

Manor Minutes
Volume 16 Issue 30
July 25, 2025

- Operating Deficit Task Force – July 29, 6pm Library
- Making Meatballs – July 31, 6-8pm Kitchen
- Spaghetti Dinner – August 2, 4-8pm

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



**The Bethany Class will meet at
Eat'n Park on August 19 at noon
for lunch. Everyone is welcome ☺**

**RuMmage
\$ALE**

No prices on items.
Pay what you want.
Take what you need.

Set up Tuesday, August 5, 9am-1pm
Set up Wednesday, August 6, 12pm-3pm
Set up Thursday, August 7, 9am-1pm
Sale Friday, August 8, 9am-6pm
Sale Saturday, August 9, 9am-2pm

If you can help during any of these times,
please sign the sheet in the Narthex.

Wild Things

FMCC Night at
Washington Wild Things
Friday, August 22, 7pm
Fireworks Night

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

Sign up in the Narthex for tickets and parking
passes.

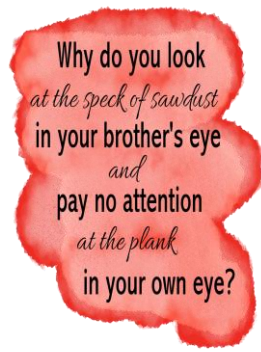
Please turn in cash or check
(payable to FMCC) to the office by **August 3**

FMCC is taking orders for new bricks for the
Memorial Brick Garden. All paid orders are
due by September 7. New bricks will be
dedicated on All Saints Sunday, November 2.
Order forms are on the credenza in the Narthex.
If you have any questions, contact the Church
Office.

**SAVE
the
DATE**

Church Picnic
Washington Park
Kiwanis Pavilion
September 7, 1:03pm

If you have any "gifts"
that can be used for
Surprise Bingo, save
them for the picnic.



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

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

July 27, 2025 – 10:15am

Prelude

Sam Johnson, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Gary Ford

Leader: Before we even knock,

People: Christ opens the doors and invites us in.

Leader: Before we even ask,

People: God knows our every need.

Leader: Come to seek; come to pray; come to worship,

People: For the Spirit has called us here.

Opening Hymn

“Just a Closer Walk with Thee”

Jody Mullis, pianist

I am weak, but thou 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

Christ Jesus, we come to your house this day, knocking and asking that the door may be opened. We come seeking your face and yearning for your presence in our lives. Open the door of our hearts, as you have opened the doors of your church. Lift our faces, that we may see your face shining upon us. Answer our yearning, that our restive hearts may find their rest in you.

Sustaining God, grant us our basic needs. Where there is hunger, give us bread.

Where there is homelessness, give us shelter. Where there is loneliness, give us friendship.

Where we have wronged another, guide us into reconciliation and where we have been wronged, lead us on the journey of forgiveness.

Save in times of trial, and lead us in the Way of life.

Grow in our lives, Lord Jesus. Make our hearts larger with each gift of your grace. Make our spirits stronger with each moment of your mercy. As you fill our lives with your presence, fill our hearts with your love, that we might grow into your likeness. As we grow in your love, may we give our love and grace as freely as you have generously given your love to us. 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:*“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 Lesson**Psalms 85**

Rita Puskarich

Special Music**Children’s Message**

Rev. Stillwell

I have a couple of items here. I have a stick, and a toothpick and the question I have for you is, which would you like stuck in your eye?

Neither, right? Well today we are talking about one of the strangest questions Jesus ever asked anyone. He asked, “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the log in your own eye?” This scripture always confused me. I mean who has a log in their eye? And who can see anything with a log in their eye.

I don’t think anyone really had a log in their eye. I think this was an illustration Jesus used to point out the problem of judging others. Jesus is pointing out that we often make a big deal about other peoples' faults. Meanwhile, we often overlook our own. He says it's like trying to get a speck of dust out of our friend's eye, while we have a huge stick in our own eye. First, we should take care of our own problems and faults, before we tell others how to fix theirs. It's easy to spot someone else when they are being selfish, proud, mean, unforgiving, or dishonest. It's harder to notice when we are acting that way.

Nobody has sticks in their eyes, but we all have things we need to work on. We all have ways which we need to get better. What Jesus was trying to teach his followers was worry about our own problems. What is another word we could use? Worry about your own sins.

Jesus also said that the way you judge others is how you will be judged. Forgiving people their faults is called grace, so if we want to be forgiven for our faults, then we should be graceful to others.

Second Scripture Reading**Matthew 7:1-5**

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

This is a previous sermon based on Matthew 5:13-16

Rev. Chris Stillwell

I was watching a Happy Days reunion that was on TV the other night, and it was a strange, but enjoyable sort of time warp, one where I couldn’t really be sure what era I was in as each clip came on. For instance, they showed the episode where Fonzie water skis over a shark in Hawaii, and I thought to myself, “This happened in the 80’s,” because that is when I watched the show in reruns, but then I remember, “no this episode aired in the 70s,” but, of course, all the action is taking place in the 1950’s, and here I am in another millennium trying to make sense of all of this.

It got confusing as the reunion show moved effortlessly back and forth from one decade to another, but the one thing that stayed true in each was the catchphrases. They dedicated an entire section to the popular catchphrases of the show, like when Ralph Mouth would say, “I still got it”, Richie would sing “Blueberry Hill”, Chachi would remark, “Wa-wa-wa”, and of course, the Fonz would simply say “Ay!” All of these lines were things that the writers just threw in one time and they took on a life of their own. Each of us who have watched this show, know these sayings and who said them. They were the popular catchphrases of the 70’s, and they have even influenced the way many people remember the 50’s.

Television sitcoms prove, without a shadow of a doubt, the power that sayings can have. Advertisers spend millions of dollars and countless hours finding that perfect catchphrase. There is no doubt that words are powerful things, and if they catch in our mind they can live far beyond the person who coined them. As powerful as slogans or sayings can be there is another side to that coin, to use a popular catchphrase. That is, if they become too common in our speech they lose a lot of their luster. Saying “exactamondo!” like the Fonz might have been the height of cool in 1979, but today it comes off as corny or just confusing. It is still alive today because we remember it well, but it has lost a lot of its meaning.

It suffices to say that, what was once a popular and commonly used saying can easily be turned into a cliché. Webster’s defines cliché as “a word, idea, or saying, weakened from overuse.”

Well, as good as TV is of making sayings and catchphrases there is probably no better source of common sayings in our language than the Bible. Half of the time people do not even know they are saying them. “It is better to give than to receive.” “The writing was on the wall.” “By the skin of your teeth,” are all popular sayings that many people do not know come from the Bible.

However, even Jesus was not immune from having his sayings become clichés, and, in the section of the Sermon on the Mount that we have read for the day, we have two distinct sayings of Jesus Christ, reported in Matthew, Mark, and Luke as well as the non-canonical gospel of Thomas, that have found a separate fate.

First, in addressing the crowds, he says, “You are the salt of the earth.”

Now the original meaning of this phrase, “Salt of the earth”, was meant to imply that those who listened to Christ, who sought to do God’s will were the spice and the zest to the earth. Without them the world would be a joyless place, bland and uninviting.

There is something about that saying that has always rung a bit hollow with me, for my family has always had salt on the dinner table. Salt has always been a part of every meal, so much so, that I see salt, not so much as a seasoning, but as a common ingredient. I can think of few ingredients that are used on so many of my meals. It always seemed to me that if Jesus is trying to say that his followers spice up the world he might have said, “You are the cinnamon of the earth.” “You are the curry powder of the earth.” “You are the four alarm, habanero, chipotle, tabasco sauce of the earth.”

Salt, in Jesus’ time, was a valuable commodity that was traded, but, with all of the spices and flavors we have today, salt just doesn’t seem so spicy or valuable anymore, but salt has another function. Salt was also the main ingredient for preserving food. So calling someone the salt of the earth also meant that they helped to preserve the world as well. This is important because a world in which people did not seek to do God’s will would fall into decay.

Today, we still want to preserve our food, but now we have refrigerators. We rarely use salt as a preservative any more, and, in fact, we hear that salt is not good for preserving our health. All of our doctors tell us to cut out our sodium and lay off the salt to keep our blood pressure down. Calling someone the salt of the earth in Jesus’ time was high praise, indeed, but today, while still it is a compliment, being the salt of the earth hardly has the same luster to it.

We don’t think much of salt but we do still think a great deal about light. Perhaps more now than ever. For now we have the power to harness light in ways that the people of Christ’s time never imagined. At that time the only light on earth was fire. Most of their light came from the sun and the moon.

From spotlights on our houses to flood lights in our ball parks, from longer lasting halogen bulbs in our lamps to neon signs on our streets, more light is our holy grail. Perhaps that is why, of the two sayings of Christ, we are much more likely to call someone the salt of the earth rather than the light of the world.

Both of these are sayings coined by Jesus, and they are placed right alongside one another and serve the same purpose of getting his disciples to understand that they have an important part to play in God's kingdom here on earth. Yet calling someone the salt of the earth in our modern context is a compliment but it hardly is a bold endorsement of one's greatness. To be the salt of the earth no longer means that you give the world its zest, in fact now it means the opposite. It means that you are a good, solid, fundamental, person who the world needs to function properly but who doesn't stand out. It is the kind of thing you say when you want to be nice to someone but you don't want to go overboard.

If one were to be called the light of the world, however, it would seem to be an arrogant, even blasphemous statement. Who thinks so much of themselves that they would claim the title "The light of the world?" Well, many would conclude, were they to take this verse and lift it up out of its context, that because they believe in Christ they are the light of the world, and they are to shine on top of a hill so that all could be like them, but, as always, context is key. Lift a verse out of its context and you can make the Bible support anything, so look at the context in which this passage appears. Jesus just finished extolling the virtues of the meek, the reviled, and the mourners and then tells us to let our light shine.

Well, we may have a light. We may shine with a light of the spirit that makes people happy or comforts the saddened. We may possess a light of the mind that teaches and informs. We may own a light of the body that makes us entertain people with our dances and athletics, but are we the source of this light? Are we the ones who produced this light that Jesus tells us to take out from under a bushel and let it shine from the top of a hill?

No. Douglas Hare, of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, writes in his commentary on Matthew:

The church needs to remember constantly that it is in fact not the light itself but only the window through which the light is to be seen. It is only as the church genuinely proclaims Christ as Lord, that is, not by mouthing theological platitudes but by manifesting his life in its life, that the church can truly be the light of the world.

So when Christ says that we are the light of the world it is only in as much as we reflect the light of God because a Christian is nothing more and nothing less than a mirror by which others may see Christ and the light he brings.

When I was a kid I marveled at the full moon hanging in the night sky. It was radiant and filled the otherwise dark world with its light. I was surprised to find out when I had my first astronomy class, however, that the moon produces no light of its own. Instead it reflects to earth the light of a far off sun bringing it close to us. It absorbs the sun's rays and radiates them to us when the sun has gone so that we might remember that it was here and that it will return. Without the sun the moon is nothing more than a cold, dark rock floating in space, but, in reflecting the light of the sun it is our nighttime companion bringing light to the world.

We can be like that. Though our light does not come from the sun it comes from God, and God's son, Jesus Christ. Without the light of God we would be no better than any animal and possibly worse, for no animal, no matter how vicious, could do as much damage to the world as we humans can do when we are angry at one another.

We are the moon to God's son. The moon does not try to usurp the sun, it does not try to outshine it, and even when it tries to cover it up it discovers that it cannot. It is content to receive the sun's rays and shares them to the world so that we might enjoy its light even when all else is dark.

We should do the same. We should not hear Christ's words, "You are the light of the world" and let that puff us up with pride and boastfulness as if we are the source of light any more than being called the salt of the earth would make us prideful. Instead we should rejoice and be satisfied that God has chosen us to play such an important role in building God's kingdom, because God has asked all who would follow to reflect the light of Christ so that others may see it and feel it, and be so touched by it that they would, in turn, let their light, given to them by God, shine as well.

When we do this, the darkness of the world will be pierced by the light of a billion moons holding, reflecting, and keeping the light of God until the nighttime is as brilliantly illuminated as the daytime, and then, on that happy day, the Son will never set.

Call to Offering

We have been gifted and loved generously by God. In turn, may we share our gifts and love through God's work in the world.

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 Lord, you give us what is good. Bless these gifts we bring, that they might work for goodness in our world until steadfast love and faithfulness meet, righteousness and peace embrace each other, and love covers the whole earth. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Pastor Gena

Every time someone mentions trying to have a Spaghetti Dinner here at Fairhill again, someone else invariably says, with wide eyes, a tilted head and a deep sigh, "You know that takes a lot of work."

It does. It takes a lot of work. And it takes a good recipe. It takes time to find and purchase the ingredients. It takes energy to clean and ready the dinnerware, the serving dishes, the tables and the gathering space. It takes time and know-how and people-power to prepare the food for the crowd coming to eat. It takes people willing to serve food and drink carefully so that all are fed. It takes thoughtfulness and care to help people to feel welcomed and comfortable and to leave satisfied – perhaps even with meatballs and sauce to enjoy later or to share. It takes people willing to stay behind and clean up, putting everything back where it goes so that it's ready for the next time.

We know how to do all of this hard work, church, because we do it every week. We have a good recipe here at this Table. Juice from the fruit of the vine that reminds us of Jesus' sacrifice and our connectedness to him and each other. One loaf from the grain of the land, blessed and broken and shared, just as Jesus' love is. But we have a "recipe" recipes as well. One from a sister Disciples congregation. And we have people who take time to gather ingredients and make the bread that we share – not too crumbly, not likely to stick to the roof of our mouths, not too hard to pick up from the trays, and just sweet enough. We have people who stock up on grape juice, the juice with which our deacons fill the cups in the trays very carefully. The deacons wipe off fingerprints, arrange the trays on the Table, deliver bread and juice to the sound room and to our organist so all can participate in this meal. We welcome any and all to this Table and hope that all feel comfortable here. We serve one another, carefully and with purpose, again making sure that all are fed. And while most of us head out into the world after worship,

nourished and perhaps even with extra love to share, some stay behind to clean up and put everything back where it goes so it's ready for the next Sunday.

It's not the same scale, of course. But it has all of the same movements as a grand Spaghetti Dinner. May we enjoy this time together around this Table this morning as much as we will around the tables downstairs on Saturday evening. And may we work together this week, just as we do every week, serving one another and all who come to feast with us, making sure each person feels welcomed, comfortable and well-fed. And when we are sweaty and frustrated, too hot and annoyed with each other, exhausted and wondering why we ever volunteered for something that "takes a lot of work," let us remember that as much as Jesus is our host here, surely he will be one of our guests on Saturday evening.

Communion Hymn

"Here Am I"

Sam Johnson, organist

Here am I, where underneath the bridges of our winter cities homeless people sleep. Here am I, where in decaying houses little children shiver, crying at the cold. Where are you?

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Jody Mullis

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

This is the promise of the gospel: God already knows you. God already loves you. God has already gifted you. God has already called you. You are invited—to deepen this knowledge, to feast in this love, to cultivate these gifts, and to follow this calling. There is a place for you among the people of God in this community of faith.

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

"Abide with Me"

Sam Johnson, organist

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide; the darkness deepens, God, with me abide;
when other helpers fail, and comforts flee, Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

Go to follow Jesus, who gives us the bread of life. Go to walk in the ways of Christ, who strengthens us in our inner being through the power of the Holy Spirit. Go to serve our living Lord, who gathers the fragments of our lives, that nothing may be lost.



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!

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Sue Donaldson
Benjamin Dube
Connie Faust
Gary Ford
Kathy Moninger-Ford
Barb Graff
Irma Harper
Sheila Harris
Alberta Haught

Aryn Hess
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Ed Jackman
Kari Johnson
Brandon Keenan
Von Lacock
Marylee Lawrence
David Leonard
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Norm McDonough
Dick Moninger
Joe Neckerman
Carmen Oliverio
Peggy Oliverio
Michelle Oneal
Sandy Petry
Dick Pilgun
Betty Riecks
Jeannie Riffle
Joan Riffle
Lori Riffle
Dee Ryan
Mike Ryan

John Samida
Gene Sheller
Valerie Shetler
Doug Smith
Darci Sprowls
Wayne Starnes
Cathy Stewart
Beth Teagarden
Jane 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.