

# INTO THE MARGINS

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## THE PARABLES OF LUKE

### The Shrewd Manager

Luke 16:1-13 | Pastor Alf Halvorson

Last week, on Covenant Sunday, we were able to revel in Luke 15:1-32, which many think is the greatest chapter, not only in Luke's Gospel, but the entire New Testament. It tells us, if we have never heard the concept before, or reminds us if we have, in three parables of a similar theme, that God seeks after us; and not to harm us or judge us harshly, but to help us to be able to 'come home.' Luke 19:10 says, "The Son of Man came to seek and save the lost." That was Christ's purpose when He walked the earth two thousand years ago. But then chapter 16 hits us with what is notoriously called the most difficult of all Jesus' parables to interpret—Luke 16:1-13. We mustn't avoid it. It has much to teach.

1. Read Luke 16:1-13 in both a translation like the NRSV, NIV, or ESV, and then also in a paraphrase like "The Message" or "The Living Bible." On your early readings, what bothers you; what intrigues you; and what, if anything, inspires you?
2. Look at verses 1-2, and 8. What do we learn about the manager/steward? Why is the Master ready to fire him (vs.1-2)? And why does the master commend him even though he is dishonest (vs. 8)?
3. There is a difference between "I applaud the dishonest steward because he acted cleverly" and 'I applaud the clever steward because he acted dishonestly.' Which do you think is being commended here? Why? How do verses 10-13 help you to your conclusion?
4. I talked about a key to understanding this parable from N. T. Wright and Leon Morris, two New Testament Commentators. Did that explanation help? How? In what way(s)? Do you have another explanation or theory that might help explain part or the whole of this passage? Share it with the group.
5. I said that Jesus seems to commend the manager for his shrewdness (wisdom, initiative, risk-taking) in making friends with those in debt (chained, lost, in need of relief) and helping them toward freedom. How does that theme or concept connect with Luke 15?
6. In Luke 16:1, it says the steward squandered his boss's property, which is the same word used in Greek for what the Prodigal Son did with the property his dad gave him (Luke 15:13). What do you think Jesus wants us to do with our property (time, talent, treasure)? How does it connect with not being careless, but rather shrewdly being careful in helping make friends with those who are indebted or lost? Does this text influence you at all regarding your generosity and pledge?
7. I talked about our need as believers to be shrewd and wise and creative and willing to 'throw caution to the wind' regarding connecting with outsiders about the Good News of Jesus. Share practical ways that you can apply this idea of being "a friend-maker for God" more regularly, creatively, and passionately in your life. For example, who might you invite for **Friends-Giving\*** (see [food.mdpc.org](http://food.mdpc.org)) on November 17?

\*Bring a friend to worship, and stay for lunch. Your guest's meal will be complementary.

**Pastoral Team**

**Dan Aikins**  
Assistant Pastor, Alpha Hub Director

**Clay Brown**  
Equipping Pastor

**Beth Case**  
Caring Ministries Pastor

**Mauricio Chacón**  
Spanish Language Pastor

**Almir Dias**  
Portuguese Language Pastor

**Alf Halvorson**  
Senior Pastor

**Brett Hurst**  
Relationships Pastor

**Rachel Poysky**  
Children's Pastor

**Dave Steane**  
Executive Pastor

**Dave Peterson & Gary Bowker**  
Pastors Emeritus

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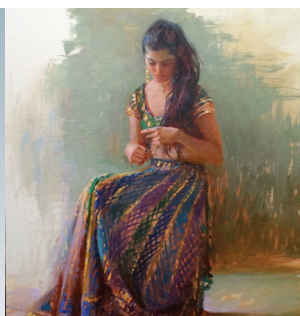
**Congregational Updates:**  
Teresa Driver passed away October 11, 2019. She is the daughter of MDPC member, Carole Driver.

**MDPC Worship**  
8:30 AM • 9:45 AM • 11:15 AM (English & Spanish) • 6:00 PM (Portuguese Language)

**Live Art Demonstration**  
by Suchitra Bhosle

Suchitra paints in a representational realistic style, drawing inspiration from 20th century naturalist painters. She embraces impressionism to depict everyday representational scenes. Suchitra's model during the live demo will be our very own **Meliza Gómez**.

**Wednesday, Nov. 13** • 6:30–8:30 PM • Amphitheater



art.mdpc.org  
suchitrabhosle.com

**WEEKLY MINISTRY PARTNER PRAYER FOCUS**

**Small Steps Nurturing Center** • Small Steps is an exemplary early childhood program that fosters the social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and spiritual growth of children from low-income families. Its two locations in Houston's First and Fifth Wards provide high-quality education, transportation, nutritious meals, and social and emotional therapy to 180 economically at-risk inner-city children. [ssnc.org](http://ssnc.org)

**SIRE Therapeutic Equestrian Centers** SIRE improves the quality of life for disabled individuals through therapeutic horseback riding. Equestrian therapy improves muscle tone, balance, and coordination, and increases cognitive skills. Students benefit emotionally by building feelings of self-reliance and accomplishment, and socially by developing meaningful relationships with volunteers, and bonding with the horse. [sirehouston.org](http://sirehouston.org)

**MDPC Field Partner in Central Asia** • This MDPC partner family focuses their ministry on reaching those who have not yet heard about or encountered Jesus Christ in the Himalayas. They demonstrate God's love and power in the midst of spiritually difficult areas, and work with local believers to reach out in cross cultural ministry.

Online giving is available at [giving.mdpc.org](http://giving.mdpc.org).

**WEEKLY FINANCIAL UPDATE**

as of 11/03/19

|                              |                     |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| 2019 Annual Budget           | \$ 12,240,000       |
| Actual Income to Date        | \$ 7,761,055        |
| <b>Needed to Meet Budget</b> | <b>\$ 4,478,945</b> |

Sunday, November 10, 2019



**INTO THE MARGINS**  
THE PARABLES OF LUKE

**The Shrewd Manager**  
Luke 16:1-13 • Alf Halvorson preaching

**Generosity Matters.** On November 3, in a corporate act of worship and stewardship, we made our 2020 financial pledges to God. Pledging is not giving, but making a personal commitment for next year's contributions. This allows MDPC to be a faithful steward and responsibly plan the church's budget and outreach giving. If you've not yet pledged, you can still do so online at [pledge.mdpc.org](http://pledge.mdpc.org), or by using the Covenant Cards found in the pews. Also, please keep year-end giving in mind as we strive to meet our 2019 budget obligations. You may give online at [giving.mdpc.org](http://giving.mdpc.org).

**The Winsome Witness Challenge.** If the idea of witnessing to others feels daunting but you want to be able to share your faith more comfortably, join us in a Winsome Witness Challenge! Each week, we will suggest simple and practical ideas for building deeper relationships with those in your sphere. This week, take an extra step to discover the names of your co-workers' family members. *Remember -- ministry moves at the speed of relationships!*

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

**PRaise & WORSHIP • CONFESSiON • MESSAGE • OFFERING**

Musicians in these services: Meliza Gómez and Laurien Hook, worship leaders  
Daniel Amaya, bass • George Heathco, guitar • Daniel Martinez, keys  
Asher Pudlo, drums • The Music Box Kids' Choir

**11:15 AM TRADITIONAL MUSIC**

|                                 |                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>PRELUDE</b>                  | <i>Sacred Harp Medley</i>             | arr. Brant Adams (b. 1944)       |
| <b>*HYMN OF PRAISE #260</b>     | <i>A Mighty Fortress is Our God</i>   | Verses 1, 3 & 4; EIN' FESTE BERG |
| <b>*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE</b> | <i>The Gloria Patri</i>               | Hymn #579                        |
| <b>ANTHEM</b>                   | <i>When the Saints Go Marching In</i> | Arr. John Rutter (b. 1945)       |
| <b>OFFERTORY</b>                | <i>Steal Away</i>                     | arr. Howard Helvey (b. 1968)     |
| <b>*HYMN OF RESPONSE #441</b>   | <i>I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord</i>       | Verses 1 & 3; ST. THOMAS         |
| <b>POSTLUDE</b>                 | <i>Canticle</i>                       | Aaron David Miller (b. 1974)     |

Musicians in this service: Chris Schubert, clarinet  
Kathryn White • piano/organ; Charles Hausmann, conductor • Sanctuary Choir

**TODAY'S THIRD GRADE BIBLE RECIPIENTS**

**9:45 Service**

Graham K. Conn  
Caroline Cooper  
Elizabeth Dang  
Ella Jacquelyn Dawson  
Cameron Walker DeLaat  
Anna Hamelers Filip  
William Carter Going Jr.  
Eloise Harrison  
Carson Allison Jaeger  
Chloe Jennings  
Colton Jennings

Charlotte Llewellyn King  
Connor Lankford  
Nathaniel Allen Long  
Emmaline Rose McChristian  
Chase Michels  
Justin L. Patrick  
Emma Pezzia  
Luke Grayson Tackett  
George William Taylor  
Jane Watford Vajdos  
Carter James Wallis

**11:15 Service**

Ella Arriaga  
Alexandra Chapman  
Allison Cole  
Sara Edwards  
Vera Anne Finnilla  
William Holz  
Alexander Wallace Jackson  
Carter Khalil  
James Peterson  
Charlotte Ann Taylor

\* Please stand if able.



# Friends-giving

All-Church Lunch  
Sunday, November 17

Bring a friend or neighbor to church and stay for a Thanksgiving-themed All-Church Lunch. **Your guest's meal will be complimentary.**



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

Thank you, MDPC, for fully embracing our "Meal In a Bag" drive to feed area families at Thanksgiving. Today is the last day to pick up a cloth grocery bag and shopping list before filled bags are due back to church next **Sunday, November 17**. For your convenience, drop-off locations will be available inside the entrance doors, and also in the MDPC parking lots, where bags may be handed off to volunteers. Look for the tents located at the **Circle Drive, Lot A**, and at the **CLC**. Many, many families will be blessed by your generosity!

## UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES AT MDPC



**Everything Holiday!** For a more comprehensive look at MDPC's seasonal opportunities, pick up a copy of the latest FOCUS, found on bulletin boards around campus, or visit [holiday.mdpc.org](http://holiday.mdpc.org).

### Spring Recreational Classes (REACH)!

Spring classes include Abakadoodle, Art, Ballet, Basketball, Bridge, Coder Kids, Dance, Little Geniuses Chess Class, Mini-Star Sports, Music Together, Piano, Soccer Shots, Tumbling and Gymnastics, Voice, Woodworking, and Yoga.

**Classes run January-May 2020**

For a complete listing, or to register: [reach.mdpc.org](http://reach.mdpc.org) or 713-490-9564

### Gingerbread House Event

Enjoy two hours of creativity and fellowship while designing a masterpiece for the holidays. A snowstorm of icing and the largest candy buffet anywhere will help your family create your own special gingerbread house!

**Saturday, December 7 • 9:00-10:30 AM**

**Location: Fellowship Hall • Cost: \$36**

Contact: [reach.mdpc.org](http://reach.mdpc.org) or 713-490-9564

### Purchase Poinsettias for Christmas

The Christmas Poinsettias that will adorn the MDPC Chapel and Sanctuary may be purchased in honor or memory of loved ones. Sign-up and payment may be done online at [flowers.mdpc.org](http://flowers.mdpc.org), or via cash or paper check by using the paper envelopes available at the Front Office and Connection Center.

**Sign up from November 3-December 13**

**\$8.00 per dedication**

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

### Turn Black Friday into Bless Friday

Make plans with your friends and family to share God's love through our annual Bless Friday at-home and ministry partner projects, such as helping with holiday decorations, bagging beans and rice, or filling shoeboxes with small surprises.

**Friday, November 29**

Learn more at [blessfriday.mdpc.org](http://blessfriday.mdpc.org).

### Light of Hope Ethiopia Vision Trip

Visit Light of Hope, one of our global outreach partners that is bringing the Good News of God's love to the Arssi Oromo people. Witness how God is at work in Ethiopia through the building of village schools, the planting of churches, and Bible translations.

**February 23-March 2 • Cost: \$1,800**

Contact [Kelsi McCormack](mailto:kesci_mccormack@mdpc.org):

[kesci\\_mccormack@mdpc.org](mailto:kesci_mccormack@mdpc.org).

## TWO EVENTS. ONE FUN-FILLED DAY!

### Family Christmas Festival

The Family Christmas Festival is a great way to kick off the holiday season! Participants will enjoy dinner, Bingo, Amazing Race (Christmas version), crafts, face painting, Advent wreaths, hot cocoa bar, cookie decorating, calendar jar, and a service project.

**December 8 • 4:30-6:30 PM**

**Cost \$8.00 adult, \$4.00 kids**

Contact [Rachel Poysky](mailto:rpoysky@mdpc.org):  
[rpoysky@mdpc.org](mailto:rpoysky@mdpc.org) or 713-490-9269

### Concert Series

Celebrate the season with congregational carols and festive music by the MDPC Sanctuary Choir, performing Dan Forrest's Jubilate Deo (*Sing to the Lord*).

**Sunday, December 8 | 6:00 PM | Sanctuary  
Open to the public; free concert and childcare**

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



## ONGOING OPPORTUNITIES AT MDPC

### Walking Through Luke

Stand-alone lessons, taught by MDPC Pastors, follow the "Transformed by Hope" study. Choose 9:45 or 11:15 AM, Amphitheater.

**Today: Dan Aikins, Alpha Hub Pastor  
Luke 7:36-8:21**

### MOPs (Mothers of Preschoolers)

Are you a mom of young children? Would you like a little break in the week to drop off the kids (enjoy free childcare), relax, and chat with other moms? Then MOPS is for you! Come for connection, solid content, and adult conversations.

**Every other Thursday**

**9:30-11:15 AM | Parlor**

**OR Monthly on Wednesdays**

**6:00-7:00 PM | MC 102**

Check dates and register: [mops.mdpc.org](http://mops.mdpc.org)

### Women's Ministry Fall to Connect

No matter your age or stage, we're sure you'll find something you'll enjoy in these (mostly) one-off fellowship events. Learn something new, work out your stress, or just make new friends. With morning, lunchtime, and even evening events, there's something to fit everyone's schedule!

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

### Download the New MDPC App

We've created a powerful new mobile app, with all the features you enjoyed in the former app, PLUS expanded features in the area of event information and easy registration, group communication, personalized notifications, check-in, and so much more!

**See back page for quick links.**

Contact [Marquita Pointer](mailto:Marquita Pointer):

[mpointer@mdpc.org](mailto:mpointer@mdpc.org)

## Are you dealing with some degree of hearing loss?

MDPC is pleased to offer two options to improve the auditory experience of those worshipping in the Sanctuary:

- 1) Amplification headphones may be secured from an Usher. These may be used anywhere in the Sanctuary.
- 2) Our T-Coil System connects to hearing loops installed under the Sanctuary floor, allowing most hearing aid to function as a wireless antenna. **Only your health care provider can activate this system for your hearing device.** This system works only in specific areas of the Sanctuary.

Additional information in print form may be obtained from an Usher, or at the Connection Center.



## TREATS FOR YOUR FEAST!

ORDER BY THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24

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

PUMPKIN PIE \$12 • PECAN PIE \$16

CHOCOLATE FUDGE \$14 (WITH PECANS)

CRANBERRY BREAD \$7 (WITH OR WITHOUT NUTS)

CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES \$6 (HALF-DOZEN)

PICK UP IN THE KITCHEN NOV. 26-27 • 8:00 AM-2:00 PM