

Manor Minutes
Volume 17 Issue 25
June 19, 2026

- Wild Things Game – June 26, 7pm

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Rev. Chris is on vacation June 22-27. **Karen Thomas** is on vacation June 18 – July 5. While Karen is away we will not be publishing the Manor Minutes. During this time if you are in need of anything, please contact Pastor Gena, your Elder or leave a message on the office phone (724) 225-8610.



Board Reports are due July 6.

Board Meeting July 8.



If there is a hymn that is near and dear to you and hasn't been sung in awhile, contact Rev. Chris or the Church Office. We will try to sing it during the summer.



Ronald McDonald House Charities®

McDonald's is doing a **pop tab collection** to benefit the Ronald McDonald Houses in Pittsburgh and Morgantown. You can fill a happy meal box with pop tabs and take to any Washington, PA restaurant (Chestnut, Jefferson, and Trinity Point) for a free happy meal in return. FMCC will have a box in the Narthex for tabs.

Father's Day Trivia

- **Question:** When is Father's Day celebrated in the U.S.?
- **Answer:** The third Sunday in June. Many other countries, including The U.K., Mexico, Ireland, France, Greece, China and Japan also celebrate it on this day
- **Question:** Which U.S. president was the first to commemorate Father's Day?
- **Answer:** Woodrow Wilson
- **Question:** Which President signed a law establishing Father's Day as a national holiday in 1972?
- **Answer:** Richard Nixon
- **Question:** What year was the first Father's Day celebrated in the U.S.?
- **Answer:** 1910



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

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

June 21, 2026 – 10:15am

Prelude

Sam Johnson, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Isaac Mayen

Leader: The Holy Spirit calls us to trust God's steadfast love.

People: With our ancestor Abraham, we say: "Here I am."

Leader: The Holy One calls us to be guided by prophets.

People: With the first followers of Jesus, we say: "Here I am."

Leader: Jesus Christ calls us into eternal life.

People: With the Gospel writers, we say: "Here I am."

All: Let us worship the God who calls us. Amen.

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.

Recognition of New 50-Year Members – Judy Hanning, Bette Jo Puckarich, Steve Skariot, Darci Sprowls

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Rev. Stillwell

Loving God, your presence in our lives is a joy to the heart and a blessing to the spirit. Your movement in our midst is like a basket of summer fruit—a delight to the eye and a pleasure to the tongue. Speak to us your words of life, that we may sit at your feet and know that we are yours.

When the winds of life buffet us, O God, we need your hand to hold us and your love to make us whole. Speak words of peace to our aching hearts, that we might find the courage to embrace the fullness of life you place before us. Correct our sight when our vision fades, and lead in right paths when we lose our way.

We come into this holy space, O God of the ages, asking for your blessing,
only to find that the abundance of your love is already around us.

Open our eyes to see the blessing of your creation in the beauty all around us.
Open our ears to hear the blessing of your word as it is proclaimed in story and song this day.
Open our hearts to experience the blessing of faith through the gentle touch of a friend
or the supportive smile of a stranger.
Open our doors, that we may become vessels of your blessing to a world still in need of salvation.
All this we pray in the name of Jesus Christ. 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

Exodus 3:7-15

Connie Sheller

Special Music

“Day by Day”

Jim Cope

Children’s Message

Rev. Stillwell

In the Book of Exodus, we read the story of God meeting Moses at the burning bush. There, God said to him, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of your ancestors, and I want you to go to Pharaoh and direct him to release my people from slavery.”

But Moses kept asking him, “Who are you?” “If I come to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” God said to Moses, “I am who I am—thus you shall say to the Israelites, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

God wanted to be known simply as the great “I AM.” When Moses then asked, well, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh?” God replied, “I will be with you.” That is, we, who are all made in the image of God, are little “I ams,” and thus we are defined.

Many of the words we use to describe ourselves are just plain fact: I can say “I am an adult” All of you could say “I am a child”, but we could also describe ourselves in other ways. We might say, “I am lazy”, “I am shy”, “I am stupid”, or “I am clumsy”. Those are very negative declarations aren’t they? Those types of statements tend to shape what we are or who we become. What if you don’t want to become any of those, what can you do?

Here’s a simple solution: simply make new, positive declarations. By re-naming ourselves, we enlarge the space for God to help us to become who we say we are: “I am a child of God”. “I am a kind person”. “I am a generous person, and I am filled with joy, hope, peace and love.” Once you believe that, it will be easier to live that way.

Of course, we may fail at times. But, here is another declaration: “I am NOT a quitter”. When I fall down, I don’t stay there. I get right back up and keep trying. You can be whatever you have the courage to take a stand for. Remember: “I am.”

Dear Lord, we know that you are the Great “I AM.” Help us to remember that we are little “I ams” and to make positive declarations on our lives. Amen.

Second Scripture Reading

John 1:1-14

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

“And The Word Became Flesh”

Rev. Chris Stillwell

The ability to question is one of the first things we human beings learn. We learn how to ask about something because questioning is the first tool for learning. Children ask, what makes the wind blow,

where does lightning come from, where does the sun go at night? Every question, once answered, is preceded by a series of follow-up questions all begging for more answers. But the desire for knowledge and the propensity to ask questions does not stop at youth. On the contrary, for as we get older, we discover the ultimate truth about life, and that is, the more we learn, the less we know.

As we become more and more aware of all that there is to know we realize just how little knowledge we actually do possess and so the questions increase. Is there life on other planets? How did the universe begin? Why do people suffer? What happens when we die? And of course there are the really hard questions like, how do I fill out this tax form, or how does this computer work? There are a lot of hard questions to answer in this world, so many, in fact, that it seems the truly wise person is the one who has more questions than answers. Above all of these ponderous puzzles is the one question that sticks in the back of our minds from the very first time we are aware of our own existence to the very last breath we draw, and that is, “What is God like?”

We each have in our heads some notion of what God is like, and often it is the classic image of the large man with a white beard, but the question, “what is God like”, goes beyond physical appearance. There is the nature of God to consider. Not only God’s form and face, but God’s personality, God’s desires, and God’s presence. Although humans are made in God’s image, we often imagine God in our own. Most cultures of the west think of God with the white beard because that is what kings looked like. Other cultures envisioned God as the sun, because it made the crops grow, and the ancient Egyptians, who valued secrecy and mystery, thought God must be like a cat.

But as much as these images have tried to quench our thirst for knowledge of God, they all have their faults. If God is an old man with a long white beard, he doesn’t have as much energy as a God would need, and if we believe that we are made in God’s image, this image leaves out more than half the world. If God is the sun or the rain then how do we know that God is still with us at night or on cloudy days? And if God is like my cat, then she is cute, fat, and can’t listen to our prayers because she has no time for anything other than sleeping, eating, and preening.

If, indeed, we are created in the image of God, then what is God like?

The Bible attempts to answer that question, but, as anyone who has ever tried to grasp the infinite wisdom of God knows, there is only so much that can be done with words, but it was words that first tried to describe what God was like when God gave the law to the Israelites on Mt. Sinai. These laws tried to create a people, a religion, a nation of people living God’s will and treating one another as God would treat them. The commandments to honor and respect one another indicated that God was respect. The demands that one person remit another for harm done by them, showed that God was just and fair. The exhortations to follow the laws showed that God was demanding and exacting. The instructions for sacrifice and proper worship showed that God was above human beings and yet interacted with them.

These laws, which guided the chosen people for centuries in the wilderness, in their kingdom, in their exile, and during their occupation, revealed only a little of what God was truly like. When Moses spoke with God concerning these laws he asked to see the divine face. This God would not allow, but did condescend to pass before Moses allowing him to glimpse the back of the divine presence. Although this story implies that God has some sort of form, still we know little of what it is.

So, we cannot see God, but we can still try to know “what is this God like?” This is what the John tried to do in writing the fourth gospel that bears his name. The other gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, had already been written proclaiming that God did exist and had become incarnate in the form of Jesus Christ. What separates the gospel of John from the others is its attempt to answer the question “what is God like?”

The gospel is the last of the four written, about 70 years after Christ’s life on earth. The community in which John lived, known as the Johannine community, told stories of Jesus even though most of them had

never met him face to face. They knew that God was real because of how their faith, in the stories that they told one another, affected their lives.

Many of them knew the law and from it they learned a great deal about God, but from Jesus they learned a great deal more. Whereas before they knew that God demanded obedience and justice, now they also knew that God forgave shortcomings and extended mercy to all. Because of these wonderful new aspects of God, they had come to know John wrote their stories down, “so that many would believe that Jesus is the Messiah”.

Here are the words of the introduction to John’s gospel:

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth. ¹⁶From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father’s heart, who has made him known.

The word, here means the word of God, the very same word that spoke the world into creation, and it became flesh in Jesus Christ. In other words, God became flesh so that we might see God’s glory. The gospel of John acknowledges that God was revealed in the law of Moses, but goes on to claim that more about God was revealed in Christ. Indeed, it is Christ who has made God known.

But this leads us to one more question, “How did Jesus reveal God to us”? First there were his teachings, which did not contradict the law but fulfilled it as he claimed. Then there were his actions. He taught us of God’s grace by forgiving those who wronged him, by being merciful and compassionate to those who had suffered because of other’s self-righteousness or selfishness. He taught us of God’s justice by healing and feeding, and he taught us of God’s love by extending love to all.

But still he revealed more of the image of God. He showed us more about who God is, what God is, and just what God does in our world. Jesus did not do this literally, such as drawing pictures to show what God was like, for God is above our complete understanding. Instead, Jesus used metaphors and similes to describe what God is like.

Metaphors attribute the qualities of one object on to another to help a person get a better understanding of what it is like. If someone describes a person as being strong as steel, well, they may not be that strong, but you know that they are pretty strong.

In the gospel of John, Jesus uses a series of metaphors that attempt to put God’s infinite nature in simple words. Jesus says, I am the true vine . . . , I am the living water . . . I am the bread of life . . . I am the true light . . . I am the good shepherd. Obviously, God is much more than bread or water, but these metaphors help to bring the esoteric, ambiguous nature of God, into shape using the elements of everyday human life.

One theologian wrote of this gospel,

The Gospel of John may well represent the richest mine for spiritual excavation that is found in the Christian tradition, but it surely is also the least literal, least objective piece of Christian writing in the Bible. Yet I also believe that this Gospel writer understood Jesus and his ultimate meaning better than any other. The 4th Gospel, born out of contemplation and meditation on the meaning of Jesus, was at one and the same time the least literal and the most accurate.

In this way the gospel of John stands apart from the other gospels. It includes many stories and sayings that do not appear in the other three, and it often does not get the attention it deserves. This summer I will focus upon it, unpacking the metaphors Jesus uses to answer the question, “what is God like?” Each time

Jesus says, I am . . . (the bread of life for instance) there is a story that demonstrates what being (the bread of life) looks like in our world.

When God revealed the divine name to Moses in Exodus God said, “I Am who I Am. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I Am has sent me to you.’ Thus, in Judaism, “I Am” is unquestionably understood as a name for God. Whenever Jesus made an “I am” statement in which He claimed attributes of deity, he was identifying himself as God.

These metaphors, therefore, are essential for a full understanding of the gospel. We have heard the skeleton of the gospel; the bones upon which the word of God is set. These bones are the basic beliefs of the gospel, that Jesus was the Messiah, the incarnate son of God, that he taught us to love one another, and he was crucified and rose again.

But these sayings of Jesus found in the gospel of John reveal the “fullness of God”, as the gospel of John puts it, and places flesh upon the bones of the gospel by giving us a glimpse into the nature of God and what the kingdom of God might look like. Join with me this summer, each Sunday until September, as we examine and seek to understand how the word became flesh so that we might find an answer to the question, “What is God like?”

Call to Offering

Chuck Riggie

God heard our supplications when we cried out for help. What can we give in return? Our praises and prayers of thanksgiving? Our time and talents? Our tithes and offerings? Our whole lives? Let us give whatever we can with a sincere heart.

***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, as we bring our tithes and offerings to you this morning, we acknowledge that every good gift comes from your hand. May these gifts reflect our gratitude for your light and your grace. Help us to use these gifts to spread your love in our world. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Pastor Gena

I was stopped in my tracks by a bush this week. It wasn't a bush with a flame of fire coming out of it, not a bush ablaze but not consumed. It was, however, a bush that caused me to say, “I must turn aside and look at this great sight.” God did not call to me from the bush, but the black raspberries on it did. What a find! I couldn't believe it! And this early in the season! I hadn't even thought to look for them yet. Free to pick and eat, and pick and eat I did.

Oh, the joy of a ripe black raspberry! Oh, the suffering of a poison ivy rash! I have sacrificed more than one summer to all-consuming poison ivy rashes for the deliciousness of wild black raspberries. Black raspberries straight from the bush. Black raspberries on ice cream. Black raspberry pie. Black raspberry jelly that brings me that wonderful taste all year long.

Now, I know I can go and actually pick cultivated black raspberries at a couple farms in our area. The raspberries are just as good as and usually much bigger than the wild ones. I can pick there for days without a whiff of poison ivy, but there's nothing like the joy of spotting a ripe black raspberry in the wild. O, the joy of knowing the spots to go back to year after year. O, the joy of Dad saying he saw some black raspberries while driving around. Just the promise of them is a delight. After all, that joy is the joy of my grandmother, my mother, my father and me. An “around the 4th of July” tradition of searching for,

finding, picking, washing and enjoying black raspberries. It connects me to good, tasty, sweaty, itchy memories with people I love.

So too during those times in life when I've been away from this meal that we share together. When I find myself back around a communion table, it's a joy to be connected to the story again. Sometimes it's in a place I expected and sometimes it's in the last place I expected. But the story is the same – the story of one who sacrificed much more than poison ivy. The story of the many who have gathered around tables like this throughout time and place to remember one who loves us so much and still calls us family, offering us peace and belonging and joy. Oh, the joy of unexpected blessings! You are welcome to this Table.

Communion Hymn

“Lord, I Want to Be a Christian”

Sam Johnson, organist

Lord, I want to be a Christian in-a my heart, in-a my heart, Lord, I want to be a Christian in-a my heart. In-a my heart, in-a my heart, Lord, I want to be a Christian in-a my heart.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Jackie Nelson

Holy Eternal God, today we celebrate our earthly fathers, who have the responsibility of leading, protecting and nurturing their families. Happy Father's Day to you! Thank you for Your endless love. You are the ultimate example of a perfect, steadfast, father.

In the scriptures today, You spoke to Moses from the burning bush. You declared that You have seen the misery and heard the cries of the Israelites in Egypt and You have a plan to rescue them and lead them to a new land. When Moses asked Your name, You told Moses, My name is "I AM"!

"I AM" sees, "I AM" hears, "I AM" knows! "I AM", has a plan for rescue. "I AM"! Not I was or I used to be. "I AM"! You are still "I AM", from Adam, through Moses, through generation after generation to us right here today and the generations to follow. We share this bread and this cup symbolizing the now as an act of love and an act of trust. We believe You are who you say you are and you saw our misery and had a plan for rescue.

Thank you for Jesus, our rescue. Holy Spirit, bless us as we share together and bless fathers with wisdom, grace and renewed strength as they model Your heart to their children.

In Jesus Holy 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

“Here I Am, Lord”

Sam Johnson, organist

I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry. All who dwell in deepest sin my hand will save. I who made the stars of night, I will make their darkness bright. Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send? Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night. I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

With prophets and teachers, and all who seek to do the will of God— let us go forth to fill the empty cups of all who ask; let us give in the name of the Breath of Resurrection, the Wellspring of Grace, the Teacher of Truth: the One, Triune God, who gives eternal life.



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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Vanessa & John Berezney
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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
Dick Moninger
Joe Neckerman
Carmen Oliverio
Peggy Oliverio
Michelle Oneal
Sandy Petry
Jeannie Riffle
Joan Riffle
Lori Riffle
Mike Ryan
Valerie Shetler
Doug Smith
Darci 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.