



# The Slackwood Grapevine

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March 2019

## Lent: A Season of Preparation & an Opportunity for Spiritual Growth

*Everybody thinks of changing humanity and nobody thinks of changing him(her)self.*

*-Leo Tolstoy*

So many misconceptions swirl around the season of Lent. For some, one is compelled to “give something up.” Why they are giving something up to begin with, they’re not sure. Others believe that Lent is a time to wallow in guilt and shame and to feel regret all the terrible things they’ve done over the past year. I would contend that, while God desires honest self-reflection and a repentant heart, God doesn’t desire for us to become overly burdened by guilt and shame.

**So, what is the season of Lent all about?** I would contend that it is a **time of preparation** and an **opportunity for spiritual growth and personal transformation**. In these weeks preceding Easter, if we desire to experience the joy and liberation that comes from Christ’s resurrection, we need to come to remind ourselves why Jesus had to lay down His life to begin with. Sin separates God from humanity and sin remains all around us and within us. When we acknowledge sin and its destructive reality on our lives and on the world, then we take the first steps, with God’s help, in appreciating why Jesus had to make the ultimate sacrifice. This awareness of sin and grace should then compel us to seek personal and spiritual growth in our own lives.

Our Adult Forum is currently reading the classic “Celebration of Discipline” by Richard Foster. Foster has a genuine way of teaching us how to implement Spiritual Disciplines in our lives as a means to promote spiritual growth and transformation. Here are the 12 Spiritual Disciplines that Foster discusses:

### The Inward Disciplines -

- Meditation:** The ability to hear God’s voice and obey God’s word.
- Prayer:** Conversations which brings about communion with God and promotes personal transformation.
- Fasting:** Intentionally removing or abstaining from something that may have become overly important in hopes of allowing God to rightfully return back into the center of one’s life.
- Study:** Engaging and directing our minds to consider the relationship between God and humanity.

### **The Outward Disciplines**

- Simplicity:** Creating an inward reality that results in an outward lifestyle that creates freedom and peace
- Solitude:** Creating space in our hearts and minds and inviting God presence into our lives and allowing God to fill those empty spaces with gifts of joy, peace and freedom.
- Submission:** Obediently handing over to God the burden of needing to be right and get our own way.
- Service:** Letting go of power and privilege and engaging in a willingness to trust and practice humility.

### **The Corporate Disciplines**

- Confession:** Admitting our sinfulness, receiving God's forgiveness, and being healed and transformed.
- Worship:** Our active response to the overtures of love from the heart of God.
- Guidance:** Giving God permission to lead and instruct us through an intentional group experience.
- Celebration:** Practicing a joyful spirit which energizes and brings life to a group of people and lifts up God's presence in its midst.

As we begin the season of Lent, I would invite you to take time and consider which spiritual discipline(s) God may be calling you to engage in. We will be discussing these disciplines in our worship and our Lenten devotional time. Yes, there is some level of discomfort and pain that is a part of the process, but the ultimate goal is to experience joy, abundant life, and human flourishing that is found in and through Jesus Christ.

Your Pastor,

Ryan

## SESSION REORGANIZATION

At its February 27 meeting, the session made the following appointments for 2019:

Clerk of Session – *Carol Belles*  
Co-Chairs of Christian Education & Spiritual Growth –  
*Debi Moore and Mark Thomas*  
Co-Chairs of Membership, Outreach & Hospitality –  
*Ginger Baker and Karen Nolan*  
Chairperson of Property & Finance – *Bill Mansmann*  
Chairperson of the Stewardship Campaign – *Kate Moore*  
Session Liaisons from the Worship Team – *Carol Belles and Kate Moore*  
Chairperson of the Nominating Committee – *Carol Belles*  
Chairperson of the Personnel Committee – *Mark Thomas*  
Members of the Personnel Committee – *Jill Beebe and Carol Ward*  
Commissioner to Presbytery – *Carol Belles*  
Alternate Commissioner to Presbytery – *Jim Branson*  
Liaison to Deacons – *Fred Mitchell*  
Newsletter Editor – *Penny Baumann*  
Liaison to the Grace Congregation – *Penny Baumann*  
Church Treasurer – *Ginger Baker*  
Trust Funds Treasurer – *Bill Mansmann*  
Memorial Fund Secretary – *Bill Ward*  
Financial/Recording Secretary – *Susan Gibbs*  
President, Board of Trustees – *Karen Nolan*  
Vice President, Board of Trustees – *Fred Mitchell*

Also at its February meeting the session:

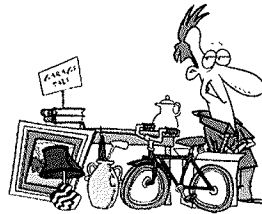
- voted to approve the position description for a part time Director of Family Ministries and to move forward advertising the position;
- learned that the dates for this summer's outdoor movie nights will be June 22 and July 20;
- voted to tile the floors in the three bathrooms in the Christian Education building, as well as the church office;
- voted to replace the rear storm door at the manse;
- voted to purchase a new lapel microphone.

## LENTEN DEVOTIONAL



We will be holding weekly Lenten Devotional sessions starting on Sunday morning, March 17, 9:30-10:15, during Adult Forum. All are welcome to join us as we study the book, "God is on the Cross: Reflections on Lent and Easter," by Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

## HOLD THESE DATES – May 8-11 SPRING RUMMAGE SALE!!!



Don't forget to mark your calendars for the spring rummage sale. Spring----- yes, it's just around the corner.....we all hope! Right now the shed is 60% full, so if you do some early spring cleaning right now, you can get rid of your "treasures" and put them in the shed. As we get closer to the sale and the shed is full, we have to ask folks to hold on to their items until that week. If you have larger items, hold them until just before the sale. Next month we'll focus on the specific dates, times, and call for help. The dates of the Spring Rummage Sale are **Wednesday, May 8 – Saturday, May 11. (Public sale days are Friday and Saturday).**

Terrie and Bill Mansmann  
Co-chairs

## MEN'S BREAKFAST CLUB

Our "Breakfast Club" continues to meet on the third Friday of each month with great success. Join the next meeting on Friday, March 15 at 9:00 am at the church. Following an enjoyable meal – maybe green pancakes - we will continue our fellowship by completing small jobs around the church. Mark your calendar and join us on March 15, 2019.



## SPRING CLEAN-UP – APRIL 13

This year Easter Sunday is April 21st. The Property Committee has scheduled a spring "Clean-up" for **Saturday, April 13, 8:30 AM until 12:00 noon** (Rain Date: Saturday, April 20). Hopefully the harsh winter will be gone by then. With much to do around the property, we are hoping for "real" spring weather to get many jobs done. We will gather at 8:30 am and any time you may have to help pitch in would be gratefully appreciated! All that is needed is your willingness to join in the "fun!"



## DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that we have a fund at the church that is titled the Slackwood Church Trust Fund? It was set up a number of years ago to provide an opportunity for people to make a donation to the church that could have a lasting effect. The funds donated are invested and the income from the investment may then be used for a need at the church at the discretion of the Session. Then original amounts of donations cannot be spent by the Session. This a good way to make a contribution in honor of someone, in memory of a loved one or as a result of estate planning that may assist the church for years to come. If you are interested in making such a donation contact any member of Session.

## DEACONS UPDATE – UPCOMING WORKSHOP, MARCH 24

The deacons reorganized with our newly elected deacons. Our officers are: Moderator, Terrie Mansmann; Vice Moderator, Sandra Thomas, Secretary, Lex Chu; Treasurer, Sherry Branson; and Sunshine, Nan Dodge. We are also in the process of updating the shepherding lists.

The Deacons have been providing informative workshops to the congregation on topics of concern. In February, James Klotz, Bailie Gregory, and Amelia Irmer led us in a discussion about **Mental Health and Suicide**. It was very informative and handouts were provided to further assist us. This month, after the church service on **March 24**, James and Bailie will again lead us in a discussion on **Depression and Anxiety**. These informative sessions only last about a half an hour, with time at the end for questions. Please mark your calendar and join us on March 24<sup>th</sup>!!!

## GRACE CHURCH

**20**  
**YEARS**  
*Anniversary*

On Easter Sunday the Grace Congregation will be recognizing their church's 20-year anniversary during their regular worship service. Following their service they will be hosting a luncheon, and pictorial displays will be posted of the many happy memories, events, and special people we have enjoyed through the years.

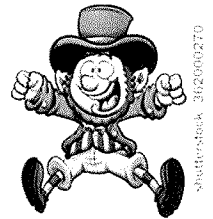
The Slackwood family is welcome to join them for this very special occasion.

## MARION COMBS – IN MEMORIAM

A Memorial Service for Marion Combs who passed away on August 31, 2018 will be held in the sanctuary on April 6, 2019 at 11:30 AM. Marion and her husband Fred were members of Slackwood Church for many years and she served as a Deacon and taught Sunday School. Please join her family in celebration of her life. A reception will follow in Fellowship Hall.

## BEWARE THE LEPRECHAUNS!

If we don't wear green on St. Patrick's Day, it's considered shameful but even worse than that, we could get pinched! People wearing green on St. Patrick's Day are themselves invisible to those mischievous leprechauns so can avoid the pinch. Anyone who practices the pinching tradition and



pinches others who aren't wearing green can be compared to the leprechauns. However, if they dare to practice that tradition, I can promise you most of us will not take it lightly and will deliver a sincere and direct slap to the offending hand! Am I right?

## AHEAD OF 'THE TIMES'

"WHERE is my SUNDAY paper?!" The irate senior citizen calling the newspaper office, loudly demanded to know where his Sunday edition was.



"Sir", said the newspaper employee, "today is Saturday. The Sunday paper is not delivered until tomorrow, on SUNDAY".

There was quite a long pause on the other end of the phone, followed by a ray of recognition as he was heard to mutter, "Well, darn, so that's why no one was at church today!"