



# The Slackwood Grapevine

Slackwood Presbyterian Church  
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May 2015

## Beyond the Upper Room

There is an old saying that "silence is golden." Perhaps you can remember times when that was true. Those times were filled with contentment and allowed some escape from an all too busy world. However for some of us of a certain age, we also remember Simon and Garfunkel singing "The Sounds of Silence" which were not soothing. The silence reflected the darkness of life. This is probably how the eleven disciples and the women who were in that upper room felt. Their leader had been silenced. They were without a voice of authority. What if it just ended there? Who would lead them now?

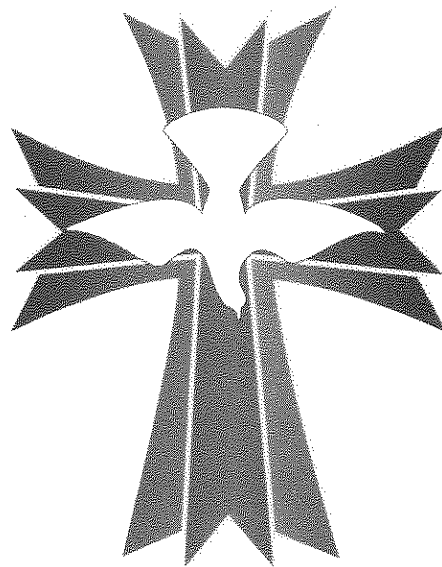
The answer was not who but what. As usual Peter took charge but it was after the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost that changed things. Although the disciples had deserted Jesus, God did not desert them. In the gathering of Jews from the diaspora as well as Palestine, Peter forcefully broke his silence. The Israelites knew the salvation history of the exodus. Peter recites for them a salvation that now affects their understanding of the true nature of Jesus. This was no small task. Just imagine trying to speak over the sounds of a bunch of little girls screaming with delight at a birthday party. Or men unrestrained in their shouting at a sports event. The cacophony at that Pentecost may have been as unintelligible as those noises but Peter guided by the Holy Spirit preached a new understanding of the Festival of Pentecost.

The Festival of Pentecost, or called the Festival of Weeks, was the second of three annual ones which every male Israelite was required to appear before the Lord at the Temple in Jerusalem. Peter spoke to the assembled crowd on the first Pentecost after the resurrection and ascension of Christ. Dr. James McCord, president of Princeton Theological Seminary when I was in a class he taught, described Pentecost as the birthday of the church. The institution of the Christian Church came when the Holy Spirit descended upon all believers without distinction of age, gender, nationality or class (Acts 2:1-4, 14-36). Pentecost as related to Christ took on a new meaning. There are many conflicting voices in the world today, but thanks be to God the voices that were inspired by the Holy Spirit did not remain in the upper room.

The Gospel is not silent today. On May 24 let us wish "happy birthday" to the church and work for many more to come. Pentecost does not just begin the work of the church but is a day to remind disciples of Christ to continually grow more mature in the calling of the church. Like those disciples of old, we can be energized by the Spirit to serve. The spreading of the Word and its meaning by the apostles are stated today when we as a congregation confess the Apostles' Creed. As we recite it together we are recalling church traditions that hold Christians together in the world in spite of language and other differences. When our acts reflect our beliefs we create community and silence chaos.

Rejoice in the Spirit!

Rev. Bernadine McRipley



## SESSION ACTIONS – APRIL 15, 2015 MEETING

Session voted to place a number of old minute books and church registries in the environmentally controlled archival storage area of the Presbyterian Historical Society in Philadelphia for safe keeping.

Session also voted to:

- install shelving in the large storage room in fellowship hall;
- approve the contract with Explorations Community Preschool for 2015-2016;
- allow Explorations Community Preschool to extend the fenced in play yard, replace the swing set with a commercial grade set, replace the mulch with a state approved playground mulch, and erect a 10' x 10' shed to provide storage for outdoor play equipment, all at their own expense.

The Pastor Nominating Committee submitted their completed Ministry Information Form and session voted to approve it with some minor recommendations for changes in wording. The form will now be submitted to the Committee on Ministry for its approval.

## SPRING CLEAN-UP: ANOTHER SUCCESS

On Saturday April 18, the Spring Clean-Up around the church was a great success! A large contingent of people from Slackwood and Grace Taiwanese Churches spent the morning completing many tasks: the border around the front sign was reset; the low branches on an oak tree were trimmed; the front sidewalk was edged; windows in Fellowship Hall, kitchen, the hallway to the CE building, library, office and pastor study were cleaned; litter and sticks around the property were picked up and the grounds raked; gardens around the church were cleaned up; logs around the swing set were moved to the rear of the property; the choir room was prepared for painting and the kitchen unit in the office was removed and sold on Craig's List! Many hands made for a great deal to be accomplished! Thanks to all for your terrific effort!

## CHURCH CARILLON SYSTEM

At the April 15 session meeting, elders approved the purchase and installation of a Chime Master digital carillon system to allow hymns and bells to be played on a regular basis. The carillon is a gift



to the church from Bob Walters in memory of his parents Dorothy and Pete Walters. We are thrilled that Bob is remembering his parents in this beautiful way and we are grateful for his continued support of Slackwood. Pete and Dottie were faithful members for a good many years. They were also active members of the Lawrence Township community, and it is fitting that the hymns of our faith should be heard throughout the neighborhood that they so dearly loved.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

Weekly Sunday school classes will continue to meet through May 31 and then will take the months of June, July and August off. Classes will resume on Sunday, September 13.

## MEMORIAL DAY PARADE



Once again this year, Slackwood church will participate in the Lawrence Township Memorial Day Parade on May 23. The parade begins at 10:00 a.m. at Lawrence High School. We hope a number of people will come out and walk the parade, or ride on the church bus. We will distribute information about the church and show off our transportation ministry. You can join us at the high school by 9:45 a.m. or if you would like to ride over on the bus, be at the church by 8:45 a.m. We had a great deal of fun last year and hope more people will participate this time.

## VISIT THE PRESBYTERIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Organized in 1852, and located in Philadelphia, the Presbyterian Historical Society is the oldest denominational archives in the United States and serves as the national archives for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and many predecessor denominations. It exists to collect, preserve, and share the story of the American Presbyterian and Reformed experience with Presbyterians, the scholarly community, and the general public. On Wednesday, May 27, you have the opportunity to tour the facility and meet with David Staniunas, the Records Archivist. And to make the trip really convenient, you can travel to Philly on the church bus.



Current plans are to leave the church parking lot promptly at 9:30 a.m. in order to arrive at the Historical Society by 10:30 a.m. The tour will take approximately 45 minutes to an hour, and we will then return to the church. We should be back by lunch time (provided you don't eat lunch till 12:30 or 1:00!). Transportation on the bus is open to the first 12 people to sign up. After that, you are welcome to join the tour, but will need to get yourself to its facility in Philadelphia.

This is a great opportunity to hear of our church's history and to see the excellent work done by our Historical Society. A sign-up sheet is available at church on Sundays, or you may call Carol Belles to arrange for a seat on the church bus.

### **CHURCH BUS USED IN UNITY WALK**

On Friday May 1, the United Mercer Interfaith Organization conducted a unity walk to sites around Trenton to memorialize the spot where people have been killed during 2015. Many clergy of all faiths around Mercer County participated along with about 75 people who made the three mile walk to join another 75 people at the Ghandi Garden on East Hanover Street in Trenton. Bill Mansmann drove our bus with the walkers to provide a ride for those unable to walk the entire route. He reports that the prayers and comments by clergy, parents and friends of those killed were very moving. The goal of the walk was to reduce the numbers of senseless violent acts here in Trenton.

### **PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE (PNC)**

The PNC has successfully completed the Ministry Information Form (MIF). (Good job committee!!!) It was approved by session and the New Brunswick Presbytery Committee on Ministry (COM). It has been uploaded to the Presbyterian Church's "Church Leadership Connection" and our next step is to begin reading the Personal Information Forms (PIFs) of applicants who wish to apply for the position. Please continue to keep the PNC in your prayers as we embark on the next phase of our search. COM said that we would receive many applicants, so the task is a large one!

### **MEN'S BREAKFAST CLUB**

The next meeting of the Club will be Friday June 19, 2015 at 9:00 am at the church. We will not be

meeting in May due to the Rummage Sale being held on the third Friday. So mark your calendar for the June meeting to join in the great breakfast, fellowship and work of the church!

### **IN SYMPATHY**

Our heartfelt sympathies are extended to Doris Liu, a member of the Grace congregation, and her family for the passing of Doris' mother recently. Please keep Doris and her family in your prayers as they grieve their loss.

### **HALLELUJAH MOMENTS**

In recent months, many of us have been intensely following the journeys of some of our most precious members as they struggle with health issues and life-changing events. We pray for so many who are home-bound or seriously ill, and many of our members are committed to keeping in touch with them on a regular basis just to let them know we are thinking of them and offer any assistance they may need. Most recently I shared with you the serious challenges faced by two of our long-time and very treasured members. Dolly Ettenger and Arlene Filson were in our prayers, both dealing with health issues that kept them away from our Sunday worship services but so close in our hearts and minds. We shared tears when the news was bad, we shared cheers when the news was good. But the most inspirational and heart-warming sight I've ever witnessed at Slackwood was when, after months of prayers, Easter Sunday Arlene wheeled into Fellowship Hall through one door, followed by Dolly minutes later through another door. The room went up in cheers, applause, and grateful tears as we welcomed back these two very special ladies after months of trials and tribulations, worry and angst, progress and set-backs. They were home! It just felt so right to have them back.

Thanks be to God for a truly joyous Easter Sunday for Slackwood! There is nothing more moving than witnessing the grace of His blessings through the very special members we so love. We bask in life's sunshine, we trudge through life's shadows, but we never walk alone.

Penny Baumann

***God promises a safe landing,  
not a calm passage***

# Slackwood Presbyterian Church May 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 8:30 AM AA Meeting
3 9:30 AM Adult Forum and Sunday School 9:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship 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 7:00 PM PC 8:00 PM Debtors' Anonymous	8 8:00 PM Daughters of Scotia	9 8:30 AM AA Meeting
10 <i>MOTHER'S DAY</i> 9:30 AM Adult Forum and Sunday School 9:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship/Communion	11 7:30 PM AA Meeting	12	13 1:00 PM Begin Rummage Sale set-up	14 9:00 AM Set up for Rummage Sale 6:30 PM AA Meeting 7:00 PM PNC 8:00 PM Debtors' Anonymous	15 9:00-5:00 PM Rummage Sale	16 8:30-1:00 PM Rummage Sale 1:00 PM Rummage Sale clean-up
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 7:30 PM AA Meeting	19 7:00 Membership and Outreach Committee	20 6:00 PM Personnel Committee 7:00 PM Session meeting	21 6:30 PM AA Meeting 7:00 PM PNC 8:00 PM Debtors' Anonymous	22	23 8:30 AM AA Meeting 10:00 AM Lawrence Twp Memorial Day Parade
24 <i>PENTACOST</i> 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 <i>MEMORIAL DAY</i> 7:30 PM AA Meeting	26	27 9:30 AM Depart for 10:30 AM tour of Presbyterian Historical Society (Philadelphia)	28 6:30 PM AA Meeting 7:00 PM PNC 8:00 PM Debtors' Anonymous	29	30 8:30 AM AA Meeting
31 <i>LAST SUNDAY SCHOOL SESSION</i> 9:30 AM Adult Forum and Sunday School 9:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship 2:00 PM Grace Taiwanese Services						

UPCOMING EVENTS:  
June 21 - Father's Day

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2020 Brunswick Avenue  
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Non Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Trenton, N.J.  
Permit #150

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

May 2015

*We're called to be witnesses,  
not lawyers or judges.*

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Newsletter of the Slackwood Presbyterian Church