Inspired by the bold and boundless hospitality of Jesus, we are “open to all,” which means we welcome and accept all people into the life of our Church without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, age, economic status, political affiliation, physical or mental capacity, or religious belief. We believe that God’s call is given to all people, and we embrace the Spirit that continues to cross boundaries in order to unite the world.

Prelude
“Rigaudon”
Whit Blount, trumpet; John Richardson, organ

Call to Worship and Invocation
Rev. W. Benjamin Boswell

Welcome of Our Guests
Rev. Carrie Veal
If you are our guest today, please text “guest” to 474747 so we may offer you our gratitude for joining us today.

Opening Hymn
“For the Beauty of the Earth”
Ryan Merritt, baritone; John Richardson, piano

New Testament Reading - Colossians 1:15-20 (NRSV adapted)
Rev. Mia M. McClain

Christ is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; for in Christ all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through Christ and for Christ. He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. For in Christ all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

Gospel Reading - John 1:1-14 (NRSV adapted)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Christ, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. Christ was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Leader: For the Word of God in scripture, for the Word of God among us, for the Word of God within us.

People: Thanks be to God.
Sermon
“Creation Through Christ”  

Dr. Norman Wirzba

Dr. Norman Wirzba is the Gilbert T. Rowe Distinguished Professor of Christian Theology and Senior Associate Dean for Institutional and Faculty Advancement at Duke Divinity School.

Church at Prayer  
Rev. Joseph D. Aldrich

Sharing Our Gifts  
Rev. Leigh Anne Hagerman

Offertory Anthem
“The God of Love My Shepherd Is”  

Eric Thiman (1900-1975)

Deborah Moore Clark, soprano; Janice Bradner, piano

Benediction  
Rev. W. Benjamin Boswell

Postlude
Variations on “Springs of Living Water”  

arr. John Richardson

Leading worship today with Dr. Norman Wirzba, Guest Preacher, are Rev. W. Benjamin Boswell, Senior Minister, Rev. Mia M. McClain, Associate Minister, Rev. Joseph D. Aldrich, Associate Minister, Rev. Carrie Veal, Minister of Children and Community Life, and Rev. Leigh Anne Hagerman, Church Administrator.

Leading worship through music with Charlotte C. Judge, Associate Director of Music, is John Richardson, Organist.
THEOLOGY OF WORSHIP

Why do we worship?
Worship at Myers Park Baptist is the gathering of a diverse, intergenerational, ecumenical community of faith, celebrating God’s active and timeless presence in the world. In worship, God re-forms our hearts, minds and bodies, and ignites our imaginations with sacred stories—stories that invite us to question, explore mystery, express joy and grief, and deepen our faith. We worship to learn how to develop caring, empowering relationships with each other, and to stay centered in God as the world swirls around us. We worship to be inspired and prepared to exemplify the compassion and justice of Jesus in our church family and in the world. Through worship, God frees and transforms us in heart, mind and body, so we can make a difference within ourselves, in our relationships and in our community.

How do we worship?
Focusing on God, worship at Myers Park Baptist unfolds consistently with the Isaiah 6 scriptural model: praise, confession, pardon, calling to respond, commitment and sending out. All our worship services are built on this ancient structural form, regardless of worship style, venue or theme. Communal practices within worship — radical hospitality, confession and assurance of pardon, passing the peace, silence and listening, spirited hymn singing, presentations of gifts, and active participation in Communion—transform worshipers into newness with God and one another. Themes for services, based on lectionary scriptures, annually portray the narrative arc of God’s redeeming love for humankind.

HOW TO JOIN MYERS PARK BAPTIST CHURCH

Becoming a member of Myers Park Baptist is as easy as filling out a Joining Card. To receive a card or learn more, stop by the Welcome Table in Heaton Hall Foyer.

MOBILE GIVING

You can now text your contributions and offerings to MPBC! It is secure, simple, and efficient:
- Start a new text message to phone number 73256.
- In the message of the text, enter 1900Q, a space, and the amount you want to give (i.e., 1900Q 100).
- The system will return a message to you; click on the link provided and follow instructions.
- You will then receive a receipt to confirm your gift was received. It is that simple!
- Next time, since your setup is already done – just text “1900Q, a space, then amount you wish to give” to 73256.

Questions? Contact Rev. Leigh Anne Hagerman, Church Administrator, at 704.334.7232 x116 or lhagerman@myersparkbaptist.org
OUR COVENANT

We, the members of the Myers Park Baptist Church, are a people on a journey of faith. By God’s grace we are experiencing God’s love through Jesus Christ and in the community of the faithful. We are discovering in this experience our freedom to become new creatures and our responsibility to be faithful stewards of our lives and of this world.

We will be open to all new light, strengthened by God and each other in our faith. We will sustain a critical examination of Scripture, belief and ritual as interpreters of God’s active presence in the world. We will accept controversy as a reality of life together and an opportunity for growth toward maturity. We covenant to be a community of God’s new creation and affirm that we are open to all and closed to none.

We covenant to nurture this Church as a community of faith and as an instrument for reconciliation in this world: by worship, by Christian education, by the dedication of our personal and material resources and by all the other ways we express the significance of our lives with God and one another.

We covenant together to be priests celebrating God’s presence in community and in the world, believing we are participants in God’s kingdom on earth.

OUR MINISTERS

Rev. W. Benjamin Boswell
Senior Minister | bboswell@myersparkbaptist.org

Dr. Matt Caine
Minister of Music and Worship | mcaine@myersparkbaptist.org

Rev. Joseph D. Aldrich
Associate Minister | jaldrich@myersparkbaptist.org

Rev. Mia M. McClain
Associate Minister | mmclain@myersparkbaptist.org

Rev. Leigh Anne Hagerman
Church Administrator | lhagerman@myersparkbaptist.org

Rev. Carrie Veal
Minister of Children and Community Life | cveal@myersparkbaptist.org

John Richardson
Organist | jrichardson@myersparkbaptist.org

Charlotte C. Judge
Associate Director of Music | cjudge@myersparkbaptist.org

Allen Davis
Director of Youth Ministry | adavis@myersparkbaptist.org

Pamela Handon
Director of the Cornwell Center | phandon@cornwellcenter.org

Belinda Guess
Director of Through-The-Week School | bgeuss@myersparkbaptist.org