Manor Minutes Volume 16 Issue 40 October 3, 2025

- Dartball October 7, 7pm @ St James
- Elders Meeting October 8, 5:30pm
- Calling Commission October 8, 6:30pm
- Choir Practice October 9, 6:30 PM

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



This Sunday, October 5, immediately after worship



October 26, 2pm in the parking lot Sign up in the Narthex if you are decorating your car or would like to donate cookies and/or candy for this fun event.

The Bethany Class will meet at Eat'n Park on Tuesday, October 28 at noon for lunch.



November 9
6pm
Featuring:
Pastor Betty Riecks
Sam Johnson
Dan Baker
Ambassadors for Christ

The Reconciliation Ministry Special Offering Sunday, October continues this The Reconciliation Ministry strengthens our capacity to be remembered, reconnected, and restored as beloved by disrupting racism oppression. You may give to this ministry by using the envelope included in the bulletin, on Givelify directly or to: https://reconciliationministry.org/give/

Our <u>Drive-Thru Nativity</u> will be Saturday and Sunday, <u>December 13 and 14</u>. Please mark your calendars now to save both dates. We will need 50 people to be characters and more people to help in many different ways to make this a great community event. Please ask relatives, neighbors and friends to participate. Give Connie their contact information if they can help. Thank you very much!





Gift cards available for purchase this week:

- Bath & Body Works (1)
- Dick's Sporting Goods (1)
- Jimmy John's (1)
- Old Navy (2)
- Texas Roadhouse (2)

Each gift card has \$25 loaded on them. The church earns an average of 10% on each card sold. Please see Pastor Gena after worship if you would like to purchase a card or 2 ©.



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

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

October 5, 2025 – 10:15am

Prelude Sam Johnson, organist

Welcome Pastor Gena

Stewardship Campaign Minute

Jerry Puskarich

Call to Worship Kevin Puskarich

Leader: Brothers and sisters, we come from many houses. Welcome to this household,

the house of God.

People: Here we hear words that revive. Here we experience grace that makes our heart

glad.

Leader: God offers light to our eyes.

People: Christ brings wisdom to our hearts and minds.

Leader: God's teachings are sweeter than honey— People: Even honey dripping off the honeycomb!

Leader: They are more precious than gold—

People: Even tons of pure gold!

All: Brothers and sisters, welcome to the house of God!

Opening Hymn

"This Is the Day"

Jody Mullis, pianist

This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made, that the Lord has made; we will rejoice, we will rejoice and be glad in it, and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Pastor Gena

God of brilliant sunsets and shining rainbows, God of goldenrod and glowing autumn leaves, God of all the blues of sunlit seas, God of all the shades of green in bush and field, God of people, brown and amber, pink and ebony; artistic and athletic, practical and visionary, compassionate and laughter-bringing, God who colors us a world of variety, we thank you that you have made each of us unique, that you call us to contribute our special colors to the life around us. We come to you in thanksgiving and worship this day.

Today, God, we confess our fumblings and failures in accomplishing unity, as we set aside yet another day to remind ourselves of this task. On this World Communion Sunday, give us eyes to recognize your reflection in the eyes of Christians everywhere. Give us a mind to accept and celebrate our differences. Give us a heart big enough to love your children everywhere. We thank you for setting a table with space enough for us all! Help us to make a room, move over and pull up a chair for everyone.

Thank you for your Spirit which sustains our world, connecting us more surely than any worldwide internet, binding us together more closely than any cable could. Thank you for the beauty of the church

with all its denominations, with people of every color, nation, and culture. Thank you for the beautiful music of languages and our ability to learn them. Thank you for the beauty of worship in many forms. Thank you for beauty of compassion which moves us to action when we see our brothers and sisters in need, whether they be next door or on the other side of the globe.

In this spirit of beauty, today we pray for those who are hungry or afraid... We pray for those who face violence... We pray for those who are working for peace, and for those who need to work for peace... We call to mind the people of one country - whether a country of our heritage, a country we have visited, or a country we hear about in the news - and we pray for the people of that country now... We pray for those we know who are in special need of your care this morning...

Lord, you are always doing a new thing in our world; you are working in ways we can hardly imagine. Thank you for your vision, which is far greater than our own. Help us to put our trust in you, our Creator, our Redeemer, our Sustainer, and our Friend.

And now, please hear us as we join together with voices around our world, praying the prayer Jesus 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:

"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

Deuteronomy 10:12-22

Gary Ford

Anthem Sam Johnson

Children's Message Rev. Stillwell

In our Bible lesson today, Jesus told his disciples a story to teach them the importance of staying connected to him. Of course Jesus didn't use a lamp to tell his story, because electricity hadn't even been invented yet. Instead, Jesus used an example that his disciples would understand. He used the example of a vine. You know what a vine is, don't you? It is a plant with a lot of branches growing out from it. The branches have fruit on them. If it is a grapevine, the branches should have grapes on them.

Have you ever seen a branch that has been broken off of a tree or a vine? What happens to it? That's right, it withers up and dies. Can it ever have any fruit on it again? No, it isn't any good for anything — except fire wood.

Jesus said, "I am the vine and you are the branches. If you remain in me, you will have much fruit, but apart from me, you can do nothing." Jesus wants us to produce a lot of fruit. Good fruit like being kind, generous, and faithful. Most of all, he wants us to love others as he has loved us.

Can we do that on our own? No way. just as the branches must be connected to the vine before they can produce fruit, you and I must stay connected to Jesus to produce the good fruit that God expects of us.

Second Scripture Reading

John 15:1-17

Rev. Stillwell

Come, Before Winter

This is one of Rev. Chris' previous sermons. This is not the sermon he will be preaching on Sunday.

It's not often that a minister can use the same sermon several times in one church and get away with it, but the sermon this morning, I continue to trust, is such a sermon. Every year in the fall, this sermon has been repeated at the request of those who have heard it a number of times. It's repeated because its message is too important to just present once. It's important, too, because each year different ones of us hear it for the first time; and those of us who have heard it before come to understand its message in new ways and hear new voices calling us to "come before winter."

The basic ideas and much of the content come from a sermon that Clarence McCartney delivered to his congregation in Philadelphia every year for 40 successive years. There, too, it was always delivered on a Sunday in the autumn. On that Sunday people would return from all over the nation to hear its timeless message.

I would ask each of you to carefully consider this message this morning, whether you are hearing it for the first time or the (eleventh). The title is "Come Before Winter" and the subject is the apostle Paul's last request to his young friend Timothy.

Paul, as most of you remember, was a brilliant, but bitter young Jewish lawyer who had dedicated his life to stamping out the Christian faith. When Stephen became the first Christian martyr, Paul had a part in stoning him to death. When the church spread to Damascus, Paul secured an edict to go there and destroy the Christian community, but on the road to Damascus he was confronted by the risen Christ and challenged to make some better use of his life. In the days following, a man named Ananias sought him out in Damascus and challenged him to become a follower of Christ – one who would give his life in the service of the risen Lord.

Paul accepted this challenge, and the rest of his life was spent in travel – on foot, on beast, and by boat - across Asia and then across Europe, bringing the good news of God's gracious love and purpose to mankind on both continents. There was no trial that he wouldn't endure: stoning, beatings, shipwreck, and imprisonment – he had endured them all, time and again.

He wanted others to know the love and purpose that had so changed his life. So the bitter antagonistic lawyer became the apostle of love. He wrote the never-to-be forgotten words of self-giving love we find in the thirteenth chapter of I Corinthians. In fact, most of the New Testament was written by him.

Yet, when Paul was sent to stand trial in Rome where he was to spend his last days and write his last letters, he suddenly found himself very much alone. When the going got tough, most of his friends deserted him. Demus, Crescens, and Titus all returned to their homes, and Paul, alone and in prison in a new and strange land over 1,000 miles from home, was left with but three friends he could count on. The first was the friend who had confronted him on the Damascus road – the risen lord. The second was Luke, his beloved friend and physician, who had accompanied him on most of his journeys, and had written both the gospel that bears his name and the Acts of the Apostles.

The third was Timothy, a young half-Hebrew, half-Greek youth whom Paul had affectionately called, "my son in the faith." But now Timothy, of the three he could count on, was not with him.

(The letter to timothy)

So Paul sat down and wrote what turned out to be his last letter to this young friend. In it he tells Timothy he wants him to come to Rome immediately for he doesn't expect to live much longer. He asks him to bring a few things. First, he asks Timothy to bring his cloak from Troas. It is getting cold in Rome and Paul needs the cloak to keep him warm. Next, he asks Timothy to bring his books and parchments, even in prison there was work to do and a mind to use. But most of all, Paul wants Timothy to bring himself, so he wrote to Timothy:

"Do your best to come to me soon.

Do your best to come before winter!"

Why before winter? Not only for the cloak, not only for the books, not only because the time is short before his execution, but because of the peculiar hazards of navigation on the Mediterranean in winter. When winter set in – the Mediterranean was often closed for navigation. Many captains wouldn't set sail after a certain date. If Timothy waited until winter, no boats would be sailing until spring, and Paul has a feeling he won't live until spring. Come before winter or not at all! Come now or you'll never see me again!

We don't actually know what Timothy did. We like to think that Timothy didn't waste a single day; that he started at once and went to Troas and picked up the books and the cloak and sailed for Rome; then landing in Italy, he rushed immediately to the prison, embraced his dear friend, read with him the books, wrote his last letters, sat at his feet and learned the height and depth of Paul's knowledge and unquenchable faith in Christ, then walked at the last, with him to the place of execution, saw him give his life as a witness to his faith, and supported him till the very last, but it was before winter or never! Either he went immediately or he never saw Paul again.

And so it is with us. There are things that will never be done unless they are done now. There are opportunities that come but once and then they are gone, and there is no recapturing them. There are people we love who will pass from this life before spring and we don't even know who they will be: a parent, a child, a classmate, a neighbor, the person sitting next to you right now.

The winter will come and pass and spring will transform the buds on the trees into summer's leaves, but as the winter comes and goes, so do life's opportunities and the lives of our dearest friends.

(The parable of autumn)

You've heard me say many times that of all the seasons of the year, autumn is the one I like best. Autumn is, itself, a parable of life's opportunities: one week it presents the climax of opportunity; next week it's just too late. This week the vibrant color of the leaves is at its zenith and the next week they are brown and upon the ground. This week the air is crisp and cool and the sun shines. Next week the air is bitter and cold and the clouds are gray.

This week your child needs you; next week he learns that mother and father are always too busy. This week is a chance to be with a parent or a friend; next week they're gone – stricken with a heart attack, paralyzed by a stroke, or dropped out of school, and the chance will never come again. Last week someone needed me desperately, but I didn't have time to respond and they'll never need me again, for they know now I'm always too busy with something, so they won't bother me again.

(The voice within)

Each day of life there are voices calling to us, saying, "come, before winter" – come now; I need you now; tomorrow will be too late." The first, and one of the most important, is the voice we hear from within – I'm going to call it the voice of character. What is character really – but the sum of our concerns, our goals, our commitments, our sympathies?

It is what a person is made of, what he's willing to stand for, and what she's willing to fall for. It is the degree of a person's self-discipline and concern for others. But character is like molten steel. There is a time when it's workable and a time when it's set; a time when it can be formed into something worthwhile, and a time when it can be re-formed only with great pain and difficulty. The high school and college years and the early years of marriage and work are especially the years when the metal is molten and being poured and shaped. If in these years we learn to do our very best; if we learn to feel the pain of others and offer our love to share the pain; if we learn to love, not for what we can get, but for what we can give; if we learn to stand for what we believe is right, even when we must do it alone; if we set goals that challenge the best of us, then the molten steel hardens into something worthwhile.

But if in these years we do just our second best; if in these years we just settle for having a good time and getting by; if we put off until tomorrow the things we should do today; if we ignore the needs of those about us and think only of ourselves; if we do the easy, popular thing rather than the difficult thing we know we should do; then, this is the sort of person we become. For what I am today is forming what I will be tomorrow and next year, and the year after.

There are precious and critical moments in every life, but the most precious is always the present moment; not tomorrow, but today.

(The voices of those we love)

Second, is the voice of family and friends. Suppose that Timothy had said to himself: "Yes, I will go to Rome, but first I must clear up matters at Ephesus; then I must see how things are a Colossae; then I'll go to Troas and get the books and cloak; then I'll find a ship and sail." Arriving at Troas a month later, he inquiries about passage to Rome and is told that the last boat sailed yesterday. All through the anxious winter, how he must have wondered what was happening in Rome. In spring, he takes the first boat and rushes to Rome and finds the house empty where Paul had been living. So he goes to the prison and pleads with the guard for any information about Paul, but the guard only curses him and sends him away.

So he goes from house to house seeking news, until finally a response comes: "So you're Timothy! Didn't you know that Paul was executed last December? Every time the jailer put his key in the door, Paul thought you were coming. His last message was, "Give my love to Timothy, my beloved son in the faith, when he comes". How Timothy must have wished then that he had come before winter.

In the diary of Thomas Carlyle, one can read the tragic words written after Carlyle's neglected wife died: "If only I had you for five minutes more by my side, that I might tell you all." for 40 years he had her at his side, but he always kept putting it off until tomorrow, until there was no tomorrow. For us he wrote the words:

cherish what is dearest while you have it near you, and wait not until it is far away.

Blind and deaf that we are, if thou yet love anyone living; wait not till death sweeps down the paltry little dust clouds and dissonances of the moment, and all be made so mournfully clear When it is too late.

How often we give flowers to the dead rather than to the living – too late! How often we make time for our children after they no longer need us – too late! How often we keep within us the deepest things in life and never share them until the one we wanted to share them with is gone – too late!

Phillip Brooks put it this way:

"You who are letting miserable misunderstanding run on from year to year, meaning to clear them up someday; you who are keeping wretched quarrels alive because you cannot quite make up your mind that now is the time to sacrifice your pride and kill them; you who are passing men sullenly on the street, not speaking to them out of silly spite, and yet, knowing that it would fill you with shame and remorse if one of those men were dead tomorrow morning; you who are letting your parents, or friends or child's heart ache for a word of appreciation or friendship or sympathy or love. If only you could see and feel and know all of a sudden, that the time is short, how it would break the spell. How you would go instantly and do the thing which you might never have another chance to do."

To each of us, there are loved ones and friends crying for our love and needing our friendship. How often do we hear voices? How often do we come, before winter?

(The voices of minorities)

Third, there are the voices of minorities in our country: the poor, the rejected, the forgotten, saying we can't do this to them anymore; that if they can't share in the American dream, there won't be an American dream for any of us. The time is now to do something; not tomorrow or ten years from now. Do we hear their voices and understand what they are saying, or are we afraid and feel that the dream is only for us?

(The voice of Christ)

But more eager, more concerned, more wistful than any other voice is the voice of Christ, calling us to him – calling us to come, before winter: calling us to know his love and to let that love for all people flow through our lives to the world.

How many of you have seen Homan hunt's painting, "the light of the world"? In it you see the crucified Christ with crown of thorns on his head and lantern in his hand, knocking at the door of the human heart. The door is a heavy door. Its hinges are rusty, for it isn't opened often and there is no handle on the outside. If the door is to be opened it must be opened from the inside. The master never forces his way in, for his ways are the ways of love. He just patiently knocks and to any man who opens the door, he is ready to light the way, to free that man to reach out in concern to others. He frees him to be a new kind of person. He frees him to care for those so close to him. He frees him to work for a new kind of world today. But how many of us keep putting him off until tomorrow. Christ invites us to follow him today; we answer tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow, until we no longer hear his knock or until there are no tomorrows.

(Closing)

And today's opportunity may never be repeated. It wasn't to Timothy. And it won't be to many of us. In the use we're making of our lives; in our relationship to children, parents, and friends; in facing and responding to the crisis and opportunities of our time; in our relationship to Christ our lord. We say, "I intend to do something about that tomorrow."

But Paul says: "Now or never." Christ says: "Now or never!" experience, conscience, common sense all say: "Now or never!" Now is the time – today –to build a life that is worth living. Now is the time – today – to show your love and appreciation and forgiveness to family and friends, not after they are gone. Now is the time to become involved in creating a new kind of society in which all humanity can share. Now is the time to open your life to the love of Christ, that this love may guide all your decisions and all your days and all your involvements. Don't wait until it's too late! Do your best to "Come, before winter!"

Communion Hymn

"Come, Share the Lord"

Sam Johnson, organist

We gather here in Jesus' name, his love is burning in our hearts like living flame, for through the loving Son the Father makes us one: Come, take the bread, come, drink the wine, come, share the Lord.

Invitation to Communion

Rev. Stillwell

Some of the greatest memories I have in life are of meals that I have eaten. Some of those meals were cooked by my wife, and others at restaurants. Sometimes the meal is memorable because the taste of the food was so enjoyable, while other times it was the atmosphere or the surroundings that made it great. Some of my most memorable experiences were on the occasions a friend would take me to their house where they would share a meal with me. Although the meal was usually simple, these meals were some of the best I have ever had more because of the hospitality than the food itself.

It is a generous thing to share food since it is a simple fact that the more you share the less you have, and when I receive such a meal I see it as nothing short of a sacrament-- a tangible and visible sign of an inward and invisible grace.

That is why this meal that we share with one another every week is a sacrament to us. Here I, someone who has never met Jesus Christ face to face, come to this table and receive its offerings of bread and cup, love and forgiveness, with gratitude and thanksgiving, and never do I feel that I am an imposition to our Lord, for it is Christ invites me to come.

Communion, therefore, is more than just a ritual. It is a prophetic declaration that in a world of walls we are called to be a bridge. In a world of I, me, mine, we are called to gather and as we. In a world of nationalism we are reminded that kingdom knows now boundaries especially today as we celebrate World Communion Sunday. As we eat of this meal let us thank God for such gracious hospitality, and let us find ways to follow the divine example. For, if we treat strangers the way Christ treats us, there will be only friends in this world.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Jackie Nelson

Holy, Almighty, Loving God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we give You thanks and praise for this day, Your day. Every day is Yours, every moment is Yours. Our every breath is Yours. Every heartbeat is Yours. This sacred table has been lovingly set and we are invited. We are hungry Lord. We have food and drink for the body but are hungry for You.

At this sacred hour we do what Our Lord and Savior commanded. These simple elements of bread and wine are given to stir our bodies, hearts and minds to remember Jesus. By partaking we declare Christ gave His body and blood for us. He died for us. He will come again for us. Jesus said "do this in remembrance of me." As if we could ever forget for one minute. But sadly, we do forget. Forgive us, merciful God, and create a remembering heart in us now,

Holy Spirit, keep us returning together again and again to remember and share this meal. Fill us with love, joy and hope. These we can't live without. Amen.

Words of Institution Rev. Stillwell

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

All are invited to share in this meal. Please come forward down the center aisle, as you are able, take a piece of bread, dip it in the cup, and partake. Place your offering in the trays as you return to your seats by the outside aisles. If you are unable to come forward, the meal will be brought to you. Gluten-free wafers & individual servings are available in the Narthex.

Call to Discipleship

Rev. Stillwell

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

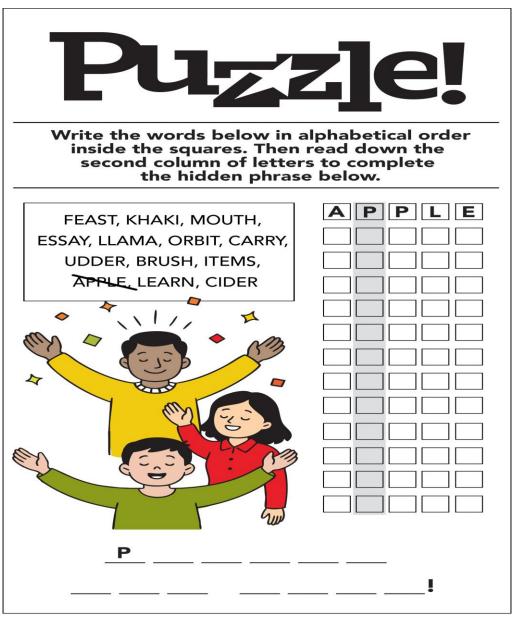
"Restless Weaver"

Sam Johnson, organist

Restless Weaver, ever spinning threads of justice and shalom; dreaming patterns of creation where all creatures find a home; gathering up life's varied fibers—every texture, every hue: grant us your creative vision. With us weave your world anew.

Benediction Rev. Stillwell

Go into the world as the people of God, sharing the loving-kindness that you have received from God and the abundant grace of the Holy Spirit through Jesus, who is the Christ. Amen.



Answer: Praise the Lord!



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 McDonough 949 Bruce Street Washington PA 15301

Alice Cokeley 900 N Cass Lake Rd, Apt 324 Waterford MI 48328

Barb Bailey Terry Bailey Donna Bakaitis **Todd Barnhart**

Vanessa & John Bereznay

Jeff Caldwell Bryan Carter Wanda Chicone Angel Corbett Ruth Cox Dave Davis Sue Donaldson Craig Dotson Benjamin Dube Connie Faust

Kathy Moninger-Ford Terry Gahagen Barb Graff Irma Harper Sheila Harris Alberta Haught Aryn Hess Danni Iams Ed Jackman Kari Johnson Brandon Keenan Von Lacock Marylee Lawrence

Pastor Dave Mansfield Charlie McConnell

David Leonard

Southminster Residents

880 S Main St Washington PA 15301

Bo & Patty Pryor, Apt 102 Doris Sorice, Apt 336

Chuck Wiseman, Apt 214

Pam McCord Norm McDonough Dick Moninger Joe Neckerman Carmen Oliverio Peggy Oliverio Michelle Oneal Sandy Petry

Dick Pilgun

Nyka Rash

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 Jan Stillwell

Beth Teagarden

Jane Teagarden

Ginger Throckmorton Cece Watson

Premier Resident

36 Old Hickory Ridge Rd Washington PA 15301

Carol Brown, Rm 213

Transitions Healthcare Resident

90 Humbert Lane Washington PA 15301

Doris Haniford, Room 121

In the Military

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

The brave men and women who serve our country make incredible sacrifices every day. 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.