



The Slackwood Grapevine

Slackwood Presbyterian Church
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November 2024

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

I recently invited those who were in worship to write down why they believe we have a future with hope here at Slackwood. Here are some of the responses I received:

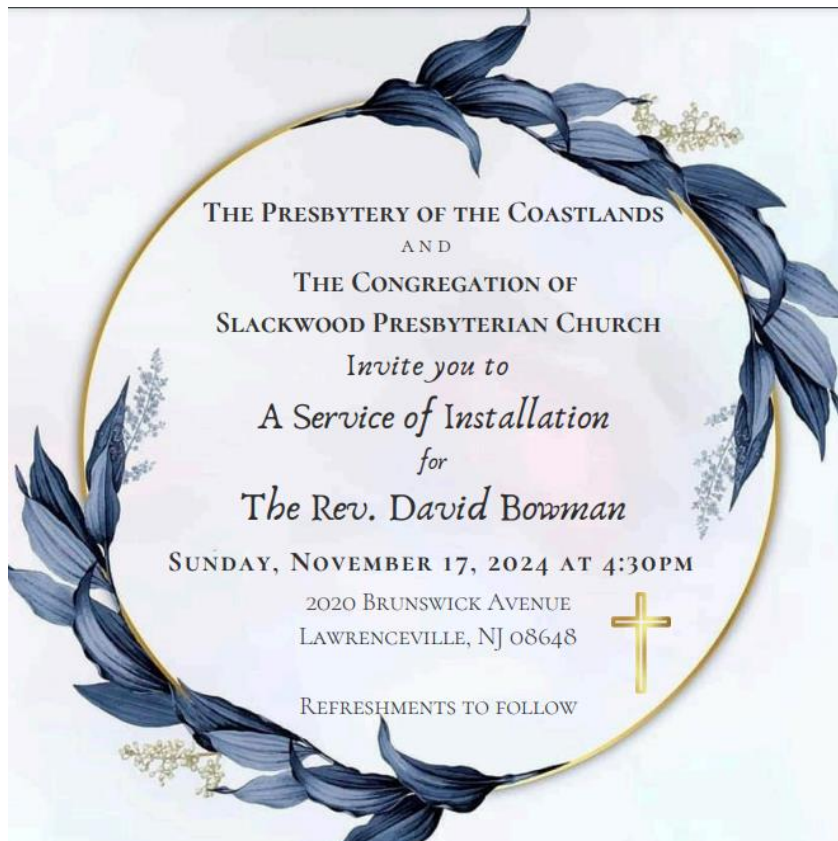
- because the church is open to all and to innovation.
- because EVERY person is loved and valued when they walk into our doors. I never feel alone when I am here.
- because we can worship without fear and be who we are individually, regardless of color, race, or sexuality.
- because God is good! We are blessed with a congregation that believes it's important to know of God's love for us and who are willing to share the message of hope and love with others.
- this community truly lives out the value and belief that God welcomes EVERYONE to the table to be transformed by Christ.
- because there is so much love in this place.
- because God's Word is alive here in the worship, the music, the preaching, the fellowship, the charity, the stewardship and the warmth and fun!!!
- because Slackwood Church is an open and welcoming congregation. I believe that the diversity here allows others to feel that openness. I believe that if we continue offering ways to bring our community together they will see how we embrace God, extend welcome and celebrate all!
- we continue to be willing to open our eyes and see new ways we can love and support our church community, our local community and our world. We do this all knowing that we are loved and supported by God.

God says, "I know the plans I have for you—plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope." Jeremiah 29: 11

I hope you carry this promise of hope with you in the days and weeks ahead. Don't let fear of the future hold you back; instead, think about how God has used, is using, and will use our faith community to share the amazing love of God revealed in Jesus Christ. That's our future. That's our hope, and that's what we're called to do together!

Pastor David

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REMEMBRANCE OF OUR DECEASED LOVED ONES

On Sunday, November 3 during we worship we remembered the following members, family and friends of our church community:

Arlene Filson

Todd Mansmann

Jan Elrod

Gale Roupp

Elizabeth Gortatowski

Rich Ireland

Kasey Fazio

Leon Phillips

Regina McIntyre

Josephine Groch

Will

Jill

Darlene Warwick

Sgt. Joe Williams

Ken Brothers

“What we once enjoyed and deeply loved we can never lose, for all that we love deeply becomes a part of us.”

— Helen Keller

A FUTURE WITH HOPE STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

On Sunday, November 3rd, we celebrated Generosity Sunday with an inspirational sermon by the Reverend David Bowman entitled “A Future with Hope.” This was the final week in this year’s Stewardship campaign. Throughout the last eight weeks, we have focused on how we each can help Slackwood live out its mission. By utilizing our time, talents, and treasures, we will continue to be a church where we “envision glorifying and serving God by being an example to each other, the community, and the world.” Your support means that we can continue in our mission to support those within our church, our local community, and our brothers and sisters around the world.

We are grateful for the generosity of our church family in sharing your time, gifts, skills, and financial resources. If you haven’t done so already, please return your Pledge Card and Time & Talent Survey to help us plan for our ministry and mission in 2025. If you need a Pledge Card or a Survey, please reach out to Kate Moore, Andrea Moore, or Pastor David. Thank you!

COLLECTION FOR WORKWELL

The Deacons will be collecting toiletries for the clients at Workwell, a local non-profit that works to equip returning citizens with job skills, dignity and hope following their release from prison. The following items are needed:

- Deodorant (men and Women)
- Toothbrushes (holders also) and toothpaste
- Sanitary Napkins
- Soap with holders
- Razors
- Wash cloths
- Trial size shampoo and conditioner
- Socks

You can place your donations in the donation box in Fellowship Hall. Thank you for helping to share our blessings with those in need in our community.

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL



Members of Slackwood and Grace Churches have produced an Advent devotional to be used this year as you await the coming of the Christ child. A devotion for each day, beginning December 1 till Christmas Day has been written by members of the two congregations. Copies will be available a week before the beginning of Advent. Additionally, the devotionals will be used by the residents of the Ann Klein Forensic Center. Thank you to everyone who submitted a devotion and thank you to Walter DeGunya for the idea and for formatting and printing the devotionals.

ADVENT SOCIAL

This year's **Advent Social** will be at the home of Andy and Deb Pratt on Friday, December 6 at 5:30. Let's be kind to our hosts and let them know how many to expect. The sign-up sheet is on the table in fellowship hall. Please plan to bring a covered dish – appetizer, entrée, side or dessert -- and beverages will be provided. We will usher in the Christmas season with socializing, game-playing, and singing, so plan to have lots of fun!



TRUTH & RECONCILIATION

Once again, our group was involved in a letter writing campaign to encourage people to vote in the current election. Vote Forward is a national program that provides the names and addresses of people who are potential voters and this year had a goal to send out 10 million letters.

Ten different people of Slackwood Church sent out a total of 200 letters to people in Georgia and Pennsylvania. Each participant received a list of 20 names, addresses, a form letter for each person with a space to write in a personal message about why they vote and 20 envelopes and stamps. It took about an hour and a half to write the letters and it was a good opportunity to “do something” as our civic responsibility during this election season.

Our group also sponsored a book discussion on John Lewis's [Across that Bridge](#). The event took place after the worship service and time of fellowship on November 3rd. Fifteen people were in attendance, including some of our youth and a friend of the church who zoomed in from California. The book was well received and recommended by those who read it. Our discussion was insightful and honest and focused on how faith was at the heart of the Civil Rights Movement.

We will be holding a brief prayer service in front of the church in recognition of Human Rights Day after worship on Sunday, December 8th. The United Nations General Assembly adopted a statement addressing human rights for all in 1950. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that, “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They

are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.” We hope you will stay after worship and join us in praying for our fellow brothers and sisters around the world.

The Truth and Reconciliation Group sponsors various activities throughout the year. We meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month on Zoom at 7:00 pm. A link can be found in the announcements the week before. All are welcome to join the meetings or participate in our activities. Please reach out to Kate Moore if you would like more information.

WORSHIP

On Saturday, October 19 at 11:00 am, the worship committee sponsored its first “Blessing of the Animals” under the tent in our back parking lot. Seven animals and their owners from our congregation and the community were present and received a blessing from the Reverend David Bowman after a brief prayer service. Those in attendance found the service meaningful and the committee will discuss ways to reach more people next year. A special thank you to the Property and Finance committee who waited to take down the tent until after the special service.

During Advent, worshipers are once again invited to bring a special or favorite **nativity** to display in one of the windows in the sanctuary. A card will be provided for the name of the owner and why the nativity is special to them. Please reach out to Kate or Carol with questions.

On Thursday, December 19th at 6 pm, the Worship Committee will hold a Blue Christmas service. This service, also known as the Longest Night, is held to honor people that have lost loved ones and are experiencing grief. All are welcome to attend.

PROPERTY & FINANCE

The committee continues to do its work on the maintenance and care of our facility. For some time, Sean Baker has been exploring the prospect of having a solar array placed on the roof of the CE building. We recently reviewed a proposal that would meet our needs and we passed it on to Session for approval. Therefore, we will soon have a solar array installed and begin generating our own electric power. We will own the installation and, due to Federal and State grant programs and savings from the system, it will pay for itself in 5 years! This is a win-win for us, and the system should be installed within a couple months.

CHURCH CLEANUP NOVEMBER 2

It turned out to be a nice cool sunny day and with the help of about 16 people from Slackwood and Grace churches, our entire list of “Jobs to be Done” were completed by 11:00! Raking leaves out of the gardens and around the property, edging the front sidewalk, trimming tree limbs, trimming growth along the exit driveway, cleaning the shed’s gutters, and preparing all tools for the winter was the order of the day. The property committee appreciated all those from Slackwood and Grace who pitched in to do a great job! Together we accomplished much!!

**From “The Mood of Christmas...”
—by Howard Thurman**

I will light Candles this Christmas,
Candles of Joy despite all sadness,
Candles of Hope where despair keeps watch,
Candles of Courage for fears ever present,
Candles of Peace for tempest-tossed days,
Candles of Grace to ease heavy burdens,
Candles of Love to inspire all my living,

Candles that will burn all the year long.

Please check our calendar online for upcoming meetings and events:
<http://www.slackwoodchurch.org/event-calendar.html>