MDPC INFO

MDPC Coordinating Team

Mauricio Chacón | Latino Ministries Pastor Amy Delgado | Interim Outreach Director Brandon Gaide | Young Adult Pastor Ginny Glass | Communications & Media Director Meliza Gómez | Contemporary Music Director Alf Halvorson | Senior Pastor Charles Hausmann | Traditional Music Director Brett Hurst | Relationships Pastor Christyn Knoop | Adult Ministries Director Gena Kooken | Senior Leadership Ministry Coord. Laura Miller | Youth Director Rick Myers | Caring Ministries Pastor Rachel Poysky | Children's Pastor Becky Riggs | Business Administrator Dave Steane | Executive Pastor Kathryn White | Coordinating Music Director Karen Winship | Human Resources Director

Pastors Emeritus

Dave Peterson Gary Bowker

Chancel Flowers

Today's flowers are given in honor of the January 7, 2017 wedding of Hayden Hulings and Megan Adams.

The White Rose is given in memory of

Esther Parks, who passed away December 26, 2016.

Ministry Partners 2017

This week, we ask that you pray for these partners in ministry that MDPC assists with your support:

the innovative efforts in prevention

June and Jack Long.

Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse AIDS Foundation Houston leads provides support services, education, and legal representation to individuals impacted by domestic violence; battering intervention and services for individuals who commit violence; and educational curriculum to prevent violence in the future. avda-tx.org

of new HIV infections. It empowers individuals, families, and communities affected by HIV/AIDS to create and sustain healthy lives. Each client referrals to housing, health, and employment resources. aidshelp.org

MDPC Field Partner Urgessa works and serves in Ethiopia as the founder of Light of Hope Ministry. Light of Hope's vision is to bring the Good News of God's love, expressed in the life and death of Jesus, to meets with a case manager to develop Muslim people groups, beginning an individualized plan that includes with the Arssi Oromo in both Ethiopia and North America. MDPC partners with Urgessa through Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship.

WEEKLY FINANCIAL UPDATE

The weekly financial update will be shown on the screens in this morning's services.

Pictured: Your giving helps support AIDS Foundation Houston, which provides resources counseling, case management, housing, and food and nutrition assistance to low-income, HIV-positive men, women, and children. AFH also runs Camp Hope for HIV-positive kids, where they learn important life skills to manage life with HIV/AIDS in a healthy and secure environment. >

MDPC

Loving God. Proclaiming Christ. Living Generously. Engaging All. 11612 Memorial Drive | Houston, Texas 77024 | mdpc.org | 713-782-1710

STUDY & SMALL GROUP SPOTLIGHT





All are welcome to join us as we study the book of Matthew. We are a friendly group and love to see new faces!

Tuesday Mornings, January 9-April 5 9:00-10:00 AM | MC 122

No registration is required. If you have questions, contact Rachel Poysky (rpoysky@mdpc.org) or Martha Moore (marthamoore@mdpc.org).

Our apologies to those inadvertently omitted from Christmas Eve Poinsettia dedication list:

Carrie, Jim, William, and Michael Goolsby in memory of

Without Vision ...the people perish. –Proverbs 29:18 клу, Psalm 42:7 NRSV

Coming Up at MDPC

Sunday, January 8, 2017

All-Church Lunch Is Today

Everyone is welcome! Entrée (\$10), entrée salad (\$8.50), and children's meal (\$4) all come with coffee, iced tea, milk for kids, and a choice of dessert. Today in Fellowship Hall | 11:00 AM-1:00 PM

Discover MDPC with Alf

Want to know more about MDPC? Interested in membership? Attend an Informational Meeting to find out more about who we are and how we operate, both in our community and around the world. Today, 10:45-11:15 AM | Gathering Room membership.mdpc.org

Bible in 90 Davs

Read the entire Bible with lots of support and insight through the Bible in 90 Days 14-week course. In 2017, we'll finish just as Holy Week begins. Sundays, January 8-April 9 | 11:15 AM | MC 101 Email Jeff Wells with questions: tjwells54@gmail.com

2017 Partner In Prayer Packet Pick-up

Are you excited to see who you're praying for this year? We're excited to show you! Packets are available in the Lobby this morning. You still can sign up! Details at pip.mdpc.org.

New Member Classes

This series is taught by the associate pastors and elders and includes a Saturday service project at one of our local mission partners.

Sundays, January 15-February 19 | 9:45-11:00 AM Contact Diann Turet to register: dturet@mdpc.org or 713-490-9553

Kids' Meals Monthly Service Project

In Houston, one in four preschool children goes to bed hungry - you can make sure there is one less empty tummy! Give one hour of your time, bring two loaves of bread per sandwich-maker, and make sandwiches for Kids' Meals. That's all it takes to make a difference.

Wednesday, January 11 | 5:00-6:00 PM Contact Julie for information: hempeljulie@gmail.com

Master Dance Class

Join some of Houston's best exercise dance instructors to get an amazing workout and support Living Water International, which drills drinking-water wells all over the world for people living in poverty. January 14 | 1:00-3:00 PM | SSQQ Dance Studio \$25/person - All money goes to LWI Sign up at eventbrite.com (Search "Team Living Water"), or contact Sarah Stone at sstone@mdpc.org.

Prime Timers January Luncheon

Beloved pianist Rob Landes returns to play songs from Broadway. You're sure to love listening to this concert of music from Broadway shows! Tuesday, January 17 | Fellowship Hall Free Program: 10:30 AM | Lunch (\$9.50): Noon Checks for lunch made out to MDPC must be received by January 11. Visitors are welcome for the program but must make a reservation for lunch.

Gems & Jewels and SCUBA

Bible studies for 3rd-5th grade boys and girls. Wednesdays starting January 18 children.mdpc.org







MDPC MORNING WORSHIP

CCLI # 182374

8:30 AM SERVICE

*Please stand if able

GATHERING MUSIC				
WELCOME		Dave Steane		
*SONGS OF PRAISE				
*PRAYER OF CONFESSION & ASSURANCE		Rick Myers		
SERVICE OF ELDER ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION				
CONGREGATIONAL SONG OF RESPONSE				
GIFTS OF GRATITUDE				
MESSAGE	Without Visionthe People Perish Proverbs 29:18 KJV, Psalm 42:7 NRSV	Alf Halvorson		
RESPONSE OF THE PEOPLE				

9:45 AM SERVICE

WORSHIP INVITATION		
*CALL TO WORSHIP		
*MOMENT OF CONFESSION & ASSURANCE		Tara Reynolds
SERVICE OF ELDER ORDINA	TION AND INSTALLATION	
CONGREGATIONAL SONG O	FRESPONSE	
GIFTS OF GRATITUDE		Dave Steane
MESSAGE	Without Visionthe People Perish Proverbs 29:18 KJV, Psalm 42:7 NRSV	Alf Halvorsor
RESPONSE OF THE PEOPLE		

Musicians in these services: Joe Gavito, guitar; Meliza Gómez, worship leader; Craig Gysler, keys; Michael Middleton, worship leader; Asher Pudlo, drums; Dennis Whittaker, bass

11:15 AM SERVICE

PRELUDE	Meditation for Organ	George Thalben-Ball (1896-1987)		
WELCOME AND CALL TO WORSH	IP	Dave Steane		
CHORAL INTROIT	Behold Now, Praise the Lord	Everett Titcomb (1884-1968)		
*HYMN OF PRAISE	We Three Kings of Orient Are	#66; Vs. 1 & 5 Three Kings of Orient		
*PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE		Rick Myers		
*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH from The Apostles' Creed				
ANTHEM	How Lovely Are the Messengers	Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)		
SERVICE OF ELDER ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION				
CONGREGATIONAL HYMN OF RES	SPONSE Here I Am, Lord	#525; Vs. 1 Daniel Schutte (B.1947)		
OFFERTORY	Be Thou My Vision	John Rutter (b.1945)		
MESSAGE	Without Visionthe People Perish Proverbs 29:18 KJV, Psalm 42:7 NRSV	Alf Halvorson		
*CLOSING HYMN	When Morning Gilds the Skies	#339; Vs. 1 Laudes Domini		
POSTLUDE	When Morning Gilds the Skies	arr. Dale Wood (1934-2003)		

Musicians in this service: Charles Hausmann, conductor; Kathryn White, organist

MORE ON MDPC SUNDAY MORNINGS

11:00 AM FIFTH SERVICE: Join folks in the Amphitheater for energetic worship, dynamic teaching, and casual community. Pastor Alf will preach this Sunday. Visit fifthservice.mdpc.org for more.

11:15 AM SPANISH SERVICE: MDPC's Fuente Hispanic Ministries worships in the Chapel. For more information on Spanish and bilingual community events and programs, visit fuente.mdpc.org.

VISITORS: If you are visiting MDPC today, we are delighted that you have come to worship with us! Allow us to welcome you personally at the Connection Center located in the Sanctuary Lobby.

INTERESTED IN MEMBERSHIP? For inquiries on how to become a member of MDPC, contact Diann Turet at dturet@mdpc.org and join one of our New Member Classes that run throughout the year.

Free Parenting Seminar! Location: MDPC Fellowship Hall Registration: palooza.mdpc.org



Family Mission Day 2017

On the MLK Day holiday, we will take buses out into the Houston community and serve the city together.

Monday, January 16 | 9:00 AM-4:00 PM

\$10 per person includes lunch Register online at register.mdpc.org.



Miggion Tripg Middle School Mission Trip San Antonio · June 4-10

San Antonio • June 4-10 Open to current 7th-8th graders High School Mission Trip

June 18-24 Open to current 9th-12th graders 6th Grade Mission Trip Houston • June 28-29 Open to current 6th graders

Uganda Mission Trip July 18-27 Open to current Juniors and Seniors

This monthly small group for parents of children with special needs includes a brief presentation by a community resource provider as well as time for discussion and questions. Lunch

For more information about this and other offerings for special needs children, contact Keri Mosk, Special Needs Ministry

Second Tuesday of the Month 12:00-1:00 PM | MC 102

kmosk@mdpc.org or 713-490-9265.

Registration opens today: youthmissions.mdpc.org • For Uganda, email Kyle Collins to apply: kcollins@mdpc.org

is provided.

Director, at



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11

1:00-5:00 PM | Spring Valley Village Park (1025 Campbell, 77055)

- An alcohol-free family event, open to the community
- Free tastings and live entertainment
- Activities for kids throughout the park
- All teams & groups are welcome to compete
- With a new Cook-off Category: Dessert!

cbgr.mdpc.org \cdot \$35 per team



Wednesday Evenings, January 11 and 18



Sally Roach

Worship & Music Sally is a 30-year member of MDPC. She and her husband, Thad, have been married 43 years. They have two grown children and four grandchildren, all living in Houston. Sally volunteered at MDPC in Sunday school and ended up serving in high school youth for 15 years. She has been on numerous mission trips with youth and adults and considers these trips to truly be lifechanging. Sally has been a Stephen Minister and is now

active in Home Visitation. She has served on MDPC Worship & Music twice and feels God's call to support the mission and vision of the ministry's leaders. She is excited to see what God is up to! She has worked at Bags and More boutique for about 10 years. Her prayer is to draw closer to God through serving the church and her community.



Chris Rush

Youth | Middle School Chris Rush is married to MDPC member and former MDPC employee, Tera Rush. They both began volunteering in the youth program and joined MDPC

in the mid-90s. Chris served on the church staff as Middle School Director and then Youth Director from 1999 to 2007. Over the years, Chris has engaged with several ministry areas, most recently serving as Men's Life Chair in 2012-2013. Since leaving full-time

ministry, Chris has been working in the pharmaceutical industry. Chris and Tera are both graduates of Texas A&M and have two children, Savannah (11) and Wyatt (4). Outside of his family, Chris most enjoys spending time with students. He is excited about re-connecting with Youth Ministries in an official capacity. He believes that the student ministry serves a critical role in students' lives, and is most impactful when supplementing strong, Christ-centered teaching and experiences the students receive at home.



Stan Simmons

Outreach | Local Charles S. (Stan) Simmons and his wife, Janet, were married at MDPC in September 1991 by Tom Tewell and Boyd Lien. They are a blended family which includes Stan's sons, Ben and Ahren, and Jan's twin daughters, Jennifer and Kristin, affectionately known as "our kids." Stan was baptized as an infant and raised in the Presbyterian church. Janet joined MDPC as a young girl in 1959, and Stan joined in 1988. Stan worked in

the wholesale tire distribution business in Houston and San Antonio for 40 years before retiring in 2012. Over the years at MDPC, Stan has participated on many committees, boards, and taught Sunday School at various levels, and serves on the Local Outreach Committee for Spring Branch Hunger. He strongly feels he has been led by the Holy Spirit in following God's call and looks forward with great anticipation to continuing to serve the Lord, this time as an Elder.



Nimia Tillmann

Fuente Ministries Nimia Tillmann is a Licensed Social Worker who has dedicated her life to helping the local community, the less fortunate, and Hispanic families. She has served on the Board of Directors of various organizations, including three terms as President of the National Hispanic Council on Aging/Houston chapter. Nimia works for Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services, providing Christ-centered services to families and

children in crisis. Originally from Venezuela, Nimia was involved in numerous projects as a student leader at Zulia University, where she received her degree. In Houston, she has served on the boards of the United Way Interagency and Referral and Elder Services Provider Network. Nimia is married to Nick Tillmann, an accomplished business executive who is very involved in the community and supports her in all her endeavors. Together they enjoy traveling and spending time with their family, friends, and pets.



Troy Vickers

Troy is the proud husband of Diane and father to Anna and Maggie, both of whom were baptized and confirmed at MDPC. After graduating from Mississippi State University, he moved to New Orleans, where he met Diane. They moved to Houston and searched for a church home. With Troy working in Egypt, friends invited Diane to MDPC. They soon joined the church and the CrossRoads Sunday School class, which they

Administration | Facilities

have attended for 25 years. Troy served on the board of The Yellow School during its design and construction, has taught children's Sunday School, volunteered in Youth Ministries and on mission trips, and taught CrossRoads on a rotating basis for the past seven years. He is part of a small covenant group of strong Christian men that has helped sustain and encourage his ongoing spiritual journey. Troy believes that God has called him into the Elder position to use his talents to help ensure our facilities are used to fulfill God's plans for MDPC's ministry.

Bart Westmoreland

Administration | Generosity (1-year term, Class of 2017)

A member since 1990, Barton (Bart) Westmoreland served as Moderator of the Board of Deacons (Deacon Class of 1994), Stewardship Chairman (Elder Class of 2000), and in the Clerk chain (Elder Class of 2012). His involvement as a charter member of the Seekers class, membership in several small groups, Men's Life, and

the IMPACT mentoring program have provided him with a rich experience at MDPC, along with numerous opportunities for personal and spiritual growth. Bart is a graduate of the Hankamer School of Business at Baylor University and the Baylor School of Law. He currently works as in-house counsel for USI Southwest. Bart and his wife, Barbara, have been married for 37 years. They have two married children: Justin, a pilot for Southwest Airlines as well as the Air National Guard, and Alisa, a part-time preschool teacher and full-time mother.



Sunday, January 8, 2017

Elders play a vital role in the ministries and administration of Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church. Today, we install 20 new Elders to our Session. We congratulate them on their new positions, and we pray for their wisdom and discernment as they help guide us through the next three years and beyond. Take a moment to learn more about their journeys of faith and service.



their dog, Molly.







MDPC

New Elder Installation

CLASS OF

Laura Benes Relationships | Women's Laura joined MDPC in 2004. She and her husband, Mike, are raising two teenagers, Michael (13) and Charlotte (16). After watching her husband work in Men's Ministry, Laura was motivated to become involved with MDPC Women. She is very excited about this new venture. She can't wait to get to know more of the women at MDPC and encourage their faithwalks through various programs. Laura works in interior

design for Cindy Witmer Designs and, prior to that, in her own firm. She loves reading, traveling, napping, baking, and spending time with friends, family, and

> Carla Bradford Children's | Preschool Carla Bradford was baptized and married her husband, Rick, right here at MDPC. Their children, Bennett (13) and Campbell (8), have been involved at MDPC since their baptisms. Carla's faith has deepened through her involvement in Children's Ministries. Over the past 11 years, she has served as Summer Celebration chair, taught Preschool Sunday School, been a Story-Teller, and served on the Children's Ministries Lead Team. Her

involvement has shown her the significance of instilling faith early in a child's life. Carla graduated Texas A&M and, before becoming a stay-at-home mom, worked at Accenture and Auto Nation.

> Warren Bright Administration | Generosity Warren and his wife, Beverly, were married at MDPC 43 years ago. While waiting for the ceremony, Warren discovered a plaque displaying MDPC's two founding principles: First, that MDPC is to be a house of prayer and every member be prayed for every day, and, second, that MDPC is committed to a Dollar-for-Dollar benevolence program of matching operational spending with giving to those in need. Profoundly

moved by these principles, he started attending MDPC and became a member. Warren has taught children's Sunday School, served on a Pastor Nominating Committee, previously served as an Elder, and is one of the founding leaders of MDPC's Stephen Ministry. He believes God is always working in our lives and this opportunity to serve Him as a Generosity Elder will provide a new avenue to even further deepen his faith.



Michelle Chambers Children's | Elementary Michelle is married to MDPC member, John, and is mother to three sons, Andrew (17), Thomas (15), and James (10). Michelle graduated from TCU and the University of Tennessee and worked in a variety of healthcare settings (physical rehabilitation, long term healthcare, and an out-patient brain injury program). Michelle is now a stay-at-home mom who enjoys walking, tennis, reading, college football, and

volunteering at her children's schools. Since joining MDPC, Michelle has served on The Yellow School Board, and has been an Elementary Sunday School and Summer Celebration teacher for about 13 years. Michelle looks forward to serving as Elementary Elder, sharing God's love with the kids, and helping them grow in Christ.



Marty Chapman

Children's Ministries | Preschool (1-year term, Class of 2017) Marty Lilliott Chapman grew up at MDPC. She was confirmed as a member in the 6th grade, was active in

the youth group and the Joyful Noise in high school, and worked as a summer youth intern in 1992. Marty graduated from Texas A&M and holds a Master's degree in Speech Language Pathology from The University of

Texas at Dallas. She and her husband, Rick, were married at MDPC in 1997 and are the proud parents of Julia, Jake, and Lexie. Marty keeps busy by volunteering with her kids' elementary school, Blessings in a Backpack, Sister School Solution, HUG, and NCL. She's excited to serve as Preschool Elder and help shepherd our church's littlest lambs.



Charmaine Denny

Administration | Food Service Charmaine joined MDPC 25 years ago when she married her husband, Dave. She and Dave and their children—Tyler (22), Blake (21), and Dana (18)—have fond memories of "camping out" on the MDPC soccer field, Pheasant Run at Mo-Ranch, Summer Celebration, and making gingerbread houses. Looking back, every family memory or milestone involves MDPC in some

way. It was at Bible Study Discussion (BSD) that Jesus Christ stole Charmaine's heart and wooed her into a personal relationship with Him and with His people. She is very humbled to be asked to serve as the Food Service Ministries Elder and cannot think of a place she would rather be than at a dinner table surrounded by family, friends, good food, fellowship, and fun, with Jesus as the centerpiece.



Tim Fenn Personnel | Elect-elect Tim and his family have been members of MDPC since 2003. Tim first accepted Christ in 1976 in Jackson, Mississippi and grew up as an active member of the youth group at Tallowood Baptist. He studied accounting at Baylor University, received a law degree from Georgetown University, and is a partner at Latham & Watkins LLP where he specializes in business taxation. He has been married to Sharalynn for 24

years, although they met in 1982 at Spring Forest Junior High. Tim's two sons-Charles, a junior at MHS, and Greydon, an 8th grader at MMS-both accepted

Christ and were baptized at MDPC. Tim has served on the board and as the treasurer of The Yellow School, taught Preschool Sunday School, and as a Men's Life small group leader. Tim is excited to be part of God's continued work at MDPC.



Paul Helbling Outreach | Connections Paul and his wife, Robin, have been MDPC members since 1993, and their daughters, Dana and Sydney, were raised and married at MDPC. After a start with Ernst & Young, Paul spent most of his career as a financial

executive for oilfield service and technology companies. He is now enjoying retirement. He and Robin have been members of the Seekers Sunday School class since the '90s. In 2000, Paul joined an MDPC men's small

group that still meets weekly and, in 2002, he began serving as an MDPC Stephen Minister. In 2013, Paul joined the board of Houston Graduate School of Theology as a Trustee. Each of these has been a successive step in his lifelong walk with Christ. Serving as Connections Elder feels like a natural next step, tapping his innate personality to enact hospitality throughout the church's ministry.



Lydia Junek

Administration | Treasurer Elect-elect Lydia and her husband, Gary, have been members of MDPC for over 20 years. They are proud parents of two daughters, Alexa and Amanda, who have grown up at MDPC. Lydia has been an Elder in Children's and in Fuente Ministries, served on the Discernment Team, and is currently a member of the BSD Steering Team. Lydia also served on Outreach Ministries'

Spring Branch Committee and currently serves on the board of the Spring Branch Community Health Center. Professionally, she was Managing Director of Citigroup's Energy Corporate Bank in Houston and founder of Piney Point Capital Advisors. Lydia is humbled to be called to serve on Session at this important time in the life of MDPC as we look forward to God's plan for our community of faith.

John Kemper



Caring Ministries | Healthcare (1-year term, Class of 2017) John has attended MDPC since 1979. He was married to Linda Kemper for 38 years, until she passed away in

2015. Their children, Ginny and David, both grew up at MDPC. Ginny presently is serving as an Elder for Equipping Ministries. After attending Tulsa University, John worked for Sears for 10 years in eight different cities. He moved to Houston in 1979, started a small

manufacturing company, and sold it in 2014. John previously served as an Elder, taught fourth grade Sunday school, participated in Men's Life for many years, attends a small group, and currently serves as an advisor for Newspring. He is board chairman of the Spring Branch Community Health Center, which MDPC helps support. The organization has four clinics and serves over 4,500 patients per month.









Susanne McClean Worship & Music Susanne has volunteered throughout her life in school, at church, in her daughters' activities, and now is concentrating on opportunities at MDPC. Susanne, a widow of five years, is mother to two daughters, Allison Daughtry and Darby Suman. She owned an antiques business for twenty years and currently is lovingly grandparenting six grandsons.

Ted Meyer Equipping | Prayer Initiatives Ted has been an MDPC member since 1990, and is married to Jenny. They are active in Bible study groups and classes and look forward to leading The Spoken Word this Lenten season. Through their relationship with Brett and Kellie Hurst, Ted and Jenny believe strongly in the critical role of Christ as a living and active presence in their marriage. Ted credits his close relationship with late MDPC member Gay Hudson

as igniting his passion to become deeply and actively involved in MDPC's leadership. Ted and Jenny head up a blended family of four children: Sarah (24), Daniel (22), Francie (21), and Mia (1). Ted has been a management side labor and employment lawyer for over 25 years. He is passionate about leadership and teaching, and is honored to serve as an Elder at this exciting time at MDPC.

Cheryl Moore

Administration | Clerk Elect-elect

MDPC has been Cheryl's church home for most of her life. Though her family moved in and out of Houston growing up, they always returned to this church. She married her husband, Preston, here in 1986, and they became members after moving back from New York in 1993, and raised three children—Preston (25), Kathryn (24), and Kristen (20)-at MDPC. Cheryl credits BSD,

weekly worship, and countless small groups for leading her to study scripture and, because of her acceptance of Christ at an earlier age, to seek to live a life worthy of that calling. She stays involved with Lulwanda Children's Home in Uganda and works for the beautification of Houston through the accessibility of public gardens. In her spare time, Cheryl enjoys being in her kitchen with family and friends, reflecting in a garden, or walking through the neighborhood.

Barbara Mueller

Children's | Special Blessings

Barbara grew up in Refugio, Texas, where she was blessed to be part of a loving Lutheran church that helped her develop a solid foundation in her faith. She has been an MDPC member since 1996. Barbara was active in the Blueprint Class, expanding her study of the Bible and understanding how God wanted her to grow in her Christian walk. When her mother was

diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 1995, Barbara learned to rely on God and the MDPC community for support and guidance. An MDPC friend, Anita Bullers, encouraged her to help with the ministry for children with special needs. Though Barbara was reluctant, Anita persisted. Looking back, Barbara now realizes that it was God and the Holy Spirit guiding her to His current plan for her to grow in her faith through service to Him. Barbara has two sisters, Beverly May and Brenda Mueller, who also are members at MDPC.

DIGGING DEEPER

Without Vision

–Proverbs 29:18 kjv, Psalm 42:7 nrsv

Happy New Year! I hope you had a great Christmas and are excited about what God has in store for us in the New Year. All fall, MDPC Staff and Elders have been doing strategic planning using the book *The Advantage*, written by

sought-after consultant Patrick Lencioni. He has organizations (from businesses to notfor-profits to churches) answer six questions: *Why do we exist? How do we behave? What do we do? How will we succeed? What is most important, right now? And who must do what?* These six questions allow a group to find clarity, alignment, and then goals around which they can rally. I hope Session will approve our plan at its end-of-January retreat, but I would like to share with you many of what we believe are God-given emphases worth sacrificing for in this next important season in our life together.

- 1. I started with Proverbs 29:18: "Where there is no vision, the people perish: but happy are those who keep the law." What does it mean to you individually, and for MDPC collectively, that we have not been able to look forward for the last half-decade until now? Does the chance to vision-cast excite you or cause you anxiety?
- 2. Sometimes it is said that people do not like *change*. I don't think that is true in all cases. We *change* to get married, to go to school, to have a baby, or to buy a new house or car. Change often is very positive. What we do not like is *loss*. As we move forward as a church, what do you hope we preserve? What, in your mind, would it be a shame to lose?
- 3. Psalm 42:7 says, "Deep calls to deep." There is something deep in God that calls to that which is deep in us. We yearn for a deeper connection with the living God; a deeper investment with one another; and a deeper engagement with the world for which Christ died. Of the thoughts and plans that I shared, which one(s) excited you the most? Why?
- 4. Was there anything not included that should be? Was there something included that could be dropped?
- 5. I quoted Winston Churchill, who stepped forward at a critical juncture in history and made a profound difference. Where might God want you to step forward right now? Where is *deep calling to deep*? When will you worship? How might you grow, study, stretch? Where might you serve?

