The Slackwood Grapevine

Slackwood Presbyterian Church
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February 2026

Pastor's Ponderings

> "Jesus put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.'" (Matthew 13:31-32)

Reflection:

Imagine standing there with Jesus' disciples—ordinary people living day to day fishing, laboring. No doubt they felt unqualified for the work of God's kin-dom. Earlier in Matthew Jesus invites them to "Come and See," and they do, but surely with doubts and questions. How could such a small, ragtag group make much of a difference? They lacked the education of the rabbis, the resources of the landowners, and the political influence of the elite. Yet Jesus reassures them again and again: God delights in using the obscure, the small, the seemingly insufficient to bring about God's kin-dom.

The mustard seed is tiny, almost insignificant. But within it lies everything needed to become a great bush, offering shelter and life to the birds of the air. In the same way, Jesus teaches that the kin-dom of God spreads through humble offerings—small acts of faith, unseen moments of service, simple prayers, and faithful folks using their gifts and skills together. These are the seeds God uses to create something mighty.

How often do we feel limited by our resources, our qualifications, or the size of our community of faith? Perhaps you've heard, "We're just a small church," or "I'm only one person—what difference can I make?" This parable invites us to see with new eyes. God is not limited by what we lack. Instead, God takes pleasure in our willingness to sow even the smallest seed, trusting that God will bring the growth.

I believe that within our church—everything needed for God's work is already present. We have who and what we need to do what God is calling us to do. The results of our work may not seem impressive or immediately measurable, but God's kin-dom grows in ways we cannot always see. Our task as the church is to be faithful to our calling to serve, sowing the seeds, and trusting God with the outcome.

Blessings,

Pastor David

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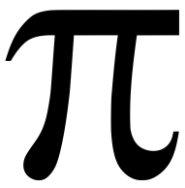
Please check our calendar online for upcoming meetings and events:
http://www.slackwoodchurch.org/event-calendar.html

SESSION NEWS

At its February 18 meeting the session made the following appointments for 2026:

Clerk of Session – Carol Belles
Christian Ed Co-chairs – Mark Thomas and Debi Moore
Communications Co-chairs – Andy Pratt and Robin Garzoni
Community Care Co-chairs – Shirley Hafford and Beth Clark
Property & Finance Co-chairs – Bill Mansmann and Carl Belles
Stewardship Campaign Co-chairs – Kate Moore and Eric Johansen
Truth, Justice & Reconciliation Co-chairs – Kate Moore and Eric Johansen
Worship Committee Co-chairs – Kate Moore & Carol Belles
Nominating Chair – Beth Clark
Personnel Chair – Ginger Baker
Personnel Com. Members – Shirley Hafford and Tom Clark
Commissioner to Presbytery – Andrea Moore
Alternate Commissioner to Presbytery – Carol Belles
Newsletter editor – Penny Baumann
Church Treasurer – Ginger Baker
Trust Funds Treasurer – Bill Mansmann
Memorial Fund Secretary – Tara Perigny
Financial Recording Secretary – Susan Gibbs
President, Board of Trustees – Carl Belles
Vice President, Board of Trustees – Andy Pratt

GAME NIGHT



Mark your calendars now for the **Great Game Night Pi-Off** to be held at the church on Saturday, March 14. That date also happens to be National Pi Day, and so the game night will include a Pi (pie) contest. A covered dish dinner will begin at 5:00 p.m, followed by an assortment of board games to play or puzzles to complete, and also judging of the Pi Bakeoff. If you like to make pies, sign up to bring one to the event. All those attending will then get a chance to vote for their favorite Pi(e). A beautiful trophy will be awarded to Slackwood's Pi Champion. Those planning the event need to know how many will attend, so sign up on the sheet in fellowship hall.

TRUTH, JUSTICE, AND RECONCILIATION GROUP

The Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Group meets on the second Thursday of the month at 7pm on Zoom. The link to join can be found in the email for the weekly announcements.

On Sunday, March 1, the Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation Group will lead the **intergenerational activity** at 9:15 before the church service. Information about the group's origin and focus will be shared. Please consider attending.

Following a time of fellowship after Sunday service on March 1, the group will meet to discuss the book **American Dirt**. These discussions are open to anyone interested in attending. They will be unscripted conversations about the book and no one is required to share unless they feel like it. These discussions following our book studies and movie showings are designed to be safe spaces for dialogue.

On Saturday, March 28, several members of the group will attend a "No Kings" rally in Princeton. Those interested will meet after worship on the 22nd to create posters for the event. Please see a member of the group for more information if you are interested in participating.

The next meeting will be held on March 12 at 7pm via Zoom. All are welcome to attend.

Kate Moore

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The Worship Committee's goal continues to be to help facilitate meaningful worship at Slackwood. We meet on the fourth Sunday of the month after a time of fellowship following the weekly service. All are welcome to attend and check out the committee to see if it is a fit for you.

We continue to work on issues that have arisen with our **new sound system**. We thank you for your patience as we work with the company that installed the system to address these issues.

On **Ash Wednesday**, more than 30 people from our congregation and the community attended our stations of reflection making it a successful event. Thank you to Pastor Bowman for his work to make each station a meaningful start on this journey and to all those who helped before, during, and after.

We will have two services on **Easter Sunday**; one at 8:30 in the garden (weather permitting) and our usual 10:30 service. We hope you will consider joining us for one or both of these services.

As we mentioned in the last newsletter, throughout the season, you will see additional candles on the chancel. These candles will be a visual symbol representing **the journey of Christ toward crucifixion**. One will be extinguished each week to represent the growing darkness as Jesus; *The Light of the World* approaches the cross. These candles will be relit on Easter signifying his Resurrection.

The committee has decided to serve **Communion by intinction** on May 3. On that Sunday, those who are willing and able will be able to come forward and receive Communion by taking a piece of bread and dipping a portion of it in the juice. Those who would prefer to stay seated will be served in their seats.

The Worship Committee will meet next on March, 22 after worship and a brief time of fellowship.

Kate Moore

COMMUNITY CARE

On February 8th, we had a wonderful **Valentine celebration** with our neighbors at Heritage Village! Pasta, salad, meatballs, desserts and drinks were served. Lots of fun and laughter playing Bingo and winning prizes. Good time had by all!

Upcoming, our **Community Egg Hunt** will be held on March 28th with a rain date of April 4th.

MARCH PROPERTY MEETING

The March Property Meeting is scheduled for following worship on March 8, 2026. If you have any ideas for us to discuss, please let Bill Mansmann know by March 5, 2026 His phone number is 609-651-1321.

SPRING CLEAN-UP

Hopefully the snow melts sooner rather than later as Easter Sunday is on April 5th. The Property Committee will conduct this spring cleanup on a date as yet to be determined. With numerous things to do around the church and property, we are hoping for "real" spring weather to get many jobs done. Keep an eye out for announcements about a clean-up day!

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 few years ago to provide an opportunity for people to make a donation to this account of the church that could have a lasting effect. The funds donated are invested and only the income from the investment may then be used for a need at the church that is identified by the Session. This a good way to make a contribution, 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.