

Senior Adults Newsletter
February 2026
Christ Covenant Church



ATTENTION: K-MART SHOPPERS!!!!

Or

Lessons Learned From K-mart

By Pastor Bruce Creswell



Lexington Street was the main shopping street in downtown Baltimore. There were four 5 & Dime stores close to each other: Woolworth's, McCory's, Green's, and S.S. Kresge's—still with their 1950's signage. Two of them had fountain service, but only one of the four made fresh subs, 3 for 99 cents, and that was Kresge's, our final stop before catching the #3 bus for home. Somewhere in the sixties, Kresge's became K-Mart. Today, there are about nine stores still in existence in the US. It was my place of employment when I was a college student in Greenville, South Carolina. Those two years, working in the garden department became a classroom of learning, which lessons left a lasting impression to this day. There are 5 lessons about doing your job.

1. Do your job—but be ready to do whatever your manager adds to it.

My responsibilities included keeping the shelves stocked with fertilizers, sprays, plants, and loading cars with mulch. But I was introduced to 'multi-tasking' as the manager would add extra jobs, such as unloading trucks, subbing in other departments, and working the cash registers. I had to have an attitude adjustment, (initiated by my manager) soon after I started. It was followed up with a humble apology. The Lord was teaching me submission to job leadership and understanding the chain of command.

2. Do your job—it's God's means of paying bills.

Working throughout all 5 years of college was the only scholarship for my college education. Not having any job skills, my employment opportunities were limited to entry level. K-mart was close enough that I could walk; so, there was no car or gas expense. Extra hours to work were available (mainly due to the high job turnover). In fact, I was considered an old timer after just two years.

3. Do your job—the world evaluates your testimony by it.

Since my school was Bob Jones University and since K-mart hired a lot of us students, it was a good thing. Not only did it provide jobs for needy students, but it was a silent reminder that we represented the Lord and reflected on the school we attended. The store liked hiring BJU students because overall we were a hard-working lot and respected the leadership over us and were dependable. My own attitude adjustment reinforced the fact of remembering that I represented the Lord. Paul reminds us that, "*Whether we eat or drink or whatsoever we do, do all to the glory of God*" I Corinthians 10:31.

4. Do your job—it's refining and strengthening your character.

It is not unusual, perhaps natural, for college students to think they know it all (sophomore means wise fool)! I found out quickly that I did NOT know it all; in fact, I welcomed the advice and instructions of my manager on how to do what my tasks (humility plus a teachable spirit). For example, it is important that to load the customer's car with pine mulch as paid for and not chicken manure that he did not, though they were in the same bag (*I should have known the difference by the smell!*) Getting along and working together with others from various backgrounds and cultures also gave me opportunities to understand, to be patient, to be kind, to give preference to one another, to share God's grace in ways that were new to me.

5. Do your job well— God expects it from us, not just your manager.

Yes, I knew this before working at K-mart, but it was constantly before me in the classroom, in chapel, and in Sunday morning worship on campus. One of the chapel sayings, "Do RIGHT-regardless of the consequences-Do RIGHT," constantly reverberated in my thoughts. Doing Right included stacking the shelves, loading the cars, cashiering, watering the plants, and everything else at K-mart to the best of my ability and strength. It was satisfying to be able to look back without regret.

I am thankful for my days at K-mart, it prepared me for my next job working at a men's clothing store and one day in shepherding the flock.

P.S. What prompted me to write this was a question recently asked, "What is a K-Mart Shopper?" (not asked by a senior adult). Remember, the Blue Light Special → several times a week a portable cart with a flashing blue light would show up in a different section of the store filled with things quick to sell. Customers from all over the store would head to the blue light when they heard those 3 famous words, "ATTENTION: K-MART SHOPPERS." You knew right then, there was a bargain, a treasure, a find, that you couldn't do without. It was always an attention-getter, and it still is for our Senior Sunday School!

HYMN HISTORIES

By Peggy Dear

AND CAN IT BE?

Charles Wesley had strict religious training at home, started "Holy Clubs" in college to promote righteous living, and went as a missionary to Native Americans after college. But he was not converted. **Charles** had no peace in his heart. One day in 1738, he met with a group of Moravians in Aldersgate Hall in London, and there he came to realize that salvation was by faith alone. In his journal of May 21, he wrote, "At midnight I gave myself to Christ." His brother **John** was converted shortly after.

Two days later, he began writing two hymns. Both of them told of his being born again. At first, he wasn't sure if he should finish them. Was it pride, he wondered, to talk about his own experience? But then, he said, "I prayed Christ to stand by me and finished the hymns." Yes, it may have described his own experience, but it is also the experience of millions of others who have come to faith in Jesus Christ.

In his lifetime he wrote between five and six thousand hymns, but this hymn stands as one of his most powerful and profound.

AND CAN IT BE?

*And can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Savior's blood?
Died He for me, who caused His pain?
For me, who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love! How can it be
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?*

*He left His Father's throne above,
So free, so infinite His grace!
Emptied Himself of all but love,
And bled for Adam's helpless race!
'Tis mercy all, immense and free,
For, O my God, it found out me.*

*'Tis mystery all th' Immortal dies!
Who can explore His strange design?
In vain the firstborn seraph tries
to sound the depths of love divine.
'Tis mercy all, let earth adore
Let angel minds inquire no more.*

*Long my imprisoned spirit lay
Fast bound in sin and nature's night.
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray
I woke--the dungeon flamed with light!
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.*

*No condemnation now I dread
Jesus, and all in Him are mine
Alive in Him, my living Head,
And clothed in righteousness divine,
Bold I approach th' eternal throne,
And claim the crown, through Christ my own.*

CHARLES WESLEY (1707-1788)

A graphic with the words "Book Review" in a white, serif font, set against a background of dark, vertical wooden planks.

ANNE VAUGHN LOCK

Selected Poetry, Prose, and Translations,
with Contextual Materials

Edited by Suisan M. Felch, Iter Press, 2021.

Susan Felch brings awareness of an important person in the early decades of the Reformation. **Anne Lock (1534-1590)** was a woman of deep faith and an articulate supporter of the reformation in England during the reigns of **Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary Tudor** (sometimes called “**Bloody Mary**” for her militant opposition to Protestantism), and **Elizabeth I**. As her father, **Stephen Vaughn** had earlier championed the cause of **William Tyndale** at the court of **Henry VIII, Anne Lock** sought through her poetry, translation work and written correspondence to influence and encourage the reformation among a number of key leaders in the movement and at the English court. She especially hoped to encourage **Queen Elizabeth I** in this regard.

When **Mary Tudor** became queen and began persecution and execution of non-Catholics, many Protestants fled England. As a result, **Anne Lock** spent about two years in Geneva sitting under the teaching of **John Calvin** and **John Knox**. After the death of **Mary** she returned to England and published a book which included translations of **Calvin's** sermons. This book also contains poetry, and especially Sonnets. (Sonnets have not been a subject of study since I was in school; I had to go back and review the structure i.e. Iambic Pentameter). Along this line there are ten translations, and eight poetic paraphrases of Psalm 51. And there is even a rendering of Psalm 51 in Sonnet form! Very interesting. There was a lot of interest in Psalm 51 in England at this time. Apparently interest in this Psalm was connected to the reign of **Henry VIII**.

This was the time of **William Tyndale**, who was martyred when **Anne Lock** was two years old. It was an exciting time as for the first time the Bible became available to the public. Reformed

expository preaching burst on the scene and allowed churchgoers to hear what had never been heard before. It was all new and exciting.

From her providential exile in Geneva, **Anne Lock** became friends with **John Knox**. **Knox** had published “First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women.” It was a denunciation of the rule of the church by women. “...**Knox** primarily had in mind the un-natural rule of Three Roman Catholic queens – **Mary of Guise**, her daughter **Mary Stuart**, and **Mary Tudor**... **Calvin** and others advised **Knox** not to publish...” (P13) This hurt his reputation in England, and though he did not ever enjoy the liberty to preach there he was forced (providentially) to expend his energies in reforming Scotland; in which he was very successful. **Anne Lock’s** correspondence with him has been preserved and gives insight into the history, the fears and successes of the time. **Mary’s** successor, **Queen Elizabeth I** took **Knox** to be hostile to a woman on the throne and was always suspicious of him though he and **Anne Lock** sought to dissuade her of his motives.

“**Anne Lock**...from the spiritual advice she gave to **John Knox** while still a teenager, to the books she later wrote, to her public association with like-minded women and men, **Lock** consistently and confidently lived *coram Deo*, before the face of God, and in community with others as she sought to promote Reformed Protestantism in England.” (P24)

The reformation spread quickly through Europe after 1517. This book fills in big gaps not only in the way the movement sought to gain traction in England but in introducing important if obscure persons in the epic. It was a unique time; only 40 or 50 years after **Luther** lit the match. **Ms. Felch** offers very interesting cultural commentary on the evidences in public manners and arts in the coming tide of Protestantism. She is an able scholar and a clear writer and offers insightful comments on the, art and poetry of the era.

Submitted by Chris Williams, February 2026

A graphic with the words "Book Review" in a white, serif font, set against a background of a wooden bookshelf with several books.

PRIDE
Identity and the Worship of Self
by Matthew P. W. Roberts

Our western culture is obsessed with the identity issue. Ironically, we need to realize identity is a fundamental problem of self-idolatry. Pride and the worship of self is an issue common to the 8.4 billion people of the world so you could say it has WIDE APPLICATION!

Chapter 1 is entitled “**Who We Are and Who We Think We Are**” and initially describes how the identity question has been building for many decades in our secularized society. We, however, know ourselves by focusing on God and not on ourselves. Sadly, the anti-God movement tells us the identity problem will have to be addressed for many future years, not just now. Ezekiel 28:20 tells us we are hard wired to worship, and we identify ourselves by what we love. However, modernity tells us we have outgrown religion and thus idols define us.

The ancient Athenians became what they worshiped. Later, the European Enlightenment purposed transcending religion, and creating a superior understanding of life, nature and reality that did not recognize God as the center of all things. The word FREEDOM in those days and certainly today

means freedom from God's control and being free to follow our own desires, resulting in the exalting of self over God. Freed self became the most powerful and most convoluted idol of the west, and our desires became our identity. Unfortunately, today our identities in the post-modern world are fragmented into terms like gay, lesbian, trans, liberal, conservative, wealthy, poor, etc. So, what should be the identity of the believer and follower of Christ? How do we turn the darkness of this world into light?

The middle six chapters contain a generous portion of the gospel and profound statements that energize the soul. Therefore, no narrative will be attempted to summarize these inspiring chapters. Rather, the reader can just ponder these various applicable statements made in the middle chapters as they relate to pride, identity, self-worship and true worship:

“The Pride movement represents the idol of self.”

“Pride is nothing less than a gospel.”

“Pelegian doctrine turns Christianity into a recipe for moral self-improvement.”

“The snake in the garden promised freedom.”

“True freedom is found in what we really are - images of the triune God designed for His worship.”

“Idolatry is not a simple matter.”

“Transgenderism describes identities which are manifestly false.”

“Feelings are an extraordinarily flimsy foundation upon which to build human values.”

“Transgenderism views the body as a plastic container to be molded any way to fit the feelings.”

“The cultures of pagan Rome, the Aztec Empire and pre-Christian Britain are forerunners of the Pride movement we see today.”

In contrast, the author provides these beautiful guidelines:

“All Christian teaching must begin and end with Jesus.”

“The church does not conquer the Roman Empire by avoiding talking about the wickedness of the Roman Empire.”

“Christian worship establishes our true identity and fulfills our true humanity.”

“Repentance is not mere remorse.”

“Individual freedom is not our deity.”

“Worship is both the denial of self and the discovery of self.”

“Worship requires a total negation of self.”

“If you focus your love on yourself, you will consume yourself.”

“There is no greater display of true humanity than a church at worship on the Lord's Day.”

“Our identity is defined by our worship.”

As an aside note, the word concupiscence is discussed, as it is in Kevin DeYoung's Daily Doctrine (page 125). How we think is so critical.

The final chapter is titled ***“Losing Yourself and Finding Yourself.”*** Roberts begins with a strong discussion of Christian worship, saying it begins with a death of the proud, self-loving person who makes a 180-degree turn from “me” to a 100 per cent surrender to God. We have to re-focus ourselves and commit our love to God, our creator, savior and Lord. The discussion on the contrast

between false worship and true worship is powerful. Only when we worship the living God do we discover our true identity. His glory will fill our vision so that we learn the truth about pride, self, identity, and mainly true worship. Therefore, we will be better witnesses for many years to come as we confront the identity issue.

Note: **Matthew Roberts, PHD**, is the minister of **Trinity Church, York, England**, a congregation of the International Presbyterian Church.

Submitted by Hugh Wise February 2026

AUNT EFFIE AND TITUS

"Hello" said Susan, answering a morning phone call. "Hello Susan. It's Aunt Effie. How are you and your family?" "Oh, Hi Aunt Effie! We are fine. How are you?" "Quite well and I wonder if you would like to bring the kids up for a day this week". "Of course. We always love those visits and love you!"
- - - That was a frequent phone call when our two children, Stephanie and Brad, were very young before dear **Aunt Effie** passed away. Susan will forever recall how She adored and respected **Aunt Effie** and how **Aunt Effie** was adored and respected by our children. - - - On our last occasion to visit Her (after we had lived away from Utah for several years) she had become very frail and was then receiving tender care in the home of her daughter. A moment came when our young son Brad asked if He could give her a kiss. - - - As He did so, He received a glowing smile and hand-squeeze from that weak yet revered elderly lady while some of those observing lifted fingers to sweep away some blurriness from their own eyes.

Effie Hooper lived in the little town of Hooper, Utah which was named after her husband's grandfather who had been the first congressional representative when Utah had gained American statehood). She was a small, clear-eyed, neatly groomed, properly dressed, gentle, friendly, church attending lady who, I suspect, would have been regarded as the town's exemplary citizen if not the town matriarch. I was privileged to become acquainted with **Effie** since She and her daughter both lived in separate towns that were both part of my sales territory. I often served as her limo driver between the two towns as extra courtesy stops. She was very alert and interesting as we conversed while I transported her. But she had stopped driving that green mint condition 1948 Chevy coup parked in the dirt floor garage behind her house.

Aunt Effie was Susan's great-aunt: with a tenderhearted love for Susan from the time of Susan's birth through the years as she grew, married and had children. Over many summers, **Effie** and her husband drove their red pick-up truck the forty miles from Hooper, Utah to Salt Lake and back to pick up Susan and her sister Diane, for a one week visit at their home and farm. When her husband passed away, **Effie** continued those frequent visits until consequence of ageing limited her driving to the Hooper town limits. By that time Susan was married, mother of two children and had a car to drive. And so, Susan would frequently drive up to Hooper with the kids for day-long visits at the farm.

A truly wonderful house and farm for summer visits was **Effie's** place! Besides **Aunt Effie** herself, there was a garden with all sorts of produce to harvest, eat or help **Aunt Effie** preserve in glass bottles. There were garden weeds that **Effie** encouraged children to pull up and discard. There were chickens to feed and to be given names. They would leave eggs for gathering and - - - should they cease producing eggs - - - they often produced feathers to pluck and meat to cook. There was a

brown cow until **Effie's** husband passed away. Her name is forgotten, but she gave milk for drinking and cream for churning into butter in a big glass jar with wooden paddles inside operated by turning a crank handle. There was an ice-cream machine which required perseverance and patience to keep rotating its hand-crank while ice and salt around a metal container transformed its contents into sensational frozen delicacies. There was always a big bag of toys to dump out and play with - - - and, to return to the bag when finished.

There was never a time spent with **Aunt Effie** that Susan (during the earlier years with her sister and in the later years with her children) when they didn't feel as though they were in the presence of a caring, nurturing mother figure (like an extra mother). **Aunt Effie's** interest and sincere love for Susan, Susan's children, their future development and well-being was indelibly manifested in a book she gifted to Susan when our kids had reached ages three and one. **Effie** knew Susan well. And she knew that book was something from which Susan (as new mother) and her children would greatly benefit. And - - - she followed up to encourage the reading of that book.

The name of the book was **Your Child's Self-Esteem**, published in 1970, written by **Dorothy Brige**. It became a child-rearing manual for Susan! - - - A blessing we received from a lovely lady at a time we needed just such guidance. - - - Something for which we'll always be grateful as we remember **Aunt Effie**.

There is another book well associated with **Aunt Effie**. - - - The book of **Titus** (particularly **Chapter 2 vss. 3-5**) where is found a description of a "**Titus 2 woman**" - "**3 Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, 4 and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, 5 to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.**"

If ever there was a **Titus 2 Woman** who loved and was loved in return it was **Effie Hooper**: a saintly woman tenderly remembered by everyone who knew Her.

SUBMITTED BY STEVE SPERRY, FEBRUARY 2026



AT HOME WITH THE LORD

"...absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord." 2 Corinthians 5:8

*Tom Walls
January 9, 2025*

*Sara Ann Keaton
March 16, 2025*

*Helen Brown
January 24, 2025*

*John Little
April 24, 2025*

*Brooke Ertel
February 22, 2025*

*Judy Pinkard
June 24, 2025*

*Cal Deaner
March 14, 2026*

*Jack Burkhart
November 7, 2025*

"Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints." Psalm 116:15

PARAPHRASE OF PSALM 66

*You have given the earth a voice to praise You – its beauty –
A voice – a song.*

Your name is glorious – we are to megaphone it by our praise.

We are to recount to You how awesome You are – Your works.

Because when Your enemies see Your awesome power they obey.

Would God's enemies obey by my giving Him praise?

All men will praise - we will sing to Thy name (You are worthy and wonderful).

Look around you (me) – what wonders God has wrought – are they not awesome?

Does man deserve?

I know You let Your people pass on dry ground. I will rejoice – joy in seeing Your hand for others.

Your might rules forever – Your eyes are never taken from the nations.

Please don't let the evildoers be proud/

I ask you to receive the blessings of Your peoples. We will sound Your praise everywhere (abroad).

My life is sustained by You – not even my foot slips.

Trials do come from You and You use them to make them silver – polished silver.

You brought me trouble – burdens.

You caused me to “ride” me – I went through fire and water, But you gave me abundance out of it all.

I bring gifts and homage to You in Your house.

I will bring my best.

You out there – you who revere God – listen and I will tell all God has done for my soul – spiritual blessings.

You, O Lord, hear my crying – but You will not hear if my sin is not dealt with.

You hear – You hear my words, my heart.

You will not be deaf to my pleadings, nor will Your loving kindness turn away from me.

Submitted by Miriam Jones, February 2026

February Senior Ladies Luncheon

Ladies' Luncheon is Friday, on February 13. **11:00am** (Please note the change).
Please let Dot Branson (704-575-5955) know that you plan to join us at Trio's at 11:00
The address is 10709 McMullen Creek Pkwy (off Hwy 51).

February Senior Men's Luncheon

The CCC "Senior Men's Lunch" will be Friday, February 20th at 11:00 (arriving a little earlier helps us get parked and order by 11:15), at Park Place Restaurant 10517 Park Rd. Join us for a good, encouraging time gathered with your Christian brothers for great food and fellowship and Pastor Mo's devotional.

FEBRUARY SENIOR ADULTS LUNCHEON

Friday, February 6, 2026

Social Time: 11:45 am/ Lunch 12:00 pm, CLC5&6

Speaker: Carroll Mantell

Menu: Lasagna, Salad, Bread, Dessert

Cost: \$7 per person



Puzzle Swap! Bring a puzzle, take a puzzle! **

You're invited! Please join the senior adult community for a time of fellowship, good food, and interesting speakers. ***RSVPs are due by Sunday, February 1st.*** 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/60B0444AAAF2EA2FC1-61809235-february#/>

SignUp Genius Tip: Click on the "Sign Up" button, which is on the right side of form; then, scroll to bottom and select "Save & Continue". This will open the screen to allow name, # attending, and email address to be entered. Creating an account is not necessary.

*****Please donate leftover puzzles to the Matthews Help Center.***



Steve Marion	Feb 06
Gary Wilhite	Feb 06
Peggy Cathey	Feb 09
Rob Randolph	Feb 09
Jeanne McWhirter	Feb 12
Dave Ruths	Feb 12
Steve Burnett	Feb 16
Mary Guthrie	Feb 17
Keith Kitchen	Feb 18
Helena Rea	Feb 18
Ginnie Hart	Feb 22
Susan Mackey	Feb 24
Martha Bond	Feb 25
Phyllis McClellan	Feb 25
Bob Smith	Feb 28

Happy 75th Anniversary, Joe & Peggy!

Joe & Peggy Cathey	Feb 03
Rob & Susan Randolph	Feb 04
Bob & Barbara Smith	Feb 24

FEBRUARY SENIOR ADULT ACTIVITIES

Sunday School, Sundays, 9:00 am

WC201/Choir Room

Prayer Meetings, Tuesdays,

7:00 – 8:30 pm, WC105

February Luncheon, Friday, February 6

11:45 am, CLC 5&6

Ladies Luncheon, -- Friday, Feb 13, 11:00am

Trios Restaurant, McMullen Creek

Men's Luncheon, Friday, Feb. 20, 11:15 am,

Park Place Restaurant

Save the Date:

Fall Retreat @ Bonclarken, October 13-17, 2026

Christmas Dinner – December 11, 2026

Make My World Go Round

Poet: Catherine Pulsifer

On this Valentine's Day

I just want to say:

Friends make the world go round.

Friends that understand

and will always be around.

Love may fill us with pleasure and delight,

But friendship is an unending

source of light.

So, on Valentine's, I want to say

You help make my world go round,

Happy Valentine's Day!

Pastor of Senior Adults

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