

Senior Adults Newsletter
April, 2024
Christ Covenant Church



BETWEEN SEEDTIME AND HARVEST

THOSE WHO HELP

Pastor Bruce Creswell

“The Lord has done great things for us; we are glad.” Psalm 126:3

Over a year of planning and longer than that in praying, the **Coram Deo Pastor’s Conference** took place mid-March 2024. Carolina blue skies and sunshine greeted us each day beginning with Tuesday morning, as 1500 pastors and Christian workers registered outside of the main lobby. They were greeted with fresh doughnuts (2,000 of them), and hot coffee! The entire CLC was one massive bookstore, a preacher’s gold mine! It was stocked with good quality books at great prices! There were food trucks for those who wanted to stay on campus for lunch. But it was inside the sanctuary that we focused our energy and attention. The Lord met with us. We beheld His glory as His servants opened the Scripture and the Spirit of God did His office work in us. Lifting their voices in joyful singing, the Lord inhabited the praises of His people.

There is another vitally important factor that contributed to the conference’s physical and spiritual success and that is the 150 volunteers who kept things going! Their job descriptions varied but included: greeting the attendees, making them welcome, answering questions, supplying coffee and water, having snack and refreshments ready, keeping things clean by emptying trash cans, giving directions, ringing up sales in the bookstore, adjusting sound and video, and attending to the speakers’ needs. I am sure there are other responsibilities that I have overlooked.

These volunteers were there an hour early, starting with a time of prayer, then on to their jobs, and leaving after things were cleaned up. Before the service, during breaks and lunch, I got to talk briefly with some of them. There was a level of enthusiasm mixed with reformed southern

hospitality that made you feel welcomed! Throughout the conference there were several guests who expressed their gratitude to Christ Covenant Church for hosting the conference and commented how kind and helpful our volunteers had been to them.

One of the greatest gifts that God gives to a church are people with the “gift of helps” (I Corinthians 12:28).

Pastor Charles Seet’s comment is right on:

“The gift of helps is very important to the body of Christ. It can be considered as the backbone of an effective church, or the oil that lubricates the whole body so that it will run smoothly and efficiently. When a church is blessed with members who are not only willing, but who also find joy and delight in doing all these things for the Lord, then the work of the Lord will proceed with much greater efficiency and speed. The gift of helps does not attract very much attention, but those who have this gift will not mind it at all. They prefer to work behind-the-scenes and not to be in the limelight at all - because they do it all for the Lord and not for self-glory.”

I say a loud AMEN to Pastor Seet’s comment!!! The senior adult community would not be able to function and minister if not for those with the “gift of helps.” The Senior Adults have a large base of volunteers: greeters, room set-up, chairs and sound, pianists, those who cook, decorate, plan our retreats and Christmas dinner. In addition, the senior adults have those who call or send cards to the sick or homebound, send out weekly prayer requests, arrange monthly lunches for the men and the ladies, edit our monthly newsletter, those who bring refreshment each Sunday, those who minister in song and lead our senior choir, those who take attendance and collect our hymnbooks, those who provide handy man repairs, those who lead covenant groups, maintain our directories and senior stories, those who minister outside our class, and our elders and deacons. No doubt, I may have unintentionally overlooked some volunteer service.

Do you see what I mean?? We would not have the body life, the one-on-one fellowship that we now enjoy if we didn’t have you, the volunteer, serving as the hands and feet of Christ. Each person serving strengthens the body, making our class inviting and friendly, a community that adorns the Gospel of our Savior- glorifying Him. How blessed we are at Christ Covenant Church and in the Senior Adult community with those who are willing to serve!

I thank God for those volunteers, who are unsung heroes in their own right - serving the Lord quietly, faithfully, and diligently in their own areas of service.

“Do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased” (Hebrews 13:16).

HYMN HISTORIES

by Peggy Dear

ALAS AND DID MY SAVIOR BLEED?

This hymn by **Isaac Watts** has certainly touched the hearts of millions through the centuries. After drawing the stark contrasts between the sacrificial death of the mighty Maker and the unworthiness of the sinful creature, he concludes with the consecration, "Here Lord, I give myself away---'tis all that I can do."

A young man who lived in the West wrote his former Sunday school teacher: "Do you remember that old hymn, 'Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed' ? I thought it rubbish at the time, but its lines have followed me like a detective. I haven't been able to shake off the question: 'Was it for crimes that I have done?'"

" So, I finally decided to surrender my life to Him. 'Here, Lord, I give myself away---'Tis all that I can do.' "

And then there was a thirty-year-old blind woman who heard a revival choir sing this simple hymn. Stanza after stanza stirred her heart, but when the choir came to the line "Here, I give myself away", she gave herself away to the Lord as well. When she did, she said, her "soul flooded with celestial light." That blind woman was **Fanny Crosby**, who went on to become the great writer of hundreds of gospel songs.

Scriptures: *Psalm 22:6; Isaiah 53: 4-6; Romans 5:8*

***Alas! and did my Savior bleed
And did my Sovereign die?
Would He devote that sacred head
For sinners such as I?***

***Was it for sins that I have done
He suffered on the tree?
Amazing pity! grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!***

***Well might the sun in darkness hide
And shut his glories in,
When Christ, the great Redeemer died
For man the creature's sin.***

***Thus might I hide my blushing face
While His dear cross appears,
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness,
And melt my heart to tears.***

*But drops of grief can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe:
Here, Lord, I give myself away---
'Tis all that I can do.*

Issac Watts(1674-1748)

A graphic with the words "Book Review" in a white, serif font, set against a dark blue background with a subtle wood-grain texture.

O SACRED HEAD NOW WOUNDED

by Jonathan Gibson

“**C. S. Lewis** once expressed his view that modern worshipers who no longer used the church’s liturgy were guilty of spiritual arrogance—the only reason for ignoring it being the assumption that we can do things better. What would the blunt-speaking **Lewis** say about corporate worship today? And no doubt the character of communal worship is inevitably reflected in the private devotions of Christians. So where can we find help? In ***O Sacred Head, Now Wounded***, **Jonny Gibson** once again comes alongside us with another splendid volume to guide our personal disciplines, inform our spiritual meditations, and nurture and nourish our private devotions. In addition, he enables us to grow into a biblical appreciation of the fact that, while Paul, Apollos, and Peter are ours, so too is the ministry of the historic and worldwide family of God.”

Sinclair B. Ferguson

Chancellor’s Professor of Systematic Theology, Reformed Theological Seminary;
Teaching Fellow, Ligonier Ministries

“**Jonny Gibson** offers a disciplined structure for spiritual devotion rooted in ancient and Reformed Christianity. He has composed a daily rhythm of meditation and prayer, drawing from the Holy Scriptures, the creeds, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Westminster Shorter Catechism, the church fathers and Reformed theologians, Reformed liturgies, and the Psalter. Though designed to prepare a Christian for the annual remembrance of Christ’s death and resurrection in the traditional church calendar, these devotions could be used at any time of the year, for our Lord’s redeeming work should always be at the forefront of our minds.”

Joel R. Beeke,

Professor of Homiletics and Systematic Theology
Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary

Submitted by Caleb Johnson

TO A DIFFERENT DRUM By Pauline Henderson

This is the true story of **Pauline Henderson**, a missionary to China and Taiwan for 30 years. It's truly an adventure and each chapter is more compelling than the previous one. A great read! It's mostly a story of how God answers prayer and always provides per Romans 8:28 and many other verses.

It begins in 1938 with an attempted suicide thwarted by God on a mountain road in Pennsylvania. A tire blew out, spinning the car around and it stopped prior to a planned plunge down the rocky cliff. The suicide plan was caused by several traumatic events: she had a tuberculosis spot on her lung, her boyfriend had eloped with her best friend, and she had been dismissed from medical school. This suicide failure was a wakeup call which led to deep prayer, Bible reading, giving up drugs and smoking and dedicating her life to the Lord. Her key verse was **Matthew 6:3** “*Seek first the kingdom of the Lord and His righteousness and all these things shall be added to you.*”

This was followed by numerous examples of God's provision: she was admitted to a better medical school than the one which kicked her out, and she received a full scholarship, plus she received a grant for further study, and met the director of China Inland Mission by spilling coffee on him. She finished her studies and taught science at Smith college for 5 years and then resigned to become a missionary in spite of not having any formal Christian training (she was self-taught) or seminary training. CIM rejected her application because of her medical history and “too much education.” She, then pro-actively subjected herself to another comprehensive medical exam and received a 100% healthy report and CIM finally accepted her application as a missionary.

So, she arrived in China as a 32-year-old missionary and proceeded up the Yangtze River on a vessel dangerously overloaded with 2000 passengers. The Language Learning Center was primitive with no electricity, no running water and scorpions in the room. Further, learning the Chinese Mandarin dialect was difficult in spite of her extensive education. Communist military action was close by. Unfortunately, despite her strong desire to be a true missionary, she was assigned to a science teaching position with children of missionaries, ranging from 5th grade to high school. Back to square one. In addition, there were no textbooks or lab equipment! Later for biology she wanted to teach the circulatory system of a frog, but the Buddhist religion considered frogs holy, so the alternative was a rat. Bottom line, the Lord provided in every adverse situation.

One dramatic example of God's blessing is in chapter 21 entitled “Monkeys and Black Eyes.” Monkeys was the name given to the clubs by the street gang boys whom she was charged with counseling duties. The name was later changed to Hope of China Band. Most of her counseling was done informally on the soccer field. Word was that the boys' behavior had improved and to her utter amazement she received an invitation to the Buddhist Governor's mansion. They wanted her to conduct classes on behavior for the boys. She refused a salary and accepted with 3 conditions: all teaching would be based on the Gospel of Jesus, all

conversations with the boys would be confidential and all documentation in the files would be sealed. She was amazed and overjoyed when the Buddhists accepted all 3 conditions! However, a few weeks later, she suffered major injuries in a cycling accident and was in traction 23 of 24 hours for 4 months. But, she was so loved and respected, the visitors poured in and according to the visitor's log, there were 1,253 visitors in those 4 months and the gospel was strongly presented. A rich harvest indeed! She regarded this time as the most fruitful part of her entire time in Taiwan.

The Chinese government became communist in May 1949 and the CIM withdrew from the country in December 1950, allowing her to finish in Taiwan.

Many of her missionary experiences are so heartwarming: she prevented a gigantic gang battle and Steven, who stole several valuables from her apartment, confessed to the thefts and was converted. Especially encouraging was the father-son battle whereby the father resisted mightily his son's desire to become a Christian and eventually both gave their lives to the Lord.

After being diagnosed with terminal cancer with only 2 months to live, she continued serving as an exemplary missionary for two decades! The episode with gall bladder surgery was also interesting. Her system didn't always agree with Chinese food, especially the sausage and during the surgery, she went into a coma for a few hours. She discovered after the surgery and coma that 4 missionaries who were located many miles away had been praying for her on the specific night of the surgery even though they had no knowledge of the operation!

“The joy of the Lord was her strength”-Nehemiah 8:10. This verse could be considered her life's story because she was always joyful, and the Lord never let her down, always providing His strength.

Submitted by Hugh Wise, February 2024

INTERPRETING THE PSALMS - AN EXEGETICAL HANDBOOK **by Mark D. Futato. Kregel Publications, 2007**

Finding this book in my bookshelf and having been drawn again to a deeper study of Psalms I picked it up and began to read, only to discover I had already read it! Well, a good book is worth a second reading.

The first time through I made many marks (always in pencil!) to help find particularly good insights for future reference. The second time I made more!

Interpreting the Psalms could be called a reference work. It is a “Handbook,” which I take to mean a book used in working with something else. In this case this book is readable straight through as basic education on the structure, themes and form of Psalms. Since it lacks any index, not even an index of Psalms referenced in the book, it seems less than useful as a “handbook.” But it has many interesting and helpful things to say about the Psalms that help in meditation.

One of the motivations for my reading was to research the origin of the five-book division of Psalms that is often referred to from the pulpit. Is this division of Psalms written into the text or was it arrived at some other way? **Futato** explains (p.62) the reasons well using the internal and thematic structure of the five books and Jewish tradition based on the pattern of five from the Law of Moses. It is brief but satisfactory.

There I much to be said about the Psalms, from the overall theme to the nature and structure of Hebrew poetry. His goal is to prepare the reader for their own study; what to look for, how to analyze, how to interpret, and how to apply good principles of exegesis.

Of special interest to me was chapter 4 on “Interpreting the Categories.” **Futato** identifies six categories in the Psalms: Hymns, Laments, Songs of Thanksgiving, Songs of Confidence, Divine Kingship Songs, and Wisdom Songs. Each of these are explained with many examples given.

The book is intended for Pastors or for Seminary students and assumes a familiarity with Hebrew. There is no English transliteration of Hebrew words which made the book more difficult for me; on the other hand, the difficulty was not great. **Futato** is clear in his explanations.

Chris Williams, March 2024

SPRING & EARLY SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL STUDIES

Transgenderism: Three-week mini-series taught by **Kevin DeYoung** and **RTS professors**. *This is a joint Sunday School for adults & youth which will be held in the Sanctuary beginning at 9:15am.*

The Character of Christ: April 26-June 30, (WC211- senior adult classroom)

We will be studying “the fruit of the Spirit,” in the life of our Savior. These characteristics are evidence of the believer’s union in Christ. Sometimes we get the idea that “the fruit of the Spirit” is a “to do list.” But “the fruit of the Spirit” that is done for **by** and **in** the Spirit.

The resource guide for our study is ***The Character of Christ* by Jonathan Cruse**. Jenny has found several places where you can order the book. Please call her if you have any problems obtaining a copy.

* **“The Character of Christ” by Jonathan Cruse** is available at **Banner of Truth books**, <https://banneroftruth.org/us/> . It is \$10.80 plus shipping (~\$5)

***Amazon**, which costs \$12, plus shipping or free if you have Prime.

***Westminster Bookstore** (<https://www.heritagebooks.org>) The book is \$9 plus tax & shipping.

APRIL SENIOR ADULT LUNCHEON

Friday, April 5, 2024

Social Time: 11:45 am/ Lunch 12:00 pm

Speaker: Zac Leach, Pastoral Intern

Menu: Loaded Potato Soup with toppings, Salad, Bread, Dessert, tea or water

Cost: \$7 per person

You're invited! Please join the senior adult community for a time of fellowship, good food, and interesting speakers. RSVPs are due by the Friday prior to the luncheon, March 29. **Please wear your name tag.**

Please RSVP via the SignUp Genius link or by calling ministry admin., Jenny Blackmon, 704-708-6104.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0444AAAF2EA2FC1-48652157-april#/>

APRIL SENIOR LADIES LUNCHEON

The **Ladies' Luncheon** will be on **Friday, April 12 at Trio's Restaurant at 11:30**. The address is 10709 McMullen Creek Pkwy.(off Hwy. 51). **Please let Dot Branson at 704-575-5955) know that you plan to attend.** We hope to see you there!

MARCH SENIOR MEN'S LUNCHEON

The CCC Senior Men's Lunch will be **Friday, April 19 @ 1130, at Park Place Restaurant 10517 Park Rd.** Join us for a good time gathered for great food, fellowship, and devotional by our good friend, retired PCA Pastor, **Mo Up De Graff.**

YOUR PERSONAL STORY

One of our seniors shared with me what their children gave them for Christmas. It sounds like a fun way to record your personal history to share with your family. I have enclosed the link to the website for you to check out. I have it on my bucket list to pursue.

The website is <http://www.storyworth.com>. This is a wonderful way for family to get to know the facts and stories about their loved ones by composing paragraphs weekly to purposed questions like, "What are some of your earliest family memories, or first family trip" etc. There is a year's worth of questions that come weekly to the participants . They get the stories made into a book by the year's end. Both the family that ordered the Storyworth gift and the participants receive a book. It costs about \$100. – **Pastor Bruce Creswell**



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|------------------|--------|
| Judy Aylestock | Apr 05 |
| Marv Eash | Apr 05 |
| Vivi Wickberg | Apr 07 |
| Mimi Compton | Apr 09 |
| Teresa Yurkovich | Apr 10 |
| John Wickberg | Apr 13 |
| Laura Costello | Apr 14 |
| Lanier Ellis | Apr 14 |
| Darrell Kirkley | Apr 15 |
| Brian Phelps | Apr 16 |
| Ilse Cauble | Apr 17 |
| Hilda Torres | Apr 17 |
| Chris Hillesheim | Apr 19 |
| Alona Weddine | Apr 19 |
| Sarah Mills | Apr 21 |
| Karen Henry | Apr 25 |
| Marguerite Hogan | Apr 27 |



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| Steve & Patty Marion | Apr 4 |
| David & Lynn McArthur | Apr 5 |
| Finn & Joan Solheim | Apr 22 |

APRIL EVENTS

Joint Sunday School
April 7, 14 & 21 - 9:00am, Sanctuary
April 28 - Regular Sunday School - **WC201**

Senior Adults Luncheon
Friday, April 5, CLC 5&6

Ladies Luncheon, -- April 12, 11:30am
Trios Restaurant, McMullen Creek

Men's Luncheon – April 19, 11:30 am
Park Place Restaurant

Fall Retreat: 9/24-27, Ft. Caswell, Oak Island

Prayer Meetings, Tuesdays, 7:00 – 8:30 pm,
WC105

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FALL PREVENTION

Falls put you at risk of serious injury. Prevent falls with these simple fall prevention measures, from reviewing your medications to hazard-proofing your home. [By Mayo Clinic Staff](#)

1. Make an appointment with your health care provider

Start by making an appointment with your health care provider. To assess your risk and discuss fall prevention strategies, your health care provider may want to talk about the following:

Your medications. Make a list of your prescription and nonprescription medications and supplements, or bring them with you to the appointment. Your health care provider can review your medications for side effects and interactions that may increase your risk of falling. To help with fall prevention, your health care provider may consider weaning you off medications that make you tired or affect your thinking, such as sedatives, antihistamines and some types of antidepressants.

Any previous falls. Write down the details, including when, where and how you fell. Be prepared to discuss instances when you almost fell but were caught by someone or managed to grab hold of something just in time. Details such as these may help your health care provider identify specific fall prevention strategies.

Your health conditions. Certain eye and ear disorders may increase your risk of falls. Be prepared to discuss your health conditions and how comfortable you are when you walk — for example, do you feel any dizziness, joint pain, shortness of breath, or numbness in your feet and legs when you walk? Your health care provider may evaluate your muscle strength, balance and walking style (gait) as well.

2. Keep moving

Physical activity can go a long way toward fall prevention. With your health care provider's OK, consider activities such as walking, water workouts or tai chi — a gentle exercise that involves slow and graceful dance-like movements. These activities reduce the risk of falls by improving strength, balance, coordination and flexibility.

If you avoid physical activity because you're afraid it will make a fall more likely, tell your health care provider. Your provider may recommend carefully monitored exercise programs or refer you to a physical therapist. The physical therapist can create a custom exercise program aimed at improving your balance, flexibility and muscle strength.

3. Wear sensible shoes

Consider changing your footwear as part of your fall prevention plan. High heels, floppy slippers and shoes with slick soles can make you slip, stumble and fall. So can walking in your stocking feet. Instead, wear properly fitting, sturdy, flat shoes with nonskid soles. Sensible shoes may also reduce joint pain.

4. Remove home hazards

Take a look around your home for potential fall hazards. To make your home safer:

- Remove boxes, newspapers, electrical cords and phone cords from walkways.
- Move coffee tables, magazine racks and plant stands from high-traffic areas.
- Secure loose rugs with double-faced tape, tacks or a slip-resistant backing — or remove loose rugs from your home.
- Repair loose, wooden floorboards and carpeting right away.
- Store clothing, dishes, food and other necessities within easy reach.
- Immediately clean spilled liquids, grease or food.
- Use nonslip mats in your bathtub or shower. Use a bath seat, which allows you to sit while showering.

5. Light up your living space

Keep your home brightly lit to avoid tripping on objects that are hard to see. Also:

- Place night lights in your bedroom, bathroom and hallways.
- Place a lamp within reach of your bed in case you need to get up in the middle of the night.
- Make clear paths to light switches that aren't near room entrances. Consider trading traditional switches for glow-in-the-dark or illuminated switches.
- Turn on the lights before going up or down stairs.
- Store flashlights in easy-to-find places in case of power outages.

6. Use assistive devices

Your health care provider might recommend using a cane or walker to keep you steady. Other assistive devices can help, too. For example:

Handrails for both sides of stairways

Nonslip treads for bare-wood steps

A raised toilet seat or one with armrests

Grab bars for the shower or tub

A sturdy plastic seat for the shower or tub — plus a hand-held shower nozzle for bathing while sitting down.