

ALPHA at MDPC

Alpha is for people who would not call themselves Christians, and also for those who would but may still have big questions about faith. The course, dinner, and childcare all are free. Who will you invite?

Tuesdays, April 23-June 11 | 6:30-8:15 PM

Learn more: alpha.mdpc.org

Visit Our Community Art Gallery

Take the time to stop by our gallery wall, located between Room 122 and The Nook, to view the newest display. *The World Through Our Eyes* is a unique and inspirational book containing 75 of Sam Gainer's photos and Dave Peterson's reflections. Several samples of their beautiful work from the book are now on display. Books are available for purchase at the Front Office.

Women's Dinner & Discussion Bible Study

Join other women in their 20s & 30s for a home-cooked meal and glass of wine as we dig into the Bible. Any stage of faith (including skeptics) welcome!

Alternate Tuesday Evenings | The Heights

Upcoming Dates: April 16, 30, May 14, 28, June 18

Contact Sarah Stone: 832-605-8129 (text or call)

Global Missions: Vision Trip to Peru

Free Wheelchair Mission provides wheelchairs to the impoverished disabled around the world and shares the Gospel with each recipient. You will have the opportunity to serve on a wheelchair distribution team and witness as lives are transformed by providing dignity, independence, and hope through the gift of mobility.

Trip dates: September 8-14, 2019 (Approx.)

Registration deadline is May 15.

Contact Kelsi McCormack: kmccormack@mdpc.org

Concert Series: Oratorio by Mendelssohn

The MDPC Sanctuary Choir is partnering with the Archdiocesan Choir of Galveston-Houston to perform the *St. Paul Oratorio* by Felix Mendelssohn. A Jewish Lutheran, this German Romantic composer was drawn to the conversion story of Saul.

Sunday, May 5 | 6:30 PM | MDPC Sanctuary

Free & open to the community • concerts.mdpc.org

Today's Chancel Flowers are given by Patrick McCauley and Suzanne McCauley, in memory of Richard Michael McCauley, who passed away April 13, 2018.

This week's Ministry Partner prayer focus:

Easter Seals ministers to adults with physical and cognitive disabilities, most having low to extremely low income and few opportunities for activities or social engagement. They meet weekly at MDPC for yoga, ceramics, speakers, and lunch. • eastersealshouston.org

Epiphany Community Health Outreach Services (ECHOS) is a faith-based organization serving the vulnerable and at-risk, helping them gain access to healthcare, education, and job training. Through partnerships with local providers, ECHOS offers health screenings, a food pantry, ESL classes, and more. • echos-houston.org

African Enterprise proclaims the Gospel to the residents of Africa's major cities, making a special effort to reach leaders, since Godly governance can result in transformations of whole countries. AE ministers through evangelism, reconciliation, leadership training, relief, and community development. • africanenterprise.org

Brain Boot Camp

Would you like to improve your memory? Want to learn tips for things such as remembering names and faces and recalling appointments and messages? This fun one-day class is taught by our friends at Amazing Place, and sponsored by Caring Ministries.

Wed, April 24 | 9:00 AM-1:30 PM | \$100 includes box lunch

For more information, contact Sally Davis at 713-552-0420 or trainyourbrain@amazingplacehouston.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

The #MeToo Movement and the Church

Fuller Texas presents Dr. Mimi Haddad discussing how the #MeToo movement demonstrates global power imbalances between men and women in culture, and in the church. It will consider how we can prevent harassment and abuse, and learn from Christians throughout history who advanced the Gospel, justice, and the dignity of women and men created in God's image.

Tuesday, May 7 | 7:00-8:30 PM | Amphitheater

Please register: metoo.mdpc.org

Host Homes Needed for Counselors

Families are needed to host college-age counselors for Kanakuk Kampout, providing a place to stay plus breakfast and dinner each day. We also need medical volunteers for the week (CPR and First Aid trained).

August 3-9 (Camp info: kampout.mdpc.org)

Please contact Alicia if you can be a medical volunteer or host family (aboykin@mdpc.org, 713-490-9261).

BBQ Fundraiser

Support the officers and staff of your Memorial Villages PD. Get a BBQ plate and fixings for a \$10 donation!

Saturday, April 27 | 10:00 AM-4:00 PM | MDPC

Sponsorships available: flerma@mvpdtx.org

The White Rose is in memory of MDPC member

Lance Livingston, who passed away April 8, 2019.

Please Pray for Jim Wharton & Family

Charlotte Wharton, wife of MDPC Pastor Emeritus Jim Wharton, died peacefully at home on April 1, 2019. She and Jim moved to Black Mountain, North Carolina from Dallas, Texas upon Dr. Wharton's retirement in 1997.

A private memorial service for Charlotte will be held in the coming months. In lieu of flowers, friends and well wishers may make contributions to the Asheville Area Habitat for Humanity or Asheville's Brother Wolf Animal Rescue.

WEEKLY FINANCIAL UPDATE

at 4/7/19

2019 Annual Budget \$12,240,000

Actual Income to Date \$2,824,149

Needed to Meet Budget \$9,415,851



Palm Sunday, April 14, 2019

REFLECT

Take up your cross and follow Me.

JOHN 12:12-16
Pastor Alf Halvorson preaching

*Please stand when able.

CCLI # 182374

8:30 AM BLENDED & 9:45 AM CONTEMPORARY***PRAISE & WORSHIP**

CHILDREN'S MOMENT (9:45)

***CONFESSION** (prayers.mdpc.org)

MESSAGE

OFFERTORY+

+ In the 8:30 Service, the Offertory precedes the message. Musicians in these services: Meliza Gómez and Michael Middleton, worship leaders; Daniel Amaya, bass; George Heathco, guitar; Daniel Martinez, keys; Asher Pudlo, drums; The Music Box Kids' Choir (9:45)

11:15 AM TRADITIONAL

PRELUDES

Two Palm Sunday Preludes

arr. Michael Burkhardt (b.1957)

WELCOME AND CALL TO WORSHIP

Dave Steane

CHORAL INTROIT

The Music Box Kids' Choir

***HYMN OF PRAISE**

All Glory, Laud, and Honor

#88; Vs. 1 | VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN

***PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE**

Amy Delgado

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** from The Apostles' Creed

***HYMN OF RESPONSE**

Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

#89; Vs. 3 | ELLACOMBE

ANTHEM

The Holy City

Stephen Adams (1841-1913)/arr. Roy Ringwald

OFFERTORY

Ride On, King Jesus

arr. Moses Hogan (1957-2003)

MESSAGE

Alf Halvorson

***HYMN OF RESPONSE**

Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed

#78; Vs. 1, 4 | MARTYRDOM

POSTLUDE

Sing Forth Exultantly!

Lani Smith (b. 1934-2015)

Musicians in this service: Cassandra Black, offertory soloist; Charles Hausmann, conductor; Ivan Ley and Calvet Young, anthem soloists/duet; Kathryn White, organ; Sanctuary Choirs; The Music Box Kids' Choir

Today's **PALM SUNDAY OFFERING** benefits the life-saving efforts of **LIVING WATER INTERNATIONAL**, a global ministry transforming communities by offering clean water in Jesus' Name. Make checks out to "MDPC" and write *Palm Sunday offering* in the note line, or place check or cash in one of the offering envelopes provided in the pews.



PALM SUNDAY OFFERING
Offering to benefit Living Water International

Name (please print clearly) _____

Amount \$ _____ Envelope # (if using) _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Holy Week SERVICES at MDPC

Join us for one of our 8 worshipful and celebratory Holy Week services. Easter's **interactive Family Service** is perfect for you and your children.

Maundy Thursday, April 18
7:00 PM · COMMUNION SERVICE

Good Friday, April 19
12 NOON · MUSIC & REFLECTION

Easter Sunday, April 21

Sunrise Service
7:00 AM · COURTYARD

Family-friendly Service
9:45 AM · SANCTUARY

Spanish Language
11:15 AM · CHAPEL

Contemporary Service
8:15 AM · SANCTUARY

Traditional Service
11:15 AM · SANCTUARY

Portuguese Language
6:00 PM · CHAPEL

For what is your soul longing? Close your eyes for a moment, and feel its need... Do you need comfort? Healing? Rest? Do you simply need to draw near to God and feel His presence?

Today is Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week. Many of us attend church today, and will again at its culmination on Easter, but spend no time with Jesus during the intervening week – His walk from Jerusalem to Calvary. This year, we challenge you to *immerse yourself in each day of Holy Week*.

It's natural to want to go "from the parade to the party," but, if we do so now, we miss what gives the Easter story its resonance. By walking that most difficult path with Jesus, taking up His cross and following Him, we acknowledge His suffering, His condemnation, and His death, sacrifices made on our behalf. Through these deeply personal and painful times, we meet Jesus face to face and fully understand the depth of His love for us.

These Holy Week services and events are offered in remembrance of Him. Please join us.

Maundy Thursday, April 18 • 7:00 PM

If you've experienced the pain of loss...the bitterness of unbelief...the sting of rejection...the ache of loneliness...the angst of anger...this Maundy Thursday service is for you. Come seek and experience Jesus' healing. Communion will be served, in addition to a variety of optional experiences. You are invited to participate, or not, as the Spirit leads.

Good Friday, April 19 • Noon

Good Friday will be an experiential service led by the Sanctuary Choir. Together, we'll learn how to take our hearts of stone – hardened by hurts or injustices – and release the pain to God. Find a new freedom and a new spirit in the saving work of Jesus.

Other Holy Week Events (See ads at right)

The Spoken Word • Communal, out-loud, cover-to-cover Bible reading

The Silent Word • Engage with your Father in a special prayer room

Journey to the Cross • An interactive kid-friendly experience of Holy Week

Easter Morning, April 21

Having spent the week fully embracing Christ's Passion, your Easter Celebration will burst with the joy of the Resurrection! A full listing of service times is at the top of this page.



MDPC Food Service Ministries invites you to

Second-Sunday Supper

Today in Fellowship Hall | Served 11:00 AM-1:00 PM

Entrée (\$10): Chicken Tandoori or Pork Shank
Sides: Saffron Rice, Tomato-Stewed Green Beans, Roasted Cauliflower, Falafel

Entrée Salad (\$10): Chicken Salad
Children's Entrée (\$4): Cheese Pizza

Meals include dessert, side salad, pita bread, and beverage. All are welcome!




Celebrate Holy Week by with MDPC's annual continuous, out-loud, cover-to-cover reading of the Bible. Sign up for one or more 15-minute spots at spokenword.mdpc.org.

THE SPOKEN WORD

HEBREWS 4:12

April 15-18 • Chapel
Come to read. Come to listen.



THE SILENT WORD

LUKE 5:16

The Silent Word is an interactive prayer room inviting you into closer communion with the Living God.

HOURS:
April 15-18: Open to adults & children 14+, Monday through Thursday, 7:00 AM-7:00 PM
April 19: Children under 14 and families are invited to participate on Friday morning, 7:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

Learn more: silentword.mdpc.org
No registration required.

Deepen your Easter experience this Holy Week



JOURNEY to the CROSS

Experience the Sights and Sounds of Holy Week

Good Friday, April 19

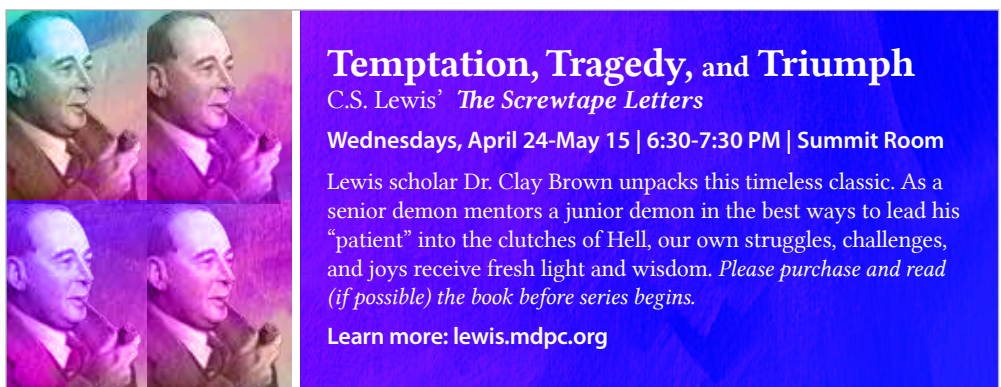
Tours run 9:10-11:30 AM

A guided walk for children and families to experience the sights and sounds of Holy Week. Live scenes, elaborate sets, & interaction!

Register to receive a tour time: journey.mdpc.org

JUNIOR JOURNEY to the CROSS

Preschoolers & parents are invited to experience *Junior Journey to the Cross*. Open 9:10-11:10 AM, come anytime.



Temptation, Tragedy, and Triumph

C.S. Lewis' *The Screwtape Letters*

Wednesdays, April 24-May 15 | 6:30-7:30 PM | Summit Room

Lewis scholar Dr. Clay Brown unpacks this timeless classic. As a senior demon mentors a junior demon in the best ways to lead his "patient" into the clutches of Hell, our own struggles, challenges, and joys receive fresh light and wisdom. *Please purchase and read (if possible) the book before series begins.*

Learn more: lewis.mdpc.org

Who will you invite?



Alpha

Alpha is an 8-week series of interactive sessions that allows people to experience Jesus for themselves and make their own decisions about faith. It is a great place to invite people to explore faith and discuss the big questions in life.

Tuesdays, April 23-June 11
6:30-8:15 PM

Alpha is **FREE**. Dinner and childcare are provided

RSVP: alpha.mdpc.org

Not sure what Alpha is all about?
Try Alpha for yourself.

ALPHA

explore life. faith. meaning.



Alpha is a great place to invite people to explore faith and discuss the big questions of life. Each Alpha includes a free meal, a video talk on a topic from the Christian perspective, and conversation in smaller groups where everyone is encouraged to share their own perspective. No question or comment is off limits and everyone is able to share as much or as little as they'd like.

Alpha is for...

- > People who are wrestling with life's biggest questions: *Does God exist? or Why are we here?*
- > People skeptical of faith, but open to having conversations with other folks who have different worldviews.
- > People who have been Christian for a while, but still are unsure about parts of the faith.
- > People who are new Christians looking to learn the basics of the Christian faith.

If you don't match any of these groups, consider inviting someone you know who does. You can even come along with them. You can find invitation pockets at the Alpha table in the Lobby or at the Front Office.



These notes come from MDPC's 2019 Lenten Study. Visit reflect.mdpc.org to learn more. It is recommended to read both translations (ESV & NLT) of each scripture passage.

REFLECT

Take up your cross and follow Me.

Week 6: John 12:12-16 (ESV & NLT)

We have spent the last several weeks looking into Christian discipleship and what it means for our lives here and now. One of the things that is often the most challenging for us as Christians is to think that our lives will look differently than Jesus'.

Yes, you read that sentence correctly. Discipleship means that we are being transformed into the image of Jesus by drawing more closely to Him each day. However, we often like to draw near to a self-made image of Jesus rather than the Jesus revealed in the Scriptures.

Our passage today depicts the King of the Universe riding into a dusty town on a donkey. He does not arrive on a war horse in the same zealous manner as the conquering Caesars of His day. Rather, He fulfills a prophetic utterance about Himself from the book of Zechariah by coming into Jerusalem on a humble donkey. No fame. No glory. Headed to His death.

While it is an unpopular thought, we deceive ourselves as Christ followers when we think that our lives should somehow look differently than our donkey-riding, humble, cross-carrying Lord. If discipleship is about anything other than us taking on the form of Christ, who took on the form of a servant and was obedient even unto death (Philippians 2:1-11), then it has become more about our individual comforts and desires than about becoming more like Christ. While it is certainly true that we worship a resurrected, ascended, and glorified King, we must not fall into the temptation of believing that our life of discipleship will only look like the glorified portion of His life. Thankfully, we have a great promise that He will never leave us or forsake us even amidst any suffering we endure!

Introducing: Getting Ready to Discuss the Passage

- Share a one to two-sentence summary of what this Lenten study has revealed to you.
- How has your concept of discipleship shifted or grown in new ways over the past six weeks?

Discovering: What the Passage Says

- Compare the two translations above for John 12:12-16. What jumps out at you as you read them? Similarities? Differences? Overlaps? Things to pursue?
- The story of the Triumphal Entry is one of the few stories that makes its way into each of the Gospel accounts. Read Matthew 21:1-11, Mark 11:1-10, and Luke 19:28-40. Then discuss the different and similar elements and messages conveyed by the four gospel writers' expressions of this story.
- In John 12:15, Jesus quotes a passage from Zechariah 9:9. How does knowing that the surrounding text of Zechariah 9:9 is about God's judgment and salvation of His people inform your reading of John 12:15?
- John 12:16 tells us His disciples did not understand everything unfolding in front of them as Jesus rode into Jerusalem. How does knowing even Jesus' immediate disciples "missed" things right in front of them encourage you as you try to follow Him?

Exploring: What the Passage Means

- If you think about it, you can surely remember seeing (either in-person or in a book) an image of a conquering hero, seated on a war horse, riding into town as they proclaim a victory. Why is it important Jesus' "Triumphal Entry" looks so different than those of the conquering heroes of His day? What does this tell us about the Christian life?
- The word "Hosanna" delivers the idea of "save" or "rescue". At the time of Jesus' life, the people of Israel were under Roman rule and authority. They had long-hoped for a Messiah who would arrive on a war horse and destroy their Roman oppressors. They shouted "Hosanna!" hoping that Jesus would be the one to overthrow Rome and establish God's Kingdom. How did Jesus' arrival on a donkey, going towards His death, upturn this understanding? How should it shape our view of Jesus today? What does this mean for us as His disciples?

- Going a little beyond our designated passage for the day, we are told in John 12:17-18 that a crowd had been following Jesus since He raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:28-44). These people had seen His power and were attracted to Him because He had performed a powerful sign. Do we follow Jesus only because we know He has immense power and He might be able to do something for us, or because we have experienced His love and His life, death, and resurrection? What is an example of this belief or behavior in your life?
- To push our story out yet a little further, read John 12:19. How does the Pharisees' reaction make you feel? The Pharisees longed for the restoration and glorification of Israel. However, their people were now following a wild, unpredictable Rabbi. Do we ever look more like Pharisees in wanting a king who will do as we want? If so, how?
- How does knowing that Jesus is on His way to His death, rather than on His way to physically overthrow Rome and establish Himself as Caesar/King, inform how you interpret this as a "Triumphal Entry"?

Applying: Wrestling with the Implications for Our Lives

- To borrow a question from our very first week together: 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?
- One implication of this passage is that Jesus rarely appears or behaves as we want Him to in our lives. How does this understanding inform our discipleship? When have we made discipleship into something overly easy or something that is more us-centered than Jesus-centered?
- Where in life are you tempted to want Jesus to be *only* a conquering hero on a war horse rather than a humble servant riding a donkey? How can we pray for our focus and desires to be changed in this area?
- Where do you need to shout "Hosanna!" in your life right now? What needs to be saved or rescued? Be careful—Jesus rarely saves us in the ways we think He should, but we can trust in His ultimate care and love for us!