



The Savior | Matthew 14:22-33  
Alf Halvorson preaching

## 8:30 AM Service

Sunday, January 10, 2021

[Matthew 14:22-33](#)

### Welcome & Call to Worship

Dave Steane

### Songs of Praise

*Forever*

Chris Tomlin

*Praise to the Lord, the Almighty*

HYMN

### \*Prayer of Confession & Assurance

Lyndsey Dottavio

### Service of Officer Ordination and Installation

Dave Steane, Mary Lee Going, Alf Halvorson

### Moment of Prayer

Dave Steane

### Song of Preparation

*Our God*

Chris Tomlin

### Message

Out On the Water

Alf Halvorson

*Matthew 14:22-33 (NRSV)*

### Song of Response

*Oceans (Where Feet May Fail)*

Joel Houston

### Offering & Benediction

Alf Halvorson

[Give Online](#) ([give.mdpc.org](http://give.mdpc.org))

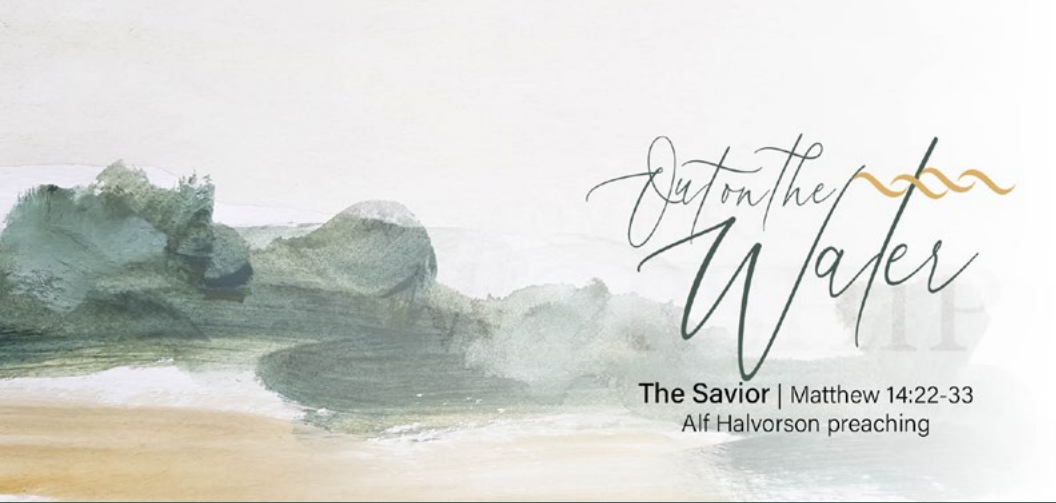


## Sunday Worship Playlist

[Click here to listen.](#)

### Remember Our Mission Partners on the Front Lines of Ministry

Each week, we pray for three of **MDPC's** local and global mission partners. During these difficult days, our partners truly covet your prayers! Visit [partners.mdpc.org](http://partners.mdpc.org) to find this week's (three) prayer recipients.



# Out on the Water

The Savior | Matthew 14:22-33  
Alf Halvorson preaching

**9:45 AM Service**

Sunday, January 10, 2021

[Matthew 14:22-33](#)

<b>Welcome &amp; Call to Worship</b>		Meliza Gómez
<b>Song of Praise</b>	<i>Found in You</i>	Phil Wickham
<b>Moment of Confession &amp; Assurance</b>		Laurien Hook
<b>Service of Officer Ordination and Installation</b>		
	Dave Steane, Mary Lee Going, Alf Halvorson	
<b>Songs of Response</b>	<i>Our God</i>	Chris Tomlin
	<i>The Blessing</i>	Steven Furtick
<b>Message</b>	<b>Out On the Water</b>	Alf Halvorson
	<i>Matthew 14:22-33 (NRSV)</i>	
<b>Song of Response</b>	<i>Oceans (Where Feet May Fail)</i>	Joel Houston
<b>Moment of Prayer</b>		Dave Steane
<b>Offering &amp; Benediction</b>		Alf Halvorson

**[Give Online](https://give.mdpc.org)** ([give.mdpc.org](https://give.mdpc.org))



## Sunday Worship Playlist

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# Out on the Water

The Savior | Matthew 14:22-33  
Alf Halvorson preaching

## 11:15 AM Service

Sunday, January 10, 2021

[Matthew 14:22-33](#)

<b>Prelude</b>	<i>23<sup>rd</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> Psalm Preludes</i>	Emma Lou Diemer (b. 1927)
<b>Welcome &amp; Call to Worship</b>		Dave Steane
* <b>Hymn of Praise</b>	<i>When Morning Gilds the Skies</i>	LAUDES DOMINI
* <b>Prayer of Confession and Assurance</b>		Amy Delgado
* <b>Affirmation of Faith</b>	The Apostles' Creed	
<b>Anthem</b>	<i>I Waited for the Lord (from Hymn of Praise)</i>	Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)
<b>Service of Officer Ordination and Installation</b>		Dave Steane, Mary Lee Going, Alf Halvorson
<b>Hymn of Celebration</b>	<i>Here I Am, Lord</i>	Daniel L. Schutte (b. 1947)
<b>Pastoral Prayer</b>		Dave Steane
<b>Anthem of Preparation</b>	<i>Call On Him</i>	John Leavitt (b. 1956)
<b>Message</b>	<i>Out On the Water</i> <i>Matthew 14:22-33 (NRSV)</i>	Alf Halvorson
* <b>Hymn of Response</b>	<i>More Love to Thee, O Christ</i>	MORE LOVE TO THEE
<b>Offering &amp; Benediction</b>		Alf Halvorson
<b>Postlude</b>	<i>Festive Trumpet Tune</i>	David German (b. 1954)

**[Give Online](https://give.mdpc.org)** ([give.mdpc.org](https://give.mdpc.org))

### Remember Our Mission Partners on the Front Lines of Ministry

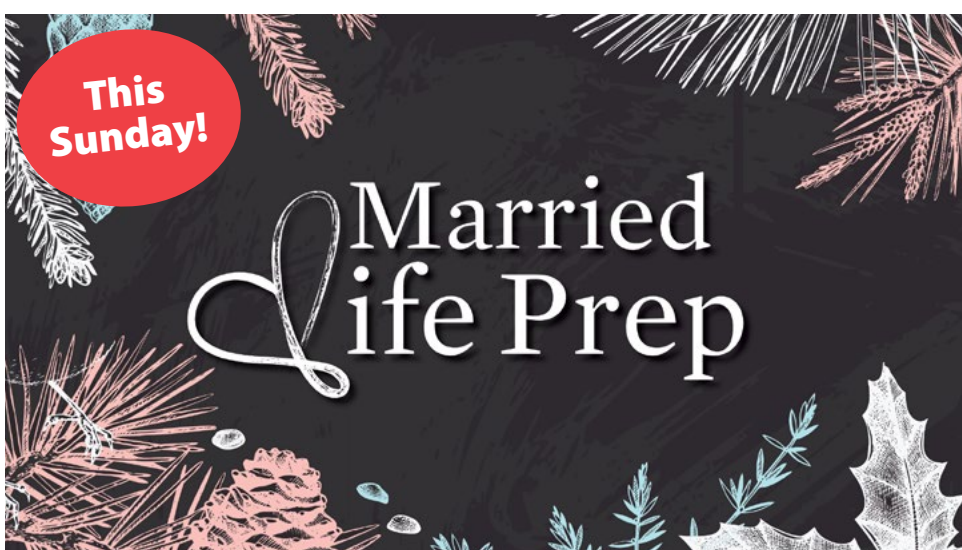
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Sunday, January 10, 2021

# MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

To see more events at MDPC, visit [events.mdpc.org](https://events.mdpc.org).

**GIVING:** Weekly financial updates will be printed in the bulletin after the 2021 budget is approved by Session in late January. Online giving is available at [give.mdpc.org](https://give.mdpc.org).



Research shows certain marriage prep programs to be particularly effective at preventing divorce, lowering the risk by as much as 75%. [Married Life Prep](https://www.marriedlifeprep.com) is approved by Twogether in Texas, and program graduates can have their Texas marriage license fee waived! A new 4-week class starts January 10.



Men, join us from anywhere for a four-week course that'll reconnect you with our Savior. Tuesdays mornings this February. Details and registration at [ml.mdpc.org](https://ml.mdpc.org).



Does it seem like you should be over your grief? While there is no timeline to grief, there is always hope. Join us Thursdays, Jan. 28-March 18 (3:00-4:30 PM on Zoom) for this Christ-centered program designed to help those dealing with loss. Trained facilitators guide the group. [Email Beverly Fluke](mailto:Bev@mdpc.org) to sign up.



CONNECTION is our Sunday program for Middle and High School students where we come together for fellowship, teaching, and worship. 11:15 AM in the Youth Loft; more info at [connection.mdpc.org](https://connection.mdpc.org).



Need a soft place to land? Unsure of where to go next? Learn more about our short-term counseling ministry by emailing MDPC counselor-in-residence Amanda Grace Caldwell, or visit [counseling.mdpc.org](https://counseling.mdpc.org).



FPU's focus on behavior change is a different view of personal finance. Most folks know what to do with money, but not how to do it. Millions have followed Dave Ramsey's plan out of debt and into a life of saving and giving. You can, too! Learn more at [fpu.mdpc.org](https://fpu.mdpc.org).



Alpha is for everyone. It breaks down distance (and social distancing) barriers by meeting online to explore life, faith, and meaning. No question or comment is out of bounds, and you're free to say as much or as little as you wish. To sign up for the next session starting February 2: [alpha.mdpc.org](https://alpha.mdpc.org)



Church in the City is back! Our fellow Houstonians can use your help this year more than ever. Save the dates and keep an eye on [citc.mdpc.org](https://citc.mdpc.org).



MDPC's fast-paced Saturday food pantry can use your helping hands, even if it's just for an hour or two. Shifts are flexible and you'll be put right to work! Learn more and sign up at [action.mdpc.org](https://action.mdpc.org).



Children's Ministries Sunday School is moving to YouTube! We will have Sunday School for Preschool and Elementary Kids on our YouTube channel from 10:45-11:15 AM for our Preschool and Elementary Kids. [Click here](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...) to learn more.



Sunday childcare currently is available for children five and under. Visit [children.mdpc.org](https://children.mdpc.org) to see our Sunday morning health and safety protocols. For The Galaxy elementary Sunday school, just text Galaxy F2F to the number 94000 so we know you are coming!

Today, we will install 23 new **MDPC** Officers to our Session, comprised of 16 Elders and 7 Deacons. Please welcome these outstanding individuals as they begin their three-year term serving the **MDPC** congregation.

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Sunday, January 10, 2021

## 2023 Class of Elders



### **Oliver Aldrich** | Treasurer Elect-elect

Oliver and wife Donna joined **MDPC** in 1996. They have been married for 56 years, and have two daughters, who are the proud parents of their four grandchildren. Oliver has previously served twice as treasurer, has served on Finance, Planning & Evaluation, **MDPC** Foundation, Caring Ministries (Ushers, Receptions, The Gathering Place), several ad hoc committees, and nominating committee. A graduate of Texas A&M University, retired from Weyerhaeuser Company, he is a retired CPA who volunteers as treasurer for several charitable organizations. His love of Jesus Christ began at an early age, and has been strengthened through Bible study, worship, and service in the church. He believes that when he serves, he feels God's pleasure.



### **Gerald Bennett** | Personnel Elect-elect

After graduating from Oklahoma State University in 1966, Gerald and his wife, Sandy, moved to Houston and, through a friend, quickly became acquainted with Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church. They moved their Methodist membership to join in 1970. Their two daughters, Shannon and Amber, grew up in the church. Gerald's Christian journey became real when, at the age of 17, God gave him a new lease on life after a serious, life-threatening car accident. During his professional career in the energy industry, where he was challenged with either troubled startups or turnarounds for failing companies, and in his various leadership roles with academic, medical, and not-for-profit arts organizations, Gerald has tried to live by Christian principles and ethics to focus on giving back rather than receiving. He has been blessed to serve **MDPC** as a Deacon, Treasurer of the church, and two terms as Elder. Gerald has served on several committees, including two building committees and a recent PNC. It's time to keep on giving.



### **Erin Bounds** | Youth | Outreach

Erin Bounds is married to **MDPC** member, Cary Bounds. They have three wonderful daughters: Elise attends Wheaton College in Illinois, and Sally and Averett attend Memorial High School. Erin became a Christian when she was very young and has always been active with church and missions. Erin is on the Hunger Task Force committee, leads a small group for Word and Worship, tutors in the HUG Program at Housman Elementary, and volunteers for East Spring Branch Food Pantry. She has also been a volunteer in the **MDPC** Youth department for the past seven years and enjoys encouraging our teens in their faith journeys. For fun she enjoys playing tennis, running, and playing Spades with other **MDPC** friends. She has worked with teenagers over the past 30 years doing Bible Studies, Young Life, Mission Trips, and Sunday school. Erin feels that being a Youth Elder is a part of God's calling and is excited to be a partner in seeking God's will for **MDPC's** Youth Ministries over the next three years.



### **Amber Caver | Outreach | Local**

Amber Caver is married to Tom Caver, whom she met at **MDPC**. She is the proud mother to Alyssa, a sophomore at UT Austin, and Drew, a high school junior. She is a 1992 Baylor graduate and has more recently completed her Fund Development Certificate from Rice University's School of Continuing Studies. Amber had a 14-year career in advertising sales for AT&T before "retiring" to spend more time with her kids and have time to volunteer. She has served in a number of capacities

both outside and within **MDPC**, including PTA and PTO president for both the elementary and middle schools attended by her children. At **MDPC** she has served as an adult leader for High School Youth, on the Children's Ministries Team, the Mo-Ranch Planning Committee, Outreach Committee for seven years, and is currently on the **MDPC** Women's Ministry Committee. In her free time she enjoys cooking, travel, water and snow skiing, and her ladies Bible study group. Amber is looking forward to being even more involved in helping guide **MDPC's** generous support of its Outreach Partners.



### **Katie Cooper | Legacy Giving**

Katie Cooper is married to Ryan Cooper and they have been members of **MDPC** since 2017. Their family fell in love with **MDPC** the first time they visited because of the warm welcome they received. Katie is the proud mother of two daughters, Caroline and Natalie, who attend Rummel Creek Elementary. She is a gift officer in the Office of Philanthropy at Texas Children's Hospital, a mission near to her heart as Caroline was born very prematurely and spent 102 days in the NICU.

Katie has been a Christian for as long as she can remember and feels blessed to be raised by two strong Christians who taught her about Jesus' love. After graduating from UT Austin, Katie had the opportunity to serve as a Young Life leader at Stratford High School. This will be her first time serving on Session. She is excited and humbled to serve on the Legacy Giving committee and to help the church continue its ministry.



### **Allison Daughtry | Outreach | Local**

Allison is a native Houstonian and has been married to her husband, Alan, for 28 years. They have three sons, Brandt (21), Titus (18), and Miles (16). She has been active in SBISD schools leading the PTA at Hunter's Creek Elementary and Spring Branch Middle School, as well as volunteering with Memorial High School and St. Pius X High School. Recently, she has led the committee at **MDPC** involved in the fight against combatting sex trafficking in Houston helping to bring Street

Grace to Houston. Allison came to know Christ at an early age. She holds her trust and faith in God as the truth, which is continually revealed to us through scripture and faith in Jesus Christ. She looks forward to serving with Outreach and engaging further with our partners serving the Houston area. Allison enjoys walking, reading, apologetics, decorating, and watching baseball.



### **Joy Dubinski | Children's | Preschool**

Joy Stanley Dubinski was born and raised in Texas, moving all over Texas due to her father's job. Her husband is Gerald Z. Dubinski, Jr. and she has three daughters, Nancy, Marilyn, and Alice. Her pride and joy are her two grandsons, Luke and Theodore (Teddy), sons of Nancy and Matthew Weber. She grew up in a Presbyterian family, with a rich heritage of Presbyterian ministers dating back to Scotland. She has taught preschool Sunday School and VBS, served as Superintendent

of Sunday Schools, served on a startup preschool school board, and served as a Deacon in her past churches in San Antonio, Texas, serving the Lord in many different ways. She spent much of her early career as a dietitian. Her second career was as a high school math teacher, teaching Algebra I, remediation math, and teaching math to ESL (newcomer English as a Second Language) students. This was her true calling, working with students who struggled to get their education, but truly wanted it.



### **Kelly Handel | Clerk Elect-elect**

Kelly Handel and her husband, Mike, have been members of **MDPC** for 30 years. Kelly is the proud mom to her two married daughters (Kristi and Garrett, Kaitlin and Nick). Kelly has served **MDPC** in various capacities including Sunday School teacher, BSD group leader, Summer Celebration chair, Hunger and Spring Branch outreach committee member, and Young Adult Elder. Kelly is a retired CPA having worked in the oil and gas industry in Houston and at a manufacturing

firm while living in Chicago. Kelly enjoys volunteering, exercising, cooking, traveling, and trying to play golf. Kelly feels called to serve **MDPC** as an Elder giving her an opportunity to support the activity of **MDPC** both inside and outside the church as we seek to spread the love of Jesus Christ.



### **Barbara James | Children's | Elementary**

Barbara James has been a part of the **MDPC** family for many years.

In high school, Barbara's family moved from New Jersey to Houston and joined **MDPC**. Barbara's parents were involved with the church and she credits most of her deeply rooted faith to her upbringing. In 1985, Barbara married her husband, Louis, in the **MDPC** Chapel.

Harry Adamson, associate pastor and friend of the family, performed the ceremony. Barbara and Louis have three grown children and three

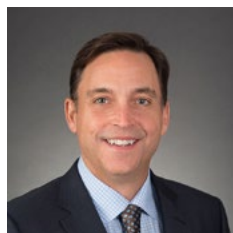
beautiful grandchildren. Barbara has been a Partner in Prayer, taught preschool and elementary Sunday School, and loves being a part of Summer Celebration as a shepherd each year. Barbara is a strong believer in God and knows through prayer, faith, love, and giving of one's talents, God will guide your life where He wants you to go. Barbara retired in June of 2020 as an elementary school teacher of 31 years. She enjoys exercising, gardening, and spending time with her grandchildren and family. She looks forward to continue to share the love of the Lord with **MDPC** members, the community, and, most importantly, with children.



### **Sharon Johnson | Young Adults**

Sharon Johnson is the proud mother of Richard and mother-in-law of Megan. She has two granddaughters, Camille (5 years) and Maris (15 months). She has been a member of **MDPC** for 29 years and has been active in Children's Ministries and Connections. She is the curriculum coordinator for the Fifth Service Small Group and attends Word and Worship on Sunday mornings. Sharon is a lifelong Presbyterian and considers Cursillo and Bible Study Discussion/Word and

Worship as significant influences in her faith walk. She is a speech-language pathologist who worked in Cypress-Fairbanks ISD and Spring Branch ISD before earning a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology and Individual Differences at the University of Houston. She has a private speech-language therapy practice in west Houston. Sharon is excited about being an Elder for Young Adults and considers it a call from God to shepherd this generation of believers and seekers.



### **Eddie Perdomo | Relationships | Men's Ministry**

Eddie Perdomo is the grateful husband of Kim and proud father of twins, Madelyn and Nicolas, sophomores in college. He and Kim celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary earlier this year and have been members of **MDPC** for 16 years, joining when the twins entered The Yellow School. Eddie participated in **MDPC** DADS Tailgate & Campout Events and served on that committee for two years. He joined Men's Life 15 years ago, served as Assistant Chairman in 2015,

Chairman in 2016, and has been a Small Group Leader for the last five years. As the twins entered high school, The Spirit moved Eddie to join the initial Human Trafficking Committee that formed as a result of Alf's initiative. He served on that committee from inception to the BIG EVENT and through joining forces with Street Grace. Eddie graduated from LSU, worked in the petro-chem industry, then moved into commercial construction as VP of Arch Floors. Eddie considers the role of Men's Ministry Elder a calling from God to bring men closer to Christ and to bless others through service.



### **Mickey Peters | Connections | New Members**

Mickey has been blessed to have Stephanie as his wife for 23 years and also be the proud father of Zach (22), a senior at Texas A&M, Emma (20), a sophomore at Baylor, and Luke (17), a junior at Stratford High School. Mickey has spent most of his career working in the energy sector and is currently the CEO of Fontus Hydro, the renewables platform of Enfragen, LLC, an energy infrastructure firm based in NYC. Mickey was raised as a Catholic, but really entered into a relationship with

Jesus while a graduating senior at Texas A&M. Mickey has since been active as a member and Sunday school student and, at times, teacher in Southern Baptist, non-denominational, and home churches in Houston, Lima, Peru, and Sao Paulo, Brazil. Mickey loves connecting deeply with other men in Men's Life, through his men's small group, as well as with other couples in married life group. Mickey and Stephanie are active in ministry to couples in crisis working with Affair Recovery out of Austin and **MDPC** Relationship Ministries. Mickey is excited to work with the **MDPC** leadership team as the New Member Elder to help new members plug into the great programs at **MDPC** and help them grow in their faith and ministry to bear fruit for the Kingdom.



### **Don Poarch | Generosity**

Don Poarch and his wife, Cindy, have been members of **MDPC** since 1993. His parents were early members when Dr. Charlie Shedd served as pastor. They have two daughters, Caroline and Allison. Don is co-founder, along with friend and fellow **MDPC** member Joe Swinbank, of The Sprint Companies, a diverse group of service businesses. Don has served as a tutor for the HUG program at Housman Elementary, as well as being a member of Men's Life. He most recently served

on the board of ALPHA Houston. He is also a founding member of Friends of ALPHA. He enjoys his family, working, traveling, golf, and quail hunting. Don sees the call to serve as an Elder as a call from God and he is committed to seeking His guidance. Don is looking forward to this service to the Lord and His church.



### **Jim Stinson | Equipping | Small Groups**

Jim Stinson joined **MDPC** with his family in 1960, at the age of 12. He is a returning Elder who accepts and welcomes Jesus Christ as his Lord and savior. He believes in the Trinity, life everlasting, and forgiveness of sins. Jim strives to make decisions and resolve doubts and weaknesses through prayer and study. In addition to worship services, he attends the Pastor's Bible Study Class and enjoys a small Bible study group with fellow **MDPC** retirees. Jim holds an engineering degree

from Texas Tech University, an MBA from the University of Texas, and MSAccy and PhD degrees from the University of Houston. He has corporate experience with FMC, Cooper Industries, and Baroid. He retired in 2014 after 30-plus years on the UH Bauer College of Business faculty. He also has taught in the Rice University MBA program and at Houston Baptist University. Jim is a CPA, former member of the Houston CPA Society board of directors, trustee of The C.T. Bauer Foundation, and member of the board of directors of the Ascend organization for pan-Asian business professionals.



### **Ellie Torres | Outreach | Global**

Ellie Torres grew up in Houston, Texas, and has been a lifelong member of **MDPC**. She attended Texas A&M University ('15) and currently practices mechanical engineering for a petrochemical company in Houston. In her free time, Ellie enjoys running, reading, cooking, and making pizza. Ellie is married to her better half, Edgar, and is the proud mom of two cats, Bella (16) and Maggie (8).





### **Xavier Trevino | Worship & Music**

Xavier is a proud native Texan and Houston Cougar. He is blessed to have been married to Ginny (Kemper) Trevino for nine years with whom he has a lovely two-year-old daughter, Amelia Ann. He has been a member of **MDPC** since 2015 serving as a Life 2.0 class teacher and Outreach committee member. Xavier works in SATCOM as a Principal Sales Engineer, designing and proposing communication solutions for major O&G offshore assets and facilities. Xavier is an

enlisted US Army Signal Corps Veteran (SGT). As part of the 7th Signal Brigade, he served in Afghanistan with the 82nd Airborne at FOB Solerno. Then in Iraq at FOB Victory and Basra to support Operation Knight's Charge. He was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal. Although an avid indoorsman, Xavier never misses a chance to go hiking, hunting, or fishing. Xavier also relaxes by reading sci-fi or military history novels. He is looking forward to serving **MDPC** as an Elder and giving back to a church that has given his family so much.

## **2023 Class of Deacons**



### **Jo Ballard | Memorial Receptions**

Jo Ballard and her husband, Sandy, have been **MDPC** members for 30 years. They raised their children, Sam, Caroline, and Kimber, here at **MDPC**. After college (SFA), Jo worked in advertising then stayed at home for many years with her children. When she returned to work, she taught middle school social studies in SBISD at Spring Forest for 20 years. She recently retired and now enjoys being "Granny" to grandsons Charlie, Carter, and Theo. Jo enjoys walking/hiking and

reading, but her passion is cooking, especially baking. Jo was blessed to grow up in a Christian home with parents who taught her the importance of loving Jesus and being part of a church family. Through most of the 90s, Jo taught third grade Sunday school then began attending the Seekers Class; she and Sandy are still active Seekers members. She has fond memories of being the painting coordinator for multiple years for woodworking during Summer Celebration. As Deacon for Memorial Receptions, Jo looks forward to using her talents for hospitality and organization to help foster the work of Caring Ministries.



### **Rebecca Davis | Alpha Prayer Ministry**

Rebecca is a long-time Houston resident who spends her free time with her husband and watching her son play sports. She looks forward to the opportunity of serving at **MDPC** in her role as Deacon of Alpha Prayer.



### **Sharon Fox | College Ministry**

Sharon Fox and her husband, Chuck, have been members of **MDPC** and the CrossRoads Class since 1990. Sharon is involved with HUG tutoring, Impact Mentoring, and loves digging deeper into God's word through Word and Worship. Over the years, Sharon has taught Summer Celebration and Elementary Sunday School, and was a small group leader for BSD. She has also enjoyed helping and connecting with students at FamilyPoint Resources. Sharon and Chuck have four

young adult children, Amy, David, Joe, and Jenny, who have recently completed or are nearing completion of their college educations. As a result, Sharon feels she can identify with the stresses and joys, fears and challenges facing college students today, especially with changes to college life during the pandemic. She is looking forward to sharing God's love with our college students, and seeing God's hand at work through the College Ministry team to provide caring and meaningful support for **MDPC's** college students.



### **Stephanie Peters | Online Community**

Stephanie Peters is married to **MDPC** member, Mickey Peters, and is mother to Zach (a senior at Texas A&M), Emma (a sophomore at Baylor), and Luke (a junior at Stratford HS). She is the owner/operator of the Massage Heights franchise in the Heights area of Houston. Stephanie is a Stephen Minister (from her days at Grace Presbyterian) and volunteers with Affair Recovery, an organization that leads couples through the healing and reconciliation of their marriages. She

loves playing tennis, watching movies, and enjoying good food. She has served in many roles with churches while living abroad – serving on the Board of Directors for the Union Church of Lima (Peru) as the Treasurer and again in Sao Paulo for Sampa Church. Stephanie attends the Daily Bread Sunday School class at **MDPC** and is excited to be the new Deacon of our Online Community.



### **Danielle Shindler | Connections Team**

Danielle Shindler is married to Dillon Shindler and they just welcomed their beautiful baby girl, Amelia, in early October. Danielle grew up in the Methodist church with her family, but it wasn't until she met her husband that her deep personal relationship with Christ began to flourish. She joined **MDPC** a few years later and has been involved in youth activities, as well as hosting a young adult Bible study in their home. As a physical therapist, Danielle has a passion

for listening and helping others become the best version of themselves. It is this passion that inspired and motivated her calling to become a Deacon for Connections Ministry. Danielle is excited and committed to listen to God's calling and assist in helping others connect and grow with Christ.



### **Andre Verona | Intercultural Ministries**

Andre Verona is the proud husband of Regina and father to Thiago (11) and Felipe (9). He and his wife were raised in Sao Paulo, Brazil, and his boys were born in Los Angeles. Andre grew up in a Presbyterian family and accepted Christ in his teenage years. From a young age, he has been dedicated to the gospel, using his talents to serve as a graphic designer at his local church. He and his family moved from California in 2017 and he was introduced to the Brazilian church at

**MDPC** right away. Andre now serves as a board member of the Brazilian congregation, and his wife is the leader of the Brazilian women's ministry. He is involved in **MDPC's** Fuente Food Pantry, where he welcomes the families at the frontline. Andre native language is Portuguese, but he also speaks English and Spanish and studies Italian. He works in a LA-based advertising agency as internet designer and developer. He sees the call to serve as a Deacon an opportunity from God to practice his faith, contributing to the needs of the people.



### **Mona Williams | Memorial Services**

Mona is a native Houstonian who has lived in the Houston area her entire life, except while attending the University of Texas, where she graduated with a degree in Elementary Education. Mona began attending **MDPC** in 1974 during Bob Ball's final sermon and joined a year and a half later after Jim Wharton became senior pastor. Mona has three grown children: Stuart, and twin daughters, Melanie Jaeger and Carla Bradford, all of whom grew up at **MDPC**. Her daughters

and their families are very active at **MDPC**. Mona worked in many different industries in Houston for 37 years, retiring in 2017 after 22 years in commercial real estate, specializing in office leasing. Mona has volunteered in a number of different areas at **MDPC** including teaching third grade Sunday school, being a greeter, Kids' Meals, Teen Moms, Piney Point teachers, Food Service, Church in the City, and Summer Celebration. Mona has always had a deep sympathy for those who have lost loved ones, and is looking forward to the call to serve as Deacon with Memorial Services Ministries and to showing God's love and compassion to families during their difficult times.



This is the first of a short New Year 2021 series on maybe my favorite New Testament story. After Jesus heard about John the Baptist's death in [Matthew 14:12](#), Jesus withdrew to a deserted place by Himself to grieve and pray. However, people heard where Jesus was, and a crowd gathered. Jesus had compassion on them, cured their sick, preached a message, and then fed the 5,000 with two fish and five loaves. Right when that episode finishes, Jesus sends the crowd away and commands the disciples to get in the boat and go on ahead of Him to the other side, so that He could be by Himself again to finish His communion with the Father in prayer.

1. How did you spend your Christmas and New Year? Did you get some down-time? Was there any time to grieve or pray about events of 2020 and/or ponder or prepare for 2021? Share with your group. What does it say that Jesus regularly withdrew to re-fill His well, emotionally and spiritually? Do you have a regular routine to do the same?
2. Read [Matthew 14:22-33](#). Get your facts straight about what happens in each part with the disciples and Jesus. Track the disciples first; then track Jesus. What happened here so that the disciples moved from thinking Jesus was a "ghost" in verse 26 to worshipping Him as the "Son of God" in verse 33?
3. Let's look at the encounter in the middle of this passage between Jesus and Peter. What did Jesus say first (vss. 27-31)? How did Peter answer Jesus in verse 28? What was Jesus' response in verse 29 to Peter's question in verse 28? And what derailed Peter's miraculous walk on the water in verse 30?
4. What can you learn about discipleship and following Jesus from this exchange between Jesus with Peter? Where might Jesus be inviting you "out of the boat"? How has He said to you, "Come"? What are your fears surrounding stepping out in faith? What are the potential waves and wind that have distracted or could distract you from single-minded devotion to Jesus' invitation?
5. Did you see that even though Peter failed or did not carry out his mission perfectly, the result was that Jesus saved him and that all the disciples worshipped him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God"? Is it possible that even a failed step of faith can produce worship and greater faith in our Savior? Why do you think that is so?
6. What step of faith in 2021 is awaiting your courageous response? How might your risk, even if you don't carry it out flawlessly, still inspire others to faith?

