

Master Artist Huihan Liu

Art lovers will enjoy this free live demonstration by acclaimed painter Huihan Liu. Take this opportunity to see a master artist compose and complete a painting!
Wed, March 27 • 6:30-8:30 PM • Amphitheater
 Details: art.mdpc.org

“Heights” Meet & Greet

Are you an MDPC'er in the Greater Heights area (Washington Corridor, Oak Forest, Carden Oaks, Montrose, Mid-Town, etc.)? Meet with others who call MDPC home in a smaller setting, and invite friends to an intergenerational neighborhood meet 'n greet.
Saturday, March 30 | 4:00-6:00 PM
Cedar Creek (1034 W 20th St, 77008)
 RSVP to Christyn Knoop: cknoop@mdpc.org

New Member Class

The four-week New Member class series is taught by the Associate Pastors and Elders, and includes a Saturday service project at one of the organizations supported by MDPC. *Class will not meet Easter Sunday.*
Sundays, April 7-May 5 | Parlor | 11:00 AM-12:15 PM
 Register: membership.mdpc.org

Easter Lily Ordering Open

Dedications in memory of and/or in honor of those close to you may be purchased online or in person at the Front Office or Sanctuary.
Purchase/submission deadline: Thursday, April 11
flowers.mdpc.org

Men's Retreat 2019: Trust or Rust

What happens when you mix an amazing ranch in nearby Fayetteville with live music, outdoor games, fishing, great food, and an entertaining speaker? A life-changing weekend! Get away from the rat race and focus on fun, fellowship, and a closer walk with Christ.
Saturday-Sunday, April 13-14 | \$150 | Lazy A Ranch
 Details and registration: mensretreat.mdpc.org

Save the Dates: Alpha

Who will you invite?
Tuesdays, April 23-June 11 | 6:30-8:15 PM
alpha.mdpc.org

The White Rose is in memory of MDPC member:

• LaVeta Bradley passed away March 12, 2019.

This week's Ministry Partner prayer focus is on:

ChildBuilders promotes healthy social and emotional development of children in preschool through high school. Its services and prevention programs build strong families and protect children from being victimized.
childbuilders.org

Children's Activity Center reaches at-risk children with a mobile interactive worship program that brings the Gospel of Jesus Christ to Houston's most impoverished areas. Its volunteers begin to identify needs of the kids' families through weekly home visits.
sgnh.org

MDPC Field Partner Rev. Dan Mc Nerney works with Frontier Fellowship, which seeks to bring the Gospel to unreached people groups all over the world. His ministry includes teaching, preaching and mobilizing in local churches on the principals of frontier mission from a Biblical perspective. He has led MDPC members on mission in Egypt and other areas of the Middle East. Dan also leads friendship groups in Chicago, which gather Christians, Muslims, and Jews to dialogue on Kingdom life, reconciliation, and the teachings of Jesus.
frontierfellowship.com

BBQ Fundraiser

Proceeds benefit dispatchers and police officers of the Memorial Villages Police Department. BBQ plate and fixings for a \$10 donation.
Saturday, April 27 | 10:00 AM-4:00 PM | MDPC
 Sponsorships are available and appreciated! Contact Frank Lerma: flerma@mvpdtx.org, 713-204-7467

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. 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? Perhaps consider adding prayer... We are offering 40 Days of Prayer: 1-2 sentences of prayer, many drawn from Scripture, often coinciding with Pastor Alf's Lenten sermon series or Pastor Clay's Lenten Scripture study, and often with a brief video devotional:
To enrich your Lenten prayer life in this way, follow MDPC on Instagram (instagram.mdpc.org) or Facebook (facebook.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

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

WEEKLY FINANCIAL UPDATE

at 3/17/19

2019 Annual Budget	\$12,240,000
Actual Income to Date	\$2,003,199
Needed to Meet Budget	\$10,236,801



Sunday, March 24, 2019

REFLECT

Take up your cross and follow Me.

NUMBERS 21:4-9 • JOHN 3:14-21
 Alf Halvorson preaching

*Please stand when able.

CCLI # 182374

8:30 AM BLENDED & 9:45 AM CONTEMPORARY

*PRAISE & WORSHIP

*CONFESSION

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

A brief Congregational Meeting will take place at the end of the 9:45 service.

The single motion on the agenda is the approval of amended MDPC By-laws.

11:15 AM TRADITIONAL

PRELUDE	<i>Sospiri (Sighs)</i>	Edward Elgar (1857-1934)
CHORAL INTROIT	<i>God So Loved the World</i>	Bob Chilcott (b. 1955)
*HYMN OF PRAISE	<i>All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name</i>	#142; Vs. 1, 2, 3 CORONATION
*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE	<i>The Gloria Patri</i>	Hymn #579
ANTHEM	<i>Benedictus from The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace</i>	Karl Jenkins (b. 1944)
OFFERTORY	<i>O Sacred Head, Now Wounded</i>	Joel Raney (b. 1956)
MESSAGE		
*HYMN OF RESPONSE	<i>Fairest Lord Jesus</i>	#306; Vs. 1, 2 CRUSADERS' HYMN
POSTLUDE	<i>Lenten Meditation</i>	Sir Walford Davies (1869-1941)

Musicians in this service: Charles Hausmann, conductor; Erika Johnson, cello; Lisa Vickers soloist; Kathryn White, piano/organ; Sanctuary Choir

On Sunday, April 7, **MDPC Worship** will release a CD of contemporary music to help enrich your study and reflection time. CDs will be available at the Front Office and Connection Center (\$10 cash or credit card).



HOURS:

April 15-18: Open to adults and children 14 and over, Monday through Thursday, 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM

April 19: Children and families are invited to participate on Friday morning, 7:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

More information: silentword.mdpc.org
 No registration required.

Also plan to visit **The Spoken Word**.
 Details inside this bulletin.

Plan to visit our interactive Prayer Room during Holy Week!

WEDNESDAY



THE WELL
A SPECIAL EDITION OF OUR SEMI-ANNUAL WOMEN'S SPEAKER SERIES

"EVEN IF"

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

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27
6:30-8:00 PM • CHAPEL


Come at 6:00 PM for light refreshments in the Parlor.

Please RSVP:
THEWELL.MDPC.ORG

Free childcare by reservation:
childcare@mdpc.org

MDPC Women
WOMEN.MDPC.ORG

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

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

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



Join Pastor Alf for a casual conversation about MDPC and its ministries. No commitment required! It's an engaging opportunity to explore what it would mean to be part of our faith community.

Sunday, March 31 | 10:45-11:10 AM | Gathering Room

membership.mdpc.org

DISCOVER MDPC

REACH Recreation Ministry

Fun camps and classes all summer long! For children, youth, and adults...



Explore classes & register:
reach.mdpc.org



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

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

This year, also visit **The Silent Word**, where guests can participate in a variety of prayer-related experiences. Details are in the ad on the front of this bulletin.

THE SPOKEN WORD HEBREWS 4:12

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	Contemporary Service 8:15 AM • SANCTUARY
Family-friendly Service 9:45 AM • SANCTUARY	Traditional Service 11:15 AM • SANCTUARY
Spanish Language 11:15 AM • CHAPEL	Portuguese Language 6:00 PM • CHAPEL

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.



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 3: Num. 21:4-9; John 3:14-21 (ESV & NLT)

Historically, God's people have often struggled to follow Him with integrity, conviction, and focus. It's the way things are. From Adam and Eve, to Noah, to Abraham and Sarah, to Jacob and most of his sons, we see the chosen people regularly

reject this call upon their lives and decide to go in any direction other than the one God intends. And this list of people is just from Genesis. Both Old and New Testament narratives describe in abundant detail how faithless His people sometimes may be.

Therefore, God's judgment upon sin and evil is seen not only upon the world at large, but also upon His called-out people. Judgment is necessary because sin and evil must be accounted for and not sloughed off. Yet, at the same time, God's love and mercy are profoundly present to redeem, to renew, and to restore all who will trust and follow Him. The Good News is Jesus provides the way to God, meeting the requirements of both judgment and mercy, and His disciples follow Him in the intersection of this divine judgment and mercy all their lives.

This week's study considers two passages of Scripture. The first is an incredible, but not well-known, story from the Old Testament book of Numbers about the Israelites on their way to the Promised Land. The second is the setting for perhaps the most popular Bible verse in the world, John 3:16. Believe it or not, both passages are strongly connected by none other than the teaching of Jesus Himself. How do the teachings of these two passages assist us in putting into practice the call of Jesus to deny ourselves, to take up our crosses, and to follow Him alone? Let's see.

Introducing: Getting Ready to Discuss the Passage

- Share a blessing you have experienced since you last met as a group.
- A transgenerational, transcultural human trait is the willingness to complain about our circumstances even when things are going well. How do we see this trait in today's world? How does social media reflect it? What about the human condition makes it so common?

Discovering: What the Passage Says

- Compare the two translations (ESV and NLT) for Numbers 21:4-9 and John 3:14-21. What jumps out at you as you read them? Similarities? Differences? Overlaps? Things to pursue?
- What is going on in Numbers 21:4-5 with the Israelites? How does God respond to the Israelites in Numbers 21:6?
- The Israelites turn to Moses in Numbers 21:7. What do they acknowledge in their request? For what do they ask?
- The Lord gives instructions for Moses to provide a means of relief in Numbers 21:8-9. What is this process and how is it applied to the needs of the people?
- As Jesus talks to Nicodemus in John 3:14-15, what event does He pull out of the Old Testament and apply to Himself? How does He connect it with His mission in the world?
- What, according to John 3:16, is John's commentary [see NOTE on back] on Jesus' comparison of Himself with the serpent in the wilderness? How does John link his commentary with the bronze serpent in the wilderness?
- In John 3:17, what purpose or motivation does the apostle state for God giving His Son? Why may the purpose or motivation be important?
- In John 3:18-21, the apostle lays out a terrifying alternative to John 3:16-17. What is this alternative? What key words are repeated several times? How does this alternative reflect the unfortunate reality of the human condition?

Exploring: What the Passage Means

- The Israelites' expressions of ingratitude, faithlessness, and blasphemy in Numbers 21 are not, by any stretch, their first response in this fashion during the journey from Egypt to

the Promised Land. Briefly review the account of the Exodus in the Old Testament to find other instances. Why do you think their trust in God's providential care is so fickle? Are they alone in their fickleness?

- Why doesn't God simply ignore the Israelite complaints this time instead of issuing such a definitive and clear correction? In your opinion, what makes this particular incident worthy of a significant response by God when He doesn't respond with judgment every time?
- Read 2 Kings 18:1-4. What problem does the bronze serpent cause many years after the event? How and why is this so typical of humans?
- As Jesus describes Himself being "lifted up" in the same manner as the bronze serpent in Numbers 21, do you think He's speaking merely in terms of physical elevation? What other meanings of "lifted up" might apply to what happens on the Cross?
- John 3:16 appears to be an explanation of John 3:14-15. How does the most famous verse in the New Testament use the connection of Jesus with the bronze serpent to share strong theological truths about Jesus' person and work? What are some of these strong truths?
- A close reading of Numbers 21:4-9 infers strongly not all the Israelites gazed upon the raised-up bronze serpent, and thus those who didn't look upon the serpent received the judgment coming to them. Do you see any connection between this judgment and the judgment described in John 3:18-21? If so, what?
- Think back to John 8:31-38 (the passage with which we began our Lenten study) and Jesus' call to deny ourselves, take up our crosses, and follow Jesus if anyone would be His disciple. How might the "lifted up" of Jesus mentioned in John 3 intersect with this call? What does this intersection between Numbers 21:4-9 and John 3:14-21 say about what it means to follow Jesus?

Applying: Wrestling with the Implications for Our Lives

- One implication of this passage is many times people called by God to follow His way often reject God's way in favor of their own way, even if the consequences are horrific. How may we assist each other to keep in the middle of God's way for our lives? How may we help a friend see when he/she is moving away from God rather than toward Him, without being judgmental or harsh?
- Another implication is the Cross provides the means for us to follow Christ as Lord, and without Jesus being "lifted up," we have no hope. Yet many today, both those who call themselves non-Christian and those who call themselves Christian, find the Cross to be primitive, offensive, and barbaric. How may we answer such concerns and witness to the wonder of the Cross with our neighbors?
- Still another implication is Christian disciples commit to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior because of God's incredible love for us, as John 3:16, the New Testament's most well-known verse, says. We love God and others because we have been loved first, not because we are really good people who've earned God's love. How will this central reason for following Christ change how we treat others? How we forgive others? How we sacrifice on behalf of others?
- One final implication is God's judgment and God's mercy are two sides of the same coin, and we need them both for a fully orbed understanding of God's character and nature. Yet God's judgment upon sin and evil is looked upon by many as a leftover from ancient days, for God is love. How may we help our neighbors understand a God with no judgment is ultimately a God not worth worshiping and serving because He winks at evil? What stories, examples, and truths have helped you in this regard? What can we share with others?

NOTE: Many (perhaps most) scholars and commentators across the Christian spectrum believe John, not Jesus, is probably speaking in John 3:16-21. The reasons include word choice, verb tenses, and more. But this doesn't change the inspiration or significance of this famous text. R. C. Sproul's comments are one example of this scholarly consensus as he explains in his *St. Andrew's Expository Commentary* on John: "Verse 16 of John 3 is surely the best-known verse in the New Testament. Many Bible versions put this in red to indicate that these words were spoken by Jesus. In my opinion, this verse should not be in red... It's difficult to tell where in this chapter Jesus' words end and John's editorial comments begin, but most commentators see John 3:16 as written by John, and I agree with that assessment. However, even if this is John speaking and not Jesus, this verse is not any less the Word of God or any less true, for John wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit."