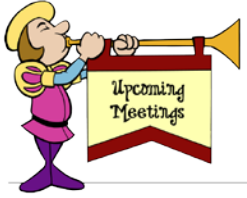


Manor Minutes
Volume 12 Issue 24
June 18, 2021



Prayer Shawl – June 21, 11am Parlor

July Newsletter deadline – June 24

Food Distribution, First Church of the Nazarene – June 26, 10am-11am

Rev. Chris is on vacation from June 19-26. Please contact your Elder,

Pastor Gena or the Church Office with any needs.

Stay up to date, check www.fairhillmanorchurch.org/calendar

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Zoom Worship will continue to be live at 10:15 am each Sunday.

"Join a Meeting" on Zoom at 9:45am using the meeting ID and password.

Meeting ID: **932 4557 4206** Password: **026316**

Fellowship with other "Zoomers" from 9:45 – 10:15am.

Text your prayer concerns to be shared during worship to Pastor Gena (724) 263-0033.

Thank You

“I want to thank my church family for their prayers during my college years. It is very comforting to have a welcoming community in my life.”

-Stephen Rydzak

I wanted to take a moment to thank you, my church family, for your recent outpouring of love. I was so touched to see how many of you braved the cold and rain to attend my Graduation Party. I will never forget that day and all of you who were there to celebrate with me. I was also honored to stand with Stephen Rydzak on Graduation Sunday, it seems like just yesterday that he graduated high school, and there I was with him as he finished college! The book and e-book presented to me by Pastor Gena from the congregation will be invaluable tools as I move forward in my pursuits. Finally, being recognized for my help with Zoom during the pandemic, as well as my input in other capacities, was beyond anything I could have imagined. You all have blessed me with so much over the years and I pray that I remember all that you have taught me and that I continue to make you proud.

-Becca Caldwell

Date has been set for Wild Things game. Fireworks night Fri. Aug. 13, 2021. Tickets will be \$10, (they are regularly \$15) parking is FREE Please let Peggy or Carmen know by Mon. June 21 if you are interested so we will know how many are interested. Call 724-225-5772 and leave a message if no answer. Hope to see a lot of you there....



Fairhill Manor Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)

351 Montgomery Ave.

724-225-8610

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Pastor

Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor

June 20, 2021

Prelude

Audra Allen, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Serena Dube

God's love for us is great! Like a loving parent, God watches over us. God's mercy for us is great! With healing patience and peace, God reaches out to us. Praise be to our loving and merciful God who has called us here to worship!

Opening Hymn

"Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

Audra Allen, organist

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty,
who rules all creation.
O my soul, worship the wellspring
of health and salvation.
All ye who hear,
now to God's temple draw near.
Join me in in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord,
who o'er all things so wonderfully reigneth
who, as on wings of an eagle,
Uplifted, sustaineth,
Hast thou not seen?
All that is needful hath been
Granted in what God ordaineth?

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Pastor Gena and Gene Sheller

Loving and Merciful God, your power is beyond our scope, your wisdom is beyond our understanding. We turn to you in faith, assured that you know our every emotion and are aware of our every need. Today we celebrate and remember our fathers. For fathers who have increased the joy in our lives, we give you thanks. For fathers whose presence is greatly missed, we pause to gratefully remember all they have given to us, providing for us in our growing. For those who have recently lost or who are facing the imminent loss of their fathers, may they find comfort in their grief, hope in their despair, and courage in the love that their fathers have given them. We give thanks, God, for the good men who sustain and support us in our living, who love us no matter what! What a blessing they are to all who know them! We give thanks to you, O God, for all those whose gift for fatherhood is so strong that they have allowed their caring to spill over into the lives of others, providing guidance and stability, nurture and love. How distressing it is for us to consider that not all fathers have been good fathers. We pray, compassionate God, for those whose fathers have been a source of hurt and pain. May their wounds be healed. May they find in you, in us, in others, the nurturing, sustaining love that is needed for their growth and well-being. We recall with sadness fathers who are separated from their children through life choices made by them or others. Give them the insight and wisdom, the courage and perseverance to parent in whatever creative and life-giving ways are open to them. Give them the courage to make the decisions which allow their children to thrive. We remember before you single fathers who struggle to be both parents for their children --to provide all the emotional, physical and spiritual needs without the constant support of a spouse. May they find the strength, the courage and the wisdom for their task. We pray for those fathers whose relationships with their children have been difficult or disappointing. We pray for those who have been denied a chance to be fathers, and for those whose years of parenting have been cut short by the loss of a child. We turn to you, most holy God, knowing, trusting that you can console where consolation seems impossible. May

they receive comfort for their soul and peace and hope for living, that their gifts may be shared with others.

Finally, O God, we rejoice with you, at the many "ne men, who have taken their place as fathers with open hearts, with willingness and joy. And we join all fathers, grandfathers, uncles and friends everywhere in praying that the children they love may be well and happy, a source of joy for years to come. Hear our prayers this day, O God, for all those we have mentioned aloud and those we name now in our hearts..... Give us such assurance of your love that your love may spill from us into the lives of others. We pray now in the name of Jesus, who found the qualities of a loving father in you. We pray together as he taught us...

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:

“Lord, Listen to your Children Praying”

Lord, listen to your children praying, Lord, send your spirit in this place;

Lord, listen to your children praying, send us love, send us pow’r, send us grace.

First Scripture Reading

Job 38: 1-11

J.C. Leasure

Special Music

“Swing Low, Sweet Chariot”

Jody Mullis

Children’s Message

Pastor Gena

I am going to give you some descriptions, and I want you to tell me all the people who come to mind for you. It can be more than one person. And since today is Father’s Day, let’s try to think of those people in our lives who identify as men who would fit these descriptions. Someone who loves you even when you make mistakes. A person who plays games with you and likes to have fun with you. Someone who helps you get the things you need – enough food to eat, clothes to wear, a bed to sleep in. A person who listens, really listens to you talk about your day or talk about a problem you’re having with a friend or just talk about something really exciting that happened. Someone who guides you and corrects you when you’re doing the wrong thing. A person who teaches you how to do things, maybe to throw a baseball, or maybe to draw a picture or maybe how to do laundry or maybe how to ride a bike. Someone who spends time with you. A person who comforts you when you are sad or hurt or sick. Someone who makes you feel safe. A person who you know cares about you and wants what is best for you. Someone who you know is proud of you. Who came to mind? For some of you, it was your dad. Or your grandfather. Maybe it was a teacher or a friend. These are all of the people that we celebrate today on Father’s Day. Because all of them are like fathers to us. Sometimes a day like today might feel sad to us because we miss our dad or we don’t really know our dad or our dad isn’t able to love us the way he should. We might feel kind of le& out or confused about what we are supposed to be celebrating. But we have so many people who are like fathers to us, even if our fathers are the best ever!

It’s so cool because these guys are showing us just a little bit what God is like. God is like a parent to us. We are God’s children. We belong to God. God cares for us, comforts us, guides us, corrects us, and wants what is best for us. God listens, God forgives us. Today, let’s celebrate all of these “fathers” and how they show us God’s love for us. Tell them thank you for caring about you and loving you no matter what. Tell them thank you for correcting you even when you don’t like it - so that you can learn to go the right way. Tell them thank you for teaching you and listening to you. Tell them thank you for showing you what God’s love is like. Dear God, thank you for loving us. Thank you for all of the people in our lives who show us how to love like you do. Thank you for their wisdom and guidance, for their patience and for the fun we have with them. Please bless everyone who is like a father to us today. Amen.

Second Scripture Reading

Mark 4: 35-41

Pastor Gena

Sometimes storms come up quickly.

My neighbor said it best about the storm we had Monday afternoon – “I didn’t know that was coming! That wind and everything seemed to come out of nowhere.”

That was how I experienced it too. First I heard loud claps of thunder, and I thought, wow that’s pretty close. Then I could hear that the wind was really blowing. When I looked out my window, I saw rain coming down so hard that it obscured anything beyond the pine trees a few feet away that were already bending way over in the wind. I wondered for a moment if they would hold up in such strong wind. Water was already rushing down the brick street on the other side of the house, creating a huge swell of water for cars on North Avenue to navigate through. Then the hail started hitting the north side of the house, pinging off the windows.

Moment by moment I was realizing just how powerful this storm was. I pulled up the radar on my phone. Sure enough there was a red severe thunderstorm warning. For just a moment, that feeling of being out of control and out of my depth swept over me. Questions that weren’t completely rational pelted my mind. Would the house be ok? Would Isaac be ok at the LeMoyné Center where he was? Would I be able to get to him to pick him up?

Jesus’ disciples – at least those who were fishermen by trade – were not new to the Sea of Galilee, and certainly not new to its unpredictable storms. When we studied this passage in Tween Team this year, we wondered how a lake could have such violent storms. We learned that it is the geography of the Sea of Galilee that creates the conditions that make sudden and severe storms possible. The Sea of Galilee lies 680 feet below sea level while the hills on its east side reach 2000 feet high. The cool, dry air from those eastern heights contrasts with warm, moist air directly around the sea. When the contrasting air masses meet, storms arise quickly and without warning.

As local fishermen, Peter, James, John and Andrew would have been intimately familiar with the unpredictable weather on the Sea, including violent storms, and how to handle them. That they panic and wake Jesus up from a much-needed nap after a long day of teaching and healing crowds of people tells us that this particular storm was extraordinarily severe. If the storm was out of even their wheelhouse, imagine how the other disciples who weren’t fisherman felt in that boat in the midst of that storm!

When the disciples wake Jesus up, they ask him a question that we too ask of those who seem to care about our welfare and have some power to change our circumstances for us: “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?”

Even this early in their journey with Jesus, the disciples already know that he cares for people and that Jesus is able bring wholeness out of brokenness and despair. After all, they had seen Jesus rebuke an unclean spirit, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!” (Mark 1:21-28). And the unclean spirit had obeyed Jesus, much to the amazement of all in the synagogue that day. After all, Jesus had cured a man of leprosy, caused a paralytic to walk again, and restored a man’s withered hand. So no wonder the disciples ask Jesus, “Do you not care that we are perishing?”

The disciples know that Jesus cares, but they had no idea the extent of his power yet. Power over diseases and demons, yes. But power over the natural elements that they had been wrestling with their whole lives? Who is this? The disciples are left in even more fear of this one who can calm a storm with his words than even their fear of the storm itself. They know storms. But, who is this?

In the midst of their mounting fear, Jesus asks the disciples a question that haunts us all in our own walks of faith: “Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?” Some people interpret this to mean that if we have enough faith, we shouldn’t have storms at all in our lives. Some claim that Jesus always calms the storms of those who have enough faith. Some of us who do suffer the storms of life blame ourselves for not having enough faith. We even explain others’ misfortune with their lack of faith. Perhaps most tragically, those of us who have weathered very few storms and have plenty of what we need in life chalk up our good fortune to our stellar faith.

The original readers of Mark’s gospel would have been very unlikely to make these naïve, harmful conclusions about how life’s storms correspond with faith. Mark wrote his gospel, this good news, for a Jewish Christian community living in Rome in the tumultuous early 70s. That first century church was in a different boat in the midst of a different but similarly violent storm.

Mark’s audience had known storms; they’d been through a lot of them. You see, the folks piled in this early 70s model boat already knew the end of the story - this man Jesus, who Mark describes as calming a storm with his words and who was the pinnacle of faith in God, also ended up dead on a Roman cross. They knew that the apostle Paul, who faithfully and tirelessly carried the gospel to their very city of Rome, had been martyred. They knew that Peter, who was in that first boat on the Sea of Galilee and became the rock upon which the church was built, had just recently been martyred in the persecutions of the Emperor Nero. They knew that Rome had just conquered and destroyed the holy city of Jerusalem and the Temple there.

And now the storm was coming to touch them personally, and it was more violent than ever. Rome was in the process of crushing the Jewish community after an insurrection. So, the cries of Jesus’ disciples in the boat in the storm on the Sea of Galilee are the cries of Mark’s community too: “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?!”

Today’s readings are full of storms. In our first reading, we find Job in the midst of a storm too. His storm started in a conversation between God and one of God’s servants called the Accuser. God had been bragging about Job - that Job was an upright man, faithful in worship - when the Accuser replied, ‘well, of course Job is! Who wouldn’t worship you and live according to your ways if they have seven sons and three daughters, seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred donkeys and many servants? You’ve put a hedge up around Job to keep him safe and happy. What happens when you take down a little of that hedge? Will Job still worship you then?’ Ok, ok, God said. You can take away some of what Job has, but don’t touch Job himself.

And so Job’s storm began to whip up. Some of his animals were carried off by raiders while the rest are consumed by a great fire from heaven. All of Job’s servants were killed in the process. And the storm didn’t stop there. Job’s children were eating together in the oldest son’s house when suddenly a great wind came across the desert, struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people and all of Job’s children died. Just like that, Job everything.

God’s servant, the Accuser, wasn’t surprised that Job still worshipped God. ‘Take away his health and then see what happens.’ In other words, remove his last layer of protection. So God allowed the Accuser to inflict Job with sores from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head.

Now Job knew that he hadn’t done anything wrong – and we as the readers know that Job hadn’t done anything wrong. Job was an upright man who worshipped God and followed God. God even had bragged about Job’s faithfulness. And yet Job suffered. Job couldn’t have done anything differently to

have avoided this calamity. It was a storm that came from nowhere and was more than he was prepared for, more than he could handle.

Job's friends came to comfort him. After a time of silence, they decided to be helpful and started trying to find an explanation for why this terrible thing was happening to their upright friend Job. 'You must have sinned and didn't realize it, Job. Who can truly be sinless before God after all? You must purify yourself so God can forgive you and bring you back into blessing.' His friends even said, 'why do you keep worshipping God if this is the thanks you get? What's the point of being faithful if you are just going to suffer anyway? It doesn't pay.'

Job's friends were speaking from within the tradition of nearly the whole Old Testament and many Christians today: you are suffering because you did not obey God. If you obey and follow God, you will be blessed. If you are suffering, you must have done something wrong.

Job argues vehemently with his friends for thirty-five chapters. He refuses to believe that this is how God works. He knows he is innocent and yet he is suffering. There must be a different explanation. If only he could have a face-to-face talk with God and settle this.

It is not until our text in the thirty-eighth chapter of Job that God finally speaks – out of a whirlwind, a storm. God speaks for several chapters, but we don't ever get the clear answers we are looking for. God doesn't answer directly the question that all of us want answered: why do good people suffer?

So, what does God say? God starts by heavily refuting Job's idea that God's whole purpose in creating light was just to mask the darkness and fool us all. The ultimate purpose of creation is not darkness but light, God says. God doesn't hem us in in safety from the darkness and evil, but God did restrict the darkness and the chaos of the sea somewhat by creating light and a space for us to live. While darkness and evil are still present in creation, they do not have complete or free reign.

In God's recounting of creation in Job, people are not counted among the creatures as in Genesis. Instead, people, created in the image of God, have not just a caretaking duty over the rest of creation, but a co-creating function together with God. This means that we have the work together with God of bringing more and more light into creation and further hemming in the darkness, restricting evil, bringing order to chaos. And we can bring more and more light into creation – including into ourselves - with freedom and abandon. We don't have to wait until people measure up or do the right thing. We can co-create more light so that the darkness recedes.

Maybe that means working to create vaccines to hem in a killer virus. Maybe that means reaching out to each other in new and creative ways in order to push back the darkness just a little bit in someone's life. Maybe it means holding someone's hand as they lay dying, somehow easing the burden and increasing the good just a little.

Maybe that means listening to, really getting to know someone with a different life experience from us – and honoring their story as a human being made in the image of God. Maybe a woman; maybe someone who is gay or transgender; maybe someone who is African American; maybe someone who entered this country illegally. Maybe that means giving a hand to someone who started life way back of the starting line because the family they were born into, the color of the skin they were given, the country they found themselves. Maybe that means honoring and remembering the stories of those who were brought to this country against their will and worked for nothing but pain. Maybe that means working to level the playing field for their descendants who are still climbing the long, slow road to dignity and equality.

Why do bad things happen to good people? Why do good things happen to bad people? These stories would seem to say that good things happen to everyone sometimes and bad things happen to everybody sometimes. Our work is not to be about trying to assign blame and taking credit where it's not due. Our work is to be about increasing the good and hemming in the evil – even inside each one of us.

So what happens when the darkness touches us? When COVID-19 comes and crowds out our life. When an accident takes our 19-year-old son from us? When our bodies can't move the way we want them to? When our minds slowly fail us? When the cancer diagnosis comes? Does this mean that we've done something wrong? That has nothing to do with it. Bad and good things happen. So, within each situation that we face, how can we be God's co-creators and increase the goodness? Calm the storm? Create a pocket of peace? So that the difficulty will fade just a little bit?

I asked Ron Faust, the coach of the Wash High boys' basketball team how the boys are doing in the midst of their former teammate Caleb Jackson's death, the young man who lost his life in a motorcycle accident on May 13. Coach Faust put his hands in his pockets and stood in silence for some time. "What can you say?" he said. "There is no way to explain it. You wish you could do more for each kid, to keep each one of them safe, but you can't put them in a bubble. The guys on the team are all friends, so they have each other. They talk and help one another through." Just a little more light, and the darkness recedes ever, ever so slightly.

Mark's community knows that faith in God doesn't prevent suffering from entering our lives. They've seen that first-hand just as Job did. But they have another piece of information that the disciples in the boat in that storm on the Sea of Galilee that evening didn't have. Faith in God didn't keep Jesus from suffering, from dying on the cross. But evil and darkness couldn't keep him from living again either.

Jesus is still in the boat with us. Praise God. And God is in the conversation with us through the valley of the shadow of death and into new life in which there will be no darkness. Nothing can separate us from God and God's love – not death and certainly not our questions.

Call to Offering

Serena Dube

We are invited, even urged, to open our hearts wide and to place no boundaries on our affection for God's people. Let us then share generously what we have and who we are with others.

Doxology

Dedication of Offering Prayer

Pastor Gena

How grateful we are, O God, that you call us to serve with the Holy Spirit, who fills us with patience and generosity and genuine love. We pray that all we return to you will be used faithfully in ministry to the world. We ask this in the name of Christ. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Pastor Gena

This Table stands as a witness to the fact that nothing separates us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Not our suffering. Not our successes. Not our pain. Not even death. As we share this meal together today, may Jesus come and hold your hand through whatever struggle you are having. May you sense his peace and the good news that he is still in the boat with us, never leaving us alone in our struggles.

Communion Hymn*“Bread of the World, in Mercy Broken”*

Audra Allen, organist

Bread of the world in mercy broken,
 wine of the soul in mercy shed,
 by whom the words of life were spoken,
 and in whose death our sins are dead:

Look on the heart by sorrow broken,
 look on the tears by sinners shed;
 and by thy feast to us the token
 that by thy grace our souls are fed.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Cara Hritz

Eternal God, You have been so good to us. In a time when so much feels uncertain, you have remained steadfast. In a world that feels rushed, you are peaceful and still. When everything around us seems so loud, you speak softly. As we gather together today, let us open our hearts to hear your voice. Let this bread and cup fill us with your overwhelming love and kindness. Let us remember the sacrifice you made sending your son to die for us. 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.

Sharing in Communion**Closing Hymn #628***“Precious Lord, Take My Hand”*

Jody Mullis, pianist

Precious Lord, take my hand, lead me on,
 let me stand, I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;
 through the storm, through the night,
 lead me on to the light:

When my way grows drear, precious Lord,
 linger near, when my life is almost gone,
 hear my cry, hear my call, hold my hand lest I fall

Refrain: Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.

Benediction

Pastor Gena

May the power of God uphold you, the peace of Christ rest upon you, and the Holy Spirit defend you, now and always.

Previous Worship services can also be found on the Church website or on YouTube,
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLmlH3qzih_fzHCC2X0Jhc_sfniJ7C1O3X



Do you have a prayer request or need help? Please feel free to contact 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 Pastor Gena. We are One Body in Christ!

Southmont-Presbyterian Medical Center

Bill Behrens Rm 437
835 S Main Street
Washington PA 15301

Homebound Members:

Phyllis Cimino Mrs Mary McDonough
317 Wellness Way 949 Bruce Street
Strabane Trails #325 Washington PA 15301
Washington PA 15301

Don Ainsley
Ed Alexy
Gary Anderson
Avery Allen
Donna Bakaitis
Tom Barnhart
Bill Behrens
Bristol Allan Berry
Abby Blanchard
Mark & Susan Britko
Mabel Brooks
Wanda Chicone
John Collar
Emily Cope Robinson
Coretta and family
Ruth Cox
Irma Davis
Sue Donaldson
Jessica Duke
Libby Eberhard
Fred Engle
Jay Freudenberg
Jett Fuller
Lois Gayman
Joe Greene
Bonnie Gregg

Judy Grover
Sloan Amelia Hagy
Kyle Hallam
Connie Hanning
Judy Hanning
Sandy Harton
Aryn Hess
Ed & Harriet Jackman
Family of Caleb Jackson
Dallas Jacobovitz
Bob Lanning
Ty, Kerri, Allie, Ivy &
 Ty James Lacock
Von Lacock
Cheryl Leach
Libby LeDuff
Frank Lippert
Lee & Betsy Martin
Dave McConnell
Don Melvin
Michaela Nixon
Ruth Mikuta
Georgette Murray
Karen Palfreyman
Deborah Patterson
Betty & Charles Riecks

Betty Jo Riggle
Jim and Barb Roupe
John Shadeck
Connie Sheller
Theresa Shape
Hannah Simpson
Doug and Tracy Smith
Cathy Stewart
John Stewart
Beth Teagarden
Nadine Teagarden
Gary Weaver
Nikki Wells
Tom Williams
Chuck & Mary Wiseman
Sarah Wittenberg
Marcie Yocum
Preparing for Baptism – Nyka Rash

In the Military

Lance Dague
Terrell McClain
Brandon Lipscomb
Daniel Robinson
Shawn Dallatore
Andrew Gregg
Zachary Keene
Sarah Lipscomb
Travis Ringer
Emily Chase
Dylan Demain