

Manor Minutes
Volume 17 Issue 28
July 24, 2026

- Bible Study with Rev. Chris via Zoom – July 30, 2pm

Stay up to date at www.fairhillmanorchurch.org/calendar

• **Apostle Peter**
• **Bible Study**
• **Thursday @ 2pm**

Via Zoom – Zoom invitation will be emailed to the Manor Minutes list on Thursday. If you do not receive the Manor Minutes or you know someone that would like to receive this invitation and they are not on the Manor Minutes list, please contact Karen in the Church Office.

UPDATE
on
Alice Cokeley



Hello to Fairhill Manor Christian Church members. I just wanted to let everyone know that my mom, **Alice Cokeley**, still talks about FMCC and was an active member from the 50's and into the 2000's until she had to move in 2021. She still goes to chapel services at her senior center in Michigan. She will be turning 97 on her birthday this Wednesday, 7/22/26! Her physical health is still good, and she is still doing her daily walk routines. Her walking routines have gone on for decades and I believe it is instrumental with her longevity. She now has 7 Great Grandchildren and all boys. With my youngest son just starting their family this year, maybe mom will get that first Great Granddaughter. Please keep mom in mind during prayers. -- David Cokeley

(If you would like to send Alice a card, her address can be found in the prayer request section at the end of the Manor Minutes.)



When anxiety
was great within me,
your consolation
brought me joy.

Psalms 94:19, NIV

THANK YOU

Thank you to Kevin Puskarich for trimming all the shrubs around the church. That was a lot of hard work during the heat of summer. It looks nice!!

Memorial Brick Garden
Laser-Engraved Bricks

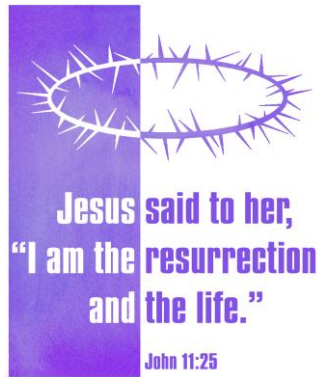
Orders are due by August 1.

The bricks are \$40 each.

Contact the Church Office (724) 225-8610 if you are interested. Bricks will be dedicated on All Saints Day, November 1, 2026. Order forms are in the Narthex.



Memorial Garden



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

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Minister
Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor
Elders: Jody Mullis, Bread
Jackie Nelson, Cup

July 26, 2026 – 10:15am

Prelude

Sam Johnson, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Von Lacock

Leader: Once we were not a people,

People: But now we are God's people.

Leader: Once we were alone,

People: But together we are the household of God.

Leader: Here in this time of worship, and later when we go forth to serve,

People: Christ is our cornerstone, strengthening us for the journey.

**All: In our living and in our dying, Christ is our sure foundation,
strengthening us along the way.**

Opening Hymn

"Just a Closer Walk with Thee"

I am weak, but though art strong; Jesus, keep me from all wrong;

I'll be satisfied as long as I walk, let me walk close to thee.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Rev. Stillwell

O God who weeps with us, you have sat beside us in the depths, waiting with us in every dry and lifeless valley. Grant us the endurance to wait as you do, to discern in breathless bones the beginning of new life and in days-old tombs a coming resurrection, while never bypassing the reality of grief or rushing those who yearn for comfort. Breathe in us your life-giving Spirit, that we might live and wait. Just as God commanded Ezekiel to prophesy to dry bones, so we are called to sit with the death that we encounter.

Spirit of the living God, we cry to you out of the depths. Hear our voice! Be attentive to our cry! We live in the gap between resurrections, longing to hear you speak life to our weary souls: our souls wait for you, more than those who watch for the morning. We cry out with those whose bones are dried up, suffering from chronic illnesses, the persistent weight of oppression, and the ongoing effects of poverty. As we cry out with them, our souls wait for you, more than those who watch for the morning. We raise our voices with those whose hope is lost, weighed down by the ebb and flow of grief, in despair at the state of this world you have made, and exhausted by violence and abuse.

As we raise our voices with them, our souls wait for you, more than those who watch for the morning. We sit in solidarity with those who feel cut off completely, mired in the depths of loneliness, relegated to the margins of society, shunned and forgotten by those who should love them. As we sit with them, our souls wait for you, more than those who watch for the morning. O great advocate and comforter, through your

radiant presence teach us that the sorrows that grieve us disturb your Spirit too. Enliven our spirits with your steadfast love, even as we wait for your redemption. Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

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

Isaiah 26

Gene Sheller

Special Music

“In Christ Alone”

Vicki Sisson

Children’s Message

Rev. Stillwell

Do you ever cry? Of course you do. What is something that makes you cry?
I made a list of some things that make us cry.

Raise your hand if you have cried because you got hurt.

Raise your hand if someone hurt your feelings and you cried.

Raise your hand if you cried because you dropped your ice cream.

Raise your hand if you’ve ever cried because someone else was crying.

We all cry, don’t we? Did you know that Jesus cried? The shortest verse in the entire Bible says, "Jesus wept." I know of at least three things that made Jesus cry.

The Bible tells us that Jesus cried when He prayed for others. It says, "While Jesus was here on earth, he offered prayers and pleadings, with a loud cry and tears." (Hebrews 5:7 NLT)

The Bible also tells us that Jesus cried when He saw people who were missing out on what God wanted for them. Luke tells us that as Jesus approached Jerusalem and saw the city, He wept over it and said, "I wish that even today you would find the way of peace. But now it is too late, and peace is hidden from you." (Luke 19:41-42 NLT)

Another time, the Bible tells us that Jesus cried when friends of His were hurting. Jesus had a friend named Lazarus who became very sick. His sisters, Mary and Martha, sent word to Jesus and asked Him to come and heal Lazarus, but when Jesus arrived, Lazarus had already died. The Bible tells us that when Jesus saw Mary weeping because her brother had died, He cried too. That isn’t all that Jesus did; listen to what happened next.

Jesus went with Mary and Martha and some others to visit the grave where Lazarus was buried. It was a cave with a large stone across the entrance. When they arrived at the tomb, Jesus said to some of the men who were with them, "Take away the stone." Then Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" And Lazarus walked out of the grave. I imagine that when she saw that, Mary’s tears of sadness turned to tears of joy.

We all cry, and I am glad that we have a Savior who weeps too. I am glad that He loves us so much that He hurts when we are hurting. He feels our pain. He sees our tears and shares them

Dear Jesus, it is comforting to know that when we cry, You cry with us. But it is even more comforting to know that You have power over death and the grave and that one day we will be in heaven with You--and then there will be no more tears. In Jesus' name, amen

Second Scripture Reading

John 11:17-44

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

“I Am the Resurrection and the Life”

Rev. Chris Stillwell

There was once a story about a man who was loved and hated, who traveled across the world doing great things which won him many followers and many more enemies, who had long hair, dressed shabbily and owned nothing. This man died a terrible death leaving his friends in despair and feeling as if no hope remained. But one day they encountered him again. They could not believe their eyes, in part because it was so hard to believe, but also because he looked so different. He was clean, new, his clothes which had been gray were now shining so white that they were blinding, and he was clearly more powerful than before. This man's name was Gandalf and his resurrection was told in the Lord of the Rings.

Then there was another story in which the main character was sacrificed because of the sin of another person. He was ridiculed and tormented and disfigured and the women who were there looked on and wept, but their tears were dried the next day when they saw him raised from the dead and his mane fully restored and his roar stronger than ever because this person was Aslan the lion, and his story was told by C. S. Lewis in the Chronicles of Narnia.

Of course, there was also the wise old teacher with tremendous spiritual powers who warned the forces of evil that if you struck him down, he would come back more powerful than you could ever imagine, but Darth Vader killed Obi-Wan Kenobi anyway.

Resurrection is such a pervasive theme in our culture that it is all over our novels, myths, and films. It is a constant presence in the stories that we tell one another, and it always looks the same. Someone makes a sacrifice on behalf of someone else, and they come back looking better, stronger, newer than before. This is the standard picture of resurrection, and it comes from another story, the story upon which the whole of the Bible is built upon, the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Even if you have never read the story before, I guarantee you are familiar with it. Jesus was a wildly popular and hated man. He did great things for his friends and riled up the anger of his opponents. He was killed in a terrible way, but his death saved many others, since the needs of the many outweighed the needs of the few or one and when his friend had given up all hope, they discovered that he was back, resurrected and better than before. Not only did Jesus appear to them dressed in white, but the angels who greeted Mary at the tomb were like lightning, and their clothing white as snow. So now Jesus is accompanied by angels, and he appears to his disciples by walking through the wall where they were staying. Clearly Jesus has been resurrected better than before, and because of this we have the expectation that resurrection isn't just restoring to life, but restoring to a better life.

So, what does that mean for us when Jesus says; “I am the resurrection and the life?” If we are a people who believe in resurrection, when are we going to be new and shiny and better than before? Like Martha, we believe that this will happen after we die and we are resurrected into eternal life, but is there no resurrection for us in this life? Will resurrection not happen for us this side of Heaven the way it is described in the Bible?

I think it happens all the time, it's just that we are looking for the wrong thing. We are looking too often for the wrong description of resurrection in the Bible. You see, the Bible gives us two distinct and disparate pictures of resurrection. The first and most famous is that of Christ who is described as white

and shining and more glorious than when he was on earth. The second is the resurrection of Jesus' friend, Lazarus, in which he comes out of the tombs in his bandages and wrappings, dirty with the smell of death.

These stories give us a clear distinction between one who is clean and new (Jesus) and one who is dirty and unclean, Lazarus. As Christians we are called to live the resurrection, and we often assume that this means things will often look like Jesus' resurrection, but more often they look like Lazarus'.

We who are ill long for a resurrection of our health and hope that we will leap and dance and sing but sometimes, all we receive is another day of aches and pains. We who are poor look for a Lord who rewards faith with riches and blessings, but sometimes all we get is bread. We who are powerless long for a moment when we will win every battle and be declared a champion, but sometimes all we get is the strength to fight another day. We whose church struggles to rebuild itself, wait for that day when every pew on every Sunday will be as full as it is on the Sunday when we celebrate the resurrection. We often don't get blessings the way we want them but make no mistake they are blessings all the same.

Maybe today was another day with aches and pains, but it is another day. We may not be wealthy, but God has given us all we need. We may not always win, but as long as we keep up the fight for what's right, we will never lose. If Christ is present when 2 or three are gathered in his name, then Christ is abundantly present every week in our church. Resurrection is indeed everywhere we look, it's just that it doesn't always look shiny and new and better than before. Sometimes resurrection simply means not being dead.

That's what Lazarus was. Not dead. He was dirty. He looked bad. He smelled bad, but you can bet his sisters started crying tears of joy and Jesus still called it "the glory of God" Lazarus' resurrection was a different type of resurrection than the one Jesus would later experience. His was not the resurrection into glory, but a resurrection back into this life. We all await that glorious day when the shadows of this life have gone, and we'll fly away, but believing in Christ means that a resurrection is available for us in this life where we will mount up on wings of Eagles, we will walk and not grow weary, we will run and not faint.

So much in our life makes us weary. We grow weary of sickness and pain. We grow weary of bills. We grow weary of watching buildings in our city crumble. We grow weary of hearing our leader's squabble and bicker. We grow weary of wars and rumors of wars, and it makes us want to fly away, but there is value in life. There is purpose in God placing us here and we must make the most of every day and God promises to restore us to life to do the work God needs us to do.

When Lazarus came out of the tomb, he was dirty, but it was the dirt that made his new life grow. You can bet that he and Mary and Martha argued before he died. You can bet that they sometimes held resentments and sometimes took one another for granted. You can bet that they did not when he came back. Lazarus's resurrection was not just his, but a resurrection back into the fullness of life for his family and his community. He wasn't anything better than before, he just wasn't dead, and that was gift enough.

Can we live the resurrection this way? Can we wake up each morning and give thanks that we're not dead? Can we celebrate when it is rainy and cold, because we still have breath to breathe? Can we rejoice even though our church isn't as big and shiny and wealthy as we would like it to be, but it is still alive and doing God's work after almost 180 years? If so then we will be resurrected to a new life because we will not take this life for granted.

The most striking thing about this story is that Jesus already knew what he was going to do. He had known Lazarus would die. He knew God's power would be revealed by raising Lazarus from the dead, and he knew that by raising Lazarus, he would set in motion the events leading up to his own death. In

Jerusalem, the high priest concluded, "It is better that one man Jesus should die, so the rest of us will not be destroyed."

Nevertheless, Jesus chose to undergo death in order to give us life. As he said previously:

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. No one takes my life from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my father

The raising of Lazarus would lead to the death of Jesus, and Jesus knew it. When Jesus wept, he faced the inevitability of his own death. By choosing to bring Lazarus out of the tomb, Jesus chose to move toward his own tomb. The one who invited potential disciples to "come and see" the works of God made known in him has invited those at the tomb of Lazarus to "come and see" the inevitable consequences of his life-giving works in a world of death. With tears of commitment, Jesus gave the gift of his life to the world. Through the tears of his impending crucifixion, we were baptized into the life of his resurrection.

Lazarus died. Jesus raised him back to life. Lazarus, like all of us, would die again, and the promise of the resurrection is that the Lord raised him once again. This is the good news: in all of our deadness and death, God-in-Christ raises us up and fills us with the life of eternity. Our hope is not merely a dream of resurrection on the last day, but eternal life that begins today in faith and continues on the other side of the grave.

Life like this is a gift, and receiving it is simple. 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 often times living the resurrection looks and smells a lot more like Lazarus, but if we know what resurrection in this world often looks like, we will rejoice. For we will know that dirt is the only way in this world that anything can grow.

Call to Offering

Isaac Mayen

As the people of God, let us bring our offerings and gifts, so that others may know the loving foundation we have found in Christ Jesus.

***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 thank you for your endless generosity. Please bless and multiply these gifts we bring that they might serve your people and spread your love. We come, offering not just our resources, but our hearts to you. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Pastor Gena

Come to this table, not because you must but because you may, not because you are strong, but because you are weak.

Come, not because any goodness of your own gives you a right to come, but because you need mercy and help.

Come, because you love the Lord a little and would like to love him more.

Come, because he loved you and gave himself for you.

Come and meet the risen Christ, for we are his Body.

Communion Hymn

“Shall We Gather at the River”

Sam Johnson, organist

Shall we gather at the river, where bright angel feet have trod, with its crystal tide
forever flowing by the throne of God? Yes, we'll gather at the river, the beautiful,
the beautiful river; gather with the saints at the river that flows by the throne of God.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Jody Mullis

Dear Heavenly Father, as we come to you this morning, we're grateful for the privilege of receiving your bread and cup, and we pray that we will always bear fruit for you. May we be like Lazarus, restored to health through this simple meal, and remember the faithful who have shared in it before us. Bless us with abundant health and success through you, Lord Jesus, this morning. In Jesus' name, 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

“I Am Thine, O Lord”

Sam Johnson, organist

I am thine, O Lord, I have heard thy voice, and it told thy love to me; but I long to rise in the arms of faith, and be closer drawn to thee. Draw me nearer, nearer, blessed Lord, to the cross where thou hast died; draw me nearer, nearer, nearer, blessed Lord, to thy precious, bleeding side.

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another...so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.



Gary Blackhurst and Barb Bailey are at Southmont for a short rehabilitation stay. If you would like to send them a card here is the address:

Southmont
880 S Main Street
Washington PA 15301

Gary is Room 428 and Barb is Room 363



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

Mrs. Mary Lou McDonough
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Washington PA 15301

Alice Cokeley
900 N Cass Lake Rd, Apt 324
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Southminster Residents

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Patty Pryor, Apt 102

North Strabane Rehab

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Donna Bakaitis, Room 202

Premier Resident

36 Old Hickory Ridge Rd
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Carol Brown, Room 213

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Doris Haniford, Room 121

Mary Allison
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.