



Sunday, January 21, 2018

# ROMANS

The Good News from God  
Romans 1:16-17

## 8:30 AM BLENDED

CCLI # 182374

WELCOME AND CALL TO WORSHIP		Dave Steane
*SONGS OF PRAISE		
*PRAYER OF CONFESSION & ASSURANCE		Rachel Poysky
SONG OF RESPONSE		
GIFTS OF GRATITUDE		
MESSAGE	ROMANS: The Good News from God	Alf Halvorson
RESPONSE OF THE PEOPLE		

## 9:45 AM CONTEMPORARY

CALL TO WORSHIP		The Eyre Family
*SONG OF PRAISE		
WELCOME		Sarah Stone
*PRAYER OF CONFESSION & ASSURANCE		Dan Aikins
SONGS OF WORSHIP		
MESSAGE	ROMANS: The Good News from God	Alf Halvorson
GIFTS OF GRATITUDE		Beth Case
RESPONSE OF THE PEOPLE		

Musicians in these services: Meliza Gómez and Michael Middleton, worship leaders • Daniel Amaya, bass • George Heathco, guitar • Daniel Martinez, keys • Asher Pudlo, drums

## 11:15 AM TRADITIONAL

PRELUDES	<i>Wonderful Words of Life</i> <i>Thanksgiving: Simple Gifts</i>	arr. J. Wayne Kerr (b. 1957) arr. John Ness Beck (1930-1987)
WELCOME AND CALL TO WORSHIP		Dan Aikins
CHORAL INTROIT	<i>I Will Worship the Lord</i>	John Rutter (b. 1945)
*HYMN OF PRAISE	<i>Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine!</i>	#341; Vs. 1, 3   ASSURANCE
*PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE		Dave Steane
*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH from the Apostles' Creed		
ANTHEM	<i>Hallelujah</i>	Leonard Cohen/arr. McChesney
OFFERTORY	<i>We Walk by Faith</i>	Jan Sanborn (b. 1958)
MESSAGE	ROMANS: The Good News from God	Alf Halvorson
*HYMN OF RESPONSE	<i>Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me</i>	#366; Vs. 1, 2   ST. CATHERINE

Musicians in this service: Gulf Coast Campanile Handbell Group; Emily Borling, director • Charles Hausmann, conductor • Kathryn White, organist



Join Pastor Alf on Twitter! Save the date of February 7 for a tweeting tutorial.  
[tweet.mdpc.org](http://tweet.mdpc.org)



**Alpha is coming.**

Kickoff: Tuesday, January 23  
[alpha.mdpc.org](http://alpha.mdpc.org)

Everyone is welcome at Alpha. *Everyone.* Learn more at the link above.

## Lenten Season Small Groups

Meet Weekly, February 18-March 25

When we talk about deadly sins and saving virtues, we are emphatically *not* stating we must work our way into God's good favor by acquiring certain virtues, attributes, or characteristics. At the same time, though, "grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone" naturally leads to lives lived in gratitude and obedience to God's will.

As Pastor Alf preaches on these themes this Lenten season, groups will gather to further discuss how, in our journeys of faith, we will acknowledge, confess, and strive against the sins that pervade our hearts, and seek to develop virtues that counter these sins.

There will be a variety of small groups to join, or, consider starting your own with friends, family, or colleagues. Sign up as an individual or register your class or small group at our table next Sunday, January 28; online registration opens Thursday, February 1.

For details, stay tuned to [lenten.mdpc.org](http://lenten.mdpc.org).

Deadly  
Sins and  
Saving  
Virtues

### Large-group Option

The same curriculum will be offered in a large-group format at two different hours on Wednesdays during Lent, taught by Pastor Clay Brown.

Wednesdays at MDPC  
February 21-March 28  
Noon or 6:30 PM

## COMING UP AT MDPC

### Vision Update 2.0

At this vision casting presentation and discussion, Pastor Alf will update us on where we stand on the 12 MDPC Advantage Goals introduced in 2017, and how they'll impact our future. Come early to enjoy Wednesday Night Dinner. **Wednesday, Jan. 31 | 6:30 PM | Chapel**

### Youth and Adults: Do You Love to Sing?

MDPC Sanctuary Choir is preparing for its April 15 choral concert. If you love to sing but do not have time for a weekly commitment, join us for two upcoming workshops to learn the concert music and enjoy fellowship. **Sat, Feb. 3 & March 3 | 9:30 AM-12:30 PM | Choir Room** Childcare provided by reservation. For more info, contact Tracy Stidam at [tstidam@mdpc.org](mailto:tstidam@mdpc.org).

### The Music Box Kids' Choir

Are you an awesome kid? Do you love music? Do you love to sing? Then join The Music Box kids' choir! Elementary-age kids (K-5th) are welcome. The program's directed by Meliza Gómez, MDPC Contemporary Music Director. **Weds, Jan. 31-March 28 | 4:45-5:30 PM | Chapel** Details and registration: [themusicbox.mdpc.org](http://themusicbox.mdpc.org)

### Discover MDPC with Alf

Want to know more about MDPC? Interested in membership? Attend this Informational Meeting to find out more about who we are and how we operate. **This morning, 10:45-11:10 AM | Gathering Room** More info: [membership.mdpc.org](http://membership.mdpc.org)

### Cookies for the Troops

Put on your aprons, dig out a bowl, and bake! Each year, Sewing for Missions bakes, collects, and packages cookies to send to deployed U.S. military. Drop off cookies, or stay to help pack up and pray over them. All are welcome! **Thursday, Feb. 1 | CLC 170 | 9:00 AM-1:00 PM** Contact Pat Ikard: 713-303-1101, [pjikard@comcast.net](mailto:pjikard@comcast.net)

### 2018 Partner in Prayer Packet Pick-up

Are you excited to see who you're praying for this year? We're excited to show you! *Packets available this morning at the Connection Center in the Lobby. You still can sign up! Details at [pip.mdpc.org](http://pip.mdpc.org).*

### Call for Committee Members

We're seeking 15 volunteers for Local Outreach Subcommittees. Teams of two make site visits during the year to learn more about and pray with local ministry partners. From these visits, recommendations are made to Session for sending support. A unique blessing is seeing God at work when you visit these hardworking, compassionate folks caring for others daily. *If God is calling you to local outreach, contact Jan Roe to learn more: [jroe@mdpc.org](mailto:jroe@mdpc.org)*

### New Member Class Intensive

The normally four-week series is compressed into one evening and one morning. **Fri. PM & Sat. AM, Feb. 2 & 3 | Parlor** More info: [membership.mdpc.org](http://membership.mdpc.org)

## Please Pray With Us: MDPC Ministry Partners

This week, please pray for these MDPC partners:

**Aldine Family Hope Center** is for residents of all ages in Aldine, a low-income, unincorporated, often-overlooked area of Harris County. Its programs empower positive change in the lives of youth and families. [aldineyouth.org](http://aldineyouth.org)

**Alpha Houston** trains, equips, and encourages Christian communities in using the Alpha Course as an evangelism tool. Its discipleship program takes the Good News of Jesus Christ to churches, homes, businesses, and prisons. [alphahouston.org](http://alphahouston.org)

MDPC Field Partner **Jeff Burns** has a call on his life to reach North American Muslims with the love of Jesus Christ. He teaches Christians ways to reach out in friendship to Muslims in peaceful, respectful witness.

### It's a Busy Season at MDPC!



There are so many opportunities to learn, grow, connect, and serve at and through MDPC. Pick up a copy of the first quarter *Focus* to learn more. For the most up-to-date list of Upcoming Events, visit [events.mdpc.org](http://events.mdpc.org).

### The White Rose is in memory of

Flo Hannah, who passed away January 10, 2018.

### WEEKLY FINANCIAL UPDATE

MDPC's 2018 Operating Budget is pending approval. Today's Financial Update will be shared on the screens.



**MDPC**

Loving God. Proclaiming Christ. Living Generously. Engaging All.

11612 Memorial Drive | Houston, Texas 77024 | [mdpc.org](http://mdpc.org) | 713-782-1710

# ROMANS

## The Good News from God

Romans 1:16-17 | Alf Halvorson preaching

This is the first in a series of three sermons on the Book of Romans that will provide the framework or foundation for our Lenten Sermon Series this year on *Deadly Sins and Saving Virtues*.

If we understand that we are saved by grace through faith (from Romans), then we can work on our sins, old negative habits, and character flaws without thinking our works save us. We do not work our way into God's favor by acquiring virtues. But when we have accepted Christ's love and forgiveness for our sins on the cross while we are sinners, gratitude wells up in our hearts and invites us to want to become more Christ-like, through the Holy Spirit's help. Martin Luther put it this way: "Good works do not make a person good; but a good person (someone with Christ in their heart) does good works." Or, Ephesians 2:8-10 helps us understand the relationship of faith and works this way: "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God—not the result of works, so that no one may boast. [pause]. For we are what He has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life."

1. How familiar are you with the Book of Romans? Do you know any stories of famous people who have studied the book and the results of that study? What did you learn from what I shared in the first part of my message?
2. What do you think about the possibility of studying the whole Book of Romans next Fall through Spring as a church, in most if not all of our Sunday School classes? What benefit might that offer to us individually and corporately? Is there a downside to the proposal?
3. Read Romans 1:16-17. This is Paul's Thesis Statement for the whole book, his short summary of the Gospel. What strikes you about the statement? Anything surprising? Confusing? Clarifying?
4. Why do you think Paul planted the negative when he said, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel." Why might he be ashamed? I suggested a few reasons. What are some others?
5. I attempted to define a few of the terms in the two verses, like *power*, *salvation*, *faith*, *righteousness*, and "*from faith to faith*." What was helpful? How might the group help you with what is still murky?
6. I suggested that one way to look at faith is that "it is putting your weight down on the faithfulness of God—on God's promises and God's action on our behalf through His son Jesus the Christ." Are you doing that in the present? If not, what would it take for you to be able to make that crucial move? Is the Alpha Course for you or someone you love? Visit [alpha.mdpc.org](http://alpha.mdpc.org) for more information - and consider attending, or inviting a friend. What do you have to lose?

