

BETWEEN SEEDTIME AND HARVEST

**Senior Adults Newsletter
Christ Covenant Church
December 2019**



GRACE TO YOU

by

Pastor Bruce Creswell

ALL THE WAY MY SAVIOR LEADS ME

If you are alive you have gone through hard times, and, if you live long enough, you are able to look back and see the lessons learned from them. Our Lord custom designs our hard times, knowing what we need to strengthen our faith and to make us more like Him. If it was left up to us, we would bypass them altogether! The hard times you face may be different than the ones faced by others. But one thing they have in common is that they can't be fixed or controlled by ourselves! Hard times have a way of showing up our limitations, our inabilities, our weaknesses, and even our mortality. They make us vulnerable to the subtle attacks and the fiery darts of the evil one, thus driving us to the Lord.

For Job, hard times included losing everything at once: his wealth, his family, his health, and his wife's love. With it came suffering of all sorts, unanswered questions, and miserable friends, but never did he lose his focus on the Lord. In the midst of hard times, he could still say, "For I know that my redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God." (Job 19:25-26). He recognized the sovereign power of God over death and expressed his personal relationship in "my redeemer" – two important truths to remember in hard times.

I have found hard times either makes me turn to the Lord, "from whence cometh my help" (Psalm 121:1) or finds me isolated and trusting in myself. Growing up in hard times, I learned to pray to God for His provision to provide, or His power to overcome, or for "grace to trust Him more." It showed just how needy and dependent I was (and am) on the Lord. It became the "natural" response to go to the Lord in prayer, like a beggar begging for bread. The outflow of praying included "waiting on the Lord" learning to trust in His timing to bring it about. Hard times also made me aware of the promises of God and claiming them in my prayer. Alongside those promises in my Bible, are the letters "FM," standing for "For Me," focusing on the Lord and His greatness.

At such times, when I fail to turn to the Lord, I wind up creating unnecessary problems and adding more stress and things seem to become more complicated. Learning over again what the songwriter penned, "O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear," and what the scripture says, "You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you" (Isaiah 26:3). It seems that I still haven't learned to "carry everything to the Lord in prayer."

(Continued on Page 2)

The hard times we go through today only strengthens our faith and prepares us for the next round of hard times, having witnessed as Job did, the sovereign power of the Lord as well as our personal relationship with Him growing deeper. The Apostle Paul, faced hard times and penned these words in Philippians 3:10, "That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death."

Recalling some of the hard times that I have faced and seeing the goodness in the Lord in sending them to me and what He has taught me, I especially want to give offer up praise and thanksgiving to Him, ever learning, "Jesus doeth all things well."

All the way my Savior leads me;
What have I to ask beside?
Can I doubt His tender mercy,
Who through life has been my guide?
Heav'nly peace, divinest comfort,
Here by faith in Him to dwell!
For I know, whate'er befall me,
Jesus doeth all things well;
For I know, whate'er befall me,
Jesus doeth all things well.

Announcement: No Sunday School December 22nd and 29th.

HYMN HISTORY

Submitted by Peggy Dear

SILENT NIGHT

In their village high in the Austrian Alps, a Catholic priest and his organist often talked about the hymns their church sang. They agreed that the perfect Christmas hymn had not yet been written. Then, just before Christmas in 1818, the church organ broke down. Suddenly they needed a new hymn that could be easily sung by the congregation, even without a booming organ to lead the way.

Joseph Mohr, the priest, took up the challenge and quickly wrote the words for "Silent Night." He handed them to Franz Gruber, the organist, who said, "You have found it--the right song--God be praised!" Then Gruber wrote a tune that could be effective with guitar accompaniment.

The hymn might have remained an obscure Alpine folk song if it weren't for the organ repairman. A few days after Christmas, he got a copy of the song and began sharing it with others. Soon touring groups began to sing it in concerts, spreading its popularity even further. Today, it is one of the most beloved of all Christmas songs.

Silent night, holy night,
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and Child.
Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night.
Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ the Savior is born!
Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Joseph Mohr (1792-1848)

BOOK REVIEW

By Chris Williams

***"The Island at the Center of the World"*
by Russell Shorto
Doubleday, 2004**

This is the "Epic story of Dutch Manhattan and the forgotten colony that shaped America," a very interesting and fresh look at how we became the nation we are. The book is based on recently translated original documents from the 1600's and gives details about the discovery, settlement, culture, and religion of the Dutch in New Amsterdam (now New York city).

The account is full of colorful details and personalities. There is Willem Kieft, the first leader who intentionally made war against mostly peaceful Indian villages to the detriment of the colony and surrounding settlements. There is the leader who replaced him, Peter Stuyvesant, a military man who ruled with independence and strictness. And a lawyer, Andriaen Van der Donk, who constantly pressed for more public involvement in government, and developed the "right to petition the government for redress of grievances," (p.240) and who worked to publicize the beauty and openness of New Amsterdam back in Holland.

The author constantly emphasizes the openness of the colony. There were no religious requirements for immigration and no "established religion" as in most of Europe. Unlike Puritan Boston, the colony became the home for all sorts of people from many nations and cultures: Protestants, Catholics, and Jews. He cites this as foundational in America's constitutional commitment to freedom of religion.

As mentioned in my previous review of "The Pioneers" by David McCullough, one of the most captivating aspects of the book is the vivid descriptions of the newly discovered wilderness on Manhattan and the Hudson River. It is hard to imagine the island of New York as it was in the 17th century without any buildings above one story and covered in flora and fauna. The entire settlement of New Amsterdam was situated at the very southern tip of Manhattan below Wall Street. North of that were scattered farms and villages.

Those of Dutch ancestry should determine to read this. It gives some interesting insights about Dutch culture that are still with us today.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Submitted by Dot Branson

John and Cris Oliver have lived in Matthews for the past twenty years. He came in retirement to RTS as professor of practical theology, where he taught in several areas for 14 years before retiring again five years ago.

John was reared in Springfield, Illinois, and Cris is a fourth generation Atlantan, where they met fifty years ago. They have two sons and seven grandchildren in Savannah and Atlanta.

John had pastorates in Alabama and Georgia. His longest was twenty-eight years at the First Presbyterian Church of Augusta, Georgia, where the church developed Westminster Schools of Augusta, a counseling center, a bookstore, and became the Georgia base for Campus Outreach and Medical Campus Outreach. The large missions program was the heart of the ministry.

John's heart is for the Great Commission. He and Cris annually traveled abroad in his preaching and teaching ministry, principally in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Europe. Their home was open to frequent guests and short-term residents, who became like family. Cris gave dinners for large groups, including all inquirers classes, officers, the annual Christmas luncheon for the eldest Sunday school class, and a missionary luncheon during each annual missionary conference, which allowed the missionaries time to visit with each other during a busy week. She also developed a preschool/nursery ministry based on thinking that discipling begins at birth. The pastoral ministry defined their life together. Hobbies include reading and gardening, especially for John.

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

Joe Morris has a walker, a wheelchair, cane, and shower chair he wishes to give to anyone who would need them. Please contact him for further information.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLE DEADLINE

Articles for the January newsletter are due to Jane Yancey no later than December 20th. Please send them to her at jane@yancey.com



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Fran Di Andrea
- 3 Ken Cochrum
- 6 Vicki Evans
- 6 Judy Pinkard
- 7 Harriet Marshall
- 8 David Cullen
- 12 Chris Oliver
- 12 Tim Roberts
- 12 Chris Williams
- 16 Terri Theyson
- 18 Joe Morris
- 19 Martha Ann Harris
- 22 Ken Bodwell
- 22 Henry McClain
- 27 Lucille Eubanks
- 28 Latrell Ross
- 29 Virginia Gardiner
- 30 Lynn Sistare
- 31 Steve Gooch



DECEMBER ANNIVERSARY

- 2 Ted and Jane Williams
- 29 Fred and Jean Depp
- 30 Chris and Betty Williams

CELEBRATION!



Dot Driver celebrating her 90th birthday at Go Ye Village in Tahlequah, OK. She is doing well and can still get out and about.

SENIORS MONTHLY FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITIES

CHRISTMAS DINNER

December 6, 2019
6:00 PM, CLC



The Annual Coram Deo Sunday School Class Christmas Dinner will be a special occasion that you do not want to miss! We will enjoy a specially prepared celebration dinner. The program will be the Nathan George family in concert. And . . . the traditional **12 Days of Christmas** will also be sung. If you have never attended one of these dinners, you will enjoy being a part of this event,



By: Dot Branson

December 13th, 11:30 am
Trio's Restaurant

The Ladies Luncheon will be held on Friday, December 13th, at 11:30. The address is 10907 McMullen Creek Pky. (off Hwy. 51). We look forward to a delicious lunch and sweet fellowship, as we celebrate the ladies with December birthdays. Please join us, and be sure to wear your Christmas sweater!

MEN'S LUNCH

By: Dave Ruths

Friday, December 20th, 11:30 am
Park Place Restaurant

The senior men's lunch will be held on Friday, December 20th, at 11:30 at Park Place Restaurant on Park Road across from the entrance to Atrium Health Pineville. Come enjoy the good food and fellowship and Mo Up De Graff's sharing with us from the Word.



JOY SINGERS

Joy Singers will not meet in December. They resume on Monday, January 6th, at 1:30 pm. Come, join in singing praises to the Lord!

Coram Deo Sunday School Class:

Sundays: 9:00 AM, WC 201 (Choir Room)

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CHRISTMAS GIFT EXCHANGE

God did not use a silver box
Or paper green and red.
God laid His Christmas Gift to us
Within a manger bed.

No golden ribbon was used to tie
His Gift from Heaven above.
T'was wrapped in swaddling clothes
Bound with cords of tender love.

There was no Christmas tree on which
His precious Gift was tied.
Upon a bare tree on a hill
His Gift was hung . . . and died.

My sin had nailed Him to that cross;
It was for me He died.
The penalty I could not pay;
His blood had satisfied.

T'was taken down from off the tree,
Placed in a carved stone grave.
But death, itself, could not kill
God's Son Who came to save.

With mighty power He rose again.
God's Living Son is He.
His gift, eternal life, He bought
And offered it to me.

I've no such gift to give to him;
Only one gift I could bring.
I'll give to Him my heart, myself,
My life lived for my King.

Author Unknown