

BETWEEN SEEDTIME AND HARVEST

**Senior Adults Newsletter
Christ Covenant Church
December 2022**



“Reinvesting” at Christmas

By Pastor Bruce Creswell

We as senior adults at Christ Covenant Church are committed to “reinvesting” our time, wisdom, experience, energy, talent, and gifts in our younger generations, assisting them in running the race before them. This is not something new or novel to the Church of Jesus Christ. In fact, we see this commitment of “reinvestment” displayed by two senior adults at the time of Christ’s birth, Simeon, and the Prophetess Anna. Their senior stories are recorded for us in Luke 2:25-38.

Both had a ministry of presence, of faithfulness, of blessing, and of witness not only to the generations under them BUT to the generations yet to come. Some 2000 years later, the investment of their ministry that day in the Temple is still felt.

Simeon, whose name means “one who hears and obeys God” is described in Luke 2:25-35, as righteous, devout, waiting for the birth of Christ, a Spirit-filled man, and had assurance that he would live to see the Messiah, eagerly anticipating Christ’s first coming. He kept the lamp of prophecy burning when religion was at a low ebb in Israel. Simeon was Spirit-taught and knew that Mary’s child was the One through the world was to be blessed.

Coming into the Temple, he took the Babe in his arms and blessed God. What a wonderful benediction! His eyes had seen the salvation of the Lord and he could now die in peace. Simeon was not ashamed to declare that the One born in the city of David was the Savior not only to Israel but, also, to the to the Gentiles. Marveling at the things that Simeon had said, Mary and Joseph were blessed by him. But his parting words to Mary were ones that pointed to the coming bitter rejection and hatred that would be hurled on her Son, preparing her for the personal grief she would one day endure at His crucifixion.

The prophetess Anna follows Simeon in Luke 2: 36-38. Her name means “favor or grace.” In her story, Luke highlights several things about her. A prophetess does not necessarily mean that Anna foretold the future but rather indicates that she was a teacher of the Word of God. As she gazed upon the face of the Babe of Bethlehem, she knew the past predictions of Him were fulfilled. Through her long godly life, her mind had become saturated with the OT prophecies concerning the Messiah. Waiting unceasingly for Christ she believed, along with Simeon, that Mary’s first-born Son was indeed the Promised One.

It is said that she was of great age. Married only seven years, a widow of 84 years, meant that she must have been over 100, when she beheld the Savior, she had long expected. She had grown old in the service of the sanctuary and having witnessed, with Simeon, the Messiah, she was ready to depart in peace. We are told that

her later years were in continual service to the Lord, as she departed not from the Temple, being one of a band of devoted holy women who gave themselves to continual attendance at the “night and day service” at the Temple. She served God with fasting and prayers, willing to miss a meal to spend more time with God, joining others openly in the presence of the congregation and pouring out her soul in the Temple. Hers was a life of godly self-control.

Anna was a missionary. She was one of the godly remnants in Israel who, through centuries even in the darkest days before Christ came, looked for the Messiah. Faith through her long years of waiting, was rewarded and she became the first female herald of the Incarnation to all who looked for the Redeemer in Jerusalem.

Simeon and Anna, senior adults, were literally serving the Lord, and His parents, Mary, and Joseph, in their “old age”. Their ministry has continued to impact the Church even till this day. Simeon reminds us that we too, should be looking for the Lord and His return for us. Anna, reminds us that a spirit of thanksgiving should be a normal part of our lives, expressing itself in telling others about Jesus Christ.

How encouraging it is to meet those who through a long life have remained true to the Lord and whose gray hairs are honorable because of a life lived in the divine will. Like them, we can serve the Lord this Christmas by telling our grandchildren, and others, that Christ the Savior is born this day.



Submitted by Dot Branson

**Trio's Restaurant
Friday, December 9**

Please mark your calendar and join us for the Ladies' Luncheon at Trio's Restaurant on December 9th, at 11:30am. The address is 10709 McMullen Creek Pkwy (off Hwy. 51).

Wear your Christmas sweater and come to celebrate December birthdays! Great food and sweet fellowship will be waiting for you. Please let Dot Branson (704-575-5955) know that you plan to join us. We look forward to seeing you there.

MEN'S MONTHLY LUNCH

Submitted by Dave Ruths

**Park Place Restaurant
Friday, December 16, 11:30 am**

Let's gather, in time to order at 11:30am, to again enjoy great fellowship, food, and teaching by our good friend, Pastor Mo. Address: 10517 Park Rd, Charlotte, 28210

**Christmas Dinner
Friday, December 2, 6pm
(Sold Out.)**

Highlights from the Book Nook

By Caleb Johnson

***Love Came Down at Christmas*
by Sinclair Ferguson**

In this short advent devotional, Sinclair Ferguson walks the reader through the great love passage of 1 Corinthians 13 and how it relates to the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Pastor Steven Lawson writes, "Every believer and family should read this clear treatment of the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Do so and prepare to be blessed."

***Little Pilgrim's Big Journey*
(Part I & Part II) by Tyler Van Halteren**

This is a series that children will treasure for years to come. The box set includes both Part I & Part II of Little Pilgrim's Big Journey. Part I follows the classic story of Christian as he journeys from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City. Part II is the heart-warming sequel, which follows Christian's family as they encounter new challenges and learn many new lessons along the King's Path. Children ages 2-10 will learn timeless truths in an engaging way through these heirloom-quality books. [official book review] This set was promoted at the Faithful Conference by Mark Dever just a few weeks ago!

Book Review

The Ten Commandments of Progressive Christianity

By Dr. Mike Kruger, A review submitted by Hugh Wise

Ninety-nine years ago, a Princeton University professor wrote a book, Christianity and Liberalism, and concluded they are 180 degrees different. Liberal Christianity is still as devious as ever, although it has new names like “emerging” or “progressive”.

A few years ago, Philip Gulley’s book, If the Church Were Christian: Rediscovering the Values of Jesus, set forth 10 commandments for progressives which is, in essence, less Moses and more Oprah. The author, our own Dr. Kruger from RTS, dissects each of these commandments and clearly shows their focus on man instead of God. Also, doctrine is replaced by morality.

A few erroneous points of each of the Ten Commandment are presented.

- I. JESUS IS A MODEL FOR LIVING MORE THAN AN OBJECT OF WORSHIP:** Jesus is a good model for living but not divine! Christianity is about merit, not grace. It’s deeds over creeds. It’s all about moralism.
- II. AFFIRMING PEOPLE’S POTENTIAL IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN REMINDING THEM OF THEIR BROKENNESS:** The issue of sin is simply not applicable, so the progressive separates what the Bible joins. Grace is rejected and the crucified Christ is 100% rejected.
- III. THE WORK OF RECONCILIATION SHOULD BE VALUED OVER JUDGEMENT:** Christians should stop judging and start helping. They are telling us we can never declare a behavior to be wrong, whereas we have a duty to protect our faith. “Woe to you who call evil good and good evil” (Isaiah 5:20).
- IV. GRACIOUS BEHAVIOR IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN RIGHT BELIEF:** Gulley states that if you care about orthodoxy, you are probably just another Pharisee, so this takes us back to legalism. The Christian is required to think theologically whereas Progressives simply need to be ‘nice’.
- V. INVITING QUESTIONS IS MORE VALUABLE THAN SUPPLY ANSWERS:** They depict themselves as being on a journey of discovery as a humble seeker, but their seeker journey never ends. It’s an intellectual endeavor only. Answers are a result of their ‘thinking’ or ‘views’. John 17:17, “Your word is true” has no significance.
- VI. ENCOURAGING THE PERSONAL SEARCH IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN GROUP UNIFORMITY:** Gulley argues that Jesus favored spiritual exploration and that God has not clearly revealed Himself via the Bible and religion is in a state of constant flux. Christianity is about man’s never-ending search for truth, not about God’s completed journey to us.
- VII. MEETING ACTUAL NEEDS IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN MAINTAINING INSTITUTIONS:** Think social gospel. The church should function like the U. N. or the local YMCA.
- VIII. PEACEMAKING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN POWER:** The Christian church does not have the power to condemn false doctrine or to uphold truth or reject error. Peace is maintained via horizontal lines with mankind, not vertical lines with God. Gulley believes peace is kept with our strength.
- IX. WE SHOULD CARE MORE ABOUT LOVE AND LESS ABOUT SEX:** God has little concern about sexual sin. Wide choices for sex are congruent with their desire for sexual freedom and choice. Gender identity is a must in a liberated world. Good results occur when love is present in any way.
- X. LIFE IN THIS WORLD IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE AFTERLIFE:** Earthly trumps eternal. Horizontal relationships trump vertical relationships. It’s moralism, not salvation. Hell is not real.

Dr. Kruger concludes by stating the three hallmarks of Progressive Christianity:

1. Focus on man not God, 2. Morality replaces doctrine, 3. Even though they are still seeking, their opinions are always right. This book is brief, but so enlightening. This review focuses on the contradictions with the Christian ten commandments. Our ten commandments are spiritual and theirs are therapeutic. Ninety-nine years later Progressive Christianity is still definitely not Christianity.

CHRISTMAS HYMN HISTORY

Submitted by Peggy Dear

The coming of Christ at Christmas is in vain unless we allow him to come and dwell in our hearts as well. This simple and glorious message is captured beautifully in the Christmas hymn by the great reformer Martin Luther. He wrote it for his young son Hans, to be sung at a family Christmas celebration. Just as God communicated with us by sending his son that first Christmas night, Luther sought to communicate the life-transforming message of Christ to his son.

What a beautiful reminder that Christ's coming at Christmas is for everyone-old and young, rich and poor, wise and simple. It was such an amazing event: heralded by angels in the heavens yet witnessed by animals in a pungent stable; beyond the understanding of the wise yet presented in an event even children can grasp. God became a human being to reveal his loving and gracious character to us.

From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

From heaven above to earth I come
To bear good news to every home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
Whereof I now will say and sing.

To you this night is born a child
Of Mary, chosen mother mild;
This little child, of lowly birth,
Shall be the joy of all the earth.

Were earth a thousand times as fair,
Beset with gold and jewels rare,
She yet were far too poor to be
A narrow candle, Lord, to Thee.

Ah, dearest Jesus, Holy Child,
Make Thee a bed, soft undefiled,
Within my heart, that it may be
A quiet chamber kept for Thee.

"Glory to God in highest heaven,
Who unto man His Son hath given,"
While angels sing with pious mirth
A glad new year to all the earth.

MARTIN LUTHER (1483-1546)

THE GIFT THAT KEEPS GIVING

There is a gift that everyone has and gives to others. You give it, too!! Have you guessed it yet? Yes!! It's your influence! We all influence others that we come in contact with - either good or bad.

Fifty plus years ago, my husband and I made a huge investment of time and energy to become unpaid youth leaders at our home church in Michigan. We started with about 4 kids and ended with about 45. We gave all we had to help those teens grow spiritually through their high school years and to prepare them for college and life beyond.

Today, 50+ years later, most of them are our dear friends and are now ministering to us!! They call or constantly write us the most beautiful messages. They talk about our influence on their lives back then and even now. And they still call for prayer support regarding crises in their lives. Right now, we are praying for one person who has a daughter being treated for invasive cancer, and another who is having trouble with a Christian employee at work.

So, what was the "magic" formula that influenced these young hearts so much that they wanted to keep us as friends? Aside from God's gracious blessings on our work, we loved them, showing genuine interest in their lives, and delight when they came to talk to us. AND they responded! We weren't aware of the wonderful, future benefits for us from this group.

Benefits like, 1) Getting much more in return than we ever gave! 2) Having them want to be around us and share their lives. 3) We now get to share a friendship of spiritual equality. What a blessing to see how they have come through the last 50 years. 4) The love and service flows back to you when you need it the most. And 5) When you treat your family with positive influence, your children and grandchildren become your friends - not just your relatives.

That was then - but what about now? Of course, none of us can go back in time and "begin" again to influence for good. But we can start today to make our influence a positive one. As we get older, we need to be very aware that we are still influencing others - our adult children, our grandchildren, and our friends and neighbors. They are watching us and learning how we are trusting in God's plan for us, his provision for our changing needs, and how joy is on our face (or not) as we trust in Him. A pleasant face without constant complaints or negativity always brings joy to others and makes them want to be near you. Sure, at times, we don't feel like being happy or pleasant but put that aside and make your influence a positive one. Let's be the gift - that positive influence - that keeps giving long after we have left this world. That's a great legacy!!

Joan and Finn Solheim
November 14, 2022





Fran	Di Andrea	Dec 01
Tina	Stratis	Dec 02
Martha	Bridge	Dec 03
Ken	Cochrum	Dec 03
Robert	Yates	Dec 03
Anne	Prendergast	Dec 04
Barry	Osborne	Dec 05
Vicki	Evans	Dec 06
Judy	Pinkard	Dec 06
Stu	Carroll	Dec 07
Harriet	Marshall	Dec 07
Lance	Whitehead	Dec 08
Tim	Roberts	Dec 12
Chris	Williams	Dec 12
Terri	Theyson	Dec 16
Joe	Morris	Dec 18
Martha Ann	Harris	Dec 19
Douglas	Linton	Dec 19
Ken	Bodwell	Dec 22
Susan	Botzko	Dec 22
Deborah	Carter	Dec 22
Darrell	Hargett	Dec 24
Elaine	Deaner	Dec 25
Jackie	Greene	Dec 26
Susan	Parrish	Dec 27
Betsy	Elenbaum	Dec 28
La-Trell	Ross	Dec 28
Sherrie	Webb	Dec 29
Daniel	Daloia	Dec 30
Lynn	Sistare	Dec 30
Steve	Gooch	Dec 31

Paul & Deborah Carter	12.01
Ted & Jane Williams	12.02
Paul & Tricia Neal	12.07
Butch & Sandi Barkman	12.16
Ken & Tara Dabbs	12.19
Dan & Sandra Hayes	12.20
Paul & Margie Engle	12.20
Fred & Jean Depp	12.29
Lanier & Karen Ellis	12.29
Chris & Betty Williams	12.30

Coram Deo Sunday School Class
Sundays, 9 am, WC201/Choir Room

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Christ Covenant Church

800 Fullwood Lane
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EVENTS

- **Sunday School**, Sundays, 9:00 am, WC201/Choir Room
(No Sunday School December 25 or January 1)
- **Senior Adult Christmas Dinner**, Friday, December 2, 6pm
(Reservations Closed)
- **Ladies Luncheon**, Friday, December 9, 11:30 am, Trio's Restaurant
- **Men's Luncheon**, Friday, December 16, 11:30 am, Park Place Restaurant
- **Senior Adult Luncheon**, 11:45am, Friday, January 6, CLC 5&6
- **Prayer Meetings**, Tuesdays, 7:00 – 8:30 pm, WC105
(Off Dec. 27)
- **Joy Singers**, Mondays, 1:30 – 2:30 pm, WC211 **(No practice in December)**