

Manor Minutes
Volume 15 Issue 13
March 29, 2024

- Sunrise Service – March 31, 7am (outside weather permitting)
- Sunday Worship – March 31, 10:15am
If you ordered Easter flowers, please take them with you following the 10:15am service.



On Sunday, March 31, we will collect a 5th Sunday of the month offering for the **Funeral Dinner Fund**. Envelopes will be included in the bulletin. Please give as you can.



Your gift to the Disciples Mission Fund Easter Offering is part of God's enduring love...

Love that creates...

Love that inspires...

Love that makes a difference...

Your gift to the **Easter Special Offering** benefits General Ministries, allowing us to do more together than we can alone. More ministry. More impact. More of God's love in the world. You can give by placing your gift in the envelope in the bulletin, on Givelify through the church's website or directly to disciplesmissionfund.org/give.



Children's Corner

On **Easter Sunday** (March 31), the kids will **ring bells** together with the organ and congregation for the opening hymn, "Christ the Lord is Risen Today." We would like this to be a joyful time. There will be **no Children Worship & Wonder** on Easter Sunday. Pastor Gena will tell the CW&W Easter story during the Children's Message. We will have some **coloring and activity pages** for the kids to work on during worship. The kids will receive a special gift from Paradise Candy after worship.

Wild Things

**FMCC Night at
Washington Wild Things
Friday, June 7, 7pm
Fireworks Night**

Tickets - \$10/person Parking Pass - \$2/car

Jody Mullis will be singing God Bless America during the 7th inning stretch.

Sign up in the Narthex for tickets and parking passes.

Please turn in cash or check (payable to FMCC) to the office by May 3rd

Happy Easter





Fairhill Manor Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
351 Montgomery Ave.
724-225-8610

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Minister
Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor
Elders: Gary Ford, Bread
Kevin Puskarich, Cup
March 31, 2024 – 10:15am

Prelude

Carson Throckmorton, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Gene Sheller

Leader: This very day, God has acted.

People: Today, we will rejoice and be glad!

Leader: We know the message that God sends to all people.

People: God's peace, preached by Jesus Christ, is available to all through the Lord of life.

Leader: The one who lived among us, doing good and healing all, was crucified, died and buried.

People: But God raised him on the third day.

Leader: This very day, God has acted.

People: Today, we will rejoice and be glad!

Opening Hymn

"Christ the Lord is Risen Today" Carson Throckmorton, organist
Children's Bell Choir and Congregation

Christ the Lord is risen today, Alleluia! All creation, join to say, Alleluia! Raise your joys and triumphs high, Alleluia! Sing, O heavens, and earth reply, Alleluia!

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Rev. Stillwell

Infinite God, your light breaks forth like the dawn, scattering the darkness and renewing our hope. You are our joy and our life, the wellspring of our praise, the font of all our alleluias. All glory and honor to you, O God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

He is our Lord for he is risen and in our midst. Let us then bring our intercessions, saying, Lord, hear our prayer: Your steadfast love endures forever.

For your church around the world, around this country, in this community, and this congregation. Make us ever more faithful, our eyes always on Jesus. Lord, hear our prayer: Your steadfast love endures forever.

For your world and its rulers, our government and our local leaders. Give them your wisdom, establish your justice, and imbue us with peace. Lord, hear our prayer: Your steadfast love endures forever.

For this earth that lives and breathes with us, the waters that flow and all that grows, for every living creature. Enable us to flourish, and teach us to live as one. Lord, hear our prayer: Your steadfast love endures forever.

For those who are ill, those facing death, and those who care for them. Grant your healing mercies and bestow your peace. Lord, hear our prayer: Your steadfast love endures forever.

For those without hope, those who mourn, those who seek to know you. Bathe us in light, and fill us with your grace. Lord, hear our prayer: Your steadfast love endures forever.

All this we pray through our Savior and friend, Jesus Christ, who has conquered the forces of death and evil as he rose from the dead and who taught us to pray saying . . .

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Prayer Response:

“Glory Be to the Father”

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

First Scripture Reading

Psalm 118

Rita Puskarich

Anthem

“The Whole Bright World Rejoices Now,” by Joseph Roff

Choir

A Children Worship & Wonder Story

Pastor Gena

“Jesus Is Risen: Appearance to Mary Magdalene”

Based on Matthew 27:57-28:10 and John 20:1-18

From *Young Children and Worship* by Sonja M. Stewart and Jerome W. Berryman, Westminster John Knox Press, 1989, pp. 193-195.

Second Scripture Reading

John 20:1-18

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

“In Bloom”

Rev. Stillwell

Friends, our long wait is over, for God has been glorified and revealed in the form of Jesus who we can say is the Christ. Though we have ruminated, commiserated, and concentrated upon the Lenten season and upon the betrayal of Jesus, the Last Supper, and the trial and crucifixion during Holy Week we have come to the culmination of the Christ event. For the boy who was born in a manger, the lowly carpenter’s son from Nazareth, who had no money, who owned no property, who commanded no armies and ruled no lands, who entered Jerusalem on a donkey and who did not resist the Roman soldiers as they arrested and crucified him has overcome all of this and even death, itself!

He has resisted the violence that is the result of a sinful world with the ultimate form of non-violence. He has given us hope that the sins of this world may be resisted not through war and force, but through peace and sacrifice. Today Jesus Christ has risen from the tomb. Will you pray with me?

Raise us, O God, from the pits that threaten to imprison us. Help us find a way out. Open the doors of our tombs, small and large, and hasten the day when we walk as a risen people, able to live fully in your magnificent and sure salvation. Call us by name to send us as messengers in your name. Amen.

Yes indeed, today, Jesus has risen from the tomb and today we are surrounded by the perfect symbols of this resurrection. I am not talking about eggs, though they too are a good symbol, nor am I talking of chocolate and well-dressed church members, though both of these things are sweet. The perfect symbol of Christ's resurrection is the flowers that fill our sanctuary with their glorious colors and fragrant aromas. Flowers are used throughout the year at every occasion. For happy events like weddings and showers we have flowers, for sad events like funerals we use flowers, but they are particularly poignant today for they are very much symbolic of our Easter celebration.

First, they represent spring. It is at this time of year that our world comes back to life. It lives out a resurrection shooting forth lilies and tulips, daffodils, and dandelions. Forsythia line the road or soon will and the shoots of the flowers are just about the first sign that spring has returned; that the world which had grown so cold and dead has been renewed, revitalized, dare we say resurrected!

Second, they represent new life. The plants and flowers that died as the cold entered the fall have laid in the ground for far more than three days and now they are come back. To be sure they are not the same flowers as last year, but the bulbs out of which they have sprung have produced new shoots, new stems, new blooms.

Lastly, flowers represent Easter because they were there right at the tomb.

⁴¹Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. ⁴²And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

This is how John describes the burial of Christ in his gospel, and I love the imagery of that. It calls us back to the Garden of Eden to which Christ came to restore us. The light and hope, the beauty and joy which spring from this garden is counterpoint to the dark and despair, the ugliness and sadness that happened in the garden of Gethsemane only two nights ago.

Since Jesus' arrest in that garden, things had gotten very dark indeed. He was tried and convicted, he was beaten and scorned. When offering to release him the crowd called for the release of a murderer instead. Finally he was crucified and killed. The week that had begun so bright and hopeful with Jesus' triumphant entrance into the city culminated in the Passover meal in the upper room but had now left his followers buried in an avalanche of turmoil and grief. How did his followers who had already been through so much with him respond?

They abandoned him. None of his disciples stood with him before Pilate or Herod or Caiaphas. None of them walked with him to Golgotha. None of them were there at the cross. Peter denied knowing him even after he denied that he would deny him. Judas, so distraught over what he had wrought, killed himself. This is how his closest followers reacted, but some others did what they could.

Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clops, and Mary Magdalene. These women were powerless to stop his crucifixion, but they refused to leave him alone, and they refused to look away. Their tears were marks of their devotion which could have gotten them into trouble, but they cried them anyway.

After these things, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, asked Pilate to let him take away the body of Jesus. Pilate gave him permission; so he came and removed his body.

Joseph was a disciple, but his fear prevented him from being open about his devotion to Christ. He certainly picked a strange time to show his devotion, but he does now by taking Jesus' body down from the cross.

Then ³⁹Nicodemus, who had at first come to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hundred pounds. ⁴⁰They took the body of Jesus and wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, according to the burial custom of the Jews. Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid. And so, because it was the Jewish day of Preparation, and the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.

Some of the disciples even redeemed themselves somewhat.

Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. ²So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.'
³Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb.

The failures of the disciples contrasted with the impotence of the women and others is an important part of the Easter story; one that we overlook at our own peril for we often find ourselves in darkness. Things sometimes don't go our way. We get depressed, we get down, the whole world seems to be assailed against us and the question is what should we do?

A quote that is often attributed to Winston Churchill but first appeared in the Christian Science Sentinel is, "If You're Going Through Hell, Keep Going". Don't give up because if you do you will never get out of the Hell in which you find yourself. If you keep going, keep pushing, keep trying you will get to the other side, and when the ordeal is over you might have learned something from it. To be sure the disciples learned much from their three days without Christ. They learned that they could not do much themselves, they learned that he truly was the Son of God when he rose from the tomb, and they learned what he had been trying to teach them which is that his Kingdom was not of this world. He had come not to get rid of the Roman Empire or restore the kingdom of Israel, but to bring the Kingdom of God near, and soon the disciples would help him.

So if you have come to a dark place in your life remember how Jesus' followers must have felt on Good Friday and think of what would have happened if they had given up or, failing that, or think of the flowers.

Think of the flowers both here in this room or pushing up in your yard. They are small, and they are fragile, but they are beautiful and brilliant. We place them in the ground where they are surrounded by dirt and for months it is cold and dark, but then something happens. Something in them stirs, and they know it is time to grow. This they do with no help from us, and they stick out their shoots into a still cold and dark world, and while they are growing maybe the snow comes back, like it did last week, and they have to stop for a while, but nonetheless they persist, and they resist the darkness and they resist the cold, and they resist the ugliness of a late winter world and by spring they have bloomed and filled the world with their beauty.

That is how it should be with us. As we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ at the beginning of the resurrection of the world let us remember that "When you're in a dark place, you sometimes tend to think you've been buried. But consider that maybe you've been planted instead." "Don't give up, Instead, bloom."

God has planted us here, in this time and this place, and he calls us to bloom so that the world might know our beauty and in doing so we might make the world that much more beautiful. We need people who have been through the darkness and come out the other side. We need them to show others that there is light, there is hope. We need people who have struggled with addiction but overcome it to help those still in the midst of its grip. We need those who have been through a divorce to let others know that it gets better. We need people who have dealt with mental illness or chronic pain to help others simply by showing forth their light so that those who sit in the darkness will themselves see a great light and grow towards it.

A person who has never experienced pain, does not know suffering or loss, who has never looked at death, cannot appreciate how much Christ loves them and how much Christ can save them nor can they help others to know that God can take the troubled parts of our lives and like a flower growing in the dirt cause us to bloom into something wonderful.

We are called to live and preach the resurrection and we are so willing to sign up for that role if we think we'll come out looking like Jesus as beautiful as a spring lily and smelling as nice, but both Jesus and the Lilly got that way only after they had been buried in the dirt. Like a seed planted in the ground, he was placed in a tomb and three days sprung forth new and more beautiful than before.

From this we should know that dirt is the only way in this world that anything can grow. Faith in a God of resurrection will not keep us from getting dirty in this life and will not prevent us from sometimes feeling buried, but if we draw on our faith in those times we will be able to use our dirt right, so that out of it something beautiful may bloom.

Wherever you are in this life, whatever troubles you, never believe that you have been buried. Rather God has planted you so that you may bloom and so bloom and show forth God's glory.

Call to Offering

Charlotte Stillwell

Friends, God has opened the gates of righteousness. Let us accept God's invitation and offer gifts of thanksgiving in Christ's name.

Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow! Praise God, all creatures here below! Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts! Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Dedication of Offering Prayer

Pastor Gena

God of the greatest gifts, with resurrection humming in our hearts, we joyfully present these gifts to you. Bless our gifts, we pray, that through them many will be lifted up, welcomed in, and restored to life in all its fullness. We raise our voices in a chorus of thanksgiving for your blessings. In the name of our Risen Lord we pray, Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Pastor Gena

At this Table, we usually ponder the death of Jesus. And that is as it should be, because when Jesus gathered for this meal, his Last Supper with his friends, certainly his coming death was on his mind, and the fear of losing Jesus was undoubtedly on the minds of his friends. So in this bread and cup, we remember the body and the life-blood of Jesus, the one who led by loving and loved through serving.

But at this Table, we must also open our eyes to see the one who is hosting us, even now: the Risen Christ, who is calling us to this Table. For it is the Risen Christ, the one who has shown in his rising that hatred is not stronger than love, who extends an open invitation to any and to all who would come to this meal. It is the Risen Christ, the one who has shown in his rising that life is stronger than death, who joins us together as one body at this Table. It is the Risen Christ, the one who is still rolling stones away from

our tombs and calling us forth, who is present at this and every Table in every time and in every place that people gather together to remember him.

So, as we take the bread and the cup, let us remember the Christ who died for us all, but let us also remember the Christ who lives is calling us forth again to new and abundant life.

Communion Hymn *“In the Bulb There Is a Flower”* Carson Throckmorton, organist
In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree; in cocoons, a hidden promise;
butterflies will soon be free! In the cold and snow of winter there’s a spring that waits
to be, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup Gary Ford
Heavenly Father, It is Easter! A day when we celebrate the resurrection. On that first Easter morning they went to the tomb, it was empty ...Jesus was not there. They did not understand. Father give us the wisdom to better understand the meaning of this day so that we can face tomorrow and every day thereafter with the knowledge of Your love and presence. Now, we come to Your table. We take the bread and cup, and proclaim that He is risen! But, let us remember to celebrate the meaning of that empty tomb, not just today, but everyday. Amen.

Words of Institution Pastor Gena
For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.
(1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

Sharing Holy Communion
You will receive the bread and cup together. Please hold them; we will take each together as one body. Disciples of Christ believe in an Open Table. All who profess Christ and follow Him are welcome to share His meal. Gluten free wafers are available in the Narthex.

Call to Discipleship Pastor Gena
If you have come to know Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior and you would like to profess that you intend to begin a life of faith, learning to walk in his way of Love, you are welcome to contact one of the Pastors to take this step. If you would like to join this part of the Body of Christ at Fairhill Manor Christian Church, to covenant to journey together in this life of faith, please reach out to one of the Pastors to learn more. We all take these moments to rededicate our lives to following Jesus.

Closing Hymn *“In the Garden”* Jody Mullis, pianist
I come to the garden alone, while the dew is still on the roses; and the voice I hear, falling on
my ear, the Son of God discloses. And he walks with me, and he talks with me, and he tells
me I am his own, and the joy we share, as we tarry there, none other has ever known.

Benediction Rev. Stillwell
Christ is Risen! Go forth in joy. Christ is Risen! Go forth in faith. Christ is Risen! Go forth to live. For Christ is Risen. He is Risen indeed! Alleluia and Amen.

Do you have a prayer request or need help? Please feel free to contact Rev. Chris (412-956-6590) or Pastor Gena (724) 263-0033 directly and confidentially. Or scroll down on the opening page of our website (www.fairhillmanorchurch.org) to "Requests for Prayer or Help." There you can send an email which will go directly to Rev. Chris. We are One Body in Christ!

Prayer List:

Homebound Members:

Mrs. Mary McDonough
949 Bruce Street
Washington PA 15301

Chuck and Mary Wiseman
880 S Main St, Apt 214
Washington PA 15301

Elinor Newman (Southmont)
835 S Main St, Rm 513
Washington PA 15301

Alice Cokeley
900 N Cass Lake Rd, Apt 324
Waterford MI 48328

Carol Brown
36 Old Hickory Ridge Rd, Rm 213
Washington PA 15301

Doris Sorice
880 S Main St, Apt 336
Washington PA 15301

Ed Alexey
Avery Allen
Jeannie Allison
Terry Bailey
Donna Bakaitis
Jim Banish
Martin Berisford
Eleanor Boyles
Mabel Brooks
Leslie Byron
Sandra Carman
Clayton Chalfant
Leslie Chalfant
Denise Charles
Wanda Chicone
MaryAnn Coates
Ruth Cox
Irma Davis
Sue Donaldson
Benjamin Dube
Jessica Duke
Libby Eberhard
Thomas Farabee
Kathy Moninger-Ford
Jay Freudenberg
Lois Gayman
Sue Golsky
Joe Greene
Bonnie Gregg
Theresa Hancher
Irma Harper
Sheila Harris

Aryn Hess
Janet Houston
Ed Jackman
Dallas Jacobovitz
Kenger Family
Ivy Lacock
Ty Lacock, Jr.
Bob Lanning
David Leonard
John Lewis
Lee Martin
Dave McConnell
Pam McCord
Norm McDonough
Ruth Mikuta
Dick Moninger
Bob Morgan
Paul Myers
Joe Neckerman
Michaela Nixon
Sandy Nixon
Carmen Oliverio
Peggy Oliverio
Deborah Patterson
JoAnn Piatt
Bo & Patty Pryor
Rick Rafferty
Cathy Rentgen
Jeannie Riffle
Lori Riffle
Betty Jo Riggle

Emily Cope Robinson
Dave Ross
John Samida
Debbie Sekorky
Sam Sheller
Valerie Shetler
Hannah Simpson
Doug and Tracy Smith
Darci Sprowls
Cathy Stewart
John Stewart
Bernard Teagarden
Beth Teagarden
Jane Teagarden
Thad Turner
Tammie Wallace
Gary Weaver
Tom Williams
Addison Wittenberg
Sarah Wittenberg

In the Military

Lance Dague	Andrew Gregg
Terrell McClain	Zachary Keene
Brandon Lipscomb	Sarah Lipscomb
Travis Ringer*	Emily Chase
Dylan Demain	

The brave men and women who serve our country make incredible sacrifices every day. We are forever grateful for their service and dedication. Please remember the military members that are deployed and away from their family that they may return to their homes safely.

*currently deployed