



Sun, Dec 22, 2024

**8:30 SERVICE**

Rev. Dr. Alf Halvorson preaching

Welcome and Call to Worship		Dan Aikins
Songs of Praise	<i>Go Tell It on the Mountain / Joy to the World</i>	
*Prayer of Confession and Assurance		Dan Aikins
Song of Response	<i>O Come all Ye Faithful</i>	
Pastoral Prayer		Dan Aikins
Song of Preparation	<i>Hark! The Herald Angels Sing</i>	
Message	<b>Artful Advent: The Celebration</b> <a href="#">Luke 2:8-15 NRSV</a>	Alf Halvorson
Songs of Response	<i>It Came Upon a Midnight Clear</i>	

**9:45 SERVICE**

Welcome and Call to Worship		Meliza Gómez
Songs of Praise	<i>Angels (Glory to God) / Joy to the World</i>	
Moment of Confession & Assurance		Miah Collins
Songs of Worship	<i>What a Beautiful Name / Hark! The Herald Angels Sing</i>	
Message	<b>Artful Advent: The Celebration</b> <a href="#">Luke 2:1-7 NRSV</a>	Alf Halvorson
Song of Response	<i>It Came upon a Midnight Clear</i>	
Moment of Connection		Taylor Coleman

Musicians at 8:30/9:45: Asher Pudlo, drums; Uvaldo Callejas, bass; Chris Parrott, guitar; Daniel Martinez, keys; Michael Middleton & Meliza Gómez, worship leaders

**11:15 SERVICE**

Prelude	<i>Once in Royal David's City</i>	arr. Robert Hobby (b. 1962)
Welcome and Call to Worship		Amy Delgado
Choral Introit	<i>Hark! The Herald Angels Sing</i>	arr. John Rutter (b.1945)
*Hymn of Praise	<i>Angels from the Realms of Glory</i>	#22; Vs. 1, 2   REGENT SQUARE
*Prayer of Confession and Assurance		Dan Aikins
*Affirmation of Faith from the Apostles' Creed		
*Congregational Response	<i>Angels We Have Heard on High</i>	#23; Vs. 3   GLORIA
Anthem	<i>While by My Sheep (Echo Carol)</i>	Hugo Jünst (1853-1923)
Pastoral Prayer		Amy Delgado
Anthem of Preparation	<i>Angels' Carol</i>	John Rutter (b. 1945)
Message	<b>Artful Advent: The Celebration</b> <a href="#">Luke 2:8-15 NRSV</a>	Alf Halvorson
*Hymn of Response	<i>It Came Upon the Midnight Clear</i>	#38; Vs. 1, 2   CAROL
Postlude	<i>Joy to the World</i>	arr. Don Hustad (1918-2013)

Musicians at 11:15: Children's Choir, Steffanie Dean, director; Prisilla Salisbury, Steffanie Dean, Chris Childress and Antoine Griggs, quartet; Charles Hausmann, conductor; Kathryn White, organ

Join us Tue, Dec 24

Contemporary Service • 2pm

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

Family Service • 4pm

Traditional Services • 5:30, 7, 8:30pm

Nativity Animal Petting Zoo • 3:30-8pm

Services are in the Sanctuary and include a message from Pastor Alf. The 2pm and traditional services are candlelight.

*Christmas Eve*

# MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

See more events at MDPC at [events.mdpc.org](https://events.mdpc.org).



**Give Online**  
give.mdpc.org



**Open through tomorrow, Dec 23**  
Give the gift of hope when you purchase cards in honor of friends and loved ones! Learn which partners you can support and how it works: [missionmarket.mdpc.org](https://missionmarket.mdpc.org)



**Thu, Jan 2 • 6pm Pickleball, 7 Bible Study**  
College students are invited to join us for *Scripture Under the Stars* on the new MDPC Pickleball Courts! Includes free dinner. RSVP: [yaevents.mdpc.org](https://yaevents.mdpc.org)



**Tue, Jan 7-Mar 4 • 6:30-8pm**  
The 9-week course uses Biblical wisdom to teach you how to get out of debt, save for the future, and make a lifetime of solid financial decisions. Sign up: [fpu.mdpc.org](https://fpu.mdpc.org)



**Thu, Jan 16 • 6:30-8pm • Amphitheater**  
The series kickoff is *Mind Matters: Calm in the Chaos*, a presentation on how to handle anxiety and the pressures of the new year. See more at [hottopics.mdpc.org](https://hottopics.mdpc.org).



**Sat, Jan 18 • 9-11:30am**  
Speakers and fast-moving breakout sessions offer tools to use right away, and also for better relationships with your kids in the long term! Sign up: [dadpal.mdpc.org](https://dadpal.mdpc.org)



**Thu, Jan 23 • 6:30-8pm • Summit Room**  
All women from the Fuente, Brazilian, and English-speaking congregations are invited to a night of good food, conversation, and prayer! RSVP: [together.mdpc.org](https://together.mdpc.org)



**Sun-Sat, May 4-10 • Honduras**  
Serve alongside fellow MDPC ladies helping communities acquire clean water and experience "living water"—the gospel of Jesus Christ. [livingwater.mdpc.org](https://livingwater.mdpc.org)



**Collecting through Dec 22**  
Help bring some Christmas cheer to an international seafarer in the Port of Houston this season! Item list and instructions for boxes at [seafarers.mdpc.org](https://seafarers.mdpc.org).

Join Pastor Alf's 2024 Challenge

52

?

S

**Question 52:** What hope does everlasting life hold for us?

**Answer:** It reminds us that this present fallen world is not all there is; soon we will live with and enjoy God forever in the new city, in the new heaven and the new earth, where we will be fully and forever freed from all sin and will inhabit renewed resurrection bodies in a renewed, restored creation.

[Revelation 21:1-4](https://revelation21-1-4)

Learn more: [52qs.mdpc.org](https://52qs.mdpc.org)

**Financial Update** as of Dec 15, 2024

2024 Annual Budget	\$ 13,719,797
Actual Income to Date	\$ 12,694,998
Needed to Meet Budget	\$ 1,024,799

**Births and Deaths**  
Bobbie Spillette passed away Dec 11, 2024.  
*More information at [memorials.mdpc.org](https://memorials.mdpc.org).*

## An Artful Advent: The Celebration • [Luke 2:8-15 NRSV](#)

This is the fourth in our Advent Series on The Christmas Story through the lens of art. We are getting closer and closer to the baby, but first, the announcement is made not to the powerful of the land, and not to Caesar Augustus or Quirinius the Governor of Syria. And further, the Message is given not in the palace or the temple, but by angels in a field to shepherds at night. It is a shocking way to share the Good news of God with us in human flesh.

1. What was the best celebration you've ever been a part of in your life? Who or what was it for? What made it so special?
2. Read Luke 2:8-15. Where is this celebration held? Who are the recipients of this Good News? From what I said in my message, what makes this place and these individuals so surprising, special, and significant?
3. Verses 10 & 11 contain some of the most important, amazing, and powerful words ever shared by a messenger of God to humanity. Sit with those two verses for a while; ponder the words and that they are given not just to the world in general but to you (in particular.) If the shepherds, as I shared about in my message, were included, so are you.
4. From verse 11, what might you need "saving from"? And what might you need "saving for"? After all, verse 14 suggests that the coming of the Messiah is to bring peace; that is, shalom, wholeness in body and spirit with God and others. How might you live in that peace and share it this Christmas and into the new year?
5. The celebration completes the gift. And it spurs action from the celebrants. What do the shepherds do in verse 15, in response to all that had occurred to them in the previous seven verses? John Calvin wrote, "To walk in the Word of God is never to cease to be amazed." The shepherds respond to the Word of God through the angel by "going and seeing" and then "returning glorifying and praising God." How can you put the Good News directed to you this Christmas into practice in your life and work and world like the shepherds did long ago?