



# MDPC Concert Series 2017-2018



## Christmas Concert Next Sunday, December 17 6:00 PM | Sanctuary

How often do you get to sing Christmas carols  
with a full orchestra? Now is your chance!

Invite your friends and family and join us next  
weekend for a festive night of timeless Christmas  
carols. The MDPC Sanctuary choir and a  
professional orchestra also will perform *Messa di  
Gloria* by Giacomo Puccini, composer of beloved  
operas *La Boheme* and *La Traviata*.

Free Admission • All Are Welcome

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



**MDPC**

Loving God. Proclaiming Christ. Living Generously. Engaging All.  
11612 Memorial Drive | Houston, Texas 77024 | [mdpc.org](http://mdpc.org) | 713-782-1710

Sunday, December 10, 2017



# CHRISTMAS PLAYLIST

JOY TO THE WORLD

Luke 1:46-55

Coming Up at MDPC

### Sweeter Memories Cookie Party

Let's use the power of cookies to make it a sweeter season for Harvey-affected families. We need lots of homemade cookies to make this event a success - can you help by donating two dozen homemade cookies? Deliver homemade cookies to MDPC by Friday, Dec. 15 (please note if your recipe contains nuts). Then join us at the Cookie Party next weekend for snacks, music, and a time to mingle. Each guest will get two cookie tins to fill: One to take home, and one to share with a family whose home was impacted by Harvey. You're encouraged to invite a friend or neighbor. Party: Saturday, Dec. 16 | 10:00-11:30 AM  
Please RSVP so we can plan: [cookieparty.mdpc.org](http://cookieparty.mdpc.org)

### Kids' Meals Monthly Service Project

In Houston, one in four preschool children goes to bed hungry...you can make sure there is one less empty tummy! Just bring 4 bread loaves per sandwich-maker and come make sandwiches for Kids' Meals. Wednesday, Dec. 13 | 4:30 PM | Fellowship Hall  
Contact Julie with questions: [hempeljulie@gmail.com](mailto:hempeljulie@gmail.com)

### ALPHA

Alpha is a 12-week series of interactive sessions to explore Christian faith. Launch Party on January 23, 2018  
[alpha.mdpc.org](http://alpha.mdpc.org)

### Confirmation 2018

Confirmation is for students currently in the 8th grade or above. It'll be a time of focusing on what it means to follow Jesus and be part of His Church. Kick-off: Sunday Evening, January 7  
Class Meetings: Sundays, January 14-March 4  
11:00 AM-12:15 PM | \$160 for retreat expenses  
Registration & details: [confirmation.mdpc.org](http://confirmation.mdpc.org)  
Contact Laura with questions: [lmiller@mdpc.org](mailto:lmiller@mdpc.org)

### Married Life Prep

Taught at MDPC by Brett and Kellie Hurst of Home Encouragement, you will learn how to build your marriage upon a firm foundation. Sundays, January 7-28 | 10:00 AM-12:00 PM  
Details and registration: [mlp.mdpc.org](http://mlp.mdpc.org)

### MDPC Toy Train Is Here

MDPC's Mobile Unit works year-round to bring low-income neighborhoods new or lightly used goods for free or very low cost. At Christmastime, it distributes toys to kids on its routes. Please consider bringing new, unwrapped toys to drop off in the Toy Train. Collecting toys in the east hallway through Dec. 19

### B90: Read the Bible

Read 12 pages a day starting January 1, and meet once a week for support and encouragement. This could be the best new year's resolution you'll ever make. Interest Meeting: Sunday, Dec. 17 | 11:15 AM | MC 218  
Details: [b90.mdpc.org](http://b90.mdpc.org)

### Young Adults: Bible365

Your challenge: Read the Bible in a year using the Bible app on your phone. Sign up with us to get reminders, and to be notified if/as accountability group forms. Contact Trevor for details: [tharris@mdpc.org](mailto:tharris@mdpc.org), 713-446-8388 (text or call)

### Business Advisers Needed

MDPC ministry partner Newspring focuses on economic development in Spring Branch. Its annual business plan competition in conjunction with HCC gives contestants rigorous training in business planning, assisted by two advisers during the 11-week competition. If you are interested in applying your business skills as part of your Christian witness, contact Robert Westheimer at [rwestheimer1@comcast.net](mailto:rwestheimer1@comcast.net).

### ECO National Gathering in Houston

God calls us to renew, revitalize, and renovate our denomination's approach to its congregations, communities, and covenants. MDPC members are encouraged to attend. Speakers include Condoleezza Rice, Ed Stetzer, and Kyle Strobel.

Tuesday-Thursday, Jan. 23-25 | Hilton Americas  
Details and registration: [econationalgathering.org](http://econationalgathering.org)

### Register Now for Spring REACH Classes

Spring offerings include art, dance, music, and sports classes for both children and adults. For a complete list of classes and to register, call the REACH office at 713-490-9564 or visit [reach.mdpc.org](http://reach.mdpc.org).

8:30 AM BLENDED • 9:45 AM CONTEMPORARY

**WELCOME** Dave Steane (8:30), Worship Team (9:45)  
**CALL TO WORSHIP AND LIGHTING OF ADVENT WREATH** Roberts Family (8:30), Hamelers Family (9:45)  
**\*SONGS OF PRAISE**  
**\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE** Beth Case (8:30), Dan Aikins (9:45)  
**GIFTS OF GRATITUDE**  
**MESSAGE** Christmas Playlist: "Joy to the World" Alf Halvorson  
**SERVICE OF INSTALLATION AND ORDINATION** (9:45)  
 See below for more details.  
**RESPONSE OF THE PEOPLE**

Musicians in these services: Meliza Gómez and Michael Middleton, worship leaders • Joe Gavito, guitar • Craig Gysler, keys • Asher Pudlo, drums • Dennis Whittaker, bass

11:15 AM TRADITIONAL

**PRELUDE** Carol Medley arr. Richard Wagner (1909-1983)  
**WELCOME** Dave Steane  
**CALL TO WORSHIP AND LIGHTING OF ADVENT WREATH** Fluke Family  
**\*HYMN OF PRAISE** Joy to the World #40; Vs. 1, 2 | ANTIOCH  
**\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE** Clay Brown  
**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** from the Apostles Creed  
**\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE** Angels We Have Heard on High #23; vs. 1, 2 | GLORIA  
**BAPTISMS** Alf Halvorson and Dan Aikins  
 Easton Randall Beitler, son of Jeffrey and Jennifer Beitler  
 Margaret Grace Harold, daughter of Matthew and Jennifer Harold  
 Madison Aikins, daughter of Dan and Lauren Aikins  
**ANTHEM** Of the Father's Love Begotten Wilbur Chenoweth (1899-1980)  
**OFFERTORY** Ave Maria Franz Beibl (1906-2001)  
**MESSAGE** Christmas Playlist: "Joy to the World" Alf Halvorson  
**SERVICE OF INSTALLATION AND ORDINATION**  
 See below for more details.  
**\*HYMN OF RESPONSE** Joy to the World #40; Vs. 4 | ANTIOCH  
**POSTLUDE** Joy to the World arr. Don Hustad (1918-2013)

Musicians in this service: Charles Hausmann, conductor • Kathryn White, organ

\* Please stand if able.

**This morning in the 9:45 and 11:15 Services**  
**INSTALLATION OF THE REV. DR. CLAY BROWN & REV. BETH CASE**  
**ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION OF DAN AIKINS**



**CHARGE TO PASTORS** Luke Gordon

*Pastor at The Lakeway Church in Austin, Texas*

**CHARGE TO CONGREGATION** Luke Gordon

*Christmas Eve*  
*Sunday, December 24*

Christmas Eve is on a Sunday this year, so we will celebrate in the morning, and again in the evening with a new message:

10:00 AM Blended Worship  
 4:00 PM Family | 5:30, 7:00, & 8:30 PM Candlelight

**Ushers are needed at all Christmas Eve Services. Please sign up at [ushers.mdpc.org](http://ushers.mdpc.org).**



**The Stories Behind the Symbols of Christmas**



**Angels** • The term angel literally means "messenger." It is in this prominent role that angels take part in the Christmas story: appearing to Mary to announce the birth of Christ (Luke 1:26-38); appearing to Joseph to tell him that the Child conceived in Mary was from the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:20-21); and appearing to shepherds to announce the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:8-14).



**Stars** • After Jesus was born in Bethlehem during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born King of the Jews? We saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him." They went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the Child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed (excerpted from Matthew 2:1-10).



**Christmas Trees** • Though Christmas trees likely existed in homes throughout Germany at the time of Martin Luther, it is believed that he conceived the idea of adding candles to their branches to recreate the magnificent beauty of snow shimmering in the moonlight on the branches of the trees near his home. His followers spread the custom around Europe as they fled persecution in Germany.



**Candy Canes** • The cane shape reminds us of a shepherd's staff, of the shepherds that came to worship Jesus, and of how Jesus came into the world to be a shepherd of His people (Luke 2:8-15 and John 10:11). The white on the candy cane reminds us of the purity and holiness of Jesus, and the red that Jesus became a flesh and blood man who shed His blood to save His people (Hebrews 2:14).

**Shop Mission Market!**  
**Today between Services**

**P**urchasing Mission Market Christmas cards to give to your friends and family can change lives! **100% of the money received** is sent to the MDPC ministry partner(s) of your choice, helping **support cross-cultural mission** across the globe, **relieve food-insecurity** for preschoolers in Houston, bring **smiles to kids living with disabilities**, **minister to children orphaned by AIDS**, and so much more...

**mission-market.mdpc.org**

**Pray With Us: MDPC Ministry Partners**

This week, please pray for these partners MDPC assists with your support:

**Urban Outreach** is a Christian apartment ministry with on-site locations at apartments in Spring Branch, Aldine, Alief, Gulfton, Eastside, and Northside neighborhoods. It offers programs that address spiritual, physical, and social needs to help strengthen and preserve inner-city families. [urbanoutreachinc.org](http://urbanoutreachinc.org)

**Vita-Living** offers lifelong services and support for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It maintains homes with trained staff and specialists, also offering in-home care. Vita-Living is best known for its success with those who have a dual diagnosis of mental retardation and mental illness, and those with behavioral challenges. [vitaliving.org](http://vitaliving.org)

**One Eight Catalyst** (formerly China Resource Center) wants every Christian to know about the Great Commission and how God is calling them be a part of its fulfillment. It works through rural Bible distribution, Bible translation, and theological training in Asia. The ministry is dedicated to reflecting the love of Jesus Christ as it shares the Good News. [oneeightcatalyst.org](http://oneeightcatalyst.org)

**Christmas Poinsettia Dedications**

Chancel poinsettias may be purchased in honor or memory of a loved one. Your dedication will be inserted in the Christmas Eve bulletin.

**\$8/dedication | Order deadline: Dec. 15**

For details and to order, visit [flowers.mdpc.org](http://flowers.mdpc.org). Upon completion of your online order, you will be required to make full payment by eCheck, credit card, or debit card.

**The White Rose is in memory of**

Teresa Gonzalez Palomo, Mauricio Chacón's mother, who passed away November 30, 2017.

WEEKLY FINANCIAL UPDATE	
2017 Operating Budget	\$ 11,400,000
Expected Income to Date	\$ 8,381,640
Actual Income to Date (12/03/17)	\$ 7,764,129
<b>Current Income Deficit</b>	<b>\$ 617,511</b>
Needed to Meet 2017 Budget	\$ 3,635,871
Hurricane Harvey Relief Fund	\$ 760,972

## CHRISTMAS PLAYLIST

### JOY TO THE WORLD

Luke 1:46-55

This is the second in our Advent Series on hymns and Christmas carols, preparing us for Christ's birth. Last week, with "O Come, O Come Emmanuel," we looked at different prophetic titles from the Old Testament for the coming Christ. This week, we look at the most published Christmas hymn in North America. Andy Williams, The Supremes, Three Dog Night, Whitney Houston, Jonas Brothers, Pentatonix, Faith Hill, and Cimorelli, just to name a few - all have

done renditions of "Joy to the World." The song is Isaac Watts' paraphrase of Psalm 98:4-9, but I chose Luke 1:46-55 because Mary prays "The Magnificat" to celebrate the Joy that is coming into her womb and into the world—and the impact that will have on both.

1. Mary goes to visit Elizabeth in an unnamed village in the Judean hills (Luke 1:39-45). One is old and her son (John the Baptist) will close an age; one is young and her Son (Jesus) will usher in a new age. In response to seeing Elizabeth pregnant in her old age (as the Angel told her would happen), Mary prays or sings Luke 1:46-55. Read Luke 1:46-55. What is your initial reaction to this prayer by a teenage girl? What verse or word hits you? Why?
2. In verse 47, one paraphrase of the first five words might be, "My soul declares the greatness of God." Then in verses 48-50, Mary comments on some of the attributes or actions of this great God. What does she lift up here? What would you lift up if you were to talk about the greatness of God from your perspective?
3. In verse 51, the verb switches to past tense. The Greek here is a "past tense aorist," which means completed action or what is timelessly true about God. In other words: Because God said it, even if it hasn't happened yet, it is as good as done! So Mary prays about what God will do in the future because of the baby growing inside of her, giving us a glimpse into God's redemptive plan for our world. What does Mary say God has done or will do?
4. E. Stanley Jones, the great missionary to India, wrote that, "The prayer of Mary is the most revolutionary document in the world." It is not just beautiful or lovely poetry, but it is radical, subversive speech. Piggy-backing on this idea, William Barclay says that there are three great reversals (three revolutions) in verses 51-53. One is moral; one is social; one is economic. Talk about this idea in the context of what we see each night on the news or read each day in the paper.
5. The final two verses of "Joy to the World" are equally subversive and revolutionary:

Verse 3: *No more let sin and sorrow grow / nor thorns infest the ground / He comes to make His blessing flow / far as the curse is found / far as the curse is found / far as, far as the curse is found*

Verse 4: *He rules the world with truth and grace / and makes the nations prove / the glories of His righteousness / and wonders of His love / and wonders of His love / and wonders, wonders of His love*

Where are you aware of the curse in your life and in our world? How do you see His blessings flow in the face of this curse? Where do you see grace and truth working together; righteousness and love working together? How are you living these two concepts together?

