The Slackwood Grapevine

Slackwood Presbyterian Church
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PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

Fall is a season of new beginnings. School starts again, familiar routines return, and our church's ministries begin a new season of worship, learning, fellowship, and service. As we prepare for the year ahead, I am filled with gratitude for all God has already placed among us—and with anticipation for all God is ready to do through us.

"Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen." —Ephesians 3: 20,21

That phrase—*the power at work within us*—is an important reminder. God has not called us to ministry and then left us empty-handed. God has given us the Holy Spirit, the good news of Jesus Christ, the gifts of every member, and a community in which no one has to serve alone. We already have what we need to do the ministry to which we have been called.

The question, then, is not whether we are equipped. The question is whether we are willing to step up. Some are called to teach. Some are called to welcome. Some can sing, organize, listen, pray, encourage, repair, visit, give, or quietly help wherever help is needed. No act of faithful service is too small when it is offered to God in love.

This fall, I invite each of us to ask: *Where is God calling me to take one faithful step?* Perhaps it is returning to a ministry you already love. Perhaps it is trying something new, inviting a neighbor, joining Bible Study or Adult Forum, helping with children or youth, serving at Arm in Arm or simply saying, "I am available." We do not need to know every detail before we begin. We only need to offer what we have and trust God to multiply it.

This season is more than a date on the calendar. It is an opportunity to renew our shared commitment to Christ and to one another. May we come ready—not merely to attend, but to participate; not merely to watch, but to serve; not merely to hope that ministry happens, but to become part of what God is doing.

God has given us all that we need. Now is the time to step up, step in, and do the ministry we have been called to do. I can't wait to see what God will accomplish through our willing hearts and faithful hands this fall.

With gratitude and hope,
David

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

WELCOME MADALYN

We are delighted to welcome **Madalyn Sailers** as our seminary intern. Madalyn will be serving and learning alongside us through April, and we look forward to the gifts, energy, and perspective she will bring to our congregation.

Madalyn is a second-year student at Princeton Theological Seminary. A native of Indiana, she now considers Alexandria, Virginia, home, where her family currently resides.

During her time with us, Madalyn will be involved in a variety of ministries throughout the life of the church. These experiences will give her opportunities to learn, serve, and grow as she continues to discern God's call and develop her leadership skills for ministry.

We are grateful to share in this important season of Madalyn's preparation for ministry. Please take time to introduce yourself, offer her a warm welcome, and keep her in your prayers in the months ahead. May her time among us be a blessing both to her and to our congregation.

COMMUNITY CARE

The Community Fair was a great success! We had 175+ people come through, and a good time was had by all with lots of food, music, crafts, door prizes, and fellowship. Thanks to all who volunteered their help to make this a special day for everyone.

Trunk or Treat

Coming up soon also is the Trunk or Treat on October 17th (with a rain date of the 24th). Anyone interested in decorating their trunk for the event? There is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall, or let Shirley or Beth know.
Thanks,

Beth Clark

STEWARDSHIP

This year's Stewardship campaign will take place between October 11 and November 1. It will focus on investing in our church and its future. Every gift matters. Every person matters. Everyone has a part to play. More information regarding the campaign will be shared in the upcoming weeks.

Kate Moore

PROPERTY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

Throughout the summer members of the committee have been busy maintaining the church grounds. Thanks to Tom Clark who led the cutting of the grass and to all who pitched in to help. Two large oak trees became dangerous with dead limbs and needed to be removed. Thanks to Carl Belles for getting this needed job done. Thanks to the many people who helped in keeping the church property looking great by pulling weeds and trimming all areas around the church! It is greatly appreciated.

3rd Friday Breakfast: The monthly "Breakfast" will once again resume on Friday September 18th at 8:30. If you are able to attend, please let Bill Mansmann know at 609-651-1321, so he may appropriately prepare.

Fall Cleanup Day: The committee will be scheduling a clean-up day in late October after leaves have fallen from the trees. Once the committee establishes the date, it will be announced, look for the opportunity to lend a hand.

Solar System: Since last June the Solar array on the Christian Ed roof has been generating electricity. We are participating in a state program where we are to be paid for the electricity that is generated. At last, we will be receiving monthly checks for the next 14 years!

Next meeting of the committee - Sunday October 11, following worship.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Sunday School for the Middle School and Senior High age groups will begin on October 4th for the upcoming program year. The first session for the Confirmation Class and Mentors will meet on October 11th. The following youth will be participating in the Confirmation process; Juliette Buck, Clair Buck, Luke Johansen, Colette Valentino and Oliver Valentino. Both Sunday School and Confirmation classes will take place on Sunday mornings between 9:15 am and 10:15 am prior to worship. Robin Garzoni will be leading the Sr. Youth lessons. David and Madalyn Sailors will be leading the Middle School Youth Sunday School lessons and Confirmation classes. The CE committee will be actively looking for volunteers to help out with the Sr. Youth lessons. Volunteers will also be needed to help lead the lessons for the Church School age group that meets during worship after the choir anthem. If you are interested in helping with leading lessons for either of these age groups, please contact either Mark Thomas or Debi Moore (Christian Education co-chairpersons). We look forward again for our Youth to participate this year in the activities provided by the Presbyterian Church of Lawrenceville (PCOL) Youth Group and Collaborative Youth Group. Robin has provided a schedule of the Fall events for our youth and their parents.

The Adult Forum will resume on September 20th. The group will be completing the last two Bible Study lessons on Psalms before starting a new study. The book entitled “Unwavering, Developing Unshakeable Trust in God” by the Jesus Bible Foundation will be used for the next Bible Study. If interested in participating in this Study, please let Mark Thomas know. The Adult Forum meets on Sunday mornings via Zoom between 9-10 am.

Mark

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Our committee is committed to providing an opportunity for meaningful worship for those who meet in-person and those who participate online. We recently began using a handheld microphone during the announcements before the service to help with projection. We have received positive comments from many about how much easier it is to hear those who are sharing. If you have an announcement, but feel uncomfortable speaking in the microphone, please speak with an usher before the start of the service.

World Communion Sunday

On Sunday, October 4th, we will celebrate World Communion Sunday. This is a special joint service that includes participants from both the Slackwood and Grace congregations at 10:30. The service will include portions in English and Mandarin. Following worship, you are invited to stay for fellowship and enjoy delicious foods at our potluck luncheon. A sign-up sheet will be placed in Fellowship Hall.

Blessing of the Pets

On Saturday, October 10th, the Worship Committee will hold a Blessing of the Pets service outdoors under the tent at 11:00am. Following the brief service, Pastor Bowman will bless those animals in attendance and those that are remembered by their loved ones.

All Saints Sunday

Members, family members, and friends who have died this past year will be remembered on All Saints Sunday; November 1, during the 10:30 a.m. service of worship. Please reach out to Kate Moore or Pastor Bowman with names of loved ones to be remembered, or place the names on the sheet in Fellowship Hall.

There's a Place for You…

If you are interested in participating in our worship service as a liturgist, usher, or choir member, please let Carol Belles, Kate Moore, or Shelley Zuckerman know and we will happily help you make that happen.

The Worship Committee usually meets after worship on the 4th Sunday of the month in the sanctuary. Our next meeting will be held on Sunday, September 27th following worship. All are welcome to attend.

Kate Moore

VOTE FORWARD

Election day is close at hand. We will once again participate in writing letters to people in a variety of states. This year's program will involve writing letters to newly registered voters to encourage them to actually vote. If you are interested in participating, contact Bill Mansmann at 609-651-1321 or sign up on the "**Vote Forward**" sheet in Fellowship Hall. You will be provided with names and addresses of people to write to, letters, stamps and complete instructions.

In the four years that we have been a part of this civic project, we have written 740 letters. This year's goal will be to write 200 letters.

TRUTH, JUSTICE, AND RECONCILIATION

The Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation group usually meets on the second Thursday of the month at 7:00pm on Zoom and gathers for special events throughout the year.

The TJ and R group held a discussion about the book "Boy Erased: A Memoir" after worship on September 13. It is the goal of the group to provide opportunities where people feel safe to share ideas without fear of judgment, retaliation, or ridicule. The discussion was designed to build understanding and explore ideas on a topic that was personal for many of us. Eighteen people took part, and the discussion was meaningful and insightful.

During our October 8 meeting, the group will decide on the next book for discussion. There will be a sign-up sheet placed in Fellowship Hall starting October 11 if you wish to participate.

Our next meeting will be Thursday, October 8, 2026 at 7pm via Zoom. All are welcome to attend. The link to join can be found in the announcements the Saturday before the meeting.

Kate Moore

IN SYMPATHY

We extend our sincere sympathies to the family of Tom Okeson on his recent death August 23rd. Tom was a long-time member of the Slackwood family, starting with his youth years in our Sunday School classes and youth fellowship, marriage to his late wife Debby, and birth of their late daughter, Pam. His mother, Betty, was an active member of Slackwood for many years. As many of you know, Tom faced a number of tragedies during his lifetime, but we can be comforted to know that he is now at peace in the arms of our Lord.