



Palm Sunday, March 24, 2024 Rev. Dr. Alf Halvorson preaching

8:30 SERVICE	
Welcome & Call to Worship	Dan Aikins
Songs of Praise	<i>Hosanna / Rejoice</i>
*Prayer of Confession & Assurance	Clay Brown
Song of Response	<i>How Great Thou Art</i>
Moment of Prayer	Dan Aikins
Offertory	<i>I Believe</i>
Message	Alf Halvorson
	Making Light (Matthew 22:1-7 NRSV)
Song of Response	<i>Be Thou My Vision</i>

9:45 SERVICE	
Welcome & Call to Worship	Meliza Gómez
Opening Song	<i>Hosanna</i>
Meet & Greet	Meliza Gómez
Songs of Praise	<i>Hosanna Rock / Praise</i>
Moment of Confession & Assurance	Rachel Poysky
Songs of Worship	<i>I Believe / Hosanna reprise</i>
Message	Alf Halvorson
	Making Light (Matthew 22:1-7 NRSV)
Offertory	<i>Living Water</i>
Moment of Prayer and Connection	Rachel Poysky

Musicians at 8:30/9:45: Children's Choir, Steffanie Dean, director; Asher Pudlo, drums; Uvaldo Callejas, bass; Chris Parrott, guitar; Daniel Martinez, keys; Tim Hughes, violin; Michael Middleton & Meliza Gómez, worship leaders

11:15 SERVICE	
Preludes	arr. Michael Burkhardt (b. 1957)
	<i>Fanfare and Toccata on 'All Glory, Laud, and Honor'</i>
Welcome & Call to Worship	Amy Delgado
Choral Introit	Mary McDonald (b. 1996)
	<i>Fanfare for Palm Sunday</i>
*Hymn of Praise	#88 Vs. 1, 2, 3 VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN
*Prayer of Confession & Assurance	Rachel Poysky
*Affirmation of Faith from the New City Catechism, Question One	
Anthem	Howard Helvey (b. 1968)
	<i>When, His Salvation Bringing</i>
Moment of Prayer	Amy Delgado
Offertory	Craig Courtney (b. 1948)
	<i>I Am Not My Own</i>
Message	Alf Halvorson
	Making Light (Matthew 22:1-7 NRSV)
Postlude	rr. Michael Burkhardt (b. 1957)
	<i>Hosanna, Loud Hosanna</i>

Musicians at 11:15: Children's Choir, Steffanie Dean, director; Charles Hausmann, conductor; John Parker, trumpet; Kathryn White, organ

Easter Lily orders due today!

Dedicate Easter Lilies in memory of and/or in honor of loved ones. Dedications may be purchased online at flowers.mdpc.org or in person at the Front Office.

MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

See more events at MDPC at events.mdpc.org.



Give Online
give.mdpc.org



Maundy Thursday • Mar 28 • 7pm
With communion
Good Friday • Mar 29 • Noon
Easter • Mar 31 • 7, 8:30, 9:45, 11:15am
More at easter.mdpc.org.



Donate to today's Living Water International fund by enclosing your gift in the LWI envelopes in the pews (checks made out to MDPC, "Living Water" in the memo), or give online at give.mdpc.org.



Mon-Thu, Mar 25-28 • Chapel
Whether you are five or eighty-five, 15 minutes in The Spoken Word will enrich your Holy Week in an amazing way! Learn more and sign up at tsw.mdpc.org.



Mon-Thu, Mar 25-31 • Parlor
As you interact with Scripture and other tactical elements, you will experience different ways to engage prayerfully with God. Details at silentword.mdpc.org.



Sat, Mar 30 • 10am-Noon
Tour our Jerusalem village of booths telling the story of Easter! Learn through activities and interaction. Then fast-forward 2,000 years with a stop at the egg hunt.



Easter Sun, Mar 31 • 12:30-2:30pm
A meal, games, and a causal hangout with other young adults. Come on over and join. There will be prizes and raffle giveaways! RSVP at ya.mdpc.org.



Tue, Apr 2 • 6:30-9pm
At **Alpha Launch Night**, we eat great food and watch an episode on a question of faith. Free food and cash bar at White Elm Brasserie. Learn more at alpha.mdpc.org.



Wednesdays, Apr 3-May 22 • 4:30-6pm
Have you been grieving the loss of a loved one? Come join others in an 8-week program guided by trained facilitators. Learn more and sign up: grief.mdpc.org

Join Pastor Alf's 2024 Challenge



The New City Catechism

Learn more: 52Qs.mdpc.org

Week 12

Question: What does God require in the ninth and tenth commandments?

Answer: (Ninth) that we do not lie or deceive, but speak the truth in love. (Tenth) that we are content, not envying anyone or resenting what God has given them or us.

Scripture: [James 2:8 NRSV](https://james28nrsv)

Financial Update as of Mar 17, 2024

2024 Annual Budget	\$ 13,723,677
Income to Date	\$ 2,799,694
Needed to Meet Budget	\$ 10,923,983

Births and Deaths

Jim Shatto passed away Feb 24, 2024.

Melba Bates passed away Feb 1, 2024.

More information at memorials.mdpc.org.

The Vines that Choke Out Life: Stopping Halfway [Matthew 22:1-7 NRSV](#)

This is the sixth Sunday in Lent, and we are on the brink of Holy Week. Dan and Rachel have advanced the series beautifully while I was away leading a group from MDPC in the Footsteps of Paul and the Churches of Revelation in Turkey. And now we look at our final *vine that chokes out life* from our Lenten Series on this Palm Sunday.

1. What are your Lenten, Holy Week, and Easter traditions? Do you need to drop something, perhaps, or add something to increase meaning or show commitment to Christ this holiest of weeks?
2. Read Matthew 22:1-7 and, if you have time, all the way through verse 14. What are your initial impressions and questions from reading this challenging parable?
3. How does reading Matt. 21:33-45, the Parable of the Wicked Tenants and Jesus' commentary afterwards, help you know what Jesus is trying to communicate in this similar parable in Matt. 22? It appears Jesus is doubling His thoughts to try to reinforce the message, so His readers do not miss the point.
4. Luke 14:15-24 has our same parable from Matt. 22, with a little more commentary of why certain people made excuses, begged off, took lightly the great banquet, and missed it. What were the excuses listed in Matthew and Luke? Are they good ones? Are they excuses of busyness, different priorities, or something else? How can "The good" get in the way of "The best" in our lives? Do you think the guests who said "yes" initially to the general invitation intended to go to the party when the specific time was given or did they never intend to attend in the first place?
5. Thomas G. Long, in his commentary on this passage, says that the first readers would have known that "the king is God; the son is Jesus; the marriage feast is the great marriage feast of the Lamb of God at the end of time (see Matt. 8:11 and Rev. 19:9); the slaves are the prophets; those invited are Israel; violence is Israel's rejection of the prophets; the destroyed city is the fall of Jerusalem in A. D. 70; the other invitees are the gentiles, tax collectors, prostitutes, etc., and the wedding garment in verse 11 is the Christian life (see Col. 3:12)." If that is true, why would anyone miss the biggest party ever thrown in the history of the world, with the most important person(s) in the universe as the host (God) and groom (Jesus)? Verse 4 says the calves have been slaughtered and everything is ready. It is the party to end all parties; and joy is to be prominent there. How could anyone "make light" (vs. 5)? Looking at the first Holy Week, how did many "make light" of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and His resulting death on the cross? How could the crowd on Palm Sunday say "Hosanna" but on Good Friday switch to, "crucify Him"? How might you and I "make light" of what God is offering us in the way of worship, fellowship, discipleship, service, growth, generosity opportunities, grace, and salvation? But how might we, this year, repent, recommit, and then be able to rejoice by entering into the joy of the Resurrection celebration to come? It's not too late for us to still attend the party.