state university. Horrors! There was a crisis about a year ago. At a California junior squash tournament with her daughter, Sloane was on the phone strategizing with her husband, who was at a junior fencing tournament in Ohio (Remember, they live in Connecticut). It seems their teen squash prodigy had been victimized by "a malicious refereeing" dispute. Sloane's husband was having his own problem as their mini-swashbuckler (officially, you would call her a saber fencer) had been nicked in the jugular in a tournament match.

It provided a brief moment of clarity. Sloane "I thought, "What are we doing? It's the Fourth of July. You're in Ohio; I'm in California. What are we doing to our family? We're torturing our kids ridiculously. They're not succeeding. We're using all our resources and emotional bandwidth for a fool's folly." Yes! I thought. Wisdom makes an appearance. But, alas, the seed of wisdom "cast in the weeds represents the ones who hear the kingdom news but are overwhelmed with worries about all the things they have to do and all the things they want to get. The stress strangles what they heard, and nothing comes of it." Peer/culture pressure and the survival-of-the-fittest, myth of scarcity mindset that distort our understanding of what our children most need, soon threw them back into the spiritual meat-grinder of success and achievement. By this summer, Sloane was shifting one child from sabers to foils, training the squash queen in a friend's secret underground bunker court, still trying to get the edge for the college applications. And as insurance, the squash expert has added rowing, "My daughter is 5 foot 11," she said. "That's not the optimum body for squash. She has the frame for rowing. I've always had it in the back of my head. Rowing moves the needle way more."

It doesn't have to be this way. There is a wholly and holy different way. This Sunday, you will hear the Word of the Lord proclaimed by a collection of bright and engaging seniors who have been nurtured to know their value is not measured by a trophy résumé, but assured through the grace of God. In the end, it's not about the high life, but about a whole life.

Watch out for the weeds!

**Grace and Peace,
Matt**



**Dr. Matt Brown,
matt@smpchome.org**

SOUTH MECKLENBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
YOUTH SUNDAY
October 25, 2020

**Our Youth Sunday worship service will be stream live on
www.smpchome.org and [Facebook Live](#) at 10:10 a.m.**



**EVERYONE IS WELCOME!
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., SMPC Campus**

Come on over, masked and social distanced, to celebrate Youth and Commitment Sunday; greet our senior preachers; and enjoy some fellowship together!

When you're ready to go, be sure to drop by our hospitality station to grab a fall treat to-go for each of your household.

FINANCE MINISTRY

FAITH *over* FEAR 
2021 Operating Fund Campaign

COMMITMENT SUNDAY: OCTOBER 25

Click above for details and to pledge online!

The work of the church continues, even through the wilderness!

***Click the link above for answers to the questions:
How are we continuing to be the church during a pandemic?
How can I support my church during a pandemic?***

A pandemic is a difficult time to ask for financial support, and we hope that with whatever uncertainty you may feel, you know that your church is a source of strength and encouragement. If you are able to support the church financially at this time, your commitment will be greatly appreciated. Please pledge online by clicking the link above on or before Commitment Sunday, October 25.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION MINISTRY

**Children!
Be sure to check your email on Saturday mornings
for resources for parents to use with children on**

Sunday mornings!

If you are not receiving the emails, please contact Rebecca Guzman.

CHILDREN'S WORSHIP SUPPLIES FOR OCTOBER 25:

***Pencil
Crayons/Colored Pencils
Paper
Pipe Cleaner
Beads***



Family, Faith, & Fellowship

Sunday, November 1, 5:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.

Outdoors, SMPC Campus

[CLICK THE IMAGE ABOVE TO SIGN UP!](#)



This fall, we are providing families with resources to do faith at home. On Sunday, November 1, we will have an outdoor, socially-distanced event for families with children 5th grade and under. This will happen at the same time as BYG to make it as easy as possible for you! At the event, you will receive your Faith at Home kit, learn how to use your Faith at Home kit, and have some socially-distanced fellowship with other families. The Faith at Home kit will have EVERYTHING you need for the remaining weeks in the month, and there will be a companion video (optional) that will guide you through the story and activities each week. The goal is for this to be as EASY and STRESS-FREE as possible for parents, while being engaging for kids.

You must sign up for both the kit and the event on Church Life. You can sign up to receive a kit even if you will not be at the event.



Parents Take 5

This is time for parents to decompress with a Faith 5 devotion: there is no preparation, homework, or stress. Sign up on Church Life to receive a text alert/reminder for this and future pop-ups.

[CLICK THE IMAGE ABOVE TO SIGN UP FOR ALERTS!](#)

[Questions? Contact Jessica Tidwell-Weinzierl, jessica@SMPChome.org](mailto:jessica@SMPChome.org)

YOUTH MINISTRY

JOIN OUR WATCH PARTY ON ZOOM

SOUTH MECKLENBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

YOUTH SUNDAY

October 25, 2020

Meeting ID: 818 5219 9070

Passcode: 28277

**Be ready to join us for a WATCH PARTY on Zoom!
(See link above!)**

And at 11:30 a.m., come drive by the church to say "THANK YOU!" to our Senior Preachers and to pick up a delicious treat for each member of your household.



Registration Deadline: October 29, 2020 at midnight.

(Check above to register!)

MUSIC MINISTRY



YOUTH BOOMWHACKERS

Sundays, 4:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m., The Commons

Middle & High School Youth

Youth Boomwhackers is replacing Youth Handbells and Youth Choir this fall, and will rehearse with masks while practicing social distancing.

Boomwhackers Tuned Percussion Tubes are lightweight, hollow, colorcoded, plastic tubes, tuned to musical pitches by length. Boomwhackers produce musical tones when struck together, on the floor, or against nearly any surface.



VIRTUAL CHOIRS

CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND ADULTS

There will be many opportunities over the Fall and Christmas for singers of all ages to sing in a virtual choir.

Please email Zach Bowyer as soon as possible if you are interested in participating.

CHANCEL RINGERS

Wednesdays, 6:00 p.m., Sanctuary

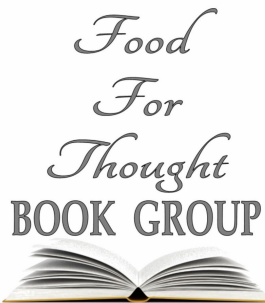
This adult choir continues to meet in the Sanctuary while practicing social distancing and wearing masks. Anyone with an interest in handbells is welcome to sit in on a rehearsal.

SMALL GROUPS AND MEETUPS

**Sit & See**

Interested in joining a small, informal, socially-distanced gathering outside on SMPC's campus?

Contact Nancy Metzler, nancy@smpchome.org.

**Food For Thought Book Group Online**

Thursday, November 5

7:00 p.m., Zoom

Book: *Gratitude* by Oliver Sacks

Join us as we discuss this series of heart-rending and uplifting essays....A lasting gift to readers....unlike other writers who have reported from the front lines of mortality, Sacks did not focus on his illness, his medical ordeal or spirituality, but on "what is meant by living a good and worthwhile life-achieving a sense of peace within oneself. Sacks not only achieved that peace but managed to convey it beautifully in these essays. He found positive ways to think

about everything, including his growing frailty: Perhaps, he suggests in the book's final pages, he was in the Sabbath of his life, "when one can feel that one's work is done, and one may, in good conscience, rest."

Contact Kathy Paquette, khesspaquette@aol.com for the Zoom ID#.

[Click here to view the 2020-2021 Reading List.](#)

**Coffee Grounds Online**

Sunday, October 25

11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., Zoom

After streaming our worship service live, join in on Zoom to see familiar faces and perhaps meet someone new.

Contact Nancy Metzler, nancy@smpchome.org for the Zoom ID#.

**Ballantyne Business Group**

Wednesday, November 4, Noon, Zoom

Join this informal group on first and third Wednesdays for lunch and thoughtful discussion on a variety of topics.

Contact David Huss, david.huss@allentate.com, to participate!

Dr. Matt Brown's Bible Study

Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m. & 6:30 p.m., Zoom

An exploration of the scripture for the coming week's sermon.

Contact Matt Brown, matt@smpchome.org for the Zoom link.



If your SMPC Small Group or MeetUp would like to host a ZOOM online meeting, or a socially-distanced gathering on SMPC's campus, please contact Nancy Metzler, Director of Hospitality & Connection.

Also, if you are interested in formally joining the SMPC family, Nancy would love to speak with you!



Nancy Metzler
Director of Hospitality
& Connection
nancy@smpchome.org

STAYING CONNECTED

SMPC STAFF EMAILS:

Once again, fraudulent emails are circulating with the sender posing as Dr. Matt Brown.

Please know that the pastors and staff of SMPC will never contact you by email asking for "favors" or your personal information.

To stay safe, always make sure that emails claiming to be from SMPC staff have the "@smpchome.org" address after the name before opening. Thank you!



Click above to view our Fall 2020 program guide, Seasons!





If you have ROKU, Apple TV, or Amazon Fire TV, you will now find SMPC among the offerings on the BOXCAST channel.

- ◆ Initialize your streaming service.
(ROKU, Apple TV, or Amazon Fire TV)
- ◆ Find BOXCAST in your Channel Store, adding it to your channels.
- ◆ Open the BOXCAST channel, and search for *South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church*.
- ◆ You may watch live or choose past worship services.
- ◆ Using your remote, choose SMPC as a "favorite".



South Mecklenburg Presbyterian Church

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www.SMPChome.org



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