

THE
Messenger
From Memorial Drive Christian Church

11750 MEMORIAL DRIVE · HOUSTON, TEXAS · www.mdccdoc.org 713-789-0060

Thank you to the 54 people who participated in the Congregational meeting on Sunday, January 26. We also would like to thank the 41 of you who have volunteered to serve and are working on a task force. The steering committee appreciates and needs your participation. John Cavnar-Johnson is working on getting the information from the congregational meeting in a summary form. The Steering Committee and Administrative Council met together to discuss your thoughts/suggestions/fears/ideas. I am sure that some of you came away from the meeting with more questions than answers. We are listening and trying to keep you informed of what is happening. The information and suggestions that you provided are very helpful for us to move forward. We would like to address some concerns and questions that arose in that meeting. Do to our present personnel situation our Task Force Committees slowed down for a while, but we are ready to continue our work to pave a path, with God's help, to where and how we are going to worship our Lord together in the future and how we are going to carry the message of grace, mercy, justice, and love to our corner of the world.

Status of the sale of the building - Linda Thompson

A contract for the sale of the property was signed with Paratus Classical Academy on December 31, 2019. Paratus now has 90 days (until March 31) to conduct their inspections of the property. They are now in the midst of this process. A \$100,000.00 non-refundable earnest money has been collected from Paratus and has been deposited into the MDCC bank account.

When the inspection period is concluded, closing must take place within 30 days i.e. by April 30. At the closing of the sale proceeds will be deposited in the MDCC bank account. The title insurance and realtor's commission must be paid from the proceeds. We also will use the funds to pay off the balance of the mortgage. (See more in Eric Wehner's report)

New Beginnings Steering Committee

Contact: Carol Neal, Chair
cneal9915@aol.com



Paratus will allow us to lease the property back from them through May 31.

Status of contents of the building - Camille Westbrook

A committee is in the process of inventorying all MDCC interior rooms and outside areas. At this time there has not been a decision on what to leave here, take with us, or get rid of. You will be advised when there is a preliminary plan. If you have any ideas of how to go about this, please call Carol Neal or Camille Westbrook.

Status of a new minister - John Cavnar-Johnson and Linda Thompson

A search committee is being formed and we will soon be in the process of searching for an interim minister. We are working with Rev. Peggy Edge and the regional office to obtain names of prospective candidates. In the meantime, we have the pulpit filled by Rev. Carolyn Allen and other ministers in the area who are available. Carolyn is scheduling those ministers.

Status of money after the sale - Eric Wehner

When the sale of the Memorial Drive property is completed, the proceeds will be deposited in the MDCC bank account. Deductions will be made to pay the mortgage balance, the realtor's commission, our portion of the closing costs, and any allowance for repairs we agree to. The remaining amount is estimated to be \$3.8 million.

A portion will remain in the checking account to cover costs of moving, storage, leasing a facility, travel costs of a minister search, and typical period costs of operation.

That amount will be determined by the Admin Council and the Steering Committee. The remainder will be invested in a diversified portfolio chosen to provide an income stream with low risk and with some potential for growth. The earnings will augment our pledge income until the new church is self-supporting. The intention is that a portion of the funds will be preserved for mission/outreach.

Status of new location to move to - Larry Neal

Relocation Task Force members have been looking at property for sale and for lease space within a strip center. Commercial property is selling for about \$1 million per acre for 2 to 4-acre tracts. We have found strip center leases run from \$10 to \$40 per square foot per year. We have not found an ideal retail center and we have rejected several locations. One of our members recently found a website specializing in finding rental or lease space for churches. Unfortunately, there was only one listed (located in a strip center) in our search area and doesn't appear to meet our needs. We will continue to monitor this site for new listings in our area. We will soon be looking into the availability of renting or leasing space for Sunday services at educational facilities or community centers.

Status of Worship Task Force -

Our original commissioned goal: to research best practices of worship styles, worship spaces, inclusion of youth and children during our worship hour, and be ready to work with Matthew Hudman and the staff to design worship in a new way in our new space.

Our updated goal is being shaped by our sub-committees. We have divided our responsibilities into four sub-committees:

1. Worship/ Hospitality led by Pam Ellis

This subcommittee is working particularly on our sense of welcome to all who will gather each Sunday.

The nuances of the worship service will be planned as we get closer to having pastoral/preaching leadership. (Order of worship, elements of worship, the ambiance of worship space, etc.)

2. Music led by Judy Conner

This subcommittee is looking at how to enhance our worship through song. (song books, choir, instruments, etc.)

3. Children and youth led by Joyce Stones

This subcommittee will be looking at guidelines for working with youth and children, planning worship and fellowship experiences for our youth and children, and their inclusion in our "whole church" worship experiences.

4. Technology

This subcommittee will be considering how best to let our new community know we are coming and who we are, which will mean working toward Facebook and the web page. It will also be looking toward what equipment we will need.

What Now?

The Administrative Council and the Steering Committee met with Rev. Bruce Frogge, the senior minister of Cypress Creek Christian Church. I believe we all felt it was helpful. He helped us formulate a plan of action.

- Have a couple of services of prayer and worship to deal with our grieving. He has volunteered to lead one of them.
- Search for a minister to lead us into the future and to take care of pastoral needs. (short term or long term)
- Find a place to worship on June 7, and prepare a worship service.
- Spend some time worshipping and becoming who WE are as a community.
- Define a mission and rewrite our mission story.

As in any family, we have matters to work out. We must teach, lead, listen, and love each other. I ask that we pray this prayer together so that we are united in searching for God's plan as we move forward.

Lord, help me to have patience and not grow weary or discouraged while waiting for answers to my prayers and for things to happen. Whenever I have doubt about my future, help me to remember that I have a high purpose and calling. When I can't see how the future is ever going to turn out the way I want it to, help me to remember that because I have given my life to You, my future will turn out like You want it to. You have promised me a future of peace and hope, a future far greater than I can imagine. Thank you, Lord, for thinking of me.

—Stormie Omartian

Blessings, Carol Neal



From the President of the Congregation

Contact: John Cavnar-Johnson
johncj@outlook.com

Now what?

What did we learn from our congregational discernment meeting? What does it mean as we move forward as a congregation? After spending some quality time with the output of the meeting (all those sticky notes), getting feedback from participants, and debriefing the table scribes, I have put together a summary of the results and how it will affect our plans going forward.

1. This Disciples congregation is still alive and committed to fulfilling our mission to glorify God. We're tired, hurting, and divided and yet we're still a "we."
2. Our identity as Memorial Drive Christian Church is ending. We are becoming something new and we need a location for that transformation to take place.
3. We recognize the need for help. Without a senior minister, with donations and attendance falling, we collectively understand that we need to reach out to other Disciples who share our mission.

Recognizing these key findings and accounting for our current circumstances helps us prioritize our needs going forward. Here are the actions that require our immediate focus:

1. Find an interim minister to help us through the transition. We're forming the search committee now. Linda Thompson and I will be the points of contact if you have questions about the search.
2. Locate a temporary place of worship that we can use when the sale of the building completes. The existing New Beginnings committee chaired by Larry Neal will take the lead on this.
3. Explore options for partnering with another local Disciples congregation. The Admin Council and the New Beginnings steering committee have begun this process. We've received helpful suggestions from others in the congregation and are following up on them. Contact me or Carol Neal if you have specific suggestions or would like more information.

In Christ,

John Cavnar-Johnson

Outreach Ministries

Contact: Judy or Frank Conner, Co-Chairs
fwconner@sbcglobal.net

Memorial Area Ministries continues to serve families from the Watson neighborhood explosion. So, please continue to bring diapers (sizes 4, 5, 6), baby wipes, and gift cards (any denomination) for Walmart or Target through mid-March. Thanks to those that have already donated to this situation. Many neighborhood households have received assistance.

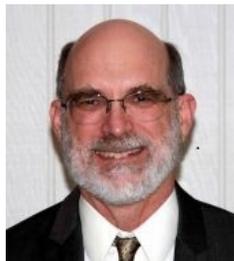
Disasters (like the Watson blast) can happen anywhere in the world. Imagine many bomb blasts in your neighborhood due to war, California/Australia fires, hurricanes, and flooding. The Week of Compassion offering, collected each year at this time, provides a way for the larger Church to respond where the need is the greatest. Please give as you are able.

Hope from Haiti

Things have been slow in Haiti the last several months. Political unrest was terrible for several months and the country was pretty much shut down. Demonstrations in Haiti have calmed down but it seems only to be temporary since the government remains the same and the people still suffer. A technician with a company in Katy has been working to finally install the dish on the school building so the school can have the Internet. This will be so exciting for the students and teacher when this is done. We currently have 15 students finishing their two-year program to learn computer networking and programming.

The water supply in Les Palmes is flowing but the reservoir has not been completed. Work has started but it seems to be going very slow. This reservoir will allow us to turn the water off and on. This will conserve the water and also regulate the amount of water used.

Thank you for your support of this ministry. Pray that God will give us direction on how we will proceed with this ministry. It becomes harder and harder to do ministry in Haiti.



Treasurer's Report

Contact: John E. Lindley, Treasurer
 treasurer.mdcc@gmail.com

General Fund Income vs Expense

	January	YTD	YTD Budget
Pledged Income	15,509.11	15,509.11	25,666.67
Other Income	4,879.32	4,879.32	5,966.67
Expense	26,664.76	26,664.76	37,279.05
Balance	(6,276.33)	(6,276.33)	(5,645.71)
Txfer From DF	0.00	0.00	0.00
Final Balance	(6,276.33)	(6,276.33)	(5,645.71)

Cash Assets & Debt

General Fund	
Checking	23,767.70
Liabilities & Amortized Inc, Exp	38,226.85
Savings (Charles Schwab)	2,478.59
Capital Campaign	50,498.49
Undesignated Memorial Funds	254,313.46
Designated Funds	93,094.01
Total	462,379.10
Mortgage Balance	532,903.18

Capital Campaign

Pledged	329,778.00
Received To Date	300,169.62
Other Income	136,933.44
Spent	386,604.57
Balance	50,498.49

Campaign ended May 31, 2017

Comments

Per the motion approved by the congregation the budget numbers here are from the 2019 budget until I am able to create a 2020 budget to present. Still they make an interesting contrast. "Pledge income" is down significantly from last year for January, though it is higher than the actual pledges would have indicated. But expenses are also down significantly because our reduced personnel costs with no Senior Minister. The net is a deficit but not nearly as bad as it could be. If you have any questions, please ask me at church or send an email to treasurer.mdcc@gmail.com

John E. Lindley, Treasurer. 1/5/2020

A Message from Your Elders

Contact: Jim Stones, Chair of Elders
 jestones@sbcglobal.net

Every successful church has many behind-the-scenes workers who make a great difference. There are the people working in the kitchen when food is served; there is Willie Rich preparing coffee every Sunday morning; there is Larry Neal fixing every leak; there are people preparing and cleaning up communion; there are people closing up the building after each church service.

Today I would like to highlight one of the most reliable of these workers. Every Sunday John Lindley goes over the offering report and accounts for all donations. Every month he prepares a thorough and readable treasurer's report for the administrative council and also for any meeting of the board or congregation. In addition to his hard work, he provides professional wisdom which keeps our church legal and makes suggestions which help solve financial problems.

I always hesitate to single out one church member when there are so many others who provide valuable service to MDCC, but John Lindley is truly an exceptional and talented servant. Therefore, a hearty thanks to John and to the rest of those able and willing folks who make MDCC a better place for all of us!

Jim Stones

YAC News (Youth and Children)

Contact: Rev. Carolyn Allen
 Associate Minister for
 Youth and Children
 nchornedfrog73@yahoo.com



YAC will meet at Joyce and Jim Stones' home after worship, March 8 and 29. All school age children and youth are welcome to attend. See Carolyn for more information.





Member Development

Contact: Maudeen Eccles, Chair
maudeenfeccl@gmail.com

Special greetings to you. Easter is upon us. Ash Wednesday is February 26, and Easter is April 12. By the time you read this we will have had our Ash Wednesday service and meal.

We graciously thank all the ministers who have been filling our pulpit, most especially Rev. Carolyn Allen. We also appreciate Dr. Andy Magnum and John Cavnar-Johnson. Welcome Sondra Tucker, our new organist!! We need your gifts of music at this time during the whole service and to accompany members of our steadfast choir. We also really needed and are so glad Deb Busch stepped up to lead our Chancel Choir along with the Handbell Choir. All of these talents greatly enhance our worship

All the diapers and gift cards given to the survivors of Watson company explosion will have some thankful receivers. We appreciate these generous donations very much.

God bless you all during this Lenten season.

Peace, Maudeen

Chain Reaction Ministries



Contact: David Finklea
chainreactionministries@gmail.com

Everyone is invited to join us on March 28, at 8:00am, for our monthly workday. No special skills are needed for this outreach project. We clean and repair donated bikes, and assign them to one of our ministry partners.



Community Joys and Concerns

Prayer of joy: Colby Jacobson was born January 9, to John and Krista (Banowsky) Jacobson! Grandparents are Carol and Jack Banowsky. Praise God!

Our condolences to the family and friends of Jane Burke, who died on February 5. Jane was a long-time homebound member; who had been in assisted living. Her daughter is Melissa Salier.

Dear MDCC Friends,

Thank you for being my worship community over the past few years. I have chosen to worship nearer my residence. May God continue to guide you in ministry and mission as you move forward in faith.

Sincerely, Linda Brady

MDCC Children's Program

Contact: Lori Maddox, Director
lmaddox@mdcccp.org

The spring semester is already off to a busy start! The children have been busy with Valentine's parties and now we are learning about the great State of Texas. Over the next few weeks we will dress up like cowboys and cowgirls, enjoy a Rodeo show and have an old-fashioned cookout. As we enter March, we will be learning about Springtime, farm animals, and hearing about the great story of Easter.

Over the Christmas holidays, I met with the buyer of the church property and we talked about the future of the preschool. The new buyer is aware of our school's legacy and sees MDCCCP as a wonderful asset to our community as well as a benefit for their own families. There will be many more discussions among us as we continue to work through all the details that come with the sale of the property. The new buyer is looking forward to working with us and continuing the legacy of our preschool. In January, we started working on getting the news out to the community that our preschool will be continuing and we opened registration for the 2020-2021 school year.



From Our Associate

Contact: Rev. Carolyn Allen, Associate Minister
nchornedfrog73@yahoo.com

Early in church history converts weren't expected to recite complicated creeds or belief statements. They were expected to trust in God. In fact, before they were baptized, candidates would fast, attend vigils, pray, and receive instruction about the nature of God. They were not required to state any particular belief. Baptism was an act of trust in God. After the ritual they would confess their belief as a commitment. They would shout, "Credo!" The pronouncement was essentially saying "I will follow!"

As we greet each day in an uncertain world, I hope we also have courage to trust. There is always unknown ahead and God seeks our commitment to follow and trust whatever adventure awaits us!

Intercessory Prayer Group

Contact: Carol Neal, 713-467-0357 cneal9915@aol.com

On Thursday mornings at 9:30am, a group of people meet in the parlor for intercessory prayer. We meet because we love the Lord, and we love you and those you love and care for. We find joy in joining you in support of your prayers for those in need of God's loving touch in their lives.

We meet with this scripture's assurance... (1 John 5:14) "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us."

We know that God does not promise to give us everything we ask for, but He acts according to His ways, not ours. He hears our prayers, but He responds to those prayers according to His will. We welcome all who come to pray with us.

Men's Fellowship Group

Contact: Larry Neal, 713-551-3991

- All men are invited!
- Tuesday, March 25, at 9:30am, Athens Room
- Discussion, light breakfast, plenty of strong coffee

Shared Reflections Book Club

Contact: Mary Williams, 713-692-8016

Our March review will be Wednesday, **March 18**, because of a conflict with spring break on the regular second Wednesday. Marsha Smith will lead us in discussing *Olive Kittridge*, by Elizabeth Strout. Everyone is invited to join us in the parlor, at 11:00am.

Books for April and May will be *The Gown*, by Jennifer Robson; and *Code Girls*, by Liza Munly.

Sunday Mornings

Adult Sunday School

9:45am each Sunday

- **Journey Sunday School Class:**
Philippi Room
Contact: Joyce Stones, 713-467-4930
or jastones@sbcglobal.net

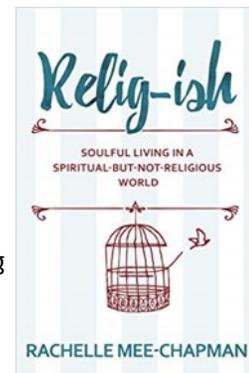
The Journey class, with its discussion format, will be led primarily by Joyce Stones for the next two months. All are welcome to come and be a part of this fellowship of learners as we study *When All Else Fails... Read the Instructions*, by James W. Moore, Sr., pastor at St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Houston. This study will include a look at: The Beatitudes / The Ten Commandments / The New Commandment of Jesus.

These ancient time-honored instructions are as relevant today as they were when they were first spoken. Join us for this reminder of how to pull our lives together and live sane, meaningful, and productive lives through the study of Creation, Covenant, Christ, and the Church.

- **Emmaus Sunday School Class:**
Conference Room
Contact: Mary Williams, 713-692-8016
or avetex@aol.com

Join us for great discussions! We meet in the conference room next to the parlor. We are discussing the book *Relig-ish*, by Rachele Mee-Chapman.

It is about "Soulful living in a spiritual but not religious world." Join us for great discussions.



Ministry in Music

Chancel Choir sings each Sunday morning and meets Wednesday evenings for rehearsal. Disciple Ringers Handbell Choir presents special music in worship regularly and meets on Wednesdays for practice. Contact Deb Busch, at dbusch0817@yahoo.com, if you are interested in joining this ministry.

March 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>First Sunday in Lent</p> <p>9:45a Sunday School</p> <p>10:30a Choir Warm Up</p> <p>11a Worship</p> <p>4p Henderson Bsktbl</p> <p>5:30p Henderson Bsktbl</p>	<p>2</p> <p>10:30a Singing Belles</p> <p>11a Staff Meeting</p> <p>3:30p Glass Gymn.</p> <p>6p Antioch Training School</p> <p>7:15p Holt Bsktbl</p>	<p>3</p> <p>6a Primary Election</p> <p>2p Gymnastics Plus</p> <p>6p Hou Jr Forum</p>	<p>4</p> <p>2p Soccer Shots</p> <p>4p Henderson Bsktbl</p> <p>5:30p Wilkins Bsktbl</p> <p>6p Handbell Practice</p> <p>7p Chancel Choir</p>	<p>5</p> <p>9:30a Intercessory Prayer Group</p> <p>4:30p Hebrew Classes</p> <p>5:30p Henderson Bsktbl</p> <p>6:30p Simply AA Group</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Office closed on Fridays</p> <p>7p Holt Bsktbl</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8</p> <p>Andrew Westbrooke IS Preaching</p> <p>9:45a Sunday School</p> <p>10:30a Choir Warm Up</p> <p>11a Worship</p> <p>12:30p YAC at Stones' home</p> <p>4p Henderson Bsktbl</p> <p>5:30p Henderson Bsktbl</p>	<p>9</p> <p>10:30a Singing Belles</p> <p>11a Staff Meeting</p> <p>3:30p Glass Gymn.</p> <p>6p Antioch Training School</p> <p>7:15p Holt Bsktbl</p>	<p>10</p> <p>2p Gymnastics Plus</p> <p>7p Admin Council</p>	<p>11</p> <p>2p Soccer Shots</p> <p>4p Henderson Bsktbl</p> <p>5:30p Wilkins Bsktbl</p> <p>6p Handbell Practice</p> <p>7p Chancel Choir</p>	<p>12</p> <p>9:30a Intercessory Prayer Group</p> <p>4:30p Hebrew Classes</p> <p>5:30p Henderson Bsktbl</p> <p>6:30p Simply AA Group</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Office closed on Fridays</p> <p>7p Holt Bsktbl</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15</p> <p>9:45a Sunday School</p> <p>10:30a Choir Warm Up</p> <p>11a Worship</p> <p>4p Henderson Bsktbl</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Spring Break</p> <p>9a Henderson Bsktbl</p> <p>10:30a Singing Belles</p> <p>11a Staff Meeting</p> <p>6:30p Elders' Meeting</p> <p>7:15p Holt Bsktbl</p> <p>7:30p Hudson Oaks 1-A</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Spring Break</p> <p>9a Henderson Bsktbl</p> <p>6p Hudson Oaks 1B</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Newsletter Deadline</p> <p>Spring Break</p> <p>9a Henderson Bsktbl</p> <p>11a Shared Reflections Book Group</p> <p>4p Henderson Bsktbl</p> <p>6p Handbell Practice</p> <p>7p Chancel Choir</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Spring Break</p> <p>9:30a Intercessory Prayer Group</p> <p>4:30p Hebrew Classes</p> <p>6:30p Simply AA Group</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Office closed on Fridays</p> <p>Spring Break</p> <p>7p Holt Bsktbl</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22</p> <p>9:45a Sunday School</p> <p>10:30a Choir Warm Up</p> <p>11a Worship</p> <p>12:30p YAC at Stones' home</p> <p>4p Henderson Bsktbl</p> <p>5:30p Henderson Bsktbl</p>	<p>23</p> <p>10:30a Singing Belles</p> <p>11a Staff Meeting</p> <p>3:30p Glass Gymn.</p> <p>6p Antioch Training School</p> <p>7p Hudson Oaks 2</p> <p>7:15p Holt Bsktbl</p>	<p>24</p> <p>9:30a Men's Fellowship</p> <p>2p Gymnastics Plus</p> <p>6:30p Hudson Forest HOA</p>	<p>25</p> <p>2p Soccer Shots</p> <p>4p Henderson Bsktbl</p> <p>5:30p Wilkins Bsktbl</p> <p>6p Handbell Practice</p> <p>7p Chancel Choir</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Newsletter Published</p> <p>9:30a Intercessory Prayer Group</p> <p>4:30p Hebrew Classes</p> <p>5:30p Henderson Bsktbl</p> <p>6:30p Simply AA Group</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Office closed on Fridays</p> <p>7p Holt Bsktbl</p>	<p>28</p> <p>8a Chain Reaction Ministries Workday</p> <p>3p Delmarie's Recital</p> <p>7p Antioch Church Dinner</p>
<p>29</p> <p>9:45a Sunday School</p> <p>10:30a Choir Warm Up</p> <p>11a Worship</p> <p>4p Henderson Bsktbl</p> <p>5:30p Henderson Bsktbl</p>	<p>30</p> <p>10:30a Singing Belles</p> <p>11a Staff Meeting</p> <p>3:30p Glass Gymn.</p> <p>7:15p Holt Bsktbl</p>	<p>31</p> <p>2p Gymnastics Plus</p>	<p>1</p> <p>2p Soccer Shots</p> <p>5:30p Wilkins Bsktbl</p> <p>6p Handbell Practice</p> <p>7p Chancel Choir</p>	<p>2</p> <p>9:30a Intercessory Prayer Group</p> <p>4:30p Hebrew Classes</p> <p>5:30p Henderson Bsktbl</p> <p>6:30p Simply AA Group</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Office closed on Fridays</p> <p>7p Holt Bsktbl</p>	<p>4</p>



**“For we are co-workers in
God’s service;
you are God’s field,
God’s building.”**

—1 Corinthians 3:9



The chalice symbolizes the central place of communion in worship for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The X-shaped cross of the disciple Andrew is a reminder of the ministry of each person and the importance of evangelism. To read the story of the Chalice, go to <https://disciples.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/TheStoryoftheChaliceLogo-2015.pdf>



Find MDCC on Facebook

Our church has an active Facebook page. If you are a Facebook user, please like our page, Memorial Drive Christian Church, and interact with our posts. We provide updates on upcoming events and post pictures from recent church events.

Memorial Drive Christian Church
11750 Memorial Drive
Houston, Texas 77024

RETURN ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED