



The Slackwood Grapevine

Slackwood Presbyterian Church
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April 2018

Striving Towards Unity

How wonderful and pleasant it is when brothers (and sisters) live together in harmony!

Psalm 133:1 NLT

With the rise of hatred, fear, and division, many of us continue to be concerned about the direction that our country is headed. And we aren't the only ones as many who live outside the U.S. are also concerned. As I continue to keep in touch with my friends in Northern Ireland I hear comments like, *"When we hear the talk of walls and borders, when we witness the bitterness and angry rhetoric, and when we see the division taking place in your country, we can't help but think to ourselves, 'Please don't go down that path!' For we learned firsthand, through the time of "The Troubles", it only leads to the loss of innocent lives, a vicious cycle of hatred and division, and increased violence and heartbreak. And that is no way to live."* My friends from Northern Ireland don't make these comments in a condescending manner, but in a way similar to a parent who says to their wayward son or daughter, "Don't go down that direction because, I too went down that path when I was your age, and it only ended in heartbreak and disaster."

So, what can we do to fight the many forces that seek to divide us? The first is to be aware of the things in our society that are intentionally being used as a means to divide us. Our politicians use "wedge issues" to "divide and conquer." Yes, it helps rally their base and increase their vote, but it is being done at the cost of the overall health and unity of our country. It's important to ask ourselves, "Is this issue really a major problem in our country or is this being used and exploited to gain political advantage?"

We need to also **be aware** of other nations that continue to intentionally divide us with the sole goal of weakening the social fabric of this country. They continue to infiltrate various forms of social media and chain emails to sow division and heighten discord. There is nothing wrong with being on social media or reading online articles, but perhaps we need to reconsider whether or not we should continue to read the "Comments" section if we aren't sure where these comments are coming from. Or perhaps social media isn't the best platform to engage in a back-and-forth disagreement on a difficult, complex issue.

Awareness of forces that seek to divide us further is important. So is **recognizing all the things that can bring us together**. We have all experienced how the success of local sports teams like the Philadelphia Eagles and the Villanova Wildcats has brought people together and celebrate winning a championship. **Sports** has an amazing ability of creating unity, whether you are playing or cheering. I would encourage us all to attend local sporting events whenever possible as we cheer and boo together.

The same is true when it comes to **Arts and Entertainment**. Attending plays, musicals, concerts, and other performances is a wonderful way to bring people together while engaging in different points of view. Finally, the simple act of sitting down and having a cup of tea, coffee, or a beverage of your choice with others is another way of enjoying life together, strengthening our social fabric, and finding a healthy way to engage in face-to-face interaction.

The last way that we can remain united is to **commit to being a part of community life**. We should be proud that we are a faith community that is diverse in a variety of different ways. Being active and engaged here at Slackwood helps to strengthen bonds between us and our neighbors. This is especially true as we lead upcoming community events such as rummage sales, movie nights, and summer festivals. Furthermore, when we come together regularly and worship Jesus, the one who came into this world not to divide but to unite us, and as we seek to follow His teachings and example, our fellowship and conversations not only strengthen this church, it also strengthens the nation in which we live.

Your Pastor,

Ryan

SESSION ACTIONS

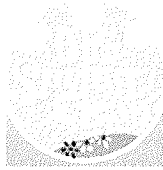
The March 21 meeting of the session was cancelled due to snow. Session will meet next on Wednesday, April 18.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Spring Gathering will be April 14 at Kingston Presbyterian Church starting at 9:30 until 12:30.

SPRING CLEAN-UP APRIL 14

Saturday March 24 was the time for the Spring "Clean-up." Multiple "Noreasters" put a halt to any possible work to be completed on that date as well as the "rain date" of March 31. So we will attempt to have a "Clean-Up" on Saturday April 14 from 8:30 – 12:00. Any help you can provide for an hour or so will greatly help. There is lots to do with picking up sticks and branches to raking gardens to edging the sidewalks in order to get our grounds around the church in good shape for the spring and summer. Next we await the blooming of flowers and bushes!



Hope you can help out on April 14th!

MESSY CHURCH

Our final Messy Church will be taking place on April 15th before our worship service. Join us as we gather together as the intergenerational body of Christ to create a beautiful banner that will be hung in our sanctuary!



Warmly,
Katie (Kathleen) Garner-Jewett

MEN'S APRIL BREAKFAST

The April meeting of the breakfast club will be held on Friday April 20th at 9:00 am at the church. If you have time in your schedule join us for an enjoyable meal. We will continue our



fellowship by completing small jobs around the church. Mark your calendar and join us on April 20, 2018!

SPRING RUMMAGE SALE: ALL HANDS ON DECK!



The dates for the 2018 Spring Rummage Sale are **Friday, May 11, and Saturday, May 12**. It's time to clean out your closets, attic or basement and gather those items, clothes, etc. that you no longer use and bring it to the church! Larger furniture items cannot be accepted until Wednesday, May 9th, set-up day. Volunteers are needed in a variety of ways. **It helps planning the event if you sign up on the list in fellowship hall or let Bill or Terrie know you can help.** There are several ways you can support the rummage sale:

- Bring items to the church to be placed in the shed – not much room left!
- Items can be received at the church **Wednesday afternoon May 9 noon to 6:00 pm and on Thursday, May 10, 9:00 am to noon.**
- Help empty the shed. On **Wednesday, May 9 at 10:00 am** the men will begin setting up the tables and moving items into fellowship hall. Whenever you can make it after 1:00 PM would be helpful. We will begin to sort "White Elephant" items, etc. **until around 6 pm – HELP IS NEEDED**
- Help set up for the sale on **Thursday, May 10 beginning at 9:00 am**
- Assist in the sale
Friday, May 11 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Saturday, May 12 8:30 – 1:00 pm
- Help in the cleanup **Saturday, May 12 beginning at 1:00 pm**

Thanks,
Terrie and Bill Mansmann, Co-chairs

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.



1st QUARTER STATEMENTS

The first quarter 2018 statements be distributed and mailed in the next few weeks. If you have any questions about your statement please contact Susan Gibbs or Bill Mansmann. They will be glad to assist you with your concerns.

NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY

The new church directory is now available and may be picked up any Sunday morning. There is one directory per household. When you pick up your copy, please sign the paper that you will find with the directories so we can keep track of who has a new directory. While an effort was made to assure the information in the directory is accurate, we know mistakes happen. If you see anything that needs to be corrected or changed, please let Carol Belles know. Also, thanks to Bill Mansmann and Roger Melick for this new directory.

MEMORIAL DAY PARADE

Once again this year members of the church will participate in the Lawrence Township Memorial Day Parade. The parade will be held on Saturday, May 26 and steps off from the parking lot of Lawrence High School at 10:00 a.m. The church bus will also be in the parade and it will leave the church parking lot at 8:55 a.m. If you want to ride over to the high school on the bus, be at the church by 8:50 a.m. Or, you can meet up with the church group at the high school parking lot no later than 9:45 a.m. You may walk alongside the bus, or ride on it, or you can walk some and ride some. The parade route is



a fairly easy walk and is a lot of fun. Everyone is welcome.

THANK YOU

Terrie Mansmann wants to thank everyone for the cards and well wishes from her recent knee replacement surgery. She is now walking without a cane and is doing physical therapy. Thanks for your prayers!

Thanks also come from Penny Baumann for the very warm and generous good wishes she received from so many of you during her recent and continuing health challenges. The cards, prayers, calls, and kind words from everyone always serve as the best therapy one could ever ask for.

SPIRITUAL MESSAGE

By Cathy Salvatore

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Do we break the 10 Commandments and not obey them in our society? It is the law of nature we use the Commandments to teach those who come into their faith to live them out fully with hope and faith in their lives.

God never fails to raise us up to become saints. A deep commitment in our lives teaches us to be uprooted and to bear good fruit.

We must live the 10 Commandments to live with the struggles and temptations in life with the help of God's grace. Amen.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything.
3. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.
4. Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.
5. Honor your father and your mother.
6. You shall not murder.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.
10. You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Exodus 20: 1-7