

SERMON NOTES

Exodus 3:4-6, Psalms 23:6, Matthew 6:9 (NRSV) • Written by Rev. Dr. Alf Halvorson

This is the second message, including our Ash Wednesday services, in our series on C. S. Lewis for Lent. Today we look at how both Scripture and Lewis describe God, because our theology (view of God) profoundly influences our discipleship (how we live). If we are an atheist or view God as a celestial Santa Claus, we distort God and behave in several unproductive ways.

1. View of God:

What unhelpful view of God do you drift toward—no God, Santa-Claus God, or a too-tame God—and how does it affect your life? Read Ex. 3:4-6, Ps. 23:6, and Matt. 6:9 (and the surrounding context verses if you have time). What do these verses reveal about God?

2. Lewis' Imagery:

What does "Aslan is not safe, but good" mean for your understanding of God? Why is a domesticated view of God so unsatisfying? And how is a holy and uncontrollable God so challenging?

3. Growing in Faith:

In what ways has God seemed "bigger" or "smaller" to you lately?

4. Lent's Purpose:

How might viewing Lent as re-awakening, instead of shame, change your approach this season?

5. God as Father (Abba):

How does the idea of a child having access to their father in the middle of the night—in a way an employee never would—change the way you pray, approach God, and live out your faith?

6. Personal Step:

What is one personal way you want to seek the "real-not-domesticated" God this week and Lenten season? How might God appear bigger through Scripture, silence, service, generosity, or worship?

Financial Update as of Feb 22, 2026

2026 Annual Budget	\$ 14,728,728
Actual Income to Date	2,104,948
Needed to Meet 2026 Budget	12,623,780

Births and Deaths

Robert (Bob) Conklin passed away Feb 5.
Dottie Williams passed away Feb 24.
More information at memorials.mdpc.org.

Sun, Mar 1, 2026

THE
LION,
LENT, &
C. S. LEWIS

All Church Lunch and Annual Meeting Today

11am Lunch begins | 12:30pm Meeting

Join us in Fellowship Hall for All-Church Lunch followed by our Annual Meeting, where we will reflect on where we've been and where we're headed. Lunch pricing at acl.mdpc.org, meeting details at meeting.mdpc.org.

Four-part College Prep Series

Sundays, Mar 1, Apr 12, May 3 | 11:15am

High school seniors will gather in the Youth area to hear from an amazing guest speaker on one important topic for life in college. Food provided. March topic: *Healthy Boundaries & Relationships*. Learn more: youth.mdpc.org

Come See What Alpha Is About!

This Morning | Chapel and Sanctuary Lobbies

Alpha is a series of group conversations that freely explore the Christian faith in an open, friendly environment. To learn more about the upcoming Spring 2026 Alpha, come visit our information table in the Chapel lobby and Sanctuary lobby.

Journey to Easter

Sat, Mar 28 | 10am-12pm

Join us for Journey to Easter at MDPC! At this free outdoor festival, families are invited to participate in interactive stations to learn the true story of Easter! Enjoy live music, a petting zoo, face painting, inflatables and more!

The Spoken Word

Mar 30-Apr 2 | Chapel

MDPC's annual Holy Week cover-to-cover reading of the Bible returns! Sign up individually, with family, groups, or friends. Registration opens on Wed, Mar 4: tsw.mdpc.org

The Well Women's Speaker Series

Thu, Apr 9 | 6:30pm

Join us for this one-time, special evening at The Well. No matter where you are in the journey, God meets us in the unknown with strength for every step. Come be encouraged as we hear from moms of special needs kids about the unique journey they are on. RSVP: thewell.mdpc.org

THE
LION,
LENT, &
C. S. LEWIS

Lenten Bible Study with Pastor Alf

Weds through Apr 1 | 6:30pm | Amphitheater

Journey through the Lenten season with Scripture and the wisdom of C.S. Lewis as our guides. Come to one session, or come to them all! Dinner is available in the MDPC Café prior to the study. Learn more: lion.mdpc.org



A TASTE OF
ALPHA

Learn more about Alpha and its mission to invite spiritual conversations and build community.

Next Sun, Mar 8
12:30-2:15pm
Fellowship Hall
taste.mdpc.org



Online Giving give.mdpc.org



All Events events.mdpc.org

8:30 BLENDED SERVICE

GATHERING

Call to Worship Beth Case

Worship Songs *All Creatures of Our God and King*
Cornerstone

*Confession & Assurance | Prayers of the People Clay Brown

Baptism Charles "Wallace" Soltis, son of Jake and Julia Soltis Alf Halvorson

*Worship Song *Because He Lives*

HEARING THE WORD

Message **The Lion, Lent, and C. S. Lewis: Who Is God?** Alf Halvorson
Exodus 3:4-6, Psalms 23:6, Matthew 6:9 (NRSV)

RESPONDING

Song of Response *And Can It Be* Dan Forrest (b. 1978)

SENDING

*Benediction Alf Halvorson

9:30 CONTEMPORARY SERVICE

GATHERING

*Call to Worship Beth Case

Worship Songs *God So Loved*
Glorious Day

*Confession and Assurance Laurien Hook

*Worship Song *God I'm Just Grateful*

Baptisms Alf Halvorson
Reese Eleanor Davis, daughter of Preston and Lindsey Davis
William "Ford" Lothrop, son of Bryan and Mariah Lothrop
Lily Grace Rayburn, daughter of Samuel and Ashtyn Rayburn

*Worship Song *Who You Say I Am*

HEARING THE WORD

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RESPONDING

Song of Response *Good, Good Father*

Baptisms Alf Halvorson
Cody Meyer Hanlen
Annie Grace Crumley, daughter of Jerred and Kelly Crumley
Archer Ray Crumley, son of Jerred and Kelly Crumley
Abigayle Marie Crumley, daughter of Jerred and Kelly Crumley

SENDING

*Benediction Alf Halvorson

Musicians in these services: Asher Pudlo, drums | Uvaldo Callejas, keys
Chris Parrot, guitar | Michael Middleton and Meliza Gómez, worship leaders

Additional musicians at 8:30: Kelli Estes, Megan Berti, Chris Childress, Antoine Griggs, quartet
Charles Hausmann, Traditional Worship Director | Kathryn White, organist/pianist

*Please stand, if comfortable.

11:15 TRADITIONAL SERVICE

GATHERING

Prelude *Choral in B Minor* César Franck (1822-1890)

Call to Worship Beth Case

Choral Introit *Create in Me a Clean Heart* Carl Mueller (1892-1982)

*Hymn of Praise *In the Cross of Christ I Glory* Vs. 1, 2, 3, 4 | #84 | RATHBUN

*Confession and Assurance of Pardon Laurien Hook

*Affirmation of Faith from Romans 8

*Congregational Response *Just As I Am, Without One Plea* Vs. 1, 4 | #370 | WOODWORTH

HEARING THE WORD

Anthem of Preparation *Holy Ground* arr. Clayton White (b. 1942)

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RESPONDING

*Hymn of Response *My Shepherd Will Supply My Need* Vs. 1, 3 | #172 | RESIGNATION

Baptism William John Bosse, son of Kyle and Lauren Bosse Alf Halvorson

Anthem of Response *Psalms 100* Heinrich Schutz (1585-1672)

SENDING

*Doxology *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow* #579 | OLD 100TH

*Benediction Alf Halvorson

Postlude *Cortege* Gordon Young (1919-1998)

Musicians in this service: Cassandra Black, soloist | MDPC Sanctuary Choir
Charles Hausmann, Traditional Worship Director | Kathryn White, organist/pianist



Thank You for Your Amazing Work at
Church in the City 2026!

Our 9th annual weekend of service was a smashing success! Together, we:

- Processed **17,741 lbs of food** creating **14,784 meals** at Houston Food Bank
- Made **24,409 sandwiches** for Kids' Meals
- Bagged **3.5 TONS of rice and beans** for MDPC Fuente Food Pantry
- Wrapped **400 candy bars** for teacher appreciation at partner schools
- Repackaged **250 lbs of dog & cat treats** for Meals-on-Wheels AniMeals
- Created **1,230 STAAR snack bags** for local schools
- Stuffed **800 Easter eggs** for House of Tiny Treasures
- Painted **3 sides of a house** and removed **90% of the trees** on SpringSpirit's property
- Prepared **260 Blessing Bags** for The Beacon

What a wonderful testament to this congregation's commitment to bless others as we've been blessed. Your overwhelming generosity has touched countless lives. Thank you, MDPC!

