

Manor Minutes
Volume 17 Issue 31
August 14, 2026

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thank you

Barb Moninger extends her heartfelt thanks to her church family for the many cards and calls she received after her recent surgery. She is feeling a little better with each passing day.



Sunday, September 13
1:04pm

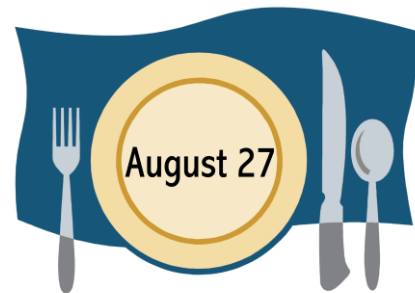
Provided:
Chicken
Hot Dogs
Drinks

There will be BINGO!

Sign up in the Narthex to let us know if you'll be attending and if you're able to help in any way. We need lots of side dishes this year.

Join Us For Lunch

The **Bethany Class** will gather for lunch at Eat'n Park on Tuesday, August 25 at noon. All are invited to join the group for good food and fellowship.



Tri-County Men's *Dinner*

Mount Lebanon Christian Church

Sign-up sheet in the Narthex

5:30pm Registration, 6pm Dinner

\$15

Chicken, Mac'n Cheese, Cole Slaw, Desserts

RSVP by August 23

Remember to sign the **attendance pew pads** each week. This information is used so Rev. Chris, Pastor Gena and your Elders can take better care of you.



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

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Minister
Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor
Elders: Connie Sheller, Bread
Gene Sheller, Cup

August 16, 2026 – 10:15am

Prelude

Sam Johnson, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Donna Stenski

Leader: We call to the Lord,

People: God hears our prayers.

Leader: We lift up our praise,

People: God hears our songs.

Leader: We wait for the Lord,

People: God answers our hope.

All: Let us come now to pray, sing, and hope together!

Opening Hymn

“Awesome God”

Jody Mullis, pianist

Our God is an awesome God. He reigns from heaven above;
with wisdom, power, and love, our God is an awesome God.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord’s Prayer

Rev. Stillwell

O Lord, Creator of all, we come here today in many states of being.

Some of us come with heavy hearts.

Some of us come with questions and few answers.

Some of us come with joys bursting from our souls.

Some of us come with long “to do” lists.

Help us lay aside all that we carry with us and focus on you—the source of our lives, the one who fills our days with joy and love, the one who provides answers to our questions.

Almighty God, our source of comfort and hope, we do not always follow your ways. We often forget to allow you to lead us like a shepherd. We sometimes neglect to abide in you as the branch abides in the vine. We work so hard for the bread that does not satisfy and give so much time pursuing the bread that will never leave us hungry. We can allow our light to dim while chasing after the things of this world that sparkle and shine instead of allowing ourselves to be guided by the light of the world. Yet, even when we are unfaithful to you, you remain faithful to us. Your steadfast love holds and heals us, no matter where we are or what we have done.

Help us to turn our lives toward you, not only on this day, but every day that we may experience the joy of resurrection not only when we die but also while we live. Show us the way to you through your son Jesus Christ as we together pray in the way that he has taught us 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:

“Spirit of the Living God”

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

First Scripture Lesson

1 Kings 19:9-18

Serena Dube

Special Music

“The King of Love My Shepherd Is”

Jim Cope

Children’s Message

Rev. Stillwell

School will be starting soon and I bet you will be needing to buy school supplies. We are collecting them ourselves for kids who can use them across the world. We have to buy notebooks, paper, folders, markers, crayons, pens and pencils. I have some pencils with me today that remind me of the four different kinds of people I see each day.

First, I have a pencil that is not sharpened on either end. It reminds me of people I see that never do anything. They just sit around and let others do all the work. A pencil that isn't sharpened on either end isn't much good for anything. Neither is a person who never does anything.

Second, I have a pencil that has an eraser on both ends. This pencil reminds me of people who never do anything because they are so afraid that they won't do it right, they are like the first pencil and just don't do anything at all.

Next, I have a pencil that is sharpened on both ends. It doesn't have an eraser! This pencil reminds me of people who think they never make a mistake! Do you know people like that? Even if they do make a mistake, which we all do, they will never admit it. Who do they think they are fooling? They are only fooling themselves!

Finally, I have a pencil that is sharpened on one end and has an eraser on the other. It reminds me of people who know they make mistakes, and when they see their mistakes, they correct them. That is the kind of person God wants us to be. If we claim that we never make mistakes, we are just fooling ourselves, but if we will admit to our mistakes and ask God to forgive us, then God will erase our mistakes and we can start all over again.

I have erasers to share with you that you can use in school, but also I hope that they will remind you to not be afraid of making mistakes so long as when you do, you do your best to fix them, and ask God to erase them.

Second Scripture Reading

John 1:10-18

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

“What God is Like”

Rev. Chris Stillwell

This summer we began asking the question, “What is God like?”, and rather than taking our own words for an answer or the words of an ancient scholar or popular preacher, we have looked to the Gospel of John. Of course, we already knew that God is powerful, and we saw that when Jesus performed many signs for all to see. We already knew that God is love, which we saw in the compassion and the mercy

Jesus showed throughout the gospel. And we already knew that God is just, which Jesus demonstrated in his dealings with the poor and the outcasts, as well as the mighty and powerful. But we have learned so much more that we could only have learned in this gospel. For, in the Gospel according to John, Jesus uses many metaphors to describe what he, and therefore God, is like.

We learned that God is the Bread of Life. All bread is wholesome and filling to our stomachs, and fresh bread has a taste that is unrivaled by any food in this world, but even the largest loaf of bread runs out or gets stale and hard, but the bread of life is the bread that God sends down from Heaven, and it never runs out, never gets old, never tastes stale. It will fill us forever.

We learned that God is the Light of the World. Those who know and have experienced God will be able to see in a way that no others can. Their eyes are open and their hearts are too. Most importantly, however Jesus brings God's light to us, so that when the world around is dark, and we are afraid that we might stumble, God will be a light to our eyes giving us sight, but more than this, giving us hope.

We learned that God is the door into a better life. Often times we think of this as Heaven in the next life and it does refer to that, but the words lead us into the understanding that this new and better life can be had in the here and now. Jesus' words in this passage are couched in the imagery of a sheepfold, which led us into the next thing we learned.

We learned that God is the Good Shepherd who gives life. We heard as Jesus spoke to his detractors that he has the power to give eternal life and those who know him will know his voice and also that there are others not part of this flock who will listen and follow. Therefore, we should never be the judges of who is in and who is out of the fold. That is God's judgement alone. No human being can do what God alone can do. As God like a shepherd leads us, God also cares for us, watches over us, and guides us through the gate into that beautiful celestial pasture.

All of this leads naturally to learning that God is the resurrection and the life. In many ways we knew this, since the resurrection is the pinnacle event of Jesus' life, but Jesus made this "I am" statement immediately before raising Lazarus from the dead. Again, we see that Jesus' teaching was not just empty talk. When Christ made a claim, He substantiated it with action. In raising Lazarus from the dead, Jesus showed that God has the power over life and death itself.

Then we learned that God is the way and the truth and the life. God is the Creator and Sustainer of all life and the Giver of eternal life. There are many things that bring us joy, contentment and meaning and we should pursue them in our work, our leisure, and our personal lives, but we should pale nay of them over and above the God who has made and blessed all things. So much of the unhappiness of the world is like chasing after wind when we make fame, wealth, power, and other false Gods are ultimate pursuit. Abiding in God will lead to our greatest contentment

This brings us to our final lesson last week that God like a vine that provides nourishment, strength, life, and all that we need to produce good fruit. The final metaphorical "I am" statement in the Gospel of John emphasizes the sustaining power of God. We are the branches, and God alone is the vine. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit unless it is joined in vital union with the vine, neither can we do what God wants us to do unless we abide in the true vine.

All of these "I am" statements are spoken in the gospel of John by Jesus Christ, but we understand that when Jesus says "I am," he is speaking of himself and also of God, because we believe that Jesus is the word made flesh as John so beautifully writes at the beginning of his gospel, and because each time we are reminded of the divine name, Yahweh, which means "I AM" as reveled to Moses as he spoke with God in the burning bush.

Now, there are two more "I am" statements of Jesus in the Gospel of John. These are not metaphors; rather, they are declarations of God's name, as applied by Jesus to himself. The first instance comes as

Jesus responds to a complaint by the Pharisees. “I tell you the truth,” Jesus says, “before Abraham was born, I am!”. The verbs Jesus uses are in stark contrast with each other: Abraham was, but I am. There is no doubt that the people understood Jesus’ claim to be the eternal God incarnate, because they took up stones to kill him after he said this,

The second instance of Jesus applying to himself the name I AM comes in the Garden of Gethsemane. When the mob came to arrest Jesus, He asked them whom they sought. They said, “Jesus of Nazareth,” and he replied, “I am he.” Then something strange happened: “When Jesus said, ‘I am he,’ they drew back and fell to the ground.” Perhaps explaining the mob’s reaction is the fact that the word he has been provided by our English translators. Jesus simply said, “I am.”

What do these metaphors show that God is like? First, they tell us that God is more than we can fully understand. God is too great for any human mind to fully comprehend, and yet we know from these stories that while trying to completely understand God leaves us uncertain of all of God’s ways, it does not leave us empty, for gives us all that we need.

Second, they tell us that, like a shepherd, God is always with us. Leading us, guiding us, calling us. God is there to protect us from the wolves, to keep us from getting lost, and to lead us to greener pastures. The Lord, our God, calls each and every one of us, and is with us in this life as well as the next.

Third, we learn from these metaphors that God does not do things on our time table. Jesus arrived to help Lazarus just in time. Not in Mary, Martha, or Lazarus’ time, but in God’s time. The lesson that Martha and Mary and we learned in this story is the lesson the prophet Habakkuk learned when God spoke to him saying, “*There is still a vision for the appointed time. If it seems to tarry, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay.*” It will not delay according to God’s schedule, but it may seem to delay according to ours.

Finally, we learn that God promises new life, not just in the hereafter, but in the here and now. Martha was right to believe that Lazarus would be raised on the last day, but Jesus also raised him on that day. Now, without Jesus physically in this world, I do not expect anyone who is dead to return to life, but God does provide new life in this life through Jesus Christ, if we will but listen to his voice.

All of these different ways of describing what God is like are unique and important. Each one is needed to get a better understanding of the great, ineffable, incomprehensible Divine, and yet they still do not tell of all the glories of God. But these sayings of Jesus reveal the fullness of God, and they place flesh upon the bones of the gospel by giving us a glimpse into the nature of God, and all of these metaphors, so prominent and eloquent, point to one incredible, literal reality. Jesus is God’s fullest representation.

There is one last thing I, and Jesus, want to share with you and that is an I am passage not found in John but Matthew. At the very end of the gospels, after Jesus was resurrected and just as he was to return to Heaven Jesus gives his disciples and us comfort in his final sentence when he reveals the most important aspect of God’s nature. Of all the things that Jesus says he is, the most important is what he reveals to his disciples when he says, “surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Jesus has already said, “I am the resurrection and the life,” but quite possibly the most comforting and inspiring words that he ever says about himself is “I am with you”. Of all the things we think about Jesus, that he is protector and deliverer, that he is Lord and he is God, the most important is that he is with us. This is important when troubles and trials lead us off our chosen path. “Remember I am with you.” This is important when we are full of ourselves and we think that we are greater than we really are. “Remember I am with you.” And this is important when we are lonely and feel abandoned. “Remember I am with you.”

But perhaps most important of all is that, as disciples of Christ, we are called to do our part in fulfilling the great commission. And we, like others before us, may ask, “who are we to do this?” Remember that God chose Moses, an old man, who spoke poorly, and who had killed a man, to speak. Remember that

Jesus chose the disciples, the very ones who abandoned him, who had followed at a distance and then who had run away, the very ones who still doubted after they saw him raised from the dead, and he commissioned them to speak on his behalf.

So put aside the question, “Who am I?” You are a disciple of Christ and that is enough. But you may still have that nagging question about Jesus, the one Moses had about God. You may still wonder what should you say if someone ask?” If we were to look at a loaf of bread; if we were to stare at a flicker of flame, point to a vine, or find a shepherd on a hill somewhere and claim any of these things by themselves to be God we would be foolish and disappointed. If, however, we were to see an aspect of God in each of them and in each thing that God has created and simply say that he is the God who is with me, and with you, always, then we would begin to know what God is like.

Call to Offering

Sometimes the blessings in our lives overflow like a basket of summer fruit. Other times they are scarce like rain in a desert. Whether our basket is full or meager, let us offer to God what we can in order to show our thanksgiving and praise.

***The 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

O God, we bring these offerings as an act of faith. We choose to step out into your presence. Take these gifts, we pray, and use them to quiet the storms of need in our community. Bless those who give, refresh those who are weary, and help us trust that you always provide exactly what we need for the journey ahead.

Invitation to Communion

Pastor Gena

In our reading from 1 Kings, God asks Elijah, “What are you doing here?” Elijah is tired, scared, and hiding in a cave.

Why is Elijah tired, scared, hiding in a cave? Not that long ago, he won a great victory over the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. But that served only to stir up an even greater threat to his life, Queen Jezebel. He had threatened her power and control, and now he was on the run from her, into the dry desert. Sitting under a solitary broom tree, which offered sparse shade from the hot sun, he asked God to let him die. Much like the broom tree, he was all alone in a harsh world.

It was a cake and a jar of water offered by an angel of the Lord that revived Elijah enough to make the 40-day trek to the mountain of God and to this cave in which he’s now hiding. “What are you doing here, Elijah?” asks God.

At the Lord's table, God asks us the same question. God sees us cowering in fear, slumped over in exhaustion, weary from trying everything we know how to do and coming up empty. God invites us to stop and to meet God in quiet grace.

God was not in the loud things – the big wind, the earthquake, the fire. God is in the sheer silence. And from that silence comes the question again, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

Christ meets us quietly in the bread and the cup today. Jesus pulls us out of our hiding places of doubt and shame, meets us in our weariness and desperation. This meal feeds our souls and gives us strength. As we commune, let us share with our Lord “what we are doing here” today. He will listen with love.

Communion Hymn

“*Creator God, Creating Still*”

Sam Johnson, organist

Creator God, creating still, by will and word and deed,
create a new humanity to meet the present need.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Connie Sheller

Heavenly Father, thank you for being the one constant in our lives, loving us and providing us with more than we need. We are thankful for these elements of communion, the bread representing Christ’s broken body on the cross and the cup representing his shed blood, all given as a sacrifice for us. May we never question or forget what Jesus, The Christ, did for each of us. Amen.

Words of Institution

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

If you need a community to belong to, if you are thirsty for the word of life and want to live as a disciple of Jesus, join us in his ministry and mission. You are welcome and needed here. If in the work and worship of this congregation you are being nurtured and fed in Christ our Lord, we invite you to join us in his service. There is a place for you in this family of faith.

Closing Hymn

“*How Great Thou Art*”

Sam Johnson, organist

O Lord my God! when I in awesome wonder consider all the worlds thy hands have made,
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder, thy power throughout the universe displayed.
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to thee; how great thou art, how great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to thee; how great thou art, how great thou art!

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

Sisters and brothers, as you leave this place, take time to be with Christ so that you may know the blessings of our God. And now may the peace of God, the love of Christ, and the comfort of the Holy Spirit be with you now and always.



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!

Homebound Members

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Patty Pryor, Apt 102

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Donna Bakaitis, Room 224

Premier Resident

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Carol Brown, Room 213

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Barb Bailey
Terry Bailey
Donna Bakaitis
Todd Barnhart
Vanessa & John Berezney
Jacquie Best
Gary Blackhurst
Jeff Caldwell
Macy Caster
Wanda Chicone
Angel Corbett
Jane Correll
Ruth Cox
Mickey Cunningham
Benjamin Dube
Kathy Moninger-Ford
Raymond Fraley
Terry Gahagen
Barb Graff
Judy Hanning
Irma Harper
Sheila Harris
Aryn Hess

Danni Iams
Dave Kania
Chris Lewis
Charlie McConnell
Pam McCord
Norm McDonough
Barb Moninger
Dick Moninger
Joe Neckerman
Carmen Oliverio
Peggy Oliverio
Michelle Oneal
Sandy Petry
Jeannie Riffle
Joan Riffle
Lori Riffle
Mike Ryan
Valerie Shetler
Doug Smith
Darcy Sprowls
Kristie Sprowls
Wayne Starnes
Cathy Stewart
Beth Teagarden
Ginger Throckmorton
Cece Watson

In the Military

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

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.