

Connections

Arise-a United Methodist Church



July/August 2011



Ministers
Every member
of the Church

Pastor
Don Weatherup

Director of Music
Rich Sliter

**Administrative
Assistant**
Dave Russell

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Summer at Arise Acres

Summertime and the living is...busy! There has been a lot going on in our congregation this summer, both at Arise Acres and within various ministries. This issue is full of the many wonderful things our church has been doing this summer in the name of Jesus. It's also my first issue as editor of Arise Connections. Many thanks go to April Flanagan for her excellent work, mentoring and friendship over these last five and a half years as editor. Our new team will strive to continue the people-focused format and quality that she brought to our church newsletter. In the meantime...thank you, God, for summer. Enjoy it – it's not over yet!

Beth Plachta, Editor



Caring Ministry with a Caring Heart

by Maryann Mathis



Back in 2009 I was asked to help with the Caring Ministry. I agreed to be part of the team because I felt there was a need in our congregation to support the wellness of our Church. The Arise Caring Ministry (ACM) started out with a leader, along with some very compassionate people for each specific caring need on the team. Things changed and we found ourselves without a leader. I felt without a leader, we were slowly becoming disengaged as a Caring Ministry. I kept thinking about this ministry, but I still did not want to step up to the plate and lead this team. My reasons for not wanting to lead the team were: would I have the time, how much time could I put into this ministry and what if I failed? I still could not get this ministry out of my mind. After praying and asking the good Lord for some guidance, I have come to the conclusion that I need to step up and lead this team to be the Caring Ministry that we need to be.

The Caring Ministry program provides support to our church family and also strengthens the connections with one another. The Caring Ministry team will work with Pastor Don and the congregation to support each other emotionally, physically and spiritually.

Our program includes: Visits to home-bound members, providing meals, visits at the hospital, performing small fix-up jobs, providing occasional transportation, making caring calls, writing caring notes, and funeral/wake support. The Caring Ministry will also send a welcome card to any new visitors that sign the friendship book. The Caring Ministry would also like to invite our regular visitors that have not attended church in awhile to come back and visit us again. The ACM will send them a card letting them know that we miss them. With everyone's help, the Caring Ministry can see that cards are being sent out in a timely manner and everyone's needs are being addressed.

When friends of Arise Church are aware that someone is going through a potentially

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Pastor's Column



Pastor Don Weatherup

It can be quantified in many different ways: 5,478 days, 131,472 hours, or 825 sermons.

At the end of September, Arise Church marks its 15th year in ministry, and begins its 16th year. Arise Church was founded on September 29, 1996. We are an infant church in comparison to other churches. Nearby United Methodist churches or their predecessor congregations have been around just a tiny bit longer. First

United Methodist Church in Chelsea – 152 years, Ann Arbor – 184 years, Howell – 175 years and Brighton – 157 years.

It has been said that one sign of a dying church is that it is more fond of spending time looking back on its past than it does looking forward to the future. By comparison to these other area churches, we have far less to look back on, and yet, this statement is as true for Arise Church today as it is for them.

It seems to me that the last year has gone by quickly. We have now been in our building almost one year. There still has not been one single day upon entering the church that I haven't said, "Thank you, God, for this building." It has indeed been a blessing.

And yet, as I look at the history of the churches mentioned above, I am reminded that not one of them is worshipping in their first building. Their first church buildings have long been torn down and are rotting in a landfill somewhere. It's hard to imagine that the fate of our one year old building is exactly the same. One day it, too, will be replaced by something else.

That is the nature of life. Old things wear out and new things replace them. What is left behind in their place, however, are great memories. Churches, like any organization, build legacies over time. What is difficult for us to remember is that legacies are not built through grand ideas and schemes. But rather, legacies are built one step at a time, one decision at a time, one day at a time. Spend too much time looking at the steps behind you, and you forget to keep moving forward.

So let me ask you, where do you see God leading Arise Church in the future? As we look forward, what opportunities do you see? While important milestones are indeed appropriate times to thank God for the blessings of our past, we have to keep looking to the future. It is a good time to ask ourselves, "What are we doing well and how can we build upon that success?"

As we think about building our legacy, let me remind you that YOU are the most important part of the legacy of Arise Church. I've said many times, "The church is the people and not the building." This fact should prompt each of us to ask, "In what ways am I helping to build the legacy of Arise Church?"

Recently you heard some great sermons about contributing to the legacy of Arise Church. Not by me, but by members of the church. You heard some really good and challenging messages from Dave Russell, April Flanagan, Merilee Zane, and Steve Cary. They challenged you to take a step of faith. They affirmed your God-given gifts and encouraged you to use those gifts and reminded you that you, too, can be a leader.

Soon the Lay Leadership Committee will be hard at work connecting the needs of the church with people who are gifted and have the passion to fulfill those needs. As you consider your contribution toward building our legacy, where is God leading you?

Friends, as we enter year number 16 and look to the future, I am confident that God has big plans. Those plans are not just for the church. They are for YOU. I am reminded of the words of the prophet Jeremiah found in Jeremiah 29:11. "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Don't look back. Look ahead. What exciting direction is God moving you to? Are you excited? I hope so. You should be excited! I am so proud of this church! I am proud to be your pastor and I am excited about what lies ahead.

With you on the journey,

Pastor Don



Lay Speakers Inspire Congregation

This spring and summer, Pastor Don attended Annual Conference and also took some well deserved vacation time to be with his family. During his absence, four members of our congregation stood in for him to lead worship. They all have a gift of sharing their spiritual perspectives, while referencing their life experiences and speaking straight from the heart.



Dave Russell, our administrative assistant, local police officer and gifted vocalist, was our first speaker, whose sermon was entitled, "Saving Lives". Dave shared one experience of trying his best to save lives, although without success, and also described how his efforts had succeeded in another scenario. He drew parallels with the spiritual

equivalent of saving souls and ended worship with a memorable solo. He shares his thoughts, "The message I shared was the most beneficial to me. I am confident I learned more than anyone else who heard it. There were so many times during the preparation that God spoke to me and opened my eyes to the things that He wanted me to see. Even if I never had a chance to share the message, which I thoroughly enjoyed, it would have been worth it just for the collaboration time with God. I eagerly look forward to doing it again."



April Flanagan spoke on leadership, a subject she knows well from her executive business and consulting background of over 40 years; currently teaching Master's and Doctoral level students in leadership. Her own leadership talents have been self-evident at Arise in her many roles. Her sermon was entitled, "Who Me? A Leader?" and described

how everyone has gifts to share, and are indeed leaders, however, may be afraid to step out on faith to develop their skills. She used examples from her life and that of her mother as illustrations. "I initially didn't want to do this, but I knew inside that I should. I suppose it was the Holy Spirit urging me. I think this is an important message for Arise, because we are a small congregation and the same people tend to lead. We need to give those people other opportunities and invite new people to step up and volunteer. They will have support from the rest of us, and from God."



Merilee Zane was the third lay speaker this season. She is an elementary school teacher and her roles at Arise are many and varied. She spoke about "The Importance of Two Little Words". She used examples from scripture and her own life as wife, mother, daughter, and cancer survivor to describe their importance. These phrases included

"thank you", "help me" and "I'm sorry." Merilee shares her process, "The beginning of the sermon was from a sermon that I heard as a teenager. I still remember Rev. Branstner as he shared the changes that someone can make with 'Two Little Words'. I prayed about what to say, and once I got started typing, my fingers couldn't keep up with the ideas. It was truly an experience of being led by the Holy Spirit. I don't envy Pastor Don the job of creating a sermon every week, but it was a powerful connection for me."



Finally, **Steve Cary**, our self-described "church cheerleader", who owns his own medical equipment business and is an active leader at Arise, shared "The Big Toe of Jesus: Spiritual Gifts and the Body of Christ." Steve didn't think he had any gifts to share, but later learned that his outgoing personality and spirit of joy were actually spiritual

gifts that could encourage the Body of Christ. Steve puts it this way, "I had a good part of the sermon written in one sitting but had prayed for days beforehand. When I read it back to myself, I was afraid that I would disappoint Don or the congregation, or maybe even God, but I realized that every word was my personal testimony. I sometimes think that when people see me in videos or up singing the Lord's praises, or even giving that sermon, they believe that I just get up there and do it. But, in reality, I am terrified every single time so, when it comes time to do it, I pray for strength, and then take a leap of faith and believe that God will get the rest done."

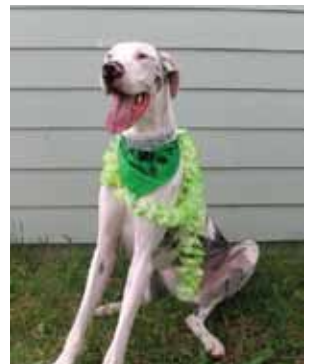
These sermons in their entirety, along with Pastor Don's excellent sermons, are available at www.arisechurch.org. Click on Sermons and prepare to be inspired.

Dogfest 2011 a Huge Success!

by Karen Vaden

On June 11, Dogfest 2011 marked the Arise Church Community Dog Park's first year anniversary. When Pastor Don presented the idea of an anniversary event to the Dog Park committee, I wondered how well it would be received. I knew the dog park users would probably like it, but the community...well that was an unknown. Then he came up with the name DogFest 2011 and we started to work on it. We had brainstorming meetings about having vendors, demonstrations, etc., all with a dog theme. The vendors would be dog related, the food was dog related (hotdogs), and the demonstrations were dog related. Fran and Gene Smith were invaluable when they sent out mailers to dog businesses and then followed with visits and delivered posters to many of the community businesses. Joy Vanderpool thought of having T-shirts made up at Dexter High School so that all of the volunteers could be easily identified. It was all starting to come together. Because the dog park donations have been fairly steady, we had enough funding to make up signs to put around the community and to do the park improvements like adding a fenced-in pond for the dogs (a thank you to my husband, Jeff, for coordinating that).

Pastor Don then sent out press releases and it was all getting very exciting. We even created our own website, www.pinckneydogfest.com, but I still couldn't help worrying that we would have this wonderful event planned and no one would show up, or worse yet, it would rain. The day finally came and I can remember telling Jeff that if we had 50-75 people and their dogs I would consider the event a success (for the first year). I was amazed beyond my wildest imagination when we had in excess of 250 people and their dogs. The weather was beautiful, the demonstrations were entertaining, the food was awesome, the vendor area was so large we actually had to put people on the grass, the volunteers were incredibly helpful and polite, but most of all, people were having fun at Arise Acres. I couldn't help thinking what a great impression the people who were new to our property would have when they left. Hopefully, the topic of this local church that has a dog park will come up in their conversations. Thank you, God, for your constant blessings. We couldn't have done it without You! Dogfest 2012... here we come!



Galactic Blast!—VBS 2011

by Steve Cary

This year's VBS theme was "Galactic Blast! A Cosmic Adventure in Praising God." An average of over 35 children per night from August 1st thru the 4th came to be welcomed aboard the Starship 'Galactic Praise' by Commander Kennedy Kunnert and Galileo, the green space ape. The Commander and Galileo introduced the 'space cadets' to the characteristics of God and how we can respond with worship; each night was specific to a space theme and a biblical event. And, at the end of each session, the green ape gave the kids tips on being 'green' at home through recycling, conserving, sharing their unused items, and other ideas.

The lessons included: The Earth and the Creation Story; The Moon and God with Elijah on Mount Horab; The Stars and Jesus knows the Woman at the Well; a Supernova and Jesus appearing on the Road to Emmaus.

Once Shannon Haines registered the cadets each night, they enjoyed infectious music from Kevin Germain, as well as a meal served each night by Evva Funk and Diane Gould.

It was a very exciting time

and, in addition to learning valuable lessons about God, worship, outer space, and being 'green', the cadets participated in games with Jim Osborne and Tyler Tankka; crafts with Barb & Duane Haines; and stories with Barb Stafford.

Tina Cary, Merilee Zane (who co-chaired VBS), and the Arise youth, built the Command Bridge for the space-ship, which was filled with bright flashing lights, a portal into space and a sound and light affect box built by Duane Haines. Pastor Don led an 'adult connect' series for all interested grown up cadets. On Wednesday night, the cadets participated in the 'Star-Lab', a portable, full functioning planetarium where they could gaze into the heavens without even leaving the sanctuary. Carrie Germain (who also co-chaired VBS), led a mission for the cadets - a can and bottle drive which raised \$59.70 for our sister church, Yae-Way UMC, in Liberia, West Africa.

Thank you to the numerous unnamed VBS participants who brought food, gave money, volunteered, or simply prayed for its success. Although no dates have yet been set, all the participants are anxious for next year's Vacation Bible School.



Relay for Life

by Jen Wagner

Relay for Life was held on June 4th & 5th this year. Arise turned in over \$700 at the event and online donations are still rolling in through August. The new track and facility at Parker High in Howell are state of the art, but the change in schedule and location probably caused the lower attendance this year. At Brighton High, a lot more locals drop in to participate, since it's close to town.



Arise had a good showing, however, and the Haines' camper was backed up to a beautiful view of field and trees. The Bollingers stayed overnight and Arise had seven attendees at the Survivor Breakfast (previously the Survivor Dinner). We'll see if Relay stays in Howell next year or goes back to Brighton. Thanks to all who helped!

Arise Barn Sale

Thanks to everyone who helped with the Barn Sale this year, a major fundraising effort led by Karen Vaden, along with many helpers. The net proceeds to date equal \$6,301.56, which, after expenses are finalized, will be donated to the Arise Capital Fund. The Memorial Garden Task Force, led by Tina Cary, held a bake sale and plant sale at the event, which earned them \$800.00. Congratulations to everyone for their hard work and great success!



The Garden of Arise Flourishes



It's not the Garden of Eden, but it's pretty cool! You may have noticed that the church garden is growing 'deep and wide'. Merilee Zane's idea to plant it as a teaching tool for church youth really grew! As she puts it, "I have encouraged people to go out and help themselves to the garden's delights. Additionally, as God has blessed us with this harvest, I have asked that whenever possible, we share "the fruits of our labors" with others. Maybe as a conversation starter like, "The zucchini bread was baked with a zucchini that came from our church garden."

The next zucchini that I pick will go with me to the assisted living facility where my mom lives as they have a baking activity and a new bread machine. I have already chatted with several of the ladies and they are so excited! I'm taking pictures of the church and the garden to show them. To me, that is outreach. We can look forward to some great pumpkins later this fall and watermelons in a few weeks. It has been a wonderful learning experience and there are already plans to expand our garden next year!"

Landscaping Update

by Merilee Zane

Plans are in the works to finish the landscaping this fall! September 24th has been designated as a men's work day to complete the toddler playground by putting rubber mulch down and fencing the area in. Many thanks in advance to the men for helping to provide a safe and secure play area for our little ones. I'll be cooking up a great breakfast for your get together that day at 9:00 am, so bring your appetite and your shovel!

Anyone who is interested in finalizing the details for our church grounds landscaping, bring your ideas on Thursday, September 15th at 7:00. If you have plants or trees to donate to this cause, please contact Merilee Zane or Jeff Vaden by September 12th with the details so that we may carefully consider the best place for your gift at our meeting on the 15th. October 8th is set aside to finish the landscaping around the church just in time for our 1st anniversary celebration the following week!



Finance Update

by Bob Zane

Summertime, summertime, sum, sum, summertime – where did it go? As we all head into the last four months of the year, we have so much to thank God for:

- Our new home
- Indoor plumbing
- Air conditioning
- An incredible Barn Sale – thanks team, I believe it was one of the best ever
- A fantastic return of VBS – congrats team – it was over the moon
- A bountiful kid’s vegetable garden – help yourself



And the really important thing: an increase in attendance at church of over 30%. God helped us get it finished and now He is seeing the benefits of our labor.

From the finance area, we are doing OK. Our giving is up over 10% from the same time last year. We are still a little light on both the General Fund and Capital Fund but with vacations coming to an end we should be able close that gap. (If you haven’t signed up for electronic giving, now would be a good time – it helps smooth out the effects of vacations.)

Here’s the approximate state of our finances at the end of July (it is approximate since we are just closing the books.)

	July receipts	Budget	Over/under	YTD
General Fund	\$10,605	\$11,359	-\$754	-\$9,990
Capital Fund*	\$5,085	\$3,879	\$1,207	-\$5,607

*The proceeds of the barn sale cover this nicely

Remember – the Busch’s and Kroger grocery loyalty programs cost you nothing but can mean a nice little bump in income – year to date we’ve earned almost \$500. If you haven’t signed up yet, please consider doing so now – forms are on the welcome table.

I know that God would not have blessed us with this wonderful gift if He did not know that we would be good shepherds of His home. Let’s all work together to justify His faith in us.

Thank you to Church Angels

Dear Pastor Don & Arise Methodist Church Members:
 My name is Gail and I have just recently returned here from Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, it was not under the happiest of circumstances. I had to leave quickly from an abusive marriage of 24 years. Not knowing many people in this area, my mother called your church and spoke with Pastor Don. On Thursday night while driving a 26 ft. Ryder truck into the mountains of Pennsylvania, I prayed that God would send me angels to help me unload my truck when it arrived in Michigan. I knew that my 78 year old mother, 54 and 55 year old sisters and I would not be able to do it alone. My mom called me Friday as we were heading into Michigan and said that some members of Arise United Methodist Church would meet me at the storage facility at 9:30 a.m. Saturday morning.

On Saturday morning as I pulled into the storage facility, I was greeted by a number of smiling faces and knew that God had answered my prayers. Within a couple of hours, the truck was unloaded. While standing in the center of the prayer circle, I felt something I had not felt very often these past 26 years – peace, and a great hope for my future. Thank you to Pastor Don, Tina and Steve Cary, Bob Whalen, Bob Zane and Rich Guyon. You are my angels! Thank you to my heavenly father who sent you to me through my mom. I could never have done this without all of you. Thank you, thank you! May God’s blessings shine on all of you and the rest of Arise United Methodist Church.

Sincerely,
 Gail B.

Caring... continued from pg. 1

stressful life event, has a joyful celebration, or whatever the need may be, or if you would just like to volunteer for this great ministry, please contact me at (H 734-878-0191, C 734-709-8394, mmathis26@yahoo.com). On the welcome table, you will find an Arise Caring Ministry card that anyone can fill out to communicate the needs of the congregation to me. The comment card can be placed in the collection basket, or you can give the card to me or any Caring Team leader.

I have a passion for this ministry and I truly hope that with our help, the communication for everyone’s caring needs will succeed through Caring Ministry with a caring heart. Thank you for your support.



Arise Ministry Center
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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.

Birthdays and Anniversaries Have Moved

You may have noticed that Arise birthdays and anniversaries are now located in the weekly Sunday bulletin. Thanks to Dave Russell for making this change, so that we can recognize people's special days closer to the actual date and have a little more room in the newsletter. Contact Dave in the church office at (734) 878-1928 with any updates.

Thank you to Ed Bock's

A big **thank you** goes to Ed Bock Feeds and Stuff in Pinckney for letting Arise put posters in their store, signs in their yard and flyers in customer bags for the Barn Sale and Dogfest 2011. This spring they also donated many of the beautiful flowers you see around the church property.

Pastoral Services Available

Pastor Don is very happy to make home visits for folks who find it hard to get out, need support after an illness, would like communion served in their home or just a friendly visit. He has also set aside the last Sunday of each month at 4 p.m. for pet memorial services in the sanctuary as a way to reach out to those who are grieving the loss of their pets. One service was held in August. This service is open to the public, also, so please share this new ministry with those who may need it. Note that pet photos for the service need to be arranged in advance. Please contact Pastor Don about any pastoral services needed.

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*Thanks to all who contribute;
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feedback and suggestions!*

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