

Connections

Arise-a United Methodist Church



May/June 2011



Ministers

Every member
of the Church

Pastor

Don Weatherup

Director of Music

Rich Sliter

Administrative Assistant

Dave Russell

Church Office

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Pinckney, MI
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*(Editor's note:
Jeff Vaden has
been elected as
Arise Council
Chair, replacing
April Flanagan;
following are his
reflections on
that ministry.)*

Oars

by Jeff Vaden

Three Easters ago, my wife, Karen, asked me if I wanted to attend Easter services that year. Since I wasn't even sure which church she attended, and given the fact that I hadn't attended a service in "God knows how long" (literally), I found the question somewhat puzzling. Before I could roll my eyes and mumble under my breath some sort of typical guy response, she said, "There'll be food."

Knowing perfectly well that bribes of food are reserved only for the most important of honey-do projects, I swear I kept noticing that subtle little grin a wife gets when she knows she's got you. Before I knew it, I was straightening my tie and we were getting in the car. Little did I know how much that day would change my life.

Quickly, Arise became my home away from home. New friendships were established and Pastor Don began to guide me along a better path. I am honored to include April Flanagan among my new friends. April has been the Council Chairperson for what has turned out to be the most pivotal years at Arise, as we moved from being a mobile church to one with a permanent home. April has done a fantastic job of coordinating and facilitating the many meetings, phone calls and emails required to help ensure our new home was a success. So I admit that I was a bit troubled when she announced she would be stepping down from her position after her three-year

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Reflections from the Editor

By April Flanagan

This is my last issue as editor of Arise Connections. After five and a half years in this role, it's time to step aside and pass the baton to Beth Plachta, who has worked with me on the editorial staff. I know that Beth will continue the people focus and attention to quality that so many of you have told me characterizes Arise Connections. I would also like to thank Barbara Wood, who will also continue as Layout Editor. We three have worked hard and had fun in the process, which is as good as it gets. It's been a pleasure to lead such a talented team! In addition, a

number of people have expressed interest in writing for Connections recently, including Steve Cary, Carrie Germain, Sylvia Hartman, Laurie Russell, Greg Stafford, and Merilee & Bob Zane. They have articles in this issue, and we look forward to those in the future.



It is never easy to ask busy people to contribute ideas, articles and photos. I admit

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Pastor's Column



Pastor Don Weatherup

According to *Business Week* magazine, Americans spend an astonishing \$41 billion a year on their furry friends. To put that into perspective, we spend more money in the U.S. on our pets than the gross domestic product of 128 countries!

I'm a pet lover myself; I have three dogs, a cat and a blue and gold McCaw. When my kids were younger, our menagerie has included bunnies, guinea pigs,

mice, gerbils, and I've lost track of how many fish.

Each time my wife and I agreed to welcome a pet into our home, our mantra to our children was that they could have a pet on one condition—that they took good care of it. Each pet we owned, in its own way, became part of the family. Perhaps I shouldn't be so surprised at how much Americans spend on their pets.

As a pastor and theologian, I admit that I struggle with how much our country spends on our pets when such great human needs go unfulfilled. At the same time, I also struggle with the knowledge that God values animals. The Bible tells us in the book of Genesis that God placed the breath of life into both humans and animals, but God clearly values human life above animals. God gave humans dominion over animals, and therefore we have a responsibility to take care of them. It's when we place animal needs over human needs that I get uncomfortable. The question becomes, "can we do both?" Can we, in good conscience, spend money on a pet while at the same time, use our resources fighting poverty and meet human needs for food, clothing and shelter? I believe we can do both. Life is about balance.

While my pets are well cared for, you won't find me spending \$75 for a doggie sweater. Nor would I choose to allow pet expenses to prevent me from tithing. I read the other day that some pet owners are spending hundreds of dollars on prosthetic testicles for their neutered dogs. One website states, "*Neuticles*" allows your pet to retain his natural look, self-esteem and aids in the trauma associated with altering." Are you serious? Clearly, some pet owners have gone overboard on their pets.

I remind myself that pets are a gift from God. I've seen many examples of how a family pet can bring a lot of joy to life. When kept in proper perspective, pets can reflect the love God has for us. Knowing that pets have such a big impact on people's lives, we built the dog park, hoping to help pet owners make friends with other

pet owners, and hopefully introduce people to the church and a relationship with God. As you've probably heard, it's working. We've had about a dozen people worship with us whose point of entry was our dog park.

On June, 11th from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m., Arise Church is hosting "Dogfest 2011," an event for dog lovers. This day will not only serve as a grand opening celebration of the dog park, but it will be yet another chance for us to meet new people. I hope you will plan to attend. You can refer friends to the event's website for details www.pinckneydogfest.com.

For the past few months, I have felt God calling me to launch a new ministry, a ministry to people grieving the death of a pet. Beginning July 31st, we'll also be offering a monthly Pet Memorial Service. The service will be held in our worship space the last Sunday of every month at 4:00 p.m. (December this year is an exception as that is Christmas day. It will be the 3rd Sunday in December.) The Pet Memorial Service will be casual in style and is offered to anyone inside or outside of the church. The idea came to me when my sister found herself in the hospital with depression over the loss of her cat. It was then that I realized there are not a lot of available resources for people who lose a pet and need help grieving.

Persons wishing to attend the Arise Church Monthly Pet Memorial Service should send an email to me (pastor@arisechurch.org) at least one week in advance and include their name, phone number, and ONE digital picture of their pet. Each pet owner will be given a brief opportunity to talk about what they loved about their pet. Then I will share a message about grief that will point people to Christ as the source of their healing. For future reference, all this information can be found on our website www.arisechurch.org by clicking the "Monthly Pet Memorial Service" button on our main page. We are in the process of sending out press releases and notices to veterinarians in the area about the monthly memorial service. I would also appreciate your help in spreading the word.

Whether it's a cat, dog, bird, horse, snake or fish—enjoy them. They are God's gift to us!

Pastor Don

The Power of Prayer

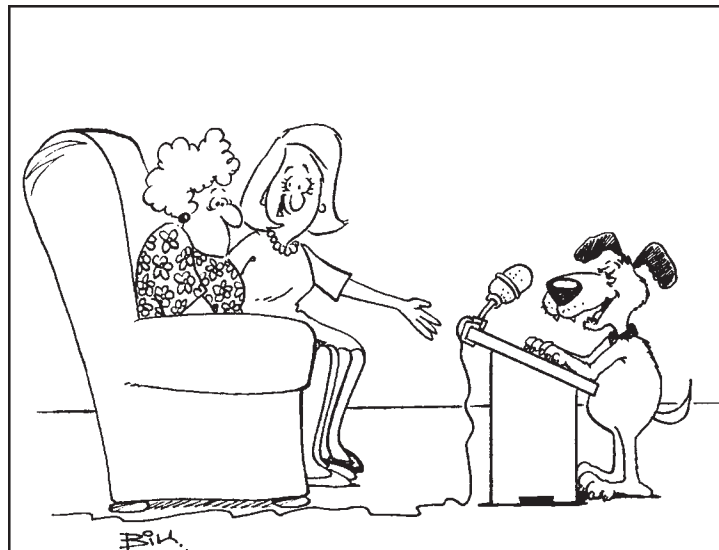
by Sylvia Hartman

The Arise prayer group will be meeting on June 8th and the 25th at the church at 11:00 am and, for those of you that cannot make the morning meetings, also in the evenings those days at 7:00 pm. The group meets for an hour, and would like to welcome and encourage anyone interested to come and pray with them. Or, if you would like to request prayer, there are green Prayer Request Cards on the welcome table. It can remain confidential or be added to the prayer list in the church bulletin.

Diane Gould is the leader of this group. Other members are Evva Funk, Norma Topp, Bob Whalen, Fran and Gene Smith, Dave Russell and Pastor Don Weatherup.

On May 5th, the National Day of Prayer (NDP) was observed, a tradition begun in 1775 by the Continental Congress. In 1863, President Lincoln called for such a day. Then in 1952 Congress established NPD as an annual event. In 1988 President Reagan, designated NPD to be the first Thursday in May.

The National Day of Prayer has great significance for us as a nation. It enables us to recall and to teach the way in which our founding fathers sought the wisdom of God, when faced with critical decisions. It stands as a call for us to come humbly before God, seeking His guidance for our leaders and His grace upon us as a people.



"It does seem strange, but Tom said this is how all pastors train their dogs to speak."

Electronic Donating Comes To Arise

by Bob Zane, Finance Chair

Starting in May we will be implementing a new program to allow our members the opportunity to donate via electronic giving. Many of us pay our mortgage, car payment, utility bills, etc. by way of a direct charge to our checking or savings account. This is a convenient, time saving and effective way to ensure that our bills are paid without the need to write checks. Electronic giving is the same thing. Members simply fill out a form (available on the welcome table at church) and drop it in the offering basket. Members of the counting team send your information to the company that facilitates the processing, VANCO Services, and your donations are then automatically deducted from your account and sent to Arise.

On the form you complete you can indicate several things: which fund (s) you wish to donate to (general fund and/or capital fund), what date you want the distribution to start, how often you want the donation sent, etc.

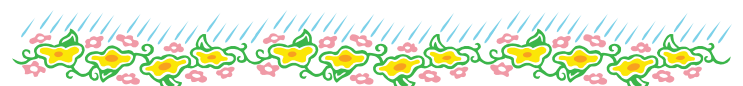
Should your circumstances change, you have the ability to cancel the electronic giving at any time or simply put it on hold for a period of time. All that is required is to contact the church office or a member of the Finance team and request this change.

Our members benefit by not having to write checks, carry cash to church, remember to bring their envelope, worry about missing a donation if you are sick or on vacation, etc. Arise benefits from having a more consistent and predictable cash flow that greatly enhances our ability to budget and plan.

As with the grocery loyalty programs, this new feature does not require any additional donations on your part. It simply streamlines a process you already utilize.

The following provides members with a snapshot of our donations through the end of April:

	<u>Donations</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>Over/Under Goal</u>
General Fund:	\$41,486	\$46,171	-\$4,685
Capital Fund	\$12,267	\$15,516	-\$3,249



Memories of Easter 2011

By Laurie Russell

There were so many special elements of Easter in 2011. It was the first Easter service in our new building. There was the journey through Holy Week, the multiple expressions of hope and joy in the poems, the baptism stories, the sermons, the music and the fellowship. There were artistic displays of colorful banners, flower arrangements, and the empty tomb. There were egg hunts and children's laughter. There was the gathering of family and friends and the sharing of the message that Christ has risen for us. How do you pick a favorite part?

There are three things that stand out for me. First, I was able to be part of the group that decorated the sanctuary and was able to see the transformation take place with the tunnel, the empty tomb, and the rainbows. It was a great opportunity to serve in a different capacity, to interact with different people and create new relationships.

Second, a personal favorite was when the choir sang "Wade in the Water." Not only did the song fit perfectly with the sermon series on water, baptisms and hope, but it was also fun to sing. I loved hearing Rich and Steve offer up the verses in their very different styles. It brought a smile to a lot of faces and hopefully touched you as much as it touched those of us who sang it.

All of this was great, but it was the time spent with my family and friends celebrating the good news that Christ has risen that made this Easter special for me. It's not just serving others, music, colorful eggs and laughter, but the memory that Christ chose to die on the cross for you and me so that we can live with him forever. That is my favorite memory of Easter.



Arise Youth Enjoy Egg Hunt!

By Merilee Zane

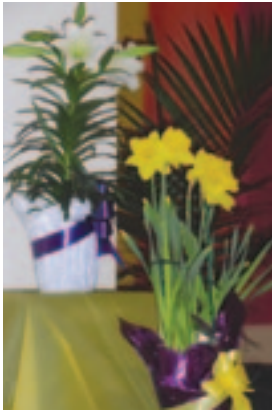
The Easter egg hunt at Arise was joyously attended by 28 youth from ages 1 – 11 years.

We designated two separate areas for our hunt—the area by the Sunday School entrance doors was the site of much excitement for our tiny tots ages 1-3 years of age. They each got a small, personalized, Easter bucket to collect eggs. We included non-food items to put in the eggs: stickers, a super bouncy ball, foam crosses and "paint with water" pictures. Some of our egg hunters weren't sure what to do at the start, but they quickly caught on.

Our older youth went hunting in the area between the classrooms and the dog park fence. We staggered the start times, allowing the younger children to start their hunt first. They had no trouble discovering the Easter eggs scattered in the area. We also filled their eggs with non-food items such as bouncy balls, quarters, crosses, rings and wipe-off tattoos. A great time was had by all! My thanks to all those who came on Saturday to help out by stuffing the eggs full of surprises!



EASTER CELEBRATIONS



Oars... *continued from pg. 1*

Council term was over. Each of us owes her a debt of gratitude for the endless hours and her tireless dedication. Thank you, April.

Now you may think that being a Council Chairperson is not unlike being the captain of a boat. Basically, you just need to steer, right? But I learned a long time ago, managing in the corporate world, that, 1) turning the wheel doesn't do anything unless the boat is moving and 2) the boat won't move unless we're all rowing in the same direction, at the same speed, at the same time. Thankfully, when one of us needs a break from rowing or being the captain, another quickly jumps in to keep things moving. As such, on behalf of the Lay Leadership Committee, Pastor Don has asked me (and I have accepted) to take a turn at the wheel. Not to replace April, but to help keep us on the course she and the others before her have set.

So here is to all of you that have grabbed an oar and are pulling for all you're worth! I dedicate to each of you, with God's help and your ongoing efforts, that we will continue to make Arise a great place for faith and friendship. With any luck in the near future, and in the words of sheriff Brody from the movie Jaws, "We're gunna need a bigger boat."

Reflections... *continued from pg. 1*

that, when I began as editor, I wondered if I would have to twist arms or hunt for ideas. I never did, thanks to the generosity, talent and willingness of Arise family members to step up and support our efforts. Special thanks go to Evva Funk and her team (Don & Jane Fuller, Fran & Gene Smith and Ethel Ward), who fold, label and mail out Connections. And, of course, I appreciate the support and trust from Pastor Don and from Pastor Doug, before him. Thanks to all, and best wishes to the new Connections team!

Hallelujah

Men's Group Starts: Building a Strong Rope of Fellowship

by Steve Cary



(L to R: Ed Postal, Pastor Don Weatherup, Steve Cary, Karl Burr, Don Mathis, Rich Guyon, Chris Young, Brad Topp, Bob Zane, Jeff Vaden and Rick Gorham)

In Matthew 18:20 Jesus said, "Where two or three come together in my name, there I am with you." (NIV). And in Ecclesiastes 4:12, the Bible states that "A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken." (NIV) Wow! What perfect scriptures to describe a group of men, getting together for fellowship in Christ.

A new L.I.F.E. team for men has formed and we meet on the last Saturday of each month. We met for the first time on Saturday, March 26th and again on Saturday, April 30th. A fantastic breakfast was provided at both meetings by Evva Funk and Merilee Zane. May's meeting will take place on June 4th (because of the Memorial Day holiday at the end of May). We averaged 14 men at each of the first meetings and the group is being co-chaired by Bob Whalen and Bob Zane.

At the first meeting, Pastor Don gave a quick survey to each one of us to find out where the interests of the group lie. The top three priorities of the group were 1) fellowship with other Christian men, 2) Bible study, and 3) helping out the needy in our local community.

Bob Whalen said it all when he told me, "The group gives us a chance to know one another outside of Sunday coffee time; and helping each other, our families, the church, and our community, while having fun as the goal. I am sure God will be pleased." Bob's only other comment was, "Anyone wanna cook?"

At the next meeting we will work to refine our goals and set up more specific projects.

All men in the Arise community are welcome and encouraged to participate. We hope to see you there!

VBS Coming August 1 – 5: Blasting Off!

by Merilee Zane

The theme for Vacation Bible School this year is **Galactic Blast**; planning is on the *launch pad* and we're starting the *countdown*. *Liftoff* is scheduled for August 1st, with the duration of our *cosmic experience* lasting through August 5th. We will again be following the format of meeting in the evenings for food, fellowship, and some galactic faith building journeys.

Our first *flight crew* organizational meeting was held May 22. Sign-up sheets for volunteers will be placed by the hospitality table. My thanks to Barb and Duane Haines for volunteering to organize the crafts for the week. I'm sure they would appreciate additional team members. Jim Osborne has also stated an interest in *rocketing* through recreation during the week, and I know that he will need more crew members as well. Please contact me at 734-268-6184.

Don't worry- there are plenty of other ways to join our *flight crew*, such as helping with music, entertainment, hospitality, and *galaxy guides* for our youth. Don't miss out on this *star studded* opportunity to celebrate our faith and give thanks and praise. No matter what star you land on or what planet you orbit, God is at the center of the universe.

Watch for more details coming soon—to a solar system near you!



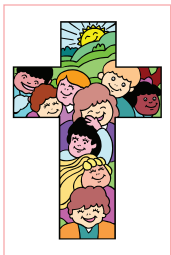
Arise is Going to the Dogs on June 11th!

by Karen Vaden

Once again Arise is offering the community another reason to come and enjoy our people, property and, oh yeah, our dogs!! Dogfest 2011 is a celebration of the opening of the Arise Church Community Dog Park... something we could not do last year due to the building of the new church. There will be demonstrations of a few of the many things that you can do with your dog, such as the Livingston County Sheriff Department's Search and Rescue, Freestyle, and much more. Therapaws, the largest Ann Arbor based dog therapy group, will be on site to offer any information about their services in training your dog to be a Therapy dog. The kid's 4H group will also be hosting a dog show and promoting kids to be involved in the many things that 4H offers. We haven't left out shopping; there will be a Doggie Mall with many items and services for you and your best friend. Please join us at www.pinckneydogfest.com to stay up to date on the schedules, etc.

Sunday School Update

by Carrie Germain



Sunday School for children meets every Sunday, during the contemporary worship service at about 10:45am, except for the first Sunday of the month, which is "Family Sunday." The classes are broken up into age groups: 4-7 and 8-11. For the three age groups there is a regular teacher and assistant every week. They learn with

a Christian, Bible-based curriculum, sing songs, and do crafts. We also have a nursery every Sunday for ages up to 3. On Family Sunday, the nursery is available to children up to age 5. Our ministry is growing and we are excited to be teaching the Word to new and young followers!

Our Sunday school schedule follows the typical school year. We are planning an End of the Year/Teacher Appreciation Day for Sunday, June 12th during and following the contemporary worship service. During the summer months, nursery will be available to children up to age 5, and there will be activity packets for older children to complete during worship service. Sunday school will reconvene in September.

Planting Seeds and Watching Things Grow

by Greg Stafford

Where two or more are gathered in His name, there shall be food. Okay, that isn't Biblical, but it's still a true statement. On the other hand, John 21:17 tells us to "... feed my sheep." Led by Merilee Zane with aid from Diane Gould and Donna Terhune, these two ideas are intertwining and starting to grow in a whole new direction, at least for Arise. In many cases, when looking for a way to move forward, it helps to take a step back, and Merilee has taken it all the way back to its roots.

That's right! Arise is planting a garden. Vegetables mainly, but it will be an organic garden, with flowers and herbs planted to keep the bugs at bay naturally. You may have noticed several raised beds take shape between the dog park and the church. This will be the garden's new home. A further plan is to fence this area in so that the larger pests might also be detoured.

The vegetables to be planted include melons, beans, peppers, squashes, tomatoes, lettuce and pumpkins. This will be a community garden, because, let's face it, Arise is a community. As Pastor Don has shown us, like growing up as a good Christian, it takes some to plant, some to water, some to weed, and some to harvest. So persons of all ages, with only a simple love of playing in the dirt, can take part in the fun of growing something for those in need. Whether dirt is your friend or you just get a jolt from watching things grow, keep an eye on this patch to see what sprouts next!

Celebrating Fathers...

"I talk and talk and talk, and I haven't taught people in 50 years what my father taught by example in one week."

-- Mario Cuomo

SUNDAYS & EVENTS

Sunday Worship:	9:00 am (traditional) 10:30 am (contemporary) 10:30 am Sunday School
Thursdays:	7 pm Traveling Light Small Group Study
Thursday 6/2:	Barn sale cleanup
Sat/Sun 6/4 & 5:	Relay for Life
Saturday 6/11:	10 am – 2 pm, Dogfest 2011



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June/July Anniversaries

- 6/2 Bob & Brenda Whalen
- 6/16 Peter & Sherry Graham
- 6/21 Don & Jane Fuller
- 6/23 Don & Shelley Weatherup
- 6/24 Wayne & Mary Ellen Kieb
- 7/18 Kevin & Carrie Germain
- 7/19 Jeff & Karen Vaden
- 7/29 Brad & Norma Topp

June/July Birthdays

- | | | |
|---------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| 6/4 Avery Germain | 6/14 Brad Topp | 6/30 Laurel Hubbard |
| Tom Short | 6/17 Karen Vaden | 7/2 Brenda Whalen |
| 6/5 Tim Richards | 6/18 Jen Wagner | 7/4 Wilson Wagner |
| 6/9 Jim Gannon | 6/28 Sally Guyon | 7/10 Steve Selvig |
| Don Mathis | Greg Stafford | 7/16 Pollyann Walker |
| 6/10 Laurel Germain | 6/29 Mark Wood | 7/21 Mary Ann Mathis |

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

- Arise *Connections* is available online and in color at www.arisechurch.org
 Check out the Missions link on the website!