

Rockville Reflections

As we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory,
are being transformed into His likeness with ever increasing glory,
which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:18

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WITH GRATITUDE

in our hearts we dedicate this BONUS issue of Reflections to
Pastor Gene and Loretta in honor of their selfless service to us, the church at Rockville.

God's Garden

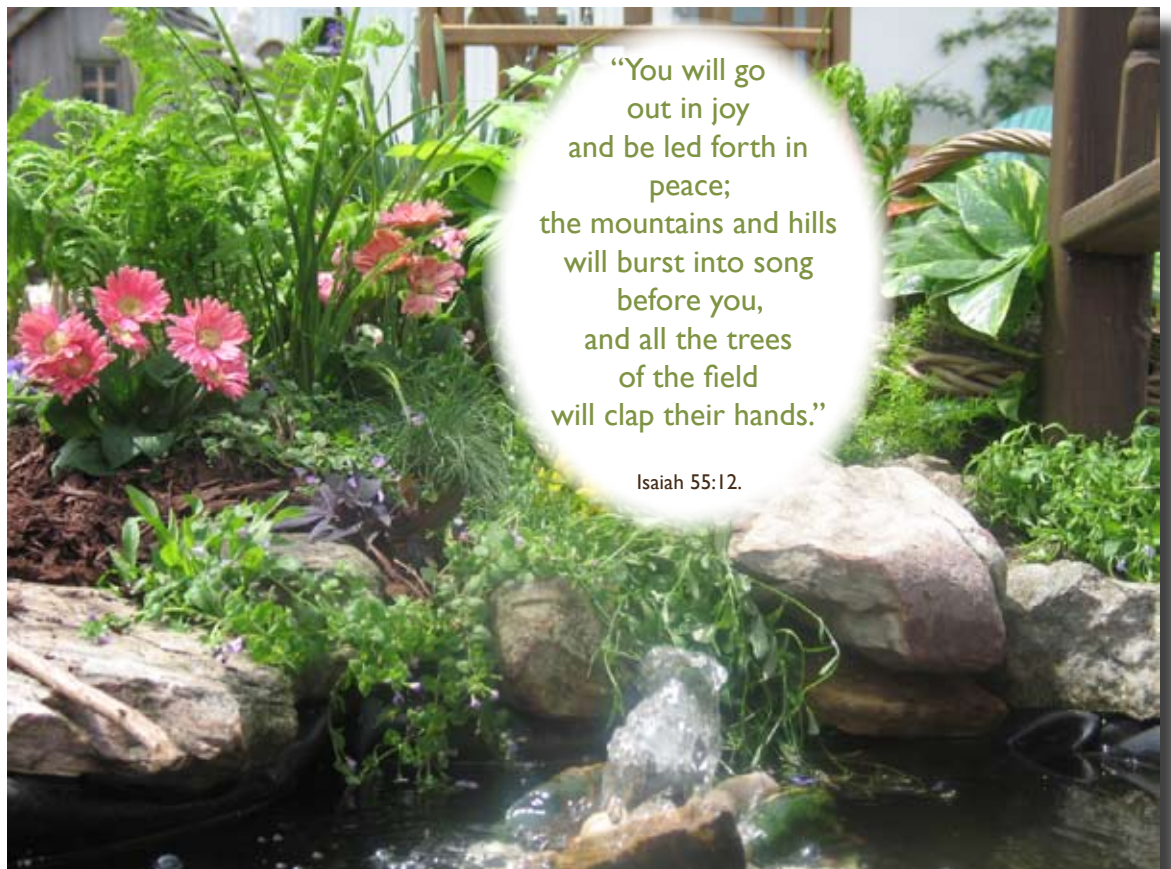
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Photo by: Twila

A
Blessing
for
Pastor Gene
and Loretta



"You will go
out in joy
and be led forth in
peace;
the mountains and hills
will burst into song
before you,
and all the trees
of the field
will clap their hands."

Isaiah 55:12.

With the arrival of Springtime comes the anticipation of newness...
a new start,...new growth,...new life...

even as all creation responds to the Maker's plan,

may this be a season of joy...peace....and celebration....
as you experience all the 'newness' that God has in store for you both!



Reflections...

When reflecting on my friendship with Pastor Gene I have to look back as far as I can remember. We both made our entry into the world in 1958. Known as the “big snow year”. Our families attended Pequea Amish Mennonite Church together and thus began our friendship.

My earliest recollection is of sitting in the primary Sunday school class at Pequea with Elva Burkholder’s mom, Sara Kauffman as teacher.

As time went on, I can recall one Sunday afternoon when we were about 14 years old. Gene had Aden Stoltzfus, Ben Zook, Ivan Stoltzfus and I over for dinner. In the afternoon we went horse back riding! Remarkably, there were goldfish swimming in the horse trough that day!

In 1972 we were baptized together at Pequea by Elam Kauffman. We were part of a group of 14 young people.

Our youth group days included many exciting ballgames with Gene playing center field. His knees were well lubed back then and he could run like a deer.

The Camp Hebron youth retreat was also a highlight during these years. When Gene was 16 years old he took part in a play written in the Pennsylvania Dutch language. It was performed at our Thanksgiving Social in 1974. I can still recite some of the lines but don’t know how to write them!

Our dads had a hunting camp together in Schuylkill County so we made memories hunting there together during our teenage years.

I saw Gene’s leadership skills being developed during his term as youth group leader. It was during this season that he and Loretta began dating. From then on his time hanging out with the guys was severely limited!

Gene was always the kind of friend who took a personal interest in each persons life. There was always room for one more in his circle of friends.

Thank-you Gene for your personal interest in each one of us here at Rockville during your years of service as pastor.

Change is not always something people welcome. For the most part people value a familiar comfort zone; they like to know what to expect. However, in this life change is inevitable. Change can be a sign of thought, of life, and of growth.

For Pastor Gene, change has brought him through many different stages in his desire to follow God and to serve the church.

In the mid 1990s, Gene was chosen as an elder to serve alongside Pastor Amos and elders Aden Stoltzfus and Dan Esh. Five years later the church voted to have him serve a second term and he agreed. Someone shared a memory of Gene requesting Mim Esh to sing “Each Step I Take” at his first installation. In later years, Gene would often refer to the comfort of recognizing the leading of God in his life personally.

Because of a growing church population, Pastor Amos asked for assistance in leadership. A search committee was formed to consider the needs of Rockville and respond to them. At that point both Gene and Metui were asked to join the leadership team as assistant pastors in 2002.

Later when Amos announced he was resigning, retired pastor Melville Nafzinger served as interim to help find someone from within the congregation to replace Amos. Having served many years as an elder, Gene was approached about the position, and in 2004 was commissioned as pastor. Soon after

he was installed he shared a verse that he desired to represent his ministry: “For the eyes of the Lord go to and fro throughout the whole earth that He may strongly support those whose hearts are completely His. II Chronicles 16:9

Throughout these changing roles, Gene’s heart for ministry was evident to many within the congregation. He found great fulfillment in meeting the needs of people, young and old alike. Caring, selfless, compassionate,

approachable, and willing to be used are words people have given to describe his shepherding ministry to the congregation at Rockville in the six years he served as the full time pastor. He and Loretta served sacrificially, making themselves available as needs arose within the church. Many people were blessed by their kind and gracious visitation, counseling, and friendship ministry.

And now change has entered into Gene’s life again. With Leon Shirk assuming the pastorate, Gene and Loretta will close this chapter with the assurance that God will go before them in each step they take. Sometimes change is uncertain, perhaps even painful, but if change is embraced when God is at work, He promises a hope and a future. He knows the plans He has for us, and they are not to harm us.



¹²So, as those who have been chosen of God,
holy and beloved,

put on a heart of
compassion... kindness.... humility....
gentleness.... and patience;

¹³bearing with one another,
and forgiving each other,

whoever has a complaint against anyone;
just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

¹⁴Beyond all these things put on love,
which is the perfect bond of unity.

¹⁵Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,
to which indeed you were called in one body;

and be thankful.

¹⁶Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you,
with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with
psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,
singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

¹⁷Whatever you do in word or deed,
do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

Colossians 3:12-17 NASB

PASTOR GENE'S PARTING PASTORAL CHARGE GIVEN MARCH 21, 2010

Song of Blessing

Sing to the tune of Edelweiss

May the Lord, Mighty God, Bless and keep you forever;
Grant you peace, perfect peace, Courage in every endeavor.
Lift up your eyes and seek His face...And His grace forever!
May the Lord, mighty God, Bless and keep you forever.

Prayer of Blessing for the family

LORD,

May this dear family hear you, calling them by name, speaking words of hope into their lives.

May their hearts thrill as they see the cords of promise You have woven in their lives.

¹Make their light to break out like the dawn, and their recovery to speedily spring forth; and their righteousness to go before them; the glory of the LORD to be their rear guard.

²May they be renewed in the spirit of their mind, May they put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

May they make the wise choice to hear and act on Your Word...for Jesus says that...³Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock.

May they be overwhelmed with Your lavish love for them. for Your...⁴Love is patient, and kind, is not jealous; does not brag, is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things endures all things...May they

experience the delightful reward of having Your love show up in their relationships....⁷A new commandment I give to you that you love one another. Even as I have loved you, so shall you also love one another.

In their daily decisions may they bow before the mystery of Your ways for... ⁹There is no wisdom and no understanding and no counsel against the LORD... May they pursue Your justice not their own version of fairness. May they possess all that You have for them.

May they turn toward You. In the good times and the bad times may they say with the Psalmist... ¹³'The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation. my stronghold.'

May they praise You for giving deliverance. May they repeat, 'I Love You, O LORD, my strength.' ⁵May they be like a graceful gazelle, sure of their way, girded with strength from You, blameless, set on a high place.

⁶In the Sabbath rests You give may they be overflowing with gladness and joy, rejoicing in what You have done. In the tough times may they confidently say, ¹¹'The LORD is my Helper. I will not be afraid. What will man do to me?.' In their times of grappling with circumstances may they hear the resounding words of Christ answering...¹²'If I can?! All things are possible to you who believes.'

May they rest in the knowledge that ⁸You are the One who has set a boundary for the deep waters. You are in control.

O Lord.... scoop them up.... hold them close...reassure them.... that You are for them... period... done... Hallelujah! and Amen.



Do not fear,
for I have
redeemed you;

I have
called you
by name;
you are
Mine!

Isaiah 43:1

Eugene

Born to Nobility
Vivacious
¹Isaiah 58:8

Loretta

Crowned with Honor
Victorious
²Ephesians 4:23,24

Craig

From the Steep Rock
Enduring Spirit
³Matthew 7:24

Becky

Bound by Love
Loving
⁴I Corinthians 13:4-7

Leah May

Gazelle,
Beauty & Grace
⁵Psalms 18: 32-33
Gift of God, Blessed
⁶Psalms 92:4

Eric

Powerful, Unifier
⁷John 13:34

Sabrina

Boundary, Protected,
Guarded
⁸Psalms 104:9

Jordan

Desender
Wise in Judgement
⁹Proverbs 21:30

Dana

Bright as Day
Obedient
¹⁰Deuteronomy 16:20

Alyssa Faith

Noble, Bold
¹¹Hebrews 13:6
Firm Believer, Faith
¹²Mark 9:23

Grant

Tall, Assurance
¹³Psalms 18:2