

SERMON NOTES

2 Corinthians 5:14-17 & John 3:16-21 (NRSV)

Written by Rev. Dr. Alf Halvorson

As we walk through Lent toward Easter, this message invites us to stop “scratching at our own skins” and instead surrender to Christ’s deeper work—moving from darkness to light, from self to Savior, from old to new. Lewis’s picture of Eustace being “un-dragoned” by Aslan (the God-figure in *The Chronicles of Narnia* series) gives us a visceral image of grace that goes deeper than self-help. Let these questions help you and/or your group reflect on reconciliation with God, the pain-and-joy of real change, and what “Monday morning” surrender might look like in real life.

1. Old to New—Where Are You in the Process? Read 2 Cor. 5:15-17. Paul says that in Christ, the old passes away and the new comes. Where do you see evidence of the “old” losing its grip and the “new” taking root in your life right now? What’s one area that still resists this change?
2. From Condemnation to Invitation. Read John 3:16-21. Jesus says He came as light, not to shame but to invite us into life. Where do you sense a pull to step out of “shadow” patterns (hiding instead of confessing; people-pleasing; bitterness or internal grudges; escapist habits like doom scrolling or overwork; cynicism; or fear-based decision-making) and into the light this week?
3. Self-Scratching vs. Surrender. Eustace tries three times to peel off his dragon skin but can’t; only Aslan’s claws reach the depth needed. Where do you find yourself “trying harder” instead of “trusting God more deeply”?
4. It Hurts...Then Heals. Share a time when God’s transforming work stung at first but led to freedom. What helped you stay with the process?
5. Reconciled—and Sent. We are reconciled to God and then entrusted with the ministry of reconciliation. Who is one person the Spirit might be nudging you to befriend this week?
6. Monday Morning Faith. What would a simple daily rhythm look like for you to practice surrender tomorrow instead of scratching? Pick one and make it real this next week.

Financial Update as of Mar 22, 2026

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|----------------------------|---------------|
| 2026 Annual Budget | \$ 14,728,728 |
| Actual Income to Date | 3,183,254 |
| Needed to Meet 2026 Budget | 11,545,474 |

Births and Deaths

Alister Scott McMullen was born on March 21 to Alex and Hillary McMullen.

Mar 29, 2026

PALM SUNDAY

Living Water Palm Sunday Offering Today in the 8:30, 9:45, 11:15am services

Each year on Palm Sunday, a special offering is collected to support Living Water International. This offering is MDPC’s gift to LWI for the year and goes directly toward providing clean water to those in need, as well as sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Donate by enclosing your gift in the envelopes provided or give at lwigift.mdpc.org.



Easter Lilies

Last Day to Purchase! Palm Sun, Mar 29

Easter lilies may be dedicated in memory or honor of loved ones. Dedications appear in the digital Easter Sunday bulletin, with printed copies available. To order: flowers.mdpc.org

Lenten Bible Study with Pastor Alf

Wed through Apr 1 | 6:30pm | Amphitheater

Journey through the Lenten season with Scripture and the wisdom of C.S. Lewis as our guides. Dinner is available in the MDPC Café prior to the study. Learn more: lion.mdpc.org

The Spoken Word

Mar 30-Apr 2 | Chapel

MDPC’s annual Holy Week cover-to-cover reading of the Bible returns! Table hosts still are needed, or come listen and be fed by God’s Word. Details and sign up: tsw.mdpc.org

The Silent Word

Mon-Sun, Mar 30-Apr 5 • Parlor

As you interact with Scripture and other tactical elements, you will experience different ways to engage prayerfully with God. Learn more: silent-word.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

College Prep Series

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

High school seniors, gather in the Youth area to hear from an amazing guest speaker on important topics for life in college. Food provided. April topic: *What To Do When It All Falls Apart (Managing Disappointments)*. Learn more: youth.mdpc.org

Grief: It’s Complicated

Thu, April 16-30 | 6-7:30pm

Grief isn’t predictable, and it doesn’t look the same for everyone. It can come from loss, change, unmet expectations, and more. Come be part of a 3-week small group experience to explore what grief is (and isn’t), what to do with it, and how to move forward with hope. Register: caring.mdpc.org

Join an Outreach Committee!

Encounter God through the work of our outreach partners while helping steward MDPC’s radical generosity. Interested? Contact Julie LaRue at jarue@mdpc.org.

Marriage Clinic

Fri-Sat, Apr 17-18 | MDPC

Led by an LPC with more than 31 years of marriage counseling experience. Discover the practical tools to deepen your intimacy with God and with your spouse. Details and reg: marriageclinic.mdpc.org

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| HOLY WEEK Maundy Thursday, Apr 2 7pm Sanctuary Communion Service Good Friday, Apr 3 Noon Sanctuary | EASTER Sunday, Apr 5 7am Courtyard 8:15, 9:45, 11:15am Sanctuary |
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Online Giving give.mdpc.org



All Events events.mdpc.org



8:30 BLENDED SERVICE

GATHERING

Call to Worship Rachel Poysky

Worship Songs *Hosanna (Praise Is Rising)*
In Christ Alone

*Confession & Assurance Rachel Poysky

Worship Song *Old Rugged Cross*

HEARING THE WORD

Message **The Lion, Lent, & C. S. Lewis: Sin & Salvation** Alf Halvorson
2 Corinthians 5:14-17 & John 3:16-21 (NRSV)

RESPONDING

Prayers of the People Kelsi McCormack

Offering *Hosanna*

SENDING

*Benediction Alf Halvorson

9:45 CONTEMPORARY SERVICE

GATHERING

Call to Worship Rachel Poysky

Worship Songs *Freedom in this House*
O Praise the Name (Anastasis)

*Confession & Assurance Miah Collins

Worship Song *Hosanna (Praise Is Rising)*

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SENDING

*Benediction Alf Halvorson

Worship Team: Asher Pudlo, Uvaldo Callejas, Chris Parrot, Tim Hughes, David Cavazos
Michael Middleton, Generational Worship Director | Meliza Gómez, Contemporary Worship Director

11:15 TRADITIONAL SERVICE

GATHERING

Prelude *Hosanna, Loud Hosanna* arr. Hayes/White

Call to Worship Dan Aikins

*Processional Hymn *All Glory, Laud, and Honor* arr. Angerman and Martin

*Confession and Assurance of Pardon Dan Aikins

*Affirmation of Faith from 1 Corinthians 15:1-6 & Colossians 1:15-20

Congregational Response *Ah, Holy Jesus* Vs. 1 | #93 | HERZLIEBSTER JESU

HEARING THE WORD

Anthem of Preparation *Fanfare for Palm Sunday* Mary McDonald (b. 1956)

Message **The Lion, Lent, & C. S. Lewis: Sin & Salvation** Alf Halvorson
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RESPONDING

*Hymn *What Wondrous Love Is This* Vs. 1 | #85 | WONDROUS LOVE

Prayers of the People Kelsi McCormack

Offertory *My Eternal King* Jane Marshall (1924-2019)

SENDING

*Doxology *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* #592 | OLD 100TH

*Benediction Alf Halvorson

Postlude *Toccata on "All Glory, Laud, and Honor"*
arr. Michael Burkhardt (b. 1957)

Musicians in this service: John Parker, trumpet | MDPC Sanctuary Choir | MDPC Children's Choir
Charles Hausmann, Traditional Worship Director | Kathryn White, organist

Our pastors are here to help. We'd love to hear from you!



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Remember Our Frontline Mission Partners

MDPC partners in local and global ministry truly covet your prayers! Find out this week's prayer recipients by picking up the prayer booklet available around campus or visit partners.mdpc.org.

*Please stand, if comfortable.