



The Slackwood Grapevine

Slackwood Presbyterian Church
2020 Brunswick Avenue
Lawrenceville, New Jersey 08648-4606

Office: (609) 392-3258

Fax: (609) 392-1650

Website: www.slackwoodchurch.org

Rev. Ryan Irmer, Pastor
Director of Music: Shelley Zuckerman

March 2016

Belonging Before Believing

Before arriving in Northern Ireland I read a terrific book by George G. Hunter III titled *The Celtic Way of Evangelism: How Christianity Can Reach the West Again*. This book takes an in-depth look at the life and ministry of St. Patrick. As we approach St. Patrick's Day I thought I'd share an interesting bit of information about what made St. Patrick's ministry so successful (and it wasn't him driving out all the snakes.)

When Patrick arrived in the Fifth Century, no outside religion had penetrated Ireland for over a thousand years. Needless to say, Patrick's mission to Ireland was considered an unprecedented undertaking. At the time, the Irish Celtic people were looked upon as "barbarians" (although Patrick refused to adopt that stereotype.) The typical approach for evangelism would have involved "Christianizing" or "civilizing" these peoples and would have been undertaken using the following model:

- 1) Present the Christian Message;
- 2) Invite them to decide to believe in Christ and become Christians;
- 3) If they decide positively, welcome them into church and its fellowship.

Does this model sound familiar? It should because it has been the traditional American Church model for decades. This approach seems and sounds very logical, but is it truly transforming people's lives?

So what made Patrick's ministry so wildly successful? Well, Patrick chose a contrasting model of sharing the Christian Gospel. It was:

- 1) First establish community with people and bring them into the fellowship with a community of faith.
- 2) Within fellowship, engage in conversation, ministry, prayer, and worship;
- 3) Over time, as they've discovered that they now believe, invite them to commit.

St. Patrick understood that most people experience a deeply rooted faith through relationships. He understood the value of encountering the Gospel through a community of faith and that becoming a Christian is a process that takes time.

As we approach another St. Patrick's Day, become more and more aware of today's current sociological trends and the desire to interact with younger generations, we should consider what we can learn from this contrasting missional approach of ancient Celtic Christians. Perhaps our first priority is to ensure that newcomers continue to find a welcoming, family-type atmosphere as they walk through our doors. Then we can provide time and space for friendships to grow, trust to be established, and questions to be asked. Hopefully over time and through the power of the Holy Spirit, they will then want to become more involved in our Christian community, and ultimately they will desire to want to become baptized, confirmed, and become new members. I believe Slackwood Presbyterian Church is in a great position to continue down this path of mission and outreach for years to come.

Your Pastor,

Ryan

SESSION ACTIONS – MEETING FEBRUARY 17, 2016

Session voted to allow Princeton University's community action program to use the church facilities from September 5 to September 9, 2016 to house students doing mission work in the area.

Session also voted to make the following one year appointments:

Clerk of Session – Carol Belles
Church Treasurer – Bill Ward
Trust Funds Treasurer – Bill Mansmann
Memorial Fund Treasurer – Bill Ward
Financial/Recording Secretary – Susan Gibbs
President, Board of Trustees – Mark Thomas
Vice President, Board of Trustees – Penny Baumann
Commissioner to Presbytery – Carol Belles
Alternate Commissioner to Presbytery – Terrie Mansmann
Newsletter Editor – Penny Baumann
Christian Ed. & Spiritual Growth Chairperson – Mark Thomas
Membership/Outreach/Hospitality Chairperson – Carol Belles
Property & Finance Chairperson – Bill Mansmann
Stewardship Campaign Chairpersons – Bill Ward & Kate Moore
Worship Committee Chairperson – Sandy Murray
Nominating Committee Chairperson – Terrie Mansmann
Personnel Committee Chairperson – Sherry Branson

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

The next meeting of Slackwood's Presbyterian Women will be Thursday, March 17, 2016 at 12 noon. Bring a sandwich, and dessert will be provided. Scripture preparation is John 4: 1-30, 39-42; Acts 2:44-47. "The Hospitality of Living Water – Compassion."

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Once again this year, during Lent and the Easter season, Slackwood Church will receive the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering. This program of the PCUSA supports ministries that provide relief to those affected by natural disasters, food for the hungry, and support of the self-development of poor and oppressed communities. Thirty-two percent of all funds received go to helping communities as they recover and find hope after disruption from natural or human-caused disasters. Thirty-six percent provides initiatives that offer food to the hungry and alleviate root causes of poverty so that all may be fed. Thirty-two percent provides resources and education to economically poor, oppressed, and

disadvantaged communities working to alleviate poverty and injustice through projects they own and from which they directly benefit. Offering envelopes will be in the pew racks. Please give generously to help others.

NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY

The new 2016 church pictorial directory is now available. Thank you to Bill and Terrie Mansmann and Roger Melick for their work on the directory.

FELLOWSHIP TIME



The Membership & Outreach Committee is coordinating the fellowship time after church each Sunday. If you would like to donate goodies to share with others on a Sunday morning, please sign the list on the table in fellowship hall, or let Carol Belles know. Cookies, fruit, cheese and crackers, other finger foods are most welcome.

EASTER SUNDAY

The early morning Easter service will be at 8:30 a.m. in the garden, followed by breakfast in fellowship hall at 9:00 a.m. After breakfast, at about 9:45 a.m., we will have an egg hunt for the kids and the service of worship will be in the sanctuary at 10:30 a.m. Hope to see you there to celebrate our risen Lord and Savior!



SPRING CLEAN-UP – March 19



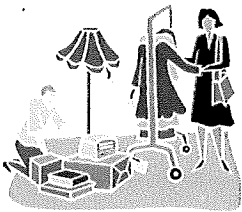
This year Easter comes at the end of March. As a result, the Property Committee set **Saturday, March 19th** for the spring "Clean-up" around the church. The harsh winter will hopefully be gone by then. With much to do around the property, we are hoping for "real" spring weather to get many jobs done. We will gather at 8:30 a.m. 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!" So mark your calendar and hope to see you on the 19th!

MEN'S BREAKFAST

Our "Breakfast Club" continues to meet on the third Friday of each month with great success. Join the next meeting on Friday, March 18 at 9:00 a.m. at the church. Following an enjoyable meal we will continue our fellowship by completing small jobs around the church. Mark your calendar and join us on March 18th!

SPRING RUMMAGE SALE

May 11-14, 2016 – HOLD THOSE DATES!!



Don't forget to mark your calendars for the spring rummage sale. Spring-----yes, it's just around the corner! Right now the shed is 30% 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 sometimes have to ask folks to hold on to their items until the week of the sale. At this time in order to have room for smaller items, we cannot accept large pieces of furniture or larger items. So beat the rush! Next month we'll focus on the specific dates, times, and call for help. The dates of the Spring Rummage Sale are **Wednesday, May 11 – Saturday, May 14** (public sale days are Friday and Saturday).

Terrie and Bill Mansmann
Co-chairs

RECYCLE YOUR CELL PHONES AND INK CARTRIDGES

We are participating in a program entitled "Green Hippo" that will appropriately recycle used cell phones and new or used printer ink cartridges. There is a collection box in Fellowship Hall where you can place your used items. They will be sent to "Green Hippo" and the proceeds will benefit the Bus Transportation Fund.

So don't throw these items into your trash can but bring them to church to be recycled for cash.



NEWS FROM EXPLORATIONS COMMUNITY PRESCHOOL

Explorations will be holding an Open House on Wednesday, March 23 from 5:30 to 7 pm. We are currently enrolling for full time preschool children for both summer and fall of this year. Please stop by if you have children between the ages of 2.5 - 5 years old and are looking for a fun and hands-on preschool/daycare program.



Our annual Easter Egg Hunt is Saturday, March 26 at 10a.m. This event is for children 2-10 years old. Please bring an Easter basket and come for hidden eggs, treats, and crafts. This is also an opportunity to see everything Explorations has to offer!

Summer is right around the corner and Explorations is the place to be! We offer games, arts and crafts, cooking, science experiments, indoor and outdoor play, water play, and much more! This affordable summer camp option is perfect for children 2.5 - 6 years!

Please call Shana for more information. 609-647-4214.

SYMPATHY

The sympathy of the congregation is extended to Tammy, Ken, Tobie and Shane Mitchell on the death of Tammy's father, Robert Willever. A memorial service will be held at a later date.

THANK YOU

Kim, Craig, Patrick and Matthew Robbins send their thanks to everyone for their prayers and expressions of sympathy on the death of Craig's mother, Shelley Robbins. Your care was a source of real support for them at a very difficult time.

GOOD FRIDAY



Good Friday and Easter -- the days of God's overpowering acts in history, acts in which God's judgment and grace were revealed to all the world -- are just around the corner. Judgment in those hours in which Jesus Christ, our Lord, hung on the cross; grace in that hour in which death was swallowed up in victory. It was not human beings who accomplished anything here; no, God alone did it. He came to human beings in infinite love. He judged what is human. And he granted grace beyond any merit.

*Submitted by Bernadine McRipley from
"Meditations on the Cross" by Dietrich Bonhoeffer
From a sermon on Romans 11:6
Barcelona, March 11, 1928 (Third Sunday in Lent)*

TO SING YOU MUST EXHALE

By Cathy Salvatore

Will I live God's way or my way?

Frank Sinatra sang the song, "My Way": "I took the blows, and did it my way." We must put off worldly qualities like anger, wrath, and filthy language, and put on the qualities of Christ, kindness, humility, and forgiveness.

To sing you must exhale by emptying your lungs, then filling them with fresh air. To actually sing one must exhale, letting our voice fill the halls. One who sings for God must do the same by emptying ourselves through true humility, and then we must invite the Holy Spirit to fill our body and soul. To begin our pilgrim journey to the cross we must exhale so the indwelling Holy Spirit can come through our breath, our voice, our example of life, and touch the hearts of those around us.

Pray This Week

Father God, please show me your will and make my life count for eternity. Lord Jesus, because you live, I live also. Make me over into your image. Holy Spirit, give me the desire and the ability to glorify Jesus. It is in His name that I pray. Amen.

WHO'S WHO AT SLACKWOOD CHURCH

Carol Ward

Carol is a long-time member of Slackwood Church, having been a member for 58 years. She was born in Chicago, Illinois and moved to this area in 1958. After she finished school, Carol worked at AAA for a while, then also worked for Makrancy's Florist seasonally, her special talent being their custom hand-made bows of all types and sizes. Her current job is with Hamilton Veterinary Hospital, where she has worked 40 years part time, and 5 years full time. Carol likes all kinds of crafts, loves to travel and enjoys following the boys' soccer games.

From age 5 to 7½ my family lived in Germany, then we lived some time in Maryland, and then back to Chicago. I moved to Montclair, NJ, with my mother and stepfather in 1955 where my sister (half-sister, 16½ yrs. younger than me) was born in March 1958. I got plenty of baby handling experience with her! I moved to Lawrence Township the summer of 1958 and attended Trenton Central High School for my junior and senior year. While at Trenton High I met and became good friends with Patricia Schultz and her parents Bob and Marie, and they started bringing me to Slackwood where I was warmly welcomed by all. I joined the church on my own and eventually my parents joined and my sister was baptized here. I attended the Senior High youth fellowship group where Bill Ward eventually became the fellowship leader. We started dating and became engaged in August of 1960 and were married at Slackwood Church by Rev. Alan Hagenbuch on February 11, 1961. All three of our children (Billy, Wendy and Warren) were baptized at Slackwood and Billy and Wendy were married here as well. Grandchildren Ashley, Ricky and Kyle Nuel, Cody and Jeremy Ward, and Scott Jeter were all baptized here as well.

We have always loved to travel and managed to cover all 48 states and half of Canada by van and truck camper with all three kids. Bill and I have also traveled to Hawaii and Alaska and overseas to Germany, with short side trips to France, Holland, and Switzerland. We have also traveled to Mexico and the Caribbean. One of the most scenic spots in the US is Crater Lake in Oregon.

We lived 37 years on Andrew Street in Hamilton Township and moved to Andover Way 13½ years ago. We just celebrated 55 years of marriage!! (We were young and many thought it would not last!!! Ha Ha!!

Slackwood Presbyterian Church

March 2016

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|-----------------------------|--|--|--|---|--|
| | | 1 6:30 PM Christian Education Committee | 2 6:30 PM Midweek Lenten Devotional Study 6:30 PM AA Meeting 7:45 PM Debtors Anonymous | 3 6:30 PM Midweek Lenten Devotional Study 6:30 PM AA Meeting 7:45 PM Debtors Anonymous | 4 | 5 8:30 AM AA Meeting |
| 6 9:30 AM Adult Forum and Sunday School 9:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship and Communion 2:00 PM Grace Taiwanese Service | 7 7:30 PM AA Meeting | 8 | 9 | 10 6:30 PM Midweek Lenten Devotional Study 6:30 PM AA Meeting 7:45 PM Debtors Anonymous | 11 1:00 PM Daughters of Scotia | 12 8:30 AM AA Meeting |
| 13 9:30 AM Adult Forum and Sunday School 9:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship 2:00 PM Grace Taiwanese Service | 14 7:30 PM AA Meeting | 15 7:00 PM Membership and Outreach Committee | 16 7:00 PM Session meeting | 17 <i>ST. PATRICK'S DAY</i> 12:00 PM Pres. Women's Meeting 6:30 PM Midweek Lenten Devotional Study 7:45 PM AA Meeting 8:00 PM Debtors Anonymous | 18 9:00 AM Men's Breakfast Club | 19 8:30 AM Spring Clean-up 8:30 AM AA Meeting 1:30 PM Wedding |
| 20 9:30 AM Adult Forum and Sunday School 9:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship 11:45 AM Deacons Meeting 2:00 PM Grace Taiwanese Service | 21 7:30 PM AA Meeting | 22 | 23 5:30-7:00 PM Explorations Preschool Open House | 24 7:00 PM Maundy Thursday Services 7:45 PM AA Meeting 8:00 PM Debtors Anonymous | 25 <i>GOOD FRIDAY</i> | 26 8:30 AM AA Meeting 10:00 AM Explorations Preschool Egg Hunt |
| 27 <i>EASTER</i> 8:30 AM Early Morning Garden Service 9:00 AM Easter Breakfast 9:45 AM Egg Hunt 10:30 AM Worship 2:00 PM Grace Taiwanese Service | 28 7:30 PM AA Meeting | 29 | 30 | 31 7:45 PM AA Meeting 8:00 PM Debtors Anonymous | | |

UPCOMING EVENTS: May 13-14 – Spring Rummage Sale

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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*The greatest gift that can ever be give
is the gift of salvation*

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Newsletter of the Slackwood Presbyterian Church