



## Gene and Fran Smith: Faith That Lasts

### Ministers

*Every member  
of the Church*

### Pastor

*Don Weatherup*

### Director of Music

*Rich Sliter*

### Administrative Assistant

*Dave Russell*

### Ministry Center

11211 Dexter-  
Pinckney Rd.  
Pinckney, MI  
48169

734 878-1928

734 878-2748 (F)

[www.arisechurch.org](http://www.arisechurch.org)

Born in Illinois and raised in Scottville, Mich., near Ludington, Fran was a farm girl. The youngest of four, she joined her brother and two sisters in driving the tractor and helping their dad with the haying. Fran always liked to draw and play basketball and has been a life-long sports fan. While growing up, she picked fruits and vegetables, worked in a canning factory and waitressed to make enough money to go to Central Michigan University for a two year secretarial course. At CMU, she met Gene at a homecoming party in 1955 soon after he returned from the army. Fran used her education to work at Ford Motor Company; then the couple married in 1956 and had two sons and a daughter. Brenda and her husband, Bob Whalen and their son, Tony, are part of the Arise Church family, as well. The Smiths moved to this area in 2000 when Bob built them a home in Howell.

Despite her Catholic heritage, Fran's first experience with church was in high school when she and her sister attended the Methodist Church together. She and Gene were later married in, and began attending, the United Methodist Church (UMC). The couple lived in Wayne, Dearborn and Livonia, for 38 years, being very active in the Newburgh UMC. Fran taught Sunday School for 3 & 4 year olds, was active in UMW, where she held several leadership positions, and was active in the Quilting Group. "I learned to make a crazy quilt and a charm quilt. My mother used to quilt and we girls would help her on the treadle sewing machine." She and Gene bowled on a Sr. League in Livonia, also—a sport that Fran enjoyed for 31 years. "Now we play bowling with Wii," she says. "It's pretty fun!"



Gene recalls that he was born at Beyer Hospital in Ypsilanti. He lived in Wayne with his parents and brother and joined the Methodist Church in 1943, where his parents were "members with the 2nd and 3rd longest time there." After 8th grade, his family moved to Cheboygan, where they owned and ran a "short serve" food business with ice cream and candy, like homemade fudge and taffy. "My father knew fudge makers on Mackinac Island, so he learned the craft after he bought the business. The taffy was the hardest – you really needed muscle to pull it. My favorite was the peanut brittle. When I was in high school, I delivered ice cream to Mackinaw City two to three times a week to be shipped over for use at the Grand Hotel. I washed more dishes during that time than I want to remember," he quips. Later, his family moved to California and he attended CMU, getting a degree in business administration. He was also one of three managers of their football team. Gene worked for 31 years at GM in the Benefits area. Once he retired, he worked an additional 14 years



## Pastor's Column



**Pastor Don Weatherup**

Not long ago I had the great privilege to visit Chris and Angela Young just 15 hours after the birth of their daughter Faith. Many of you saw the picture I snapped of Faith in her dad's arms. The thing about that picture that kept capturing my attention is the fact that Faith's head is so much smaller than her dad's hands! I'll bet I've looked at that picture dozens of times in the past few weeks. I kept asking myself, "Were my kids that tiny?" How quickly we forget that all babies really are that small.

The birth of a baby brings so much promise. Little babies capture our attention because it is a brand new life just starting out, and so the script of their life contains mostly blank pages that are yet to be written. As we think about all those blank pages, so many questions come to mind. What will he/she be like? What traits will he/she exhibit? Will he/she be more like mom, or more like dad? What will he/she grow up to become some day? Will he/she go to college? Get married? Have children?

There are hundreds of questions.

Once parents begin to realize that they have a profound impact on the plot of that script, they often begin to worry. Every parent at some point reaches that moment when they realize that they really are responsible for a life. It can be overwhelming. I'll never forget coming home with our first child. Every new sound brought a mixture of both delight and panic. More questions surfaced. Is that normal? Is she ok? Is anything wrong?

Imagine now that you have a brand new baby. You're already overwhelmed with the responsibility of this new life. But to make matters even more anxiety producing, this baby is different, because while the script of your baby's life contains mostly blank pages, you've been given an outline for what your baby's life will be like. While you don't have all the details of your baby's life, you've been given some information. That is exactly what happened to Mary and Joseph.

Luke 1:30-33 says, "Then the angel told Mary, "Don't be afraid! God is pleased with you, and you will have a son. His name will be Jesus. He will be great and will be called

the Son of God Most High. The Lord God will make him king, as his ancestor David was. He will rule the people of Israel forever, and his kingdom will never end."

Matthew 1:20-21: "The angel said, "Joseph, the baby that Mary will have is from the Holy Spirit. Go ahead and marry her. Then after her baby is born, name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

Oh, by the way, Mary and Joseph, no pressure here, but that baby of yours – he's the Messiah. He is the Son of God who will save everyone from his or her sins. He will be even more influential than King David was.

That is pressure on top of pressure!



**Newborn Faith Young in her Dad's arms**

I don't think it is coincidence that every time a message is about to be delivered by God that will turn someone's life upside down, it is preceded by the words—"Don't be afraid." When the angel spoke to Mary and Joseph, they both heard "Don't be afraid." When Zechariah was told that he would have a son named John (John the Baptist, the cousin of Jesus) he was told, "Don't be afraid."

When Simon (who was later named Peter), James, and John had fished all night but caught nothing, Jesus told them to try again. This time they hauled in so many fish the boat began

to sink. And Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Don't be afraid! From now on you will bring in people instead of fish." Right then, these men began on a journey that would change their lives.

Every time God begins to make changes that turn someone's life upside down, God always begins with a message of reassurance—"Don't be afraid!"

So how about you? What is God doing (or trying to do) in your life to turn it upside down? What has the Holy Spirit been prompting you to do that would alter the status quo? What new chapter in the script of your life is God wanting to add, that will send you in a new and exciting, yet anxious, direction?

When the shepherds were told the good news that would change everything, the birth of the Messiah, they, too, heard those words of comfort—"Don't be afraid."

This Christmas season, do yourself a favor and let those words really sink in. Jesus came to prove that we really

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# Generosity on Consecration Sunday!

Under the leadership of Steve Cary, Consecration Sunday pledges resulted in an increase of 5.4% for the General Fund and 14.8% for the Land & Building Fund at the November 8th culmination of Consecration Sunday! A catered breakfast followed the service. Thanks to those who were able to respond with pledges to this year's theme, "The Gift We Give." Thanks also to those who do not pledge, but faithfully give to Arise Church. It is our combined stewardship that allows the Arise community to serve God and His people.

As part of the campaign, \$50 was given to four volunteers, The Osbornes, Kim Sherry, Jen Wagner and Bob Whalen. Steve Cary sent the following thanks:

*I would like to take a moment and let you all know how wonderful I think your missions are, and how much your efforts are appreciated. I am sure that many people in the congregation were inspired by your Stewardship and good works: animals for villagers, food baskets for the needy, items needed by homeless teens, and even much needed insulation for our own church. You all took a total of \$200.00, grew it, and are changing lives with it in ways I don't think I could have thought of in a month of Sundays. Pretty cool stuff. God bless you all and thanks again.*

And on a lighter note, if you haven't seen the YouTube video featuring Steve and Pastor Don, check it out at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=oIgYKMRufMM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oIgYKMRufMM)



## Pastor's Column... continued from previous page

have nothing to fear. His victory over death and sin gives us absolute assurance that, with Christ in your life, there really is nothing to fear.

So to Chris and Angela, and all of you whose life is being, or about to be, turned upside down, "Don't be afraid." You have everything you need. You have faith.

Merry Christmas!

Pastor Don



## Arise Barn Sale Nets \$3500!



The Arise Barn Sale, led this year by Karen Vaden, took place on Fri. Oct. 9th and Sat. Oct. 10th. A rainy day and plenty of mud did not deter the shoppers waiting at 9:00, when it opened on Friday. Thanks go to Karen and her team for an exceptional effort in a difficult economy, and to all who

donated goods. Special thanks go to Diane Gould, for her ongoing efforts in collecting the "collectibles," and to Geoff Boltach (Sue's son), who provided \$500 worth of signs for only \$25. Well done, Barn Sale Team!!!

# Photos of Halloween Fun Day



# and Consecration Sunday



# Jeff Vaden Baptized

by Pastor Don Weatherup

A few weeks ago Jeff Vaden attended a new member class at Arise and expressed interest in joining the church. One of the requirements of church membership in the United Methodist Church is that a person needs to be baptized, but Jeff had not been baptized. So we talked about how he would need to be baptized prior to joining the church.

Jeff's grandmother is a lifelong Christian and so Jeff felt it would be important for his grandmother to see his baptism. However, since she is in her upper 90's, she is not able to travel. Jeff decided to bring the baptism to her. She lives in the Battle Creek area.

Jeff Vaden received the sacrament of baptism in front of grandma, family and friends! I know that his Arise Church family will also want to enjoy the moment, so here are a couple of pictures (compliments of his wife, Karen.) We congratulate Jeff and welcome him into the family of Christ!



“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’”

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## Gene and Fran... continued from pg.1

at a Plymouth funeral home, helping during visitation and services and transporting the deceased, as needed. He often worked on weekends, so Fran began attending Arise with Brenda; Gene joined them when his weekends were free. He was active in the Men's Group at Newburgh, was Scoutmaster for Cub and Boy Scouts and helped form a kid's hockey league that travelled throughout Southeastern Michigan.

“My favorite interest, though, is history,” Gene says. “Fran and I were tour guides for Green Mead in Livonia—a smaller version of Greenfield Village, where the historical buildings were all from Livonia. We gave tours one Sunday a month for years.” In 1989, Gene went to Costa Rica on a mission trip to help build churches. Fran joined him on a trip in 1990, teaching VBS for the children. “It was such a good learning experience. It made us appreciate what we have in the U.S. They lived in houses with dirt floors and no indoor plumbing, but were very happy people, despite their poverty.”

At Arise, Fran and Gene have been active in the newsletter folding team, worked in the church office running the weekly bulletins, attended the Wednesday Nighters and most recently help with the Dog Park Committee and being greeters on Sunday. Fran is in Threads of Faith and brought the idea of prayer shawls to Arise, which she still knits by hand. “We really like it here and hope the church keeps growing,” Fran says. “God has helped us and it's a comfort to be part of a church family and to read the Bible. We are so grateful for everyone's help and prayers during Gene's illness this year.” Fran and Gene, we are grateful, too, that you are here with us at Arise!





**What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future. It is a fervent wish that every cup may overflow with blessings rich and eternal, and that every path may lead to peace.**

— Agnes M. Pharo

**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

Monday \_\_\_\_\_

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

Wednesday \_\_\_\_\_

7:00 pm  
Wednesday Nighters



Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
29 Worship at Country Elementary <b>1st Sunday of Advent</b>	30	1 7 pm Council	2	3	4	5
6 Holy Communion Sunday Worship at Country Elementary <b>2nd Sunday of Advent</b> 1 pm One Life Team	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 Worship at Country Elementary <b>3rd Sunday of Advent</b> 5 pm Arise Christmas Party	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 Worship at Country Elementary <b>4th Sunday of Advent</b>	21 First Day of Winter	22	23	24 6 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	25 <b>Christmas</b> 	26
27 Worship at Country Elementary	28	29	30	31	1 New Year's Day	2

**Halloween Fun Day Enjoyed by All!**

by Jen Wagner

What do you get when you put together hundreds of pumpkins, crazy costumes, a bounce house, a hay wagon, donuts, cider, scary music, piñatas, kooky games, prizes, candy, and a bunch of kids? That's right—Halloween Fun Day at Arise Acres! Those who were brave enough to come out on a cold, windy day had a real treat (and a few tricks).

Halloween Fun Day was a success! We had 100 attendees, which included 70 kids and 30 parents. Ann Ruhlig of Ruhlig's Farm in Dexter donated hundreds of pumpkins,

thanks to Joy Vanderpool's request. Arise neighbor John Gray gave 4 hayrides with approximately 16 passengers each time. The bounce house was never empty. This was an event that highlighted the beauty of Arise Acres, but also a relatively low stress event for the people in charge. And there was an extremely high fun factor for the kids! Thank you to our supportive congregation for all of the donations which made this an inexpensive way to show the community how fun Christianity can be!





Arise Ministry Center  
 11211 Dexter-Pinckney Rd.  
 Pinckney, MI 48169

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*Winter Anniversaries*

12/23 Tim & Jan Richards  
 1/5 Vlad & Norine Bibicoff  
 1/18 Jim & Gail Osborne

*Winter Birthdays*

12/4 Laurie Glover	1/5 Ray Kazusky
12/6 Diane Gould	1/6 Judy Miller
12/8 Ron Fike	1/10 Max Yamakado
Kim Sherry	1/12 Norma Topp
12/11 Rich Guyon	1/20 Ethel Ward
12/23 Casey Tankka	1/22 Jerry Dawson
12/27 Taylor Cole	1/23 Duane Haines
12/28 Ross Richards	Ellen Russell
1/2 Wes Richards	1/26 E.J. Sherry
1/4 Carolyn Stafford	Gene Smith
	1/27 Evva Funk

**ARISE NEWSLETTER TEAM**

Editorial:  
 April Flanagan, Beth Plachta

Layout/Design:  
 Barbara Wood

Photography:  
 Steve & Tina Cary,  
 Barbara Wood

Distribution:  
 Evva & her team

*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](http://www.arisechurch.org)  
 Check out the Missions link on the website!