SERMON NOTES | Acts 1:1-11 (NRSV)

Sun, Sep 13, 2026

Written by Rev. Dr. Alf Halvorson

This new fall series on Acts invites us to consider the church before we consider the building. Acts reminds us that the risen Christ is still at work through His Spirit-filled people, sending us to bear witness in Houston and beyond. As we discern MDPC's future together, we will ask not only what God may be calling us to build and renovate, but also what kind of people Christ is forming us to become for the sake of His kingdom.

1. As you think about MDPC's approaching capital campaign and building project, what gives you hope or excitement? What questions or hesitations do you have?

2. Read Acts 1:1-11. Acts begins by describing what Jesus "began to do and teach." How does it change your understanding of the church's mission to believe that Jesus continues His work through the Holy Spirit and His people?

3. In verses 6-8, the disciples want a timetable, but Jesus gives them a mission. What is the mission, and where are you most tempted to seek certainty, details, or control before responding to Christ's call?

4. Jesus promises the disciples the Holy Spirit's power before sending them as witnesses. What is the difference between asking God to bless plans we have already made and allowing the Spirit to form, fill, and lead us? How might we practice the second posture?

5. Jesus describes the mission in widening circles: Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth. Who is in your "Jerusalem," the people and places already near you? Who might represent "Samaria," people or communities you are less likely to encounter, understand, or approach? And how can we at MDPC support witness in places we could not reach by ourselves?

6. The sermon describes a church building as a base for ministry rather than a destination. Who are the people Christ is sending us to love, and how might MDPC's spaces and programs better serve them? What use of our time, talent, or treasure would help make that possible?

7. The angels interrupt the disciples' upward gaze and redirect them toward witness on earth. What is one concrete way you—or your group—can join Christ's work before you meet again?

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Word and Worship
Weekly, Sep 2026-Feb 2027
The book of Daniel contains some of the stories we are most familiar with, but also many others that are often neglected - this study will cover all of them! Many day and time options. Learn more: **wandw.mdpc.org**

Men's Life: Finding Your True Identity
Tue, Sep 15-Nov 17 | 6:30-7:45am
In Men's Life 2026, we'll discover who you already are in Christ and learn to live from the identity God has given you—not the one the world tries to assign. Learn more and register: **ml.mdpc.org**

Blast Off for 1st-5th Graders
Wed, Sep 16-Nov 18 | 5:30-7pm
Get ready to zoom into a galaxy of fun, faith, and friendship at our awesome mid-week program!

Blast Off Moms Book Club
Drop off your kids, grab dinner from the cafe, then join us in room 207!
Details and sign up for Blast Off and/or Book Club: **blastoff.mdpc.org**

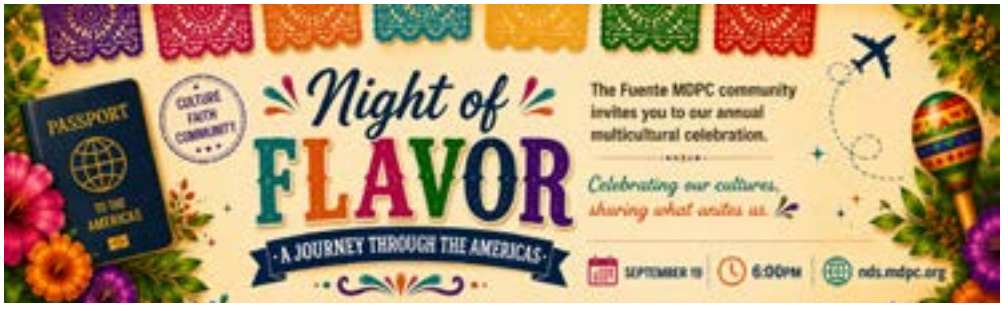
PreK & K Boys Superhero Day
Sat, Sep 19 | 10-11:30am
Join us for an exciting morning of adventure, fun, and discovery! Wear your favorite superhero costume and get ready to hear about the greatest hero of all! Register: **superhero.mdpc.org**

Make an IMPACT!
Training: Sun, Sep 20 | 12:30pm
Games. Conversation. Friendship. That's all it takes to make a difference! Spend just 30 minutes each week with a child who would benefit from another caring adult in their life: **impact.mdpc.org**

Young Adults Fall Retreat
Fri, Oct 2 at 4pm-Sun, Oct 4 at 1pm
Join other young professionals for a relaxing weekend in Caldwell, Texas, at a beautiful farmhouse tucked away in the countryside. Learn more and register: **yaevents.mdpc.org**

Marriage Retreat
Sat-Sun, Oct 17-18 | Moody Gardens Resort
Enjoy a fun and intentional weekend together focused on your married life! Led by Brett and Kellie Hurst. Register: **marriageretreat.mdpc.org**

The Well
Thu, Oct 15 | 6:30pm
Join us for a night of encouragement and testimony as women share how God stepped into their stories, redirected their paths, and revealed His perfect plan. Details and RSVP: **thewell.mdpc.org**







As you enter worship, we kindly ask that you silence your cell phones.

8:30 BLENDED SERVICE

GATHERING

Call to Worship — Kelsi McCormack

*Songs of Praise — *How Great Is Our God* | *Be Thou My Vision*

Confession & Assurance — Beth Case

Song of Response — *Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone)*

Prayer — Beth Case

Worship Song — *Love Divine All Loves Excelling*

HEARING THE WORD

Message — **Interrupted & Sent: The Church Before the Building**
The Blueprint (Acts 1:1-11 NRSV) — Alf Halvorson

RESPONDING

Offertory — *Here I Am, Lord*

SENDING

*Benediction — Alf Halvorson

Blended and Contemporary Worship Leaders
Worship Team: Uvaldo Callejas, Tim Hughes, Asher Pudlo, Drew Story, Will Story, Angel Uribe, Fernie Uribe | Meliza Gómez, Contemporary Worship Director

9:45 CONTEMPORARY SERVICE

GATHERING

Call to Worship — Meliza Gómez

*Songs of Praise — *How Great Is Our God* | *Freedom in This House*

Confession & Assurance — Jeff Taylor

Worship Songs — *Be Thou My Vision* | *God I'm Just Grateful*

HEARING THE WORD

Message — **Interrupted & Sent: The Church Before the Building**
The Blueprint (Acts 1:1-11 NRSV) — Alf Halvorson

RESPONDING

Offertory — *Center* | *Here I Am, Lord*

Call to Respond — Sally Henien

SENDING

*Benediction — Alf Halvorson

Blended and Contemporary Worship Leaders
Worship Team: Uvaldo Callejas, Tim Hughes, Asher Pudlo, Drew Story, Will Story, Angel Uribe, Fernie Uribe | Meliza Gómez, Contemporary Worship Director

* Please stand, if comfortable.

11:15 TRADITIONAL SERVICE

GATHERING

Preludes — *Elegy* — C. Hubert Parry (1848-1918)

Call to Worship — Amy Delgado

Choral Introit — *Rejoice, the Lord Is King* — arr. Henry Pfohl

*Hymn of Praise — *God of Grace and God of Glory* | Vs. 1, 2, 4 — #420 | CWM Rhondda

*Confession and Assurance of Pardon — Beth Case

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

*Congregational Response
O My Soul, Bless Your Redeemer | vs. 1,2,6 — #223 | Stuttgart

HEARING THE WORD

Anthem of Preparation — *God Is Gone Up* — Gerald Finzi (1901-1956)

Message — **Interrupted & Sent: The Church Before the Building**
The Blueprint (Acts 1:1-11 NRSV) — Alf Halvorson

RESPONDING

*Hymn of Response — *Here I Am, Lord* | Vs. 1, 3 — #525 | Here I Am

Prayer — Beth Case

Offertory — *At the Name of Jesus* — Rene Clausen (b. 1953)

SENDING

*Doxology — *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* — #592 | Old 100th

*Benediction — Alf Halvorson

Postlude — *Fanfare* — William Mathias (1934-1992)

Traditional Worship Leaders
Sanctuary Choir | Rob Landes, Organist
Charles Hausmann, Traditional Worship Director

* Please stand, if comfortable.

MORE WAYS TO CONNECT

Legacy Grandparenting Summit

Join other Christian grandparents at our neighbor Christ Presbyterian on Fri, Oct 9 for a day of wisdom, hope, practical resources, and community. Discover tools and encouragement for building a spiritual legacy that reaches generations to come! **LGS.mdpc.org**

Stay Plugged In

Sign up to receive the weekly email with Sunday information and upcoming events, and download the MDPC app for past sermons, event registrations, and more, right in your pocket! Scan the QR code or visit **mymdpc.mdpc.org**



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**.

Financial Update as of Sep 6, 2026

2026 Annual Budget	$ 14,728,728
Actual Income to Date	8,956,549
Needed to Meet 2026 Budget	5,772,179