

Connections

Arise-a United Methodist Church



Fall 2009



Ministers

*Every member
of the Church*

Pastor

Don Weatherup

Director of Music

Rich Sliter

Administrative

Assistant

Dave Russell

Ministry Center

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The Fikes: Partners in Life and Ministry

Ron and Gayle Fike have been at Arise for about six years. When Arise friends think of them, they probably think of the Wednesday Night Bible Study. The Fikes have led “The Wednesday Nighters” weekly in their home for the last several years—members being known for their generosity and enthusiasm for assembling and donating large numbers of health kits, school kits, and Christmas boxes for children overseas. And now, Ron is applying to be a pastor. What led both of them to this point in their lives together makes an interesting story.

Ron was born in Highland Park and moved to South Lyon in 6th grade, attending 1st Presbyterian Church. His mother was the church secretary; his father worked at Burroughs in Plymouth. His favorite memory of church as a child is the building being very old with lots of “secret” places like a bell tower “that we used to tear around in.” As a teen, he was an usher and President of his Sr. High Youth Fellowship. The group once made a trip to Pine Mountain Settlement in Kentucky to scrape and paint buildings. To earn money, they recycled enough newspapers to fill up a tandem gravel truck. They also recycled glass bottles for money.

Ron worked two jobs in high school, saving his money for college, and majored in Earth Science at Eastern Michigan University. Having met Gayle in classes, he asked her out for their first date at the “Mud Cinema” on campus, where tickets were \$1. “Then after she accepted, I asked her if she’d loan me \$2,” he says, laughing, “I was that broke.” Ron taught Middle School for 3 years and then found other work, due to frequent layoffs in teaching during the 80’s. He has since worked in sales, business, and management and is currently with Ervin Leasing. “In 2003, just before coming to Arise, I was in a car accident and lay around with a fracture



for five weeks. I had time to reflect for the first time in my life. I was always too busy working. It was during that time that I felt a calling toward the ministry, but it took me awhile to recognize it. Dave Sepesi invited me to an Emmaus Walk and I served the elements during communion. It hit me that this was what I was supposed to be doing. Everything I have done has led up to this; I feel sure of it.” Ron is speaking at his 6th Emmaus Walk this fall and organized the Mega Gathering at Arise this summer. In regard to becoming a minister, he is looking into seminaries and thinks he’d like to be an Ordained Elder—the pastor of a church. He has two more steps to become a Certified Candidate. When asked what people can do for him, he answers without hesitation, “They can pray for me on this journey.”

Gayle was born in Dearborn and also raised in Redford Township until the 4th grade, the eldest of three girls. “It’s possible that Ron and I may have seen each other as kids growing up and never knew it,” she quips. She lived in Auburn Heights, renamed Auburn Hills after the Palace was built, and was raised Lutheran. “My main purpose in school was to be in every dramatic or musical production that existed—and I was. I loved the camaraderie of it all.” Acting was her

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Pastor's Column



Pastor Don Weatherup

A few days ago my wife, Shelley, was looking for something. It wasn't the way you might casually look for something; it was more of a frantic "Where the heck is it?!" kind of looking. I asked her what she was looking for and she said, "My iPod!" You should know that Shelley listens to Christian music all the way to and from work on her iPod Video (5th Generation for those of you who are up on the iPod models). She listens to it almost two hours a day! She also has some music videos she watches.

But for Shelley, it isn't just about having music to listen to. That drive to work becomes Sabbath time and worship time. For her, it's a critical part of her spiritual life, particularly when she is spiritually stressed. The time she spends listening to her Christian music is...well...it's invaluable. She summed it up well when she said, "It's the most important way I feel connected to God!"

It was a comment that got me thinking. How do I stay connected with God? What do I do in my spiritual life that helps me stay connected with God? What, if taken away, would dramatically impact the way I experience my connectedness to God? It's a really good question—a question worth pondering yourself.

Jesus talked a lot about the importance of staying connected to him.

In the 15th chapter of the gospel of John, Jesus is talking with his disciples. Jesus is trying to get across to his disciples the importance of their ongoing relationship with him, and he's trying to prepare them for the time when he will not be with them physically on earth. As he often does to get his point across, Jesus uses a metaphor.

This time Jesus explains his relationship to them by talking about something very familiar to the disciples—grapes. Grapevines were plentiful in the region of Palestine because it is a hardy crop that grows well in hilly areas and in plains. The grapes were used primarily to produce wine that was mixed with water to produce a liquid that was safe to drink. Fresh drinking water was sometimes difficult to come by in Palestine. The fresh water that was available was often contaminated. They knew by experience that when they drank water mixed with wine, they did not get sick. They did not understand the microbiology behind it, they knew by experience. So wine was an important staple of life because it helped make their drinking water safe.

Jesus says to them, "Stay joined to me, and I will stay joined to you. Just as a branch cannot produce fruit unless it stays joined to the vine, you cannot produce fruit unless you stay joined to me. I am the vine, and you are the branches. If you stay joined to me, and I stay joined to you, then you will produce lots of fruit. "But you cannot do anything without me."

That's a pretty strong statement. Unless we stay connected to Jesus, we can't do anything? Well, not anything, literally speaking. I take it to mean anything meaningful and anything fruitful. What makes something fruitful?

In verse John 15:8 Jesus says, "When you become **fruitful** disciples of mine, my Father will be honored." So, producing fruit means doing things in your life that honor God. Then later in verse 16, Jesus says, "I chose you and sent you out to produce **fruit**, the kind of **fruit** that will last."

For Shelley, listening to Christian music is a spiritual discipline. It helps her stay focused on making God the priority in her life. It helps her worship God every single day. It supplies a constant stream of God's promises to her through the lyrics of the songs. It helps her live a life that is God honoring. It helps produce fruit in her life. I always know when she is the most upset because she'll find a place to be alone and she's got those white headphones plugged into both ears. It's my telltale sign to leave her alone because Jesus is working it out and she doesn't need me at the moment.

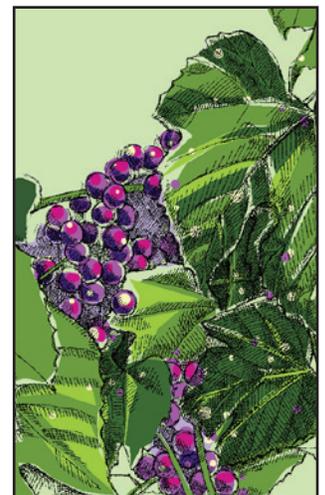
What about you? How are you staying connected with God?

Shelley never did find her iPod. As best we can tell it was likely stolen. Trust me, it is not in our house. She has turned the world upside down looking for it.

Don't worry. I see another iPod in her life very quickly. By the time this is published in the newsletter, my guess is that she'll already have found herself a replacement. When something is producing fruit like that, you want to make sure that nothing will remove the branch from the vine.

With you on the journey,

Pastor Don



Being a Welcoming Church

Arise is known for its warmth, caring, and inclusiveness. And as the saying goes, one's strength can also be one's weakness. Oftentimes, churches



consider themselves to be friendly and caring and they are...to the people who attend there regularly. But how do visitors and new attendees perceive being welcomed, included, cared for and made to feel at home in churches? The Arise Membership Team has been learning about this subject and trying to view things as visitors do.

On October 4th, our first Sunday back at Country Elementary, in addition to ushers giving us our bulletins and greeting us at the door to worship, we will also have greeters at the east entrance doors. You will notice a new entrance sign in the driveway. We don't want visitors to be confused by the two entrances in that building, so they will enter at the east side. This door was chosen due to its close proximity to the Sunday School room and Traditional Worship space. Regular attendees are welcome to enter the building as usual, but encouraged to leave a few empty parking spots in this east parking lot for visitors.

Greeters and head ushers recently participated in a training session to raise awareness about being welcoming to everyone and especially sensitive to the needs of visitors. Greeting, wayfinding, hospitality, introductions to the pastor and others, friendliness and genuine concern are all ways to help those who are new feel "part of the group", but not "smothered." We have given out 13 welcome mugs this summer to visitors. If you bring a first time guest, please be sure they receive one of these gifts. They are located on the information table.

Here are the first names of some of our Arise summer visitors: Joe, Bob, Linda, Tatiana, Jennifer, Jordan, Morgan, Dorothy, Joy, Sarah, Nichole, Michaele, Debbie, Kate, Laurie, and Vaughn. Were you able to greet them? Some of them are now among us as regular attendees. Let's all be alert to visitors among us and welcome them to our church!

Beth Plachta
Arise Membership Team

Thanks to My Friends at Arise

I would like to thank Pastor Don and all of the members of Arise for the love and support you have given my family as we try to deal with the recent death of my son, Russ. I am thankful for the cards, calls, and flowers. I especially want to thank the women of the church for the great luncheon after the funeral. You are all special people at Arise.

—Ethel Ward

A Big Welcome to Laurel Leanne Germain, Born June 10th and Baptized August 23rd



Consecration Sunday: November 8th

Under the capable (and sometimes crazy) leadership of Steve Cary, plans are underway for Consecration Sunday. This annual stewardship campaign will begin on October 18th, with presentations on our Christian calling to give of our time, talents and resources. Programs will also take place October 25th and November 1st, culminating in commitments for pledges in 2010 and a celebration of our giving. The theme this year is "The Gift We Give." More details will be forthcoming this month. Meanwhile, following are excerpts from an interesting article, available in its entirety at www.christianitytoday.com.

Our Interesting Approaches to Tithing... and what really works

by Jim Killam

Tithing has been part of our marriage from the beginning. We wouldn't change that, but over 24 years, I'd be lying if I said our accompanying attitude was always great. We've either experienced or witnessed some interesting approaches to tithing. Some were slightly out of balance. Others were seriously twisted. The list goes something like this:

Tithing as a bribe to God. We can't be the only ones who ever thought, *We'd better keep tithing because we're afraid of what might happen to us if we stopped.* It's sort of like paying off the neighborhood mob boss every month to keep the riffraff out of your store.

Tithing as a padlock. As in, "We'd really like to be able to help that needy person down the street, but all our extra money is locked into that weekly tithe check." We never did this consciously, but thinking back, we certainly did it. I pray we never do it again.

Tithing as a tax deduction. Hey, it crosses all of our minds. Why do you think late December is the biggest income period for churches? Is this wrong? Certainly I won't refuse the deduction, but if tax savings is the prime motivator for giving, then I'm pretty sure it's not honoring God. A good test: Do we think twice about giving—substantially—to someone in need if they're not an IRS-recognized charitable organization?

Tithing as a political weapon. We've seen people withhold their tithe when they didn't like a change in a church's musical styles. Or the youth ministry. Or a pastor's salary. Or any number of other reasons that totally lose the point of giving and that must truly grieve God.

Tithing as a game of keep-away: Is it really supposed to be 10 percent? Of the net or the gross? If it's the net, then do we need to tithe our tax return? Can we claim the kids as deductions? What about college tuition? What if it

was a Christian school? If we also give to missionaries, does that count as part of the 10 percent or does that have to be extra? Can we depreciate that Bible we bought last year? We turn God into the heavenly IRS. Giving becomes, "What's the least we can give and still pass?"

Tithing as punishment: Longtime tithers, don't tell me that at least once you haven't looked at your friends with the bigger homes and nicer cars and better vacations and whined, "Well, gee, if we didn't tithe we could have some of those nice things too."

Tithing as an act of pride. Take the previous statement and add: "Good thing we're more spiritual than they are. They'll get theirs someday." You don't even have to say it aloud. Just let your mind go there and the damage is done.

Tithing as a sacrifice. As in, "Here, God, take what little extra we'd have had this week. We know it's for your kingdom. We'll just scrape along. Don't worry about us." Tithing certainly is a worthy sacrifice, but when we think of it chiefly as that, we start to resent it. And then we might as well not give at all.

Tithing as an investment: Viewed correctly, it's scripturally sound: Jesus told us to store up treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:20). What better way to do that than invest in efforts to help get people there? As pastor and author Mark Driscoll says: "You can't take it with you, but you can send it on ahead." The caution is, we can forget the words in heaven and quickly move from Jesus' teaching to the slot-machine model: Put a check in the offering plate and wait for the quick payout.

"Have to" to "Get to"

So where does that leave us, after 24 years and lots of mistakes? How about...

Tithing as an act of worship. Everything we have is God's. We're just the temporary caretakers. What a privilege to be able to give a chunk of money back to him to be used for his honor. And if the word *tithing* holds too much legalistic baggage for you—or, conversely, if it's too limiting—then just call it *giving*.

All of which Paul summarizes perfectly in 2 Corinthians 9:7, "Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

Jim Killam, a MarriagePartnership.com regular contributor, teaches journalism at Northern Illinois University and is co-author of *Rescuing the Raggedy Man* (Xulon).

Source: www.christianitytoday.com

Emmaus Mega Gathering Huge Success!

On August 1st, Arise Church hosted the area Mega Gathering for the Emmaus community, coordinated by Ron and Gayle Fike and assisted by Rich Sliter and the Arise Praise Band. New and old friends gathered for food, fellowship and music, music, music! A wonderful and inspiring time was had by all. Praise the Lord! Thanks to Ron, Gayle and Rich, and all of their wonderful helpers!



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The Fikes... continued from pg.1

strongest talent. Her father worked at Sears and Roebuck and, interestingly, had been a Korean POW. His parents were told that he had been killed. Upon his return, Gayle's mother was tricked into a blind date with him and the rest is history. Her mother was a homemaker who sadly died of breast cancer at age 43, two months after Ron and Gayle married. Career-wise, this is Gayle's 30th year of teaching, most of it at South Lyon High School. Like Ron, she had a lot of experience with getting *pink slips* every year. Finally, she began to anticipate getting one and would wear pink and play hide and seek with the principal, who had to deliver it in person. "My favorite classes to teach are my Television Production classes," she shares. I have former students who are working in television, advertising and movie industries. One former student has even won an Emmy for Videography."

"In order to tell my story, we need to mention Crohn's disease," she reflects. Diagnosed with this inflammatory bowel disease at age 24, she resisted surgery until it was needed urgently. Their "miracle baby," Bob, became the

joy of their lives, after several heartbreaking attempts at parenthood. Finally, after 10 years of marriage, they had a son. "He's delightful!" Gayle says without reservation. "He grew up to be quite an independent child. I was in the hospital so often; it was almost no big deal to him after awhile." Bob, age 22, is a very creative guy. After a year of college, he lives in Kalamazoo, having many interesting jobs and talents—from selling ceramic horns for a friend at the Renaissance Festival, to painting, to writing music. His dad says that's what brought them to Arise—Pastor McMunn asked Bob to play drums with A.J. Garr and they've been coming ever since.

When asked about her husband going into the ministry, Gayle says it was not much of a surprise. "What surprised me was him wanting to lead a Bible Study. We just go with the flow on the rest. It's a great adventure. And regarding Arise, we're really glad we found it!"

Ron and Gayle, we're glad you found us, too!

Arise Barn Sale Around the Corner



Karen Vaden

It's coming soon! The Arise Barn Sale, led this year by Karen Vaden, will occur on:

Fri. Oct. 9, 9 am – 5 pm and

Sat. Oct. 10, 9 am – 3 pm.

Prices are \$7 per large bag and \$5 per small bag.

Diane Gould, who has led the sale in years past, will continue to have her antiques and collectibles section that is such a crowd

favorite. Diane shops all year for these bargains and then donates them to Arise for the Barn Sale. Her experience as an antique dealer and her expertise with merchandising is one reason our Barn Sales have been so successful, in addition to the many volunteer hours from our Arise family and others.

In simple terms, we need your stuff to sell! Household items, clothing, toys, books, tools, furniture, etc. in good condition are all great for re-sale. (For a list of things we cannot accept, please refer to the Sunday bulletin insert.)

Donors are asked to separate their goods into boxes or bags of like items this year, in order to save hours of

work for those doing the set up. If you can't sort prior to drop off, there will be bags and labels at the barn for this purpose. Please see the Sunday bulletin insert for specifics and for drop off times and ways to help.

There will be a lot more room for hanging up clothes, thanks to Jeff Vaden and Bob Whalen's "extension ladder clothes rack system" this year, so we need as many hangers as we can get and grocery bags with handles. Also new will be a tent for all separately priced items with its own cashier, to simplify the 'bag sale' aspect of the event.

Flyers designed by Pastor Don are available for distribution to area businesses and to share with neighbors, etc., so please help by taking some to share in the community. We are also making poster board ads for use in car windows while parked at stores or at workplaces in the area, so take one of those to help us with free advertising, too!

As is our tradition, leftover items are donated to charitable agencies and families in need. If you know of individuals or families that would benefit from some of these items, or if you can help in any way, please contact Karen Vaden at (734) 878-5268 or karenvaden@hotmail.com. The Arise Barn Sale benefits the Arise Building Fund.

Arise Youth Supports Garrett's Dog

It started at VBS and continued through God Squad car wash and bake sale fundraising efforts, under the direction of Vicki Dawson and aided by Bev Selvig. Arise youth have been engaged in efforts to raise the remaining funds needed for Garrett Gabriel's assistance dog. According to Vicki, "...the God Squad's mission project (8-9-09) to fundraise for Garrett's '4 Paws for Ability Dog' ...raised over \$500. [A] reporter heard about our car wash from the flyer I sent to the Brighton Argus (for PR) and wanted to do a story about him, not only to spotlight Garrett's cause, but also to let people know about autism." Those who have not

seen the article can locate it at: www.livingstondaily.com/article/20090831/NEWS01/908310311/Practicing-what-they-preach-Members-of-Christian-youth-group-translate-faith-into-action

Congratulations on this great success, Arise youth!



OCTOBER 2009 CALENDAR



GOOD CHEER IS SOMETHING MORE THAN FAITH IN THE FUTURE,
IT IS GRATITUDE FOR THE PAST AND JOY IN THE PRESENT.

—Anonymous

WEEKLY EVENTS

Sunday _____

Worship Service at Country Elementary (beginning 10/4)

9:00 am – Traditional Worship
9:45 am – Sunday School
10:30 am – Contemporary Worship

Mondays _____

7:00 pm
Divorce Care (beginning 10/12)

Wednesday _____

7:00 pm
Wednesday Nighters

Emmaus gathering...

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Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
27 Last 2009 Worship Services at Arise Acres	28	29 6:30 – 8:30 pm Barn Sale Drop off	30	1	2	3 10 am – 1 pm Barn Sale Drop off
4 Holy Communion Sunday: First Service at Country Elementary 1 pm One Life Team 12 pm – 5 pm Barn Sale Drop Off	5	6 7 pm Council	7	8	9 9 am – 3 pm Arise Barn Sale	10 9 am – 3 pm Arise Barn Sale 10 am Deer Project
11 Worship at Country Elementary	12 7 pm Divorce Care Begins	13	14	15	16	17
18 Worship at Country Elementary	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 Worship at Country Elementary	26	27 Reformation Day	28	29	30	31 Halloween





Arise Ministry Center
11211 Dexter-Pinckney Rd.
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To every person in the home of:

If you wish to be removed from our newsletter mailing list, please return this mailing panel to us. Thank you.



Fall Anniversaries

10/7 Rich & Sally Guyon
10/14 Dave & Laura Bowen
10/15 Greg & Barb Stafford
11/7 Don & Mary Ann Mathis

Fall Birthdays

10/4 Vicki Dawson Matt Plachta	11/5 Elly Sherry
10/9 Norine Bibicoff	11/10 Austin Bollinger April Flanagan
10/11 Jacob Russell	11/19 Gail Osborne
10/16 Jim Morphew	11/20 Ben Richards
10/28 Eric Tice	11/21 Cindy Morphew
10/31 Debbie Short	11/23 Jan Richards
11/3 Beth Plachta	11/25 Sean Graham

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*Thanks to all who contribute;
please contact us with your
feedback and suggestions!*