



# PastorCare

West Michigan  
Helping Pastors Soar

**December, 2013**

**Rev. Steve Raemisch, Pastor of Preaching and Vision  
Living Stones Community Church**

*Life is full of people — it's a people kind of place. We all meet people throughout our days. Some are there, some are interesting, others care, and others are just endearing. Then there are those who are all of these and then some. John Smith is all of these things to me and more.*

*I met John at a Couples Retreat at Crystal Mountain back in 2007. My first impression of him has been lasting and true to form. We got to know each other very quickly, exchanging our stories and life. We have remained friends and deepened and expanded our relationship ever since.*



Pastor Steve and Christina, Eliana – 17, Jonathan – 16, Maxwell – 10, Victoria – 8, Reagan - 7

*I've kept up with John by simply bumping into him in so many different places. I'd see him at a small pastor's luncheon and then at a large Pregnancy Resource banquet. I run into him at a restaurant or see him meeting with someone over coffee. John is just out and about in and around the lives of people. You only do stuff like that IF you really care. Those who know John, know he really cares.*

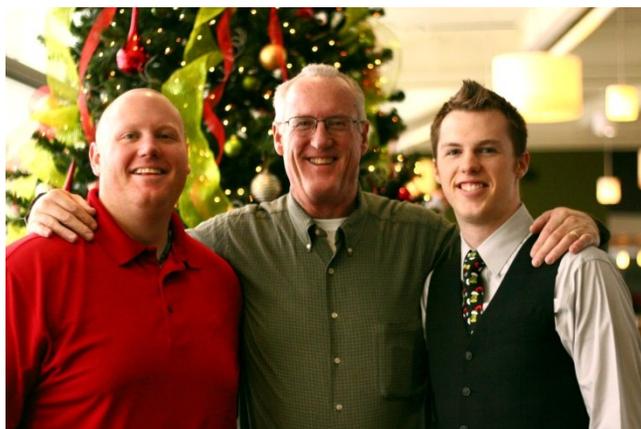
*We planted Living Stones Community Church in the Grandville MI area back in April of 2011. I like what one man said about church planting — “Church Planting is fun and cool, until it gets hard.” Another told me — “If you knew it was going to be this hard before you started, you probably wouldn't have done it.” We certainly found these things to be the case, as most church planters do, but still have little regret. John has been a great help and source of encouragement along our church planting journey. He has worn many hats in our relationship. He has provided coaching during times at the crossroads; he has preached for our people promoting the sanctity of life; he has offered tender encouragement during times of discouragement. He has always been ready to offer a quick word of counsel, to pray briefly over the phone before an important meeting, or just take the time to hear or share a good word from God. Mostly John has just been a faithful friend and a dear brother.*

*We came to the crossroads of bi-vocational ministry a few months back - most planters start there. As I began to pray over part time work I started to network with just a few of my close friends. John was one of the men I met with. He and I had lunch at a Jimmy John's and I asked him for some help in finding part time work. “No problem Steve, be glad to help!” — the standard John response . . . I sent him an electronic copy of my resume and not many days later I got a follow up email from John — he had a guy!*

*John was helping Joe Ortega, another church planter in Holland MI. In the process of helping Joe's church plant, John bumped into one of the team members from Joe's church who was also helping with the plant. That man was Randy Bouwkamp, the President of Bouwkamp Builders in Holland Michigan. The next day John sent Randy an email with my resume attached, inquiring if he knew of anyone who's looking to hire someone part time?” Randy replied immediately. Randy told John he'd been praying for another person to join his team. He didn't want to go through the process of posting the job, taking in a bunch of resumes, and then having to interview a bunch of people. Randy just prayed! And then Randy met John. John then simply asked, “Hey, I know a guy . . . do you know anyone?” Two weeks later I had a part time job — crafted in heaven, brought about by two faithful praying men and one guy in need of part time work! That's one glimpse of John Smith — he has a warehouse full of encounters like mine, and he personally cares about each one.*

*If you ever meet John Smith . . . you might just be friends for LIFE. Wherever God takes it, one thing will be constant — John Smith will help you in one way or another, even if it's just the smile of his face, the care in his heart, and the prayer from his knee.*

Pastor Steve Raemisch



Pastor John Smith with his sons, Matt and Andrew

**Please consider making a year-end contribution to PastorCare West Michigan.** We thank God for your partnership with us in Kingdom ministry.

Please make checks payable to **PastorCare West Michigan**. Mailing address: **1632 Waterbury Dr. SE Grand Rapids, MI 49508**.

**Online contributions** can now be made through the PastorCare West Michigan website, using our safe and secure **PayPal account**.