

Manor Minutes
Volume 12 Issue 38
September 24, 2021

Prayer Shawl – September 27, 11am Parlor
Trustee Meeting – September 28, 6pm Library
Dartball – September 28, 7pm @Avery Methodist
Calling Commission – September 29, 10am via Zoom

The Story – October 3 Chapter 3 Joseph: From Slave to Deputy Pharaoh

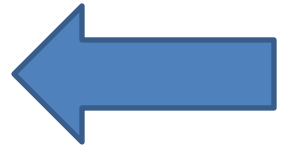
Stay up to date, check www.fairhillmanorchurch.org/calendar

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 Rev. Chris at (412) 956-6590.



Get your books for The Story!....

Books for The Story can be purchased through Sunday, October 3. After that, books will be purchased on an individual basis and costs will vary. Books still available:

The Story for Children (Hardcover) \$14
The Story for Little Ones (Hardcover) \$13
The Story for Kids (Softcover) \$9
The Story for Students (Softcover) \$12
The Story (Hardcover) \$5

Reconciliation Ministry – Special Offering
September 26 & October 3

Your gift promotes our capacity to reveal God's love and justice by promoting conversation, education, and inclusive worship.

Help Us, Help Others

Hygiene Kits for Church World Service

Goal: 125 We need your help.....

- Purchase one or more items for the Hygiene Kits. Choose tags in the Narthex. Sign your name next to the numbers of your tags on the record sheet. Purchase the items and return them to the boxes in the Narthex by Sunday, **October 3**.
- Contribute money to purchase items for the Hygiene Kits or to help ship the kits. Give on Givelify or put money (marked "CWS Kits") in the Offering Plate.
- Make one or more complete Hygiene Kits. Find full instructions at <https://cwskits.org/assemble-kits/hygiene-kits/>
- Join us as we bless the School and Hygiene Kits during worship on **October 10**.
- Help assemble Hygiene Kits on Sunday, **October 10** right after worship in the Large Fellowship Hall

Dates to remember:

- October 3: Return items to church
- October 10: Bless the School and Hygiene Kits during worship.
- October 10: Assemble the kits following worship.





Fairhill Manor Christian Church
(*Disciples of Christ*)

351 Montgomery Ave.
724-225-8610

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Pastor
Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor
September 26, 2021

Prelude

Audra Allen, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Amy Caldwell

Give ear to God's teaching. We gather to hear the stories of our ancestors.
Incline your ears to parables and dark sayings of old. We come seeking stories of God's wondrous power.
Tell the coming generations of God's glorious deeds. Teach them that they may tell them too.
Come to the fount of living water. We will drink deeply from the waters of life.
Taste the wellspring of our salvation. We gather to worship as people reborn.

Opening Hymn

"Come, Thou Fount of Ever Blessing"

Audra Allen, organist

Come, thou fount of every blessing,
tune my heart to sing thy grace;
streams of mercy, never ceasing,
call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
sung by flaming tongues above.
Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it,
mount of thy redeeming love.

Here I raise to thee an altar;
hither by thy help I'm come;
and I hope, by thy good pleasure,
safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger,
wandering from the fold of God;
he, to rescue me from danger,
interposed his precious blood.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Pastor Gena

God of all ages, we come into this holy space, asking for your blessing, only to find that the abundance of your love is already here. 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.

Saving God, you shower our lives and our world with love, yet we too often turn away from your blessings. It's just so much easier to complain! Those little annoyances we encounter every day soon pile up into a mountainous burden that becomes a curse in our lives.

Free us from our unwise choices, O God. When we are distracted and confused, redirect our attention to the abundant opportunities we have to experience your love. Focus our hearts on you, that we may choose the blessing of salvation you offer to us each day.

We pray now for the needs of those both near and far, both known and unknown. For those who are suffering, through sickness, through loss, in addiction, in depression, without support, in loneliness, let us pray. For those on long journeys, not sure where they are headed but always looking for a place to call home, let us pray. For those who have been abandoned or abused, neglected or left powerless, limited or

rejected, let us pray. For those who are celebrating new life, new life together, reunions and reconnection, we give you thanks. For this community of faith which nurtures us and cares for us, we give you thanks. Call to mind now those who are feeling disconnected this day from our church family. Show us how to care for each other and hold each other close. Give us courage to reach out as you lead us to.

Now open the doors of our hearts, that we may become vessels of your blessing to a world still in need of your love. We pray all of this in the name of Jesus the Christ, who teaches us to pray saying...

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

Genesis 12:1-3

Amy Caldwell

Children’s Message

Cara Hritz

Can you remember the last time you did something brand new? How about the last time you went to a new place? How many of you remember your very first day of school? Some of you just started school so you might remember really well and some of you have been in school for a while so it might be hard to remember that long ago. How did you feel on your first day? I brought this scarf with me today. How do you think you'd feel if I asked you to be blindfolded and find somewhere in the church here? Do you think you might be afraid? What would scare you? Yes, you might be afraid you'd walk into something or fall down. You might be afraid you couldn't find the way or that we'd laugh at you. We've been talking about Abraham in our Bible story and how he followed God even when he didn't know where he was going. He can teach us a really good lesson about having faith and trusting God even when we're a little worried. Now, we won't need to go blindfolded, but we can know that we can trust that God will take us where we need to go and that he'll be right there with us.

Special Music

“Speak, O Lord,” by Keith Getty

Jim Cope

Second Scripture Reading

Genesis 15:1-6

J.C. Leasure

Sermon

“God Builds A Nation”

J.C. Leasure

We see on television shows all the time a recap of what has happened up to the current point of the story line. So let’s do that now:

Previously in The Story: We discovered that God’s vision in creation is to be with us. Adam and Eve chose a different vision and sin and the sinful nature entered the human race. Yet God passionately pursues us at great cost.

In today's part of the Story we discover that God decides to build a nation, and through that new nation win us back to God (foreshadowing to a future chapter).

“And he brought him outside and said, ‘Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.’ Then he said to him, ‘So shall your offspring be.’ And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.” -Genesis 15:5-6

As we go about chapter two in the Story, a pattern starts to reveal itself in Scripture. When looking at the story of Abraham we see God promising that he will make a great nation through Abraham with offspring as numerous as the sand, as countless as the stars. Now if you have attended Sunday School, VBS or Children's Church in any capacity, the times you have heard Abraham's story are as numerous as the sand, as countless as the stars. One of the most popular songs we teach children to sing deals with this very story! "Father Abraham...Had many sons...and many sons had Father Abraham...I am one of them...and so are you...So let's all praise the Lord...(insert body part here and repeat until your whole body is moving in every way)."

When my mother was Sunday School Superintendent at Friendship Community Church, during the opening session, we would sing Father Abraham and everyone had to participate. From the youngest of children to lifetime members and the eldest attendees, we would be dancing and waving our arms in legs for however long she saw fit. In that time trying not to show how physically unfit I was for attending Sunday School, I started wondering if our non-denominational church was going to have to join the Pentecostals with how much movement was going on in worship. We know the story of Abraham very well, but let's try to figure out what pattern God is revealing in Scripture as we go through the story of Father Abraham (I do not apologize if you find yourself singing Father Abraham and moving your arms at the grocery store this week.)

We see in the Story chapter two the start of a great nation. We know that nation to be the people of Israel, God's chosen people. We will see as we go farther into the Story the relationship between God and his chosen people unfold. But for now, we are at the humble beginning. We are watching the sun rise on a new day and a new nation. As the scene starts, we meet the soon to be Father Abraham (now named Abram) and his wife Sarah (now named Sarai). Abram and Sarai are very old. Sarai is barren in her old age. After God reveals to Abraham that his descendants will be great, Abraham believes what God has told him, and God counts it to him as righteousness. God promises that he will make the new nation great, God will make Abraham's name great, God will bless all who bless Abraham, and God will bless all nations through this new nation. Through this nation God's plan to reveal himself and how to win back all people from the sinful nature we all have.

Though the beginning of the new nation starts well, we see that as we progress, it doesn't stay like that. While Abraham believed God will give him countless descendants, Sarah, being barren, offers Hagar, her servant, to Abraham for bearing a child. Through Hagar, Ishmael is born. While Ishmael is blessed by God he is not the descendent of Abraham that God's chosen people will come through. And at the age of 90, God promises a son to Sarah, and she laughs at God. When Sarah does have a son, he is named Isaac. While Isaac is the son that the nation of Israel comes through, this dramatic birth of a nation does not settle down.

We see now Abraham and Sarah, after many years, finally have their own son. God goes back to Abraham and tells him to take Isaac and offer him as a sacrifice, as a burnt offering to God. Almost unbelievably, Abraham obeys and takes the start of a new nation to be given back to God. As Abraham is about to give all back to God, in a twist of the plot, the LORD stops Abraham and blesses him for his devotion and faithfulness to God. Thus the new nation is born. God truly promises Abraham countless offspring and his family will possess great land. All through this too, every nation, every person, will be truly blessed with what is to come from the new nation. For further in the story, we see a savior come. One who will heal not only the physically sick, but a healer of the spiritual disease of sin.

Looking back at the story of Father Abraham and his many sons, we may start to see the pattern of who God chooses to use. Out of an elderly couple who could not have children, all nations were blessed. You might think, if I was Abraham or Sarah, I don't know if I could handle any of this." This story is definitely way more intense than your regularly scheduled programming of life. We may start thinking

that the old cliché “God won’t give you anything you can’t handle” is certainly not the case. The stress that Abraham went through from deciding to obey God and sacrifice his own son that was given to him through Sarah who was barren until then. Surely this is way more than anyone can handle. So why did God choose an old couple to start his nation? Why will he choose a stutterer to lead his enslaved nation to freedom? Why was a tiny shepherd boy chosen to become the greatest king of Israel. Why did Christ choose fisherman and tax collectors and people who will betray and deny him to be his disciples? Why does God call ordinary people like you and me for furthering his kingdom and showing the world his love? It’s not because we can handle the job. God certainly gives us more than we can handle. God chooses us so we can rely on him.

When we rely on God, we will see God work through us. It is only through God that we can do his will. We all know Philippians 4:13, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Sports stars write this verse on their gear. We take comfort in knowing nothing is impossible with God. But through God, we have the strength to do his will. God will make a way for you to do what he calls you for. If we invoke Philippians 4:13 to jump over a building or pass a test, we may be taking it out of context. Abraham put his full trust in God and what a miracle came from him! Moses could not speak well. He even asked God to pick someone else to lead Israel because he was no qualified person. God gave everything to him. God tells Moses that he will teach him what to say. God gave Moses everything he needed to free the Israelites from Egypt. Moses could not do any of this by himself; it was through God that was able to perform the miracles he did and lead God's chosen people out of slavery. We see multiple times through the Bible that when God addresses the Israelites, he says, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt." While we see that Moses led the Israelites, it was God working through him. Moses was an ordinary person who obeyed God, just like Abraham. Just as we may feel unqualified for what God has called you to, but remember it is not us who is working but God in us. It may be overwhelming at times to follow God, but it’s God who gives us the strength to press on. God is our refuge and our strength. Deuteronomy tells us to be strong and courageous, to never fear because God is always with us. He never leaves us nor forsakes us. The same God, who created a nation through old Abraham and Sarah, is the same God who through Moses brought that same nation out of slavery in Egypt. And it is through the same God, the God of Abraham and Isaac, the LORD your God that brought the Israelites out of Egypt, that is in you, working through you, and always with you. God works through us to teach us dependence on him, for it is not us that can do these things, but God in us.

We even see this pattern in our salvation. We cannot contribute anything to our salvation. God’s will is for us to be with him. We chose our own will, to gratify ourselves. Our sin draws us against the will of God, and there is nothing we can do by ourselves to go back. But while we, being made in the image of God, rebel against our Creator. God sent his only son, Jesus, to die for us. Christ fulfills the law that we are given. In his punishment we have healing. In Christ’s death we have life. We cannot do anything for salvation that we are given. We cannot buy our forgiveness by our deeds or strength; it is God in us that we have healing. It is from God we have salvation. It is through God that we are given purpose. Christ is the way, truth, and life. We cannot be with God except through Jesus.

As we look forward to the next chapter, as we experience the rest of the Story, let’s recognize the pattern of God working through the unqualified. Let’s see how God has mercy for those we may find undeserving. Let’s praise God that he works through us and we are not overwhelmed when we depend on him.

Call to Offering

Amy Caldwell

It’s easy to look to our own interests, but God calls us to look to the interests of others. For in so doing, we share the mind of Christ. Let us dedicate ourselves to lives of generosity and service, as we collect today’s offering.

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

Generous God, you shower us with gifts, including your relentless invitation to be in relationship with you. In thanksgiving and praise, we offer you our time, our money, our very selves. May these gifts multiply blessings upon blessings in your name to your world. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Pastor Gena

This summer we were at a Wild Things game, and Isaac got drafted to play one of those fan games up on the dugout between innings. It wasn't the game he was expecting and it wasn't as easy as he had been promised, but with the help of the crowd, he hung in there and named more Sponge Bob characters than a Wild Things player. As a prize, everyone in our section got a coupon from Sheetz for a free specialty drink.

I'm not really into specialty drinks like iced coffee and milkshakes and all those other fancy things, but we were headed past a Sheetz one day shortly thereafter and decided to use our coupons that Isaac had so bravely won for us.

I am used to these free coupons. Usually they say FREE in big letters and then in small print they say "buy one pizza at regular price and get a one topping medium pizza free." So as we approached the screen to place our orders, I told Isaac, now you can get one drink, small size and anything extra we will have to pay for. He said, "No, Mama, the coupon says any size, no exclusions, add as many topping as you want!"

I couldn't believe it and had to read the fine print for myself. I was so sure that the coupon would "exclude extras and upcharges" that that was how I had read it. It took a while for my mind to absorb what the coupon was really saying. Sure enough, there were no exclusions! No limitations! What a feeling. We piled it on and ended up getting two drinks that would have cost \$12 really and truly for FREE.

We come to this Table expecting lots of exclusions and limitations to apply, but when we read the fine print, we realize that there are no exclusions or limitations here. All your extras and upcharges are welcome here – all that extra guilt and fear, self-loathing and shame, all those burdens that turned out to be larger than even you realized. That may not always seem fair when we are on the inside looking out, but it brings an unexpected feeling of relief and sheer joy when we are on the outside looking in. Bring yourself, your whole self, to the Table today. No exclusions, no limitations. Bask in the blessing of God's mercy and love. And then go to be a blessing of unconditional grace and welcome to your family, your friends and everyone you meet. May you find a blessing here at this Table, a blessing that you can share with the world. I'm sure the world will remember your blessing just as fondly as Isaac and I remember our amazing Sheetz drinks!

Communion Hymn

"I'm Gonna Eat at the Welcome Table"

Jody Mullis, pianist

I'm gonna eat at the welcome table,	I'm gonna eat and drink with my Jesus,
I'm gonna to eat at the welcome table, Allelu.	I'm gonna eat and drink with my Jesus, Alelu.
I'm gonna eat at the welcome table,	I'm gonna eat and drink with my Jesus,
I'm gonna eat at the welcome table, Allelu.	I'm gonna eat and drink with my Jesus, Allelu.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Craig Dotson

Lord we give thanks for this day you have given us to worship as Christians. We give thanks for the many blessings in our lives and the freedom we enjoy. Our scriptures teach us that you always have a plan and a process. We pray that we work to more thoroughly and completely understand the value of your lessons. As we enjoy this special time of communion and take the bread and the cup we recognize unique sacrifices made in our behalf. And we accept our obligations to live as you have taught us. We offer prayer in your name. Amen.

Words of Institution

Pastor Gena

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: That the Lord Jesus Christ, on the night that he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is broken for you; eat this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; that is poured out for you. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat of the bread and drink of the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes again. (I Corinthians 11:23-26)

Sharing in Communion

Closing Hymn

"People of God"

Jody Mullis, pianist

With our lips, let us sing one confession.
With our hearts, hold to one truth alone.
For he has erased our transgressions;
named us and called us his own.
His very own.

So hear us, o spirits of darkness.
So you will know where we stand.
We are his servants, purchased with scars;
bought by the blood of the lamb.
The blood of the lamb.

Chorus: We're the people of God, called by his name.
Called from the dark; and delivered from shame.
One holy race, saints everyone;
because of the blood of Christ
Jesus the Son.

Benediction

J.C. Leasure

Go out in obedience that God is at work through you. Go in peace knowing God is with you always, and he will never forsake you. Go in boldness knowing that the God that built a great nation in Abraham is furthering his kingdom in you. And go in love, as God loves you, reflect his love to others so they may know that he is good. Amen

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

**PRAYER
REQUEST**

Do you have a prayer request or need help? Please feel free to contact Rev. Chris (412-956-6590) and 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 and Pastor Gena. We are One Body in Christ!

Homebound Members:

Phyllis Cimino
317 Wellness Way
Strabane Trails #325

Alice Cokeley
149 Meadows View Rd
Washington PA 15301

Mrs. Mary McDonough
949 Bruce Street
Washington PA 15301



Bill Behrens has a **birthday** on October 1.
If you would like to send him a card his address is:

835 S Main Street, Rm 437
Washington PA 15301

Don Ainsley
Ed Alexy
Avery Allen
Donna Bakaitis
Jim Banish
Tom Barnhart
Bill Behrens
Bristol Allan Berry
Abby Blanchard
Susan Britko
Mabel Brooks
Denise Charles
Wanda Chicone
John Collar
Emily Cope Robinson
Coretta and family
Ruth Cox
Irma Davis
Jessica Duke
Libby Eberhard
Fred Engle
Jay Freudenberg
Jett Fuller
Derek Gardiner
Lois Gayman
Nora Graff

Nancy Gregg
Judy Grover
Sloan Amelia Hagy
Kyle Hallam
Connie Hanning
Aryn Hess
Ed Jackman
Family of Caleb Jackson
Dallas Jacobovitz
Bob Lanning
Ty, Kerri, Allie, Ivy &
Ty James Lacock
Libby LeDuff
Frank Lippert
Lee & Betsy Martin
Dave McConnell
Don Melvin
Michaela Nixon
Ruth Mikuta
Georgette Murray
Deborah Patterson
Cathy Rentgen

Betty Jo Riggle
Dave Ross
Jim and Barb Roupe
John Shadeck
Theresa Shape
Connie Sheller
Gene Sheller
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
Owen Stillwell
Eli Graff
Molly Johnson

Church Office hours:

Karen is working from home on Monday, Tuesday and Friday, 9 am – 2 pm. She will be in the Church Office on Wednesday & Thursday, 9 am – 2 pm. The Church phone is forwarded to Karen's cell phone and can be reached anytime.

Pastor Gena is off on Friday. Pastor Gena is working from home and comes in to the church as needed. Feel free to text, call, email or set up a time to meet with Pastor Gena.

Rev. Chris is off on Tuesday during the school year.

If you need anything at any time, please call the Church Office phone at 724-225-8610.

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