

Pastor Don's Retirement

It has been a few weeks now since it was announced that Pastor Don is retiring. He will be moving nearer to his daughter and her family. Although it is difficult for us, it is a happy time for Pastor Don and Laura. Pastor Don has been assigned here for 14 years. We have been lucky to have him and Laura that long. They are going to be spending more time with their beautiful grandchildren. This was a privilege I enjoyed many years ago and it was the happiest time in my life. I did not feel the pressure of worrying about what they were eating (Kraft macaroni and cheese was a favorite) nor if they had what they needed for school, never had to ask about homework, I could just be the fun Grandma. They will have this joy. My grandchildren and I remember this as a happy time. I want that for Pastor Don and Laura but most of all for their two grandchildren. I will miss them, but I want them to have this special time in their lives. We won't know who is coming for a few months, but we can honor Pastor Don by welcoming and supporting whoever it is. Meanwhile we can enjoy this time with Don and Laura. Pastor Don has made a difference in many of our lives. I am no exception. I don't know how many times in the 10 years that I dealt with my husband's battle with Alzheimer's that I went into Don's office feeling beaten and down and walked out feeling uplifted and not only ready but prepared to resume the fight. I had a wonderful Stephen Minister that helped me also and between the two of them they encouraged me and kept me going. As I think about this time, I remember the many others from Pastor Don to the United Methodist Men who were so supportive and the woman who would come up and talk with Gene and hug him. I so appreciated her. But as I often do, I am wandering off the title. We will have time and for this I am grateful to honor Don and Laura in the coming months. They have been a special twosome in our lives, but I think we can get another duet from them, many more sermons, lots of Sundays to see Laura in the choir, and lots of conversations with them. Maybe a Pecan Pie here and there. We will celebrate and there will be cake, and we will send them out with joy for having had them here in this time, in this place.

Lord, we thank you for the gift of Pastors who lead us through our lives. They are there in the good and the bad times and they bless our lives. You send us many Pastors and Leaders in our lifetimes but some touch our lives and remain with us in our hearts. That is Pastor Don. We will miss him and Laura, but we will wish them well and remember them always.

Philippians 1:3 I thank my God every time I remember you

Grace Epperson