

**YA Volleyball Social**

Come bump, set, spike, play in the sand, and hang out with other young adults (20s & 30s). Bring \$5 to play.  
**Sunday, March 10 | 3:00 PM | SideOut Volleybar**  
 Text, call, or email Sarah Stone: 832-605-8129,  
 sstone@mdpc.org

**Help Fight Childhood Hunger**

Recent studies reveal 1 in 4 children in Houston often go without meals or live daily with hunger because their families cannot afford to buy food. A simple way you can help is to prepare meals at Houston Food Bank (HFB). We need you to keep the fight against childhood hunger moving forward! Will you please join us?  
**Next date: Monday, March 11 | 8:00 AM-Noon**  
 Register and more details: [bpbuddy.mdpc.org](http://bpbuddy.mdpc.org)

**Summer Camps/Classes Open!**

Register now for fun and educational camps. Kids can learn anything from arts to cooking to dance to science to sports - and MORE! Classes for adults, too, including art, music, and fitness.  
 For more, visit [reach.mdpc.org](http://reach.mdpc.org) or call 713-490-9564.

**Men's Retreat 2019: Trust or Rust**

Save the Date! **Saturday-Sunday, April 13-14**  
 Cost: TBD | Lazy A Ranch  
 Details and registration: [mensretreat.mdpc.org](http://mensretreat.mdpc.org)

**Prayer & Worship for Jesus Said Love**

Men, women, and teens are invited to join us in an evening of worship and prayer to send out the Jesus Said Love team into the city's men's clubs. JSL shares the revolutionary love of Christ with women in the commercial sex industry. We look forward to interceding alongside you for the sake of these exploited women!  
**Friday, March 22 | 8:30-9:30 PM | Amphitheater**  
 With questions, or to join the prayer chain covering 9:30 PM-2:30 AM when the team is out ministering, email Amanda Grace Caldwell at [acaldwell@mdpc.org](mailto:acaldwell@mdpc.org).

**Volunteer Opportunity**

MDPC's Clothes Closet needs two volunteers beginning in May 2019.  
**Wednesday Mornings at MDPC**  
 Call Karen Cole for details: 713-532-0966

**40 Days of Prayer**

The season of Lent is an opportunity to grow in your relationship with God and deepen your commitment to Jesus Christ. The world in which we live is busy; we find ourselves busy. But during Lent we are encouraged to reflect on Jesus' journey to the cross. With His passion, His death, His resurrection in mind, we pray more deeply, sorrow more honestly, rejoice more freely, and give more readily!

What might you do, during Lent, to increase your awareness of God's love in Christ for you? You might add a rhythm of Scripture reading, or subtract your intake of chocolate. Or, perhaps consider adding prayer... This year, we are offering 40 Days of Prayer: 1-2 sentences of prayer, many drawn from Scripture and often coinciding with Pastor Alf's Lenten sermon series or Pastor Clay's Lenten Scripture study.

To enrich your Lenten prayer life in this way, follow MDPC on Instagram ([instagram.mdpc.org](http://instagram.mdpc.org)) or Facebook ([facebook.mdpc.org](http://facebook.mdpc.org)).

**Vision Trip to Central Asia**

Trip leaders Sean and Bethany Walker lived there for 11 years, so know the area and people well! A great opportunity to see what God is doing in the world and learn how The Antioch Partners (TAP) are serving.  
**June 15-24 (extended trip option through 27)**  
 Application and \$250 deposit due April 1  
 Contact Hope Whitney: [admin@theantiochpartners.org](mailto:admin@theantiochpartners.org)

**Easter Lily Ordering Open**

Dedications in memory of and/or in honor of those close to us may be purchased online or in person at the Front Office or Sanctuary.  
**Deadline: Thursday, April 11**  
[flowers.mdpc.org](http://flowers.mdpc.org)

**Safe Haven Conference**

For all members of the foster care & adoption community. Hear from mental health experts, ministry leaders, and foster care/adoption professionals as we seek to educate, encourage, and empower families.  
**Saturday, April 27 | 8:00 AM-Noon | Amphitheater**  
**\$10 per adult • Registration required**  
 Childcare with registration: [safehavencon.mdpc.org](http://safehavencon.mdpc.org)

**The White Rose is in memory of these MDPC members:**

- Marie K. Chapline, who passed away February 24, 2019.
- Mary Ellen Plenge, who passed away March 1, 2019.

**This week's Ministry Partner prayer focus is on:**

**Candlelighters Childhood Cancer Family Alliance** offers emotional, educational, and practical support to children with cancer and their families. It also provides Medical Center parking vouchers, a major expense that parents of these children face.  
[candle.org](http://candle.org)

**Casa de Esperanza de los Niños** is a loving home for children who are in crisis due to drug abuse, neglect, or the effects of HIV. Casa provides residential care, and coordinates medical and psychological services according to the needs of each child.  
[casahope.org](http://casahope.org)

**MDPC Field Partner Dr. M and his family** show God's compassion to the unreached by meeting physical needs through Dental Health. Dr. M practices and teaches dentistry while sharing the Good News of Jesus with tribes living in abject poverty in South Asia. There, the 98% Muslim population has the least amount of dental care in the world.

**WEEKLY FINANCIAL UPDATE**

2019 Operating Budget	\$12,240,000
Actual Income to Date (3/3/19)	\$1,707,054
<b>Needed to Meet 2019 Budget</b>	<b>\$10,532,946</b>



Sunday, March 10, 2019

# REFLECT

*Take up your cross and follow Me.*

**MARK 8:31-38**  
 Alf Halvorson preaching

**8:30 AM BLENDED**

WELCOME		Dave Steane
*SONGS OF PRAISE		
*PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON		Dan Aikins
SONG OF PREPARATION		
MESSAGE	<b>REFLECT</b> Mark 8:31-38 (NRSV)	Alf Halvorson
RESPONSE OF THE PEOPLE		

**9:45 AM CONTEMPORARY**

WORSHIP INVITATION AND CALL TO WORSHIP		
MOMENT OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE		Laura Miller
SONG OF RESPONSE		
MESSAGE	<b>REFLECT</b> Mark 8:31-38 (NRSV)	Alf Halvorson
GIFTS OF GRATITUDE		

Musicians in the first two services: Meliza Gómez and Michael Middleton, worship leaders; Daniel Amaya, bass; George Heathco, guitar; Daniel Martinez, keys; Asher Pudlo, drums

**11:15 AM TRADITIONAL**

PRELUDE	<i>Ye Who Claim the Faith of Jesus Hymn of Promise</i>	arr. Matthew Corl (b. 1965) arr. Brenda Portman (b. 1985)
WELCOME AND CALL TO WORSHIP		Dave Steane
CHORAL INTROIT	<i>Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God</i>	Allen Pote (b. 1945)
*HYMN OF PRAISE	<i>Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty</i>	#482; Vs. 1, 2, 3   LOBE DEN HERREN
*PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE		Dan Aikins
*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH	from The Apostles' Creed	
*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE	<i>The Gloria Patri</i>	Hymn #579
ANTHEM	<i>The Light of the World from Every Purpose Under the Heaven</i>	Howard Goodall (b. 1958)
OFFERTORY	<i>Give Me Jesus</i>	L. L. Flemming (1936-2003)
MESSAGE	<b>REFLECT</b> Mark 8:31-38 (NRSV)	Alf Halvorson
*HYMN OF RESPONSE	<i>Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life</i>	#408; Vs. 1, 2, 6   GERMANY
POSTLUDE	<i>Alleluia</i>	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Musicians in this service: Charles Hausmann, conductor; Kathryn White, piano/organ; Brian Yeakley, soloist; Sanctuary Choir

\* Please stand if able.

CCLI # 182374

**TODAY!**

# GO TEXAN



**Second-Sunday Supper** Y'all come!

**Today in Fellowship Hall**  
Lunch served 11:00 AM-1:00 PM  
We're serving up BBQ to get you in the rodeo spirit! Plates are \$10 per adult, \$4 per child under 12, or \$25 per family (2 adults & 3 kids under 12).

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



**SPEAKER SERIES**

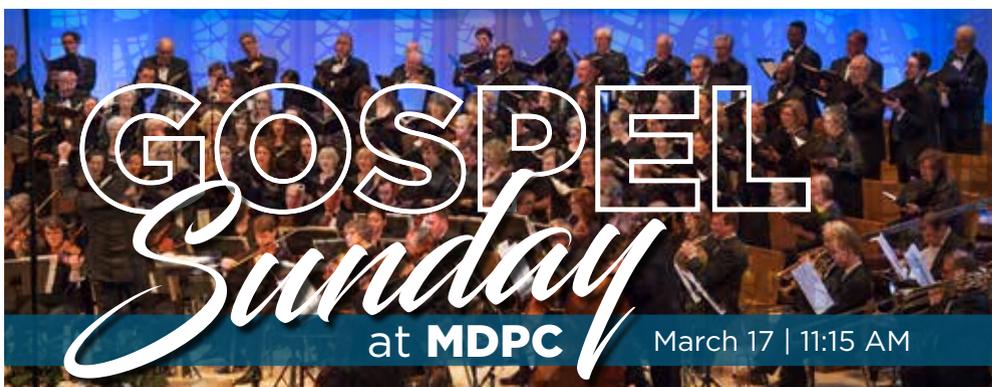
You'll leave with practical tools to share your faith. See today's insert to learn more.

## Finding Delight in Spiritual Conversations

Drawing on 25 years of parachurch and church ministry, ECO pastor and award-winning author, Don Everts, will use original research from Barna and a simple Bible-based conversation model to help all of us re-discover the delight of spiritual conversations.

**Thursday, March 21 at 7:00 PM**

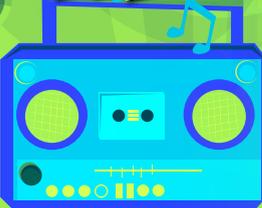
MDPC Fellowship Hall • Light refreshments • [speakers.mdpc.org](http://speakers.mdpc.org)



# GOSPEL

## Sunday

at **MDPC** March 17 | 11:15 AM



# THE MUSIC BOX KIDS' CHOIR

Learn about music and choral singing in a fun and worshipful environment! All kids in grades K-5 are welcome.  
[themusicbox.mdpc.org](http://themusicbox.mdpc.org)

**WEDNESDAYS, MARCH 20-APRIL 10 | 4:45-5:30 PM | CHAPEL**

**GROUPS BEGIN TODAY**

THE 2019 *Lenten Study*

# REFLECT

*Take up your cross and follow Me.*

The six studies supplement Pastor Alf's REFLECT sermon series. In the week following each sermon, we'll study as groups or individuals. **Groups meet weekly March 10-April 20.**

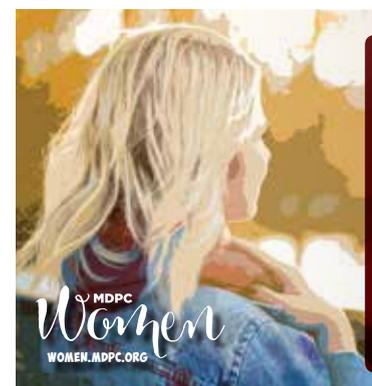
Sunday-morning small group options include:

<b>9:45 AM</b>	<b>11:15 AM</b>
Pastor's Class (Amphitheater)*	Seeker's Sunday School Class (Room 103)
Faith Explorations (Room 170)	Life 2.0 Sunday School Class (Room 122)
Pathways Women's Class (Room 116)	Pastor's Class (Amphitheater)*

Drop-ins are welcome! Learn more at [reflect.mdpc.org](http://reflect.mdpc.org).

\*Pastor-led class that also meets Wednesdays, 6:30 PM.

Study guides are available at the Connection Center in the Sanctuary Lobby.

**THE WELL**  
SPECIAL EDITION

## "EVEN IF"

We will have the honor of hearing from Nancy Maveergeorge and how her family is living proof that God can meet us in our deepest sorrow and bring joy into our sad hearts.

**WEDS, MARCH 27 • 6:30-8:00 PM • CHAPEL**  
Come at 6:00 for light refreshments. Please RSVP:

[THEWELL.MDPC.ORG](http://THEWELL.MDPC.ORG)

MDPC Women  
[WOMEN.MDPC.ORG](http://WOMEN.MDPC.ORG)

# FAMILY MISSION DAY

SATURDAY, MARCH 30  
10:30 AM-2:30 PM

Families with kindergarten kids & older, we need you! We're putting on a carnival for children involved in MDPC Special Blessings and Safe Haven ministries. Come serve with other MDPC families at this fun, faith-building way to teach your kids about the importance of service.

Register today:  
[FAMILYMISSION.MDPC.ORG](http://FAMILYMISSION.MDPC.ORG)



**MDPC KIDS**

Special Guests include Pastor Alf, Rachel Poyksy, and Brett & Kellie Hurst

# Being Human

*You're fine. I'm fine. EVERYTHING'S fine.*

Are emotions bad? Is counseling wrong? What does God think of us when we're anxious or depressed? How do the Bible and mental health intersect? Join seminarian Laurien Hook and Amanda Grace Caldwell, MA, LPC, in a podcast seeking answers to these questions and more.

Listen now: [beinghuman.mdpc.org](http://beinghuman.mdpc.org)





“How do I talk to my teenager about God?”



“What can I say to my neighbor?”



“I long for my parents to know God.”



“Talking about faith in high school is scary.”



“How can my faith and my work intersect?”

If any of these sound like YOU, this event is FOR YOU!

## Discovering Delight in Spiritual Conversations



How do you hold a spiritual conversation with someone? MDPC's first Speaker Series event of 2019 will focus on this vital need. So that we can learn and practice the delight of spiritual conversations, we've invited **Don Everts**, author and ECO pastor, to come share insights from his cutting-edge books.

This won't be a "theoretical" talk. Don will offer practical, accessible tools to start conversations about our faith, like his "Spiritual Conversation Curve." By the time the evening is over, we each will have a game plan to engage the important people in our lives in winsome, natural, invitational conversation.

**Thursday, March 21, 7:00 PM • Fellowship Hall**

**Register: [speaker.mdpc.org](http://speaker.mdpc.org)**

*These notes are adapted from MDPC's 2019 Lenten Study booklet. See the ad in today's bulletin or visit [reflect.mdpc.org](http://reflect.mdpc.org) to learn more or participate in the Lenten study.*

# REFLECT

*Take up your cross and follow Me.*

Week 1: Mark 8:31-38 (ESV and NLT)

Talking about Christian discipleship often leads to a major misunderstanding. We end up thinking it's all up to us! But we could not be more mistaken. We do not start and nurture a relationship with God through what we bring to the table.

Instead, we start and nurture a relationship with God solely by God's initiative, by "grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone," in the words of the Protestant Reformers. So when we talk about discipleship, we are emphatically NOT stating we must work our way to God.

At the same time, "grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone" naturally leads to lives expressed in thankfulness and commitment to God. In other words, "grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone" results in our serving as Christ's disciples above all other commitments and allegiances we hold. We struggle and fall along the way. But disciples of Jesus we remain.

To launch our 2019 Lenten study, first we will explore and discuss one of the most famous teachings from Jesus about discipleship: we deny ourselves, take up our crosses, and follow Him.

Wow! What on earth is Jesus really saying here? What are the implications of this staggering statement by our Lord and Savior? Let's find out.

## Introducing: Getting Ready to Discuss the Passage

- (Especially if you are in a new group) What is your name? Tell us something that will help us remember you vividly!
- It is hard to go through modern life without experiencing a sales pitch. In your opinion, what makes a sales pitch effective? What makes a sales pitch ineffective? Please share in summary form one of the best sales pitches you've ever heard and your response to it.

## Discovering: What the Passage Says

- Compare the two translations above for Mark 8:31-38. What jumps out at you as you read them? Similarities? Differences? Overlaps? Things to pursue?
- Please read Mark 8:27-30. What has occurred in this passage to set up Mark 8:31-38?
- How does Jesus begin His teaching in verse 31? How does it differ from the "sales pitch" the disciples may have expected? In substance? In tone?
- In verse 32, Peter responds to Jesus. What assertive verbs are used in the passage to describe Peter's demeanor and attitude?
- Jesus replies to Peter in verse 33. What verb is used to describe this conversation? Why might this verb be important to note?
- After Jesus speaks with Peter, He calls the crowd in with His disciples in verse 34. How does He start off His teaching to the larger group in this same verse?
- Jesus describes an exchange of sorts in verses 35-37. What is it?
- What is the result in verse 38 for someone coming out on the wrong end of the exchange in verses 35-37? To what future event does this refer?

## Exploring: What the Passage Means

- According to first-century popular opinion, who is the Christ and what is He supposed to do? According to today's popular opinion? How does Jesus' teaching about Himself both demolish and expand upon this popular opinion?
- Why is Peter so upset with Jesus? Does the fact our passage is the first time in Mark's Gospel that Jesus overtly mentions the trajectory of His life explain (at least in part) Peter's response? Why or why not? What else might be going on to create such a response?

- Jesus, as the saying goes, “doubles down” in His reply to Peter. Is Jesus saying Peter is demon-possessed? If Jesus isn’t speaking literally here, then what is Jesus stating about Peter? Is Peter alone in this flaw Jesus addresses, or is it shared in numerous ways through the centuries? If shared, how is it made known today?
- What does “deny yourself” (or “give up your own way”), “take up your cross,” and “follow Me” each mean? How are each of these often misunderstood or mischaracterized? Please take a shot at paraphrasing each of these into less “churchy” language to make them more understandable.
- What does “deny yourself” (or “give up your own way”), “take up your cross,” and “follow Me” mean when you put all three of them together? What is a good summation of their collective witness and wisdom? Why do you think the Christian faith has given such emphasis to this collective witness and wisdom for centuries? What does this collective witness and wisdom say to us now?
- Unpack how verse 35 elaborates upon what Jesus says in verse 34. How does Jesus amplify and emphasize His earlier teaching here?
- Today, how do we see people attempt to gain the “whole world” and, in so doing, lose what is most important? Why is this attempt so popular or common? What makes it so easy for humans to fall under this temptation’s spell?
- What is Jesus saying as He ends His teaching in verse 38? How may a person be ashamed of Jesus and His gospel? What are the long-term ramifications?

### **Applying: Wrestling with the Implications for Our Lives**

- One implication of this passage is Jesus’ suffering and crucifixion are central to the Christian faith; our lives, if we follow Him, will reflect this same path. Truth be told, this implication bothers us. Suffering is never on our personal “to do” lists. Furthermore, suffering is considered by some as a sign we are not in God’s will. So why is suffering so important to our spiritual development? How can we embrace it and grow through it?
- Another implication is we are called to follow Jesus as He really is, not Jesus as we want Him to be. How have we created (and keep creating) a Jesus who mirrors ourselves (our culture, our politics, our wants, and so on) instead of the Jesus revealed in the Scriptures? Discuss some specific ways we may help one another, both one-on-one and in small groups, to follow the real Jesus.
- Still another implication is every Christian is called to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. Discipleship isn’t an optional part only for the chosen few, but it’s for all who trust in Jesus, denying ourselves, taking up our crosses, and following Him. So how does discipleship play out in daily life? How do we put this to work on the job? At home with our families? In our relationships with our spouses or other loved ones? With our next-door neighbors? Share with one another some concrete things we can do as disciples to make this calling a daily reality.
- One final implication is Jesus speaks quite clearly about the fallacy of living by the world’s pattern. So why does this pattern remain so attractive to us who claim to follow Jesus? Often one can’t tell the Christians from the non-Christians, and often the non-Christians are far better! What changes do we need to make so we may witness more winsomely to God’s love through Christ? What idols do we need to forsake? How does God’s grace make a difference?

