



# The Slackwood Grapevine

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Rev. Ryan Irmer, Pastor  
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May 2018

## ***Redemption***

*O Israel, hope in the LORD! For with the LORD there is steadfast love,  
and with Him is great power to redeem. -Psalm 130:7*

It wasn't that long ago that our family was packing up our belongings and driving 3100+ miles from San Diego to Princeton. Just when we had unpacked, the first days of "Intensive Summer Language" had begun. It didn't take long for my preconceived notions of what seminary would be like to get shattered. I would witness bickering students and hear about professors that wouldn't even speak to one another. "But I thought this was a Christian institution?!" I thought. I learned quickly that Princeton Seminary was just like every other place that I had ever worked at or school I had attended: It was full of sinners and broken people, including myself.

In the midst of my disillusionment came Jan Ammon, who works as the minister of the chapel and coordinator of the worship services. But Jan is sooo much more than that! Jan has worked at the seminary for many years and has probably witnessed thousands of students who arrived at seminary thinking it would be one way only to find out it was something completely different. As Jan joined me for lunch one day and I shared with her my disappointment she said, "Ryan, I think you will find that God has an amazing way of taking those shattered pieces of what you thought seminary would be and, over time, turn it into a beautiful mosaic of what this place actually is."

Jan was right. Over time, I began to take those broken pieces and create something new. I look back now with such gratitude that I attended and graduated from Princeton Seminary. Some of my best friends and trusted mentors (including Jan) have come from there. And I was able to learn that no place or group of people is or will ever be perfect. But God does have an amazing ability to take the broken pieces of our lives and our communities and turn them into a beautiful mosaic.

That is what "redemption" is; taking what was once broken and turning it into something beautiful. God, through His son Jesus, took a brutal execution on a cross and the sins of humanity, and somehow turned it into something beautiful. As we recently went through the season of Lent, Holy Week, and the

season of Easter, we were reminded that God took what was broken and transformed it into something different and beautiful. We proclaim this truth when we sing together, *"I know that my Redeemer lives! What comfort this sweet sentence gives!"*

Is there something in your life that's broken? Is there a part of your life that has been shattered into pieces? Do you have hopes and dreams that you now realize might not ever come true? If so, it is important to first recognize and confront the pain and hardship that comes from this. But it is also important to not lose hope and to remember that we worship and serve a God who is really good at redemption! May we all continue to place our hope in and trust in our Redeemer, the only one who is able to take what has been broken and remold and reshape it into something beautiful.

Your Pastor,

Ryan

## SESSION MEETING - MAY 16, 2018

- Elders learned that the final day for Sunday School until fall will be June 3. That Sunday has been designated as Children's Day. Children will be singing during worship and participating in worship leadership. The church picnic will follow the service.
- Session voted to purchase children's Bibles for children in the church.
- Session voted to contribute the proceeds from the Peacemaking Offering that will be received on World Communion Sunday to Anchor House.
- Session voted to replace the roof on the Christian Education building.
- Session voted to replace parts in the kitchen suppression system.

## MEMORIAL DAY PARADE



Once again this year, Slackwood Church will participate in the Lawrence Township Memorial Day Parade. The parade will step

off from the parking lot of Lawrence High School at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 26. The bus will leave the church parking lot at 8:55 a.m. If you want to ride the bus to the parade site, be at the church no later than 8:50 a.m. If you are able to participate in the parade, but don't want to leave that early, be at the high school parking lot by 9:45 a.m. The parade route is an easy walk, and members have fun representing our church. Hope to see you there.

## DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Mark your calendar now for the following summer events, and then watch the newsletter, bulletin and emails for specific details:

Movies under the stars behind the church parking lot: Saturday, June 16 and Saturday, July 14.

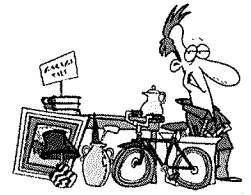
Classic movie in air conditioned fellowship hall: Wednesday, August 15

Trenton Thunder baseball game - Friday, August 17

End of summer community festival - Saturday, August 25

## SPRING RUMMAGE SALE

After many helping hands to set up the rummage sale, on May 11<sup>th</sup> the doors opened and 60 people file in to shop our "treasures". The line is filled with familiar faces, some smiling and greeting us...unfortunately some ready to snatch up the bargains. Each rummage sale we start with a prayer, reminding us that we are God's children and represent the face of God and Slackwood to others. Although the situation is the same for each sale, we have unique stories and experiences to remember. This spring we recall good weather on Friday, the morning rain on Saturday and the usual good-natured spirits of our Slackwood workers. Although the outside tent didn't have many large items, the sale was augmented by the sale of jewelry on Saturday. Thank you to all who helped make the rummage sale a success – donating items, emptying the shed, sorting the items, working the sale, donating food, cleaning up after the sale, praying for us during the sale, etc. Yes, many hands make light work. Our profit for the sale was \$3,601. Thanks be to God!



Terrie and Bill Mansmann  
Co-Chairs

*And special thanks to Terrie and Bill for their leadership and the many days of hard work they put into making the Rummage Sale such a huge success!*

## MEN'S BREAKFAST CLUB

The June meeting of the Men's Breakfast Club will be Friday, June 15 at 9:00 a.m. at the church. Mark your calendar for the June meeting to join in the great breakfast, fellowship and work of the church! Look for our Breakfast Club to start up again in September. Have an enjoyable summer!!

## TIME TO CUT GRASS



We maintain the church grounds throughout the spring and summer. The Property Committee is always seeking a few good people! If you are available to help in cutting the grass this year please speak to Bill Mansmann. He will be glad to fill you in and help get you started.