

# FOCUS



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Fall 2018

## Fall Sermon Series by Pastor Alf Halvorson

Kicking off  
August 19!

## Fall Bible Study A Study of the Book of Romans

### August 19: Kickoff Sunday

IN STEP (1 Corinthians 13:8-13)

The long, hot summer is drawing to a close, and our fall programs are kicking off! See inside for many opportunities to study, serve, and grow.

### August 26: Harvey Remembrance

IN COMMUNITY (Hebrews 10:24-25)

See Page 3 for details.

### September 2: Labor Day Lunch

IN SYNC (Luke 13:6-9)

Our annual holiday lunch will be grilled up by the Pastors and Elders. Join us for fun and fellowship.

### September 9

IN HIM (John 3:16-21)

### September 16

IN SEARCH (Luke 19:1-10)

### A Counter-cultural Study

Everything in our culture screams at us, "You only get what you earn!" We're taught that success in school, careers, and even personal relationships is determined by how hard we work. Unsurprisingly, this thinking can leave us convinced that our *actions* make us right with God.

In his letter to the Romans, the Apostle Paul flips this idea on its head. He proclaims we are made right with God not through our *efforts*, but through our *trust* in Jesus Christ. We are saved by faith - and faith alone.

### A Church-wide Study

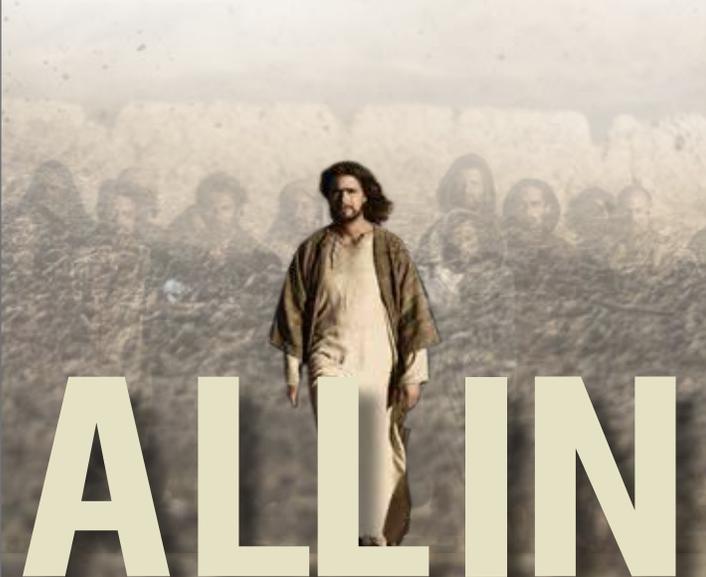
This fall through early spring of next year, hundreds of MDPC members and friends are exploring Romans together. If you're in a Sunday School now, it's likely your class leaders have signed on for this study of Romans. If you're currently unaffiliated, join one of these newly formed Sunday or weekday study groups:

- **A Sunday morning "Pastor's Class"** at 9:45 and 11:15 AM in the Amphitheater. Clay Brown will kick off these classes by teaching at both hours in August and September.
- **A Wednesday evening intergenerational mid-week class** will meet at 6:30, led by seminarian Jeanmarie Tade, Teacher in Residence Martha Moore, and Trevor Harris, MDPC Young Adult Discipleship Director.

More information is available at [romans.mdpc.org](http://romans.mdpc.org).

Saved by  
**FAITH**

A Study of the Book of Romans



**ALL IN**

NO RESTRICTIONS • NO RESERVATIONS • NO REGRETS



Who do YOU know  
that would make a great  
**MDPC ELDER?**

*Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. –Hebrews 13:7*

**We need your help to nominate qualified candidates to serve as Elders on the MDPC Session!**

**T**his year in worship, we've delved deeply into Deadly Sins and Saving Virtues and The Lord's Prayer, and are continuing to challenge ourselves to understand the heart of God and His desire for His children this summer with Wrestling with Scripture. Following Jesus beckons us to a higher calling – to be all God asks us to be by serving Him and others with submissive and devoted hearts. The individuals ready to answer that call are whom we now seek to serve and lead MDPC.

As always, your nominations are needed to reveal to us ideal candidates for the next class of Elders. They are to be people of strong faith, whose relationship with Jesus Christ is central to their lives, and who are committed to the furtherance of God's Kingdom and the overall health of this Body of Christ. They are to not only pray and attend meetings, but also to roll up their sleeves and get involved in the specific ministry area to which they are called.

Please prayerfully consider who to recommend to the Nominating Committee (including yourself) to lead MDPC into its future. Submit nominations online at [nominations.mdpc.org](http://nominations.mdpc.org), or pick up a paper form at MDPC. Nominations are due by **Monday, August 27**. The Nominating Committee will then develop a slate of candidates to present to the congregation for election later in the fall.

Thank you for taking this key membership responsibility seriously. I know God will help us secure and empower the right servant leaders for the next chapter of MDPC's story.

In Christ's Service Together,

Pastor Alf

**What is an Elder?**

Elders are chosen by the congregation. Together with the Pastors, they exercise leadership, government, and discipline, and have responsibilities for the life of our church. Elders should be persons of faith, dedication, and good judgment. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian Gospel, both in the church and in the community.

**What are the primary responsibilities of an Elder?**

Through committees, Session, and a variety of other avenues, the Elders are responsible for nurturing and strengthening the faith of our congregation, providing spiritual direction, and ministering to those in need.

**What are some of the qualifications for Elders?**

- A personal and growing relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior
- A willingness and commitment to perform all duties required of an Elder, including regular attendance at assigned committee and Session meetings
- A high level of spiritual maturity, leadership ability, and interpersonal and teamwork skills
- Faithful in marriage between a man and a woman, or chaste if single
- Regular attendance in worship services at MDPC
- Identifiable financial contributions to MDPC
- Minimum of one year's membership at MDPC

**Are self-nominations accepted?**

Yes. You may self-nominate using the same form.

You are encouraged to use the online form at if possible. Otherwise, printed forms may be completed and delivered or mailed to:

MDPC, Attention: Gena Kookan, Confidential  
11612 Memorial Drive, Houston, Texas, 77024

**HARVEY**  
A Moment to Reflect

**Sunday, August 26**  
Come and Go  
between 9:30 AM and 12:30 PM  
Ministry Center Room 122

It's been a year since Hurricane Harvey hit Houston. This city has been in our thoughts and prayers since the day the rains began. As part of our Harvey anniversary recognition, we will be offering a quiet space for community members to pray, give thanks, receive communion, get anointed with oil, or simply pause for a moment to reflect on God's presence in their lives during the past year.

Those who choose to stop in can take advantage of any or all the stations available. There will be volunteers available to pray and talk with anyone who would like someone to listen. For those who are seeking solitude in this season, our Prayer Chapel also will be open to the public.

*He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. –Psalm 147:3*

To learn more, visit: [remember.mdpc.org](http://remember.mdpc.org).

Alpha is an interactive series for you to explore Christian faith. Whether you're a believer, or you're questioning, or maybe you wouldn't even call yourself Christian, this open, honest, and accepting forum is for you.

**Starts Tuesday, September 11 | 6:30 PM**  
Meets weekly through November 13  
Alpha is **FREE**. Dinner and childcare are provided.  
For more info and to register: [alpha.mdpc.org](http://alpha.mdpc.org)

**Start with Discover MDPC**

Want to learn more about MDPC and its ministries? Attend an informal meeting to learn more about our vision and outreach. No commitment required! This is a no-pressure opportunity to meet Pastor Alf, and explore becoming a part of our faith community.

**Sunday, September 9**  
10:45-11:10 AM | The Nook

**Then Explore New Member Classes**

The four-week New Member class series is taught by the Associate Pastors and Elders, and includes a Saturday service project at one of the organizations supported by MDPC.

**Sundays, September 16-October 14**  
9:45-11:00 AM | MC 122

More info: [membership.mdpc.org](http://membership.mdpc.org)

# word AND worship

## A Study of Genesis

### Thursday

Study begins September 6

Women | 9:30-11:30 AM

Childcare (free) for ages 3 months to 5 years

### Sunday

Study begins September 9

Co-ed | 9:45-10:45 AM or 11:15 AM-12:15 PM

### Wednesday

Study begins September 12

Co-ed | 5:00-6:00 PM

Women | 6:30-7:30 PM

Details and registration:  
[wordandworship.mdpc.org](http://wordandworship.mdpc.org)

### What to expect at Word and Worship:

Life with God all began in the Garden. To learn how to build lives, create families, and encourage faith, we want to go deep into the stories of those who first walked with God. Yes, they stumbled, but God was always there to redeem and reorient their lives back to Him. We believe that God is creating and calling us to be His image bearers today, just as He called the people in Genesis.

Throughout this study, we will saturate ourselves with the stories that inspired not only people who lived long ago, but also encourage us today.

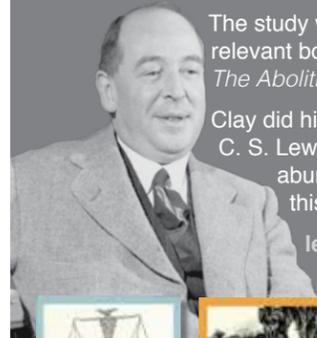
Life shared with others brings greater joy, keeps us honest, and encourages us to persevere when the road gets tough. In Word and Worship, we will share during time together in small groups, while also having opportunities to worship and learn with the bigger, corporate body of Christ—all in an effort to love and glorify God more in our daily lives.

**Contact:** Laurien Hook  
lhook@mdpc.org or 713-490-9561

## C.S. LEWIS FOR TODAY

Taught by Dr. Clay Brown, Equipping Pastor

We still read and talk about C. S. Lewis more than 50 years after his death. This six-part course will examine why Lewis remains so popular and influential even today.



The study will focus on two of his most relevant books, *Mere Christianity* and *The Abolition of Man*.

Clay did his doctoral dissertation on C. S. Lewis, so he is uniquely and abundantly qualified to teach on this fascinating subject.

[lewis.mdpc.org](http://lewis.mdpc.org)

You are encouraged to purchase both books either in class or on your own.

**WEDNESDAYS**  
AUG. 22 - SEPT. 26  
6:30-7:30 PM, MC 122

Study

## Romp through the Old Testament

Bible Study led by Pastors  
Clay Brown, Beth Case,  
and Rachel Poysky

We believe that God invites us to experience the good life through His Word. Gather with others who seek God through Bible study, prayer, and the sharing of life in community.

**Tuesdays beginning Sept. 11**  
9:00-10:00 AM | MC 122

There's always room for one more!  
[romp.mdpc.org](http://romp.mdpc.org)

**MDPC Friends & Family**

**BINGO Night**

**Wednesday, August 8**

**It's Friends & Family Fun Night at MDPC!** Make sandwiches for **Kids' Meals** (bring 4 loaves of sandwich bread), grab **dinner**, and stay for **BINGO**. Feel free to come for all or any part! Everyone is welcome.  
[bingo.mdpc.org](http://bingo.mdpc.org)

**Kids' Meals** 4:30 PM

**Dinner** 5:00 PM

**BINGO!** 6:00 PM

Serve

You Can Change...  
...the life of a child.



Help young students succeed through one of our mentoring and tutoring programs offered at three local elementary schools. Find out how one hour per week can change the direction of a child's life!

Visit [change.mdpc.org](http://change.mdpc.org).

**MAM**  
MEMORIAL ASSISTANCE MINISTRIES  
**Back School**

**Send kids back to school with needed clothes and shoes!**

Do you remember that feeling of excitement about back to school shopping? Your donation of any amount will help these kids feel proud and excited to go back to school in their brand new items!

Visit our table on these Sundays:

August 5, 12, 19, and 26

Sanctuary Breezeway or Chapel Hallway

**Thank you for supporting kids and MAM!**

To give online: [backtoschool.mdpc.org](http://backtoschool.mdpc.org)

Contact Jan Roe at [jroe@mdpc.org](mailto:jroe@mdpc.org) or 713-490-9552

### Join the MDPC Sanctuary Choir!

"There is nothing better in the world than making music with your friends, especially when it glorifies God. The music lends so much to the text - and it really sticks with you. It's the best way to memorize scripture verses while giving of your time and talents."

—Dr. Cassandra Black, Choir President

**All are welcome.**

Rehearsals are at 7:00 PM on Wednesday evenings in the choir room. Join us!



**Questions? Contact Tracy Stidam at**  
[tstidham@mdpc.org](mailto:tstidham@mdpc.org)

# We got you, Mom!



Are you a mom of young children? Would you like a little break in the week to drop off the kids, relax, and chat with other moms?

Then Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPs) is for you! Come for coffee, connection, solid content, and adult conversations.

We'll save you a seat!

1st and 3rd Thursdays beginning August 30

9:30 to 11:15 AM | Parlor

Free childcare!  
Register: [mops.mdpc.org](http://mops.mdpc.org)

## Are You a Working Mom?

Learn about monthly evening meetings at [workingmops.mdpc.org](http://workingmops.mdpc.org).

To learn more, contact Anna Vickers

Connect

[avickers@mdpc.org](mailto:avickers@mdpc.org) or 713-490-9260

# MARRIAGE is not for WIMPS!

Woodlands Waterway Marriott  
September 29-30, 2018

MDPC Marriage Retreat 2018

This special experience away will include a comfortable atmosphere, excellent food, a one-on-one date night with your spouse, and expert teaching from Brett and Kellie Hurst.

[marriageretreat.mdpc.org](http://marriageretreat.mdpc.org) | \$220/couple

# The Living Well

## A 25-week study of Jesus through Luke's Gospel

Led and facilitated by Charlotte Crawford

Come as you are to seek God at dawn through His Living Word and prayer. Be encouraged by a brief testimony and the gospel Scriptures read aloud followed by time of solitary personal reflection; responding to God's Word and Voice through journaling, prayer, and provided study guide. Women of all ages and faith stages who desire to grow as women of God, trained and taught by Biblical truth and stories, are warmly welcomed.

Wednesdays, September 12 through April 10, 2019  
[tlw.mdpc.org](http://tlw.mdpc.org)

# CORE TRAINING

Since 2003, Men's Life at MDPC has encouraged countless men in their transformations into successful leaders at home, at work, and in the community. This year, participants will be encouraged once again by the core building blocks of Men's Life, principles that have been life-changing for men from all over Houston. Invite a buddy or two to this 12-week Core Training that promises to rebuild the inner workings of your life.

Tuesdays, September 11-December 4  
6:30-7:45 AM (NEW TIME!)  
Continental Breakfast at 6:00 AM

Contact Brett Hurst: [bhurst@mdpc.org](mailto:bhurst@mdpc.org), 713-490-0930

Register: [ml.mdpc.org](http://ml.mdpc.org) | Fellowship Hall

Grow

# What A Relief!

Retired Navy SEAL and bestselling author Chad Williams is our speaker. You'll enjoy great food an afternoon of relief with other guys who've been through the same ups and downs of this past year in Houston. If you have a buddy who needs encouragement, bring him along!

Saturday, August 25  
Fellowship Hall  
11:45 AM-2:00 PM

11:45 - BBQ Lunch  
1:00 - Chad Williams  
2:00 - Book Signing

Register: [relief.mdpc.org](http://relief.mdpc.org) | Fellowship Hall | Cost: \$20 (includes Lunch)

# CRISIS TRAINING

## The Church's Role in Healing After Man-made and Natural Disasters

Free and open to all. No previous training necessary.

The Church is uniquely suited to help heal trauma in our communities, but, to be most effective, its people must be prepared. Attend this three-hour training to learn practical ways to respond appropriately to a crisis and to help prevent PTSD from occurring.

Saturday, September 15  
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM\*  
in the Amphitheater  
\*Optional Support-Group Training, 12:00-1:00 PM

Are You Prepared to Help Your Neighbor?

# CONFIRMATION 2019

Confirmation is our yearly program for all students currently in the 8th grade or above. It's a time to focus on what it means to follow Jesus and be part of His church.

Confirmation Begins Sunday, January 6, 2019  
Registration opens August 19: [confirmation.mdpc.org](http://confirmation.mdpc.org)

# MDPC

Recreational and Instructional Classes for CHILDREN, YOUTH, and ADULTS

Register at: [REACH.mdpc.org](http://REACH.mdpc.org)

# Food Can Be More Than Just A Meal

The MDPC Childhood Hunger Taskforce is excited to announce a brand-new collaboration with Houston Food Bank, SBISD, and Spring Woods Middle School aimed at feeding food-insecure children. We know that education is a key element in escaping poverty, but we also know that a hungry child does not learn as well as his or her well-nourished counterpart. A lack of food at home means that a child is most likely missing critical nourishment needed for growth and development, both physical and mental. We want every child to have the best possible recipe for success – a healthy body, mind, *and* spirit. So how can we facilitate this?



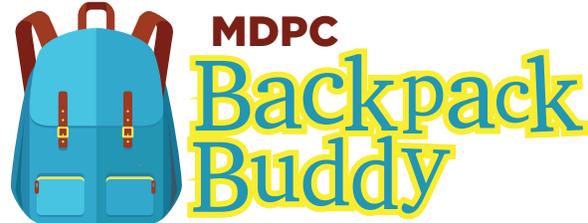
**HUNGER INITIATIVE**

## The Backpack Buddy Program

In many schools across the city, meals are available to children at breakfast and lunch, but when that child goes home on the weekends, there may be no food in the pantry. Backpack Buddy is a program designed to provide healthy food to students who otherwise would go hungry on weekends. At-risk students (identified by the school's teachers and counselors) are sent home each Friday with a bag of food.

MDPC is honored to sponsor 120 students at Spring Woods Middle School in the buddy program for the upcoming school year (2018-2019). And you can help! Twice per month, a team of volunteers will travel to Houston Food Bank to fill backpacks for the students.

Our first Backpack Buddy Team trip to HFB is **Monday, September 10th!** The commitment is only a few hours in the



morning, and we'll ride there together on the MDPC church bus, assemble food backpacks, and return to church by noon. For September signups, register at [bpbuddy.mdpc.org](http://bpbuddy.mdpc.org). For details, contact Jan Roe at [jroe@mdpc.org](mailto:jroe@mdpc.org) or 713-490-9552.

### 2018 Backpack Buddy Volunteer Dates

Monday, September 10

Saturday, September 22

Monday, October 8

Saturday, October 13

Monday, November 12

Friday, November 23

Saturday, December 8

Monday, December 10



## The Secret Ingredient...is to Trust in God!

That's the message that over 650 children learned at MDPC's annual Summer Celebration in July. Pictured below are the "Pink Ladies" - the leadership team that pulls it all together. The success of this program also is exemplified by the many families who participate, like the three generations represented below (right) by the Bradfords, the Jaegers, and the Williams. Many thanks to all!

