



# The Slackwood Grapevine

Slackwood Presbyterian Church  
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Rev. Ryan Irmer, Pastor

Director of Music: Shelley Zuckerman

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January 2016

## *Reflecting on a Very Special Night...*

On January 10<sup>th</sup>, the Presbytery of New Brunswick installed me to become your new pastor. What a wonderful and amazing night it was! From our choir, youth, and Kiran singing beautifully; to local clergy, friends, and seminary staff contributing with prayers and scripture readings; to Dr. Darrell Guder preaching, and to Kiran and Justin providing such inspirational charges, it was clear to me that God's Spirit was moving and stirring throughout our sanctuary and within our church body.

One of the many personal highlights on that night was to stand on top of our church steps and while confirming my Installation vows, to look out upon a packed church of so many familiar and beautiful people. Whether it be old members, new members, family, friends, classmates, professors, or colleagues, I loved scanning the faces of all who had gathered. What I saw were many smiles as well as tears of joy! Especially for our long-time members, I could sense a reminder and a hope that God is still working in the life of this church. For our new members I could sense an excitement and anticipation that they are now a part of such loving and welcoming church family.

What the next chapter of our church's life will look like, God only knows. It is my hope that over these next months and years we can continue to value and appreciate the history of this church, its unique and deeply rooted style of worship, and its already established forms of mission and outreach. And as we all allow Christ to lead us into our current times and all of the challenges and opportunities that come with them, that we will have the courage and vision to see what new expressions of worship, spiritual formation, and community outreach can take root and blossom. With Jesus Christ as our guide, we can trust that where God will lead us next, God will equip each of us to be Christ's witnesses to one another and to the world.

Your Pastor,

Rev. Ryan Irmer



## Experiencing Epiphany

Matt. 2:1-12

At this time of year we are reminded of the Epiphany of the Lord. We remember the Savior of the world was revealed to those considered outsiders as well as to those expecting the messiah. It is easy to conclude the story there, but there is more. "Now after they (magi) had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream." (Matt. 2:13-15) The holy family had become emigres seeking refuge in another land. They received asylum until it was safe to return home.

Today there are families in the middle-east and Africa who are fleeing persecution and death in their home-land. We know the babies in these families are not the infant Jesus. However the man, Jesus, who experienced and understood persecution said, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." (Matt. 25:40 NRSV) There seems to be a lot of chaos in the world today. The form is different today but it was also in Christ's world. Love and justice need to be lived out, now and then. Fear, also, seems to be part of lives and there should be a certain amount of acknowledgement of what is to be feared. Jesus did not expect his disciples to be naive but "be wise as serpents and innocent as doves." (Matt. 10:16)

So as mature disciples who follow the teaching of Jesus, we may be surrounded by talk of fear but do not let it overcome the humanness in common in God's world. We live in a real world where there is a challenge to keep fear from overcoming love but that is our calling. As we do, it is okay to be alert for there is danger in the world. Just ask the young muslim girl Malala Yousafzal!

Bernadine McRipley

## SESSION ACTIONS – DECEMBER 16, 2015

Session voted to:

- send a donation to Princeton Theological Seminary;
- send a donation to Presbyterian Camp Johnsonburg;
- hire Steven Stull to plow the church parking lot when necessary;
- approve the 2016 budget as presented by the Property & Finance Committee;
- use the church bus to transport a group from the Lawrenceville Presbyterian Church to Newark Airport on December 26 and to pick them up and return them home on January 8;
- have Scott and Dick Stebbins replace the storm door on the front of the manse and make repairs to the door on the back of the manse;
- approve Christmas gifts for the church staff.

Session also received information on the Church Leadership event to be held at Princeton Seminary on January 23, 2016.

## MEN'S BREAKFAST CLUB

The January meeting is coming up very quickly as the third Friday is January 15! The Men of the church are invited to join the activities. As usual the meeting will begin at 9:00 am at the church on Friday January 15, 2016. Following an enjoyable meal we will continue our fellowship by completing small jobs around the church. Mark your calendar and join us on January 15, and the February meeting will be held on Friday February 19, 2016!

## PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN MEETING

Slackwood's Presbyterian Women will meet on Thursday, January 21 at 12:00 noon. The PW curriculum will take us to Lesson 5, "Stormy Water". Our bible study comes from Matthew 14: 22-33, Faith. Please bring a sandwich. Dessert will be provided.

Next month's meeting will be on Thursday, February 18. We will discuss Lesson 6, "Waters of Justice". The bible study will be Amos 5: 21-24, Righteousness.

**LEADERSHIP TRAINING DAY: EQUIPPING THE SAINTS** will be held this year on Saturday, January 23, 2016 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Princeton Theological Seminary. A variety of workshops on topics for church leaders is being offered. There is no charge to attend. There is a fee for lunch or you can bring your own lunch. For detailed information see Carol Belles or go to: <http://coned.ptsem.edu/events/leadership-training-day/>

## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The annual meeting of the congregation of Slackwood Presbyterian Church has been called by the session for Sunday, January 31, 2016 immediately following the morning service of worship. The meeting is called to elect elders, deacons, nominating committee members and members of the auditing committee, and any other business as set by the session.

## INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

Ordination and installation of newly elected church officers will take place during the morning service of worship on Sunday, February 14, 2016. Mark your calendar and plan to attend.

## ASH WEDNESDAY



Our Ash Wednesday service of worship will be held on February 10 at 7:00 p.m.

## 2016 OFFERING ENVELOPES

Most people have picked up their set of envelopes, however a few still remain. Please pick up your set and if a set has not been created for you, contact Bill Mansmann at 609-651-1321 and he will be glad to furnish you with a set of envelopes.

## SNOW! SNOW! SNOW!

This is the time of the year to move snow around when it arrives. Hopefully it will not be as frequent as last year. We have snow shovels, ice melt and a terrific snow blower available for use. Generally we are covered, but help is always welcomed at the church or the



manse. If you are able to lend a hand in this task please speak with Bill Mansmann or call him at 609-651-1321.

## 2016 PER CAPITA FEE

The Presbytery set the Per Capita fee for 2016 at \$32.50 per member. These funds support the work of the greater church. Slackwood had around 100 members on the roll at the end of 2015 and the church's total fee will be over \$3,000. It is important that each member of our church participate and contribute the Per Capita Fee. Any shortfall in receiving the Per Capita fee is paid from the general funds of the church that reduces funds available for other needs of the church.

## THANK YOU!!

Thank you to everyone who helped make the Installation Service for Ryan Irmer on January 10 a huge success. Special thanks to Mark Thomas and Kate Moore who helped in the planning of the event, oversaw all that was needed for the dinner afterwards, and took care of invitations and RSVP cards. Mark and Kate spent many hours in preparation for the event and deserve a big thank you from the congregation. It was a great day for everyone.

## 2016 PICTORIAL DIRECTORY



The Membership committee will soon begin work on a new directory. There will be opportunities to update information for the directory in

Fellowship Hall after worship. In addition, new pictures of members may be taken in the sanctuary following worship on Sundays from January 17 through January 31. Pictures you have may also be submitted either by email to Bill Mansmann at [tbmansmann@verizon.net](mailto:tbmansmann@verizon.net) or you may mail the picture itself (it will be returned) to: Terrie and Bill Mansmann, 1588 Brunswick Avenue, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648. It is important that everyone help in this project to create our new pictorial directory. All are invited to participate. You do not have to be a church member to be included in the directory. Also, if you are not local, please let Bill know if you would like to have the new directory mailed to you.

## SPIRITUAL MESSAGE

By Cathy Salvatore

Today we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord! The one who is coming after me is greater than I, I am not worthy to unite the strap of his sandals. When we are baptized God destined us in Jesus Christ to be his children by adoption, for it was his loving purpose to show in us the glory of his grace.

Thought For The Day:

My self-worth rests not in a paycheck but in God's love for me.

Prayer:

Loving Lord, help us to seek you first. Give us patience and strength to follow your calling. Amen.

## CONGRATULATIONS



Congratulations are in order for Matthew Eblen on his earning the rank of Eagle Scout on December 20, 2015 in Ohio. He has spent numerous years of dedication and hard work to achieve this great honor through the Boy Scouts of America. Arlene Filson is his very proud grandmother. Nice going, Matthew!

Who needs a crown?

In a small Southern town there was a "Nativity Scene" that showed great skill and talent had gone into creating it. One small feature bothered me. The three wise men were wearing firemen's helmets. Totally unable to come up with a reason or explanation, I left.



At a "Quick Stop" on the edge of town, I asked the lady behind the counter about the helmets. She exploded into a rage, yelling at me, "You Yankees never do read the Bible!" I assured her that I did, but simply couldn't recall anything about firemen in the Bible.

She jerked her Bible from behind the counter and ruffled through some pages, and finally jabbed her finger at a passage. Sticking it in my face she said, "See, it says right here, 'The three wise man came from afar.'"

# Slackwood Presbyterian Church January 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 New Year's Day	2 8:30 AM AA Meeting
3 9:30 AM Adult Forum and Sunday School 9:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship, Baptism, Reception of New Members and Communion 2:00 PM Grace Taiwanese Services	4 7:30 PM AA Meeting	5	6 6:30 PM Christian Education Committee	7 6:30 PM AA Meeting 7:45 PM Debtors Anonymous	8	9 8:30 AM AA Meeting
10 9:30 AM Adult Forum and Sunday School 9:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship 2:00 PM Grace Taiwanese Services 4:30 PM Ryan Irmer Installation Services and Dinner	11 7:30 PM AA Meeting	12	13	14 6:30 PM AA Meeting 7:45 PM Debtors Anonymous	15 9:00 AM Men's Pancake Breakfast 8:00 PM Daughters of Scotia	16 8:30 AM AA Meeting
17 9:30 AM Adult Forum and Sunday School 9:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship 12:00 Deacons Mtg. 2:00 PM Grace Taiwanese Services	18 <i>Martin Luther King Day</i> 7:30 PM AA Meeting	19 7:00 PM Membership and Outreach Committee	20 7:00 PM Session meeting	21 12:00 PW Meeting 6:30 PM AA Meeting 7:45 PM Debtors Anonymous	22	23 8:30 AM AA Meeting 9:00 AM Leadership Training Day – Princeton Seminary
24 9:30 AM Adult Forum and Sunday School 9:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship 12:00 Property Committee Mtg. 2:00 PM Grace Taiwanese Services	25 7:30 PM AA Meeting	26	27	28 6:30 PM AA Meeting 8:45 PM Debtors Anonymous	29	30 8:30 AM AA Meeting
31 9:30 AM Adult Forum and Sunday School 9:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship followed by Annual Congregational Meeting 2:00 PM Grace Taiwanese Services						

**Upcoming Events:**

- February 10, 7:00 pm – Ash Wednesday Services
- February 14 – Installation of Officers
- February 19, 9:00 am – Men's Breakfast Club
- February 18, 12:00 – Presbyterian Woman Meeting

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

January 2016  
Posted 1/14/16

*All our seats come  
with a First-Class Service !*

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Newsletter of the Slackwood Presbyterian Church