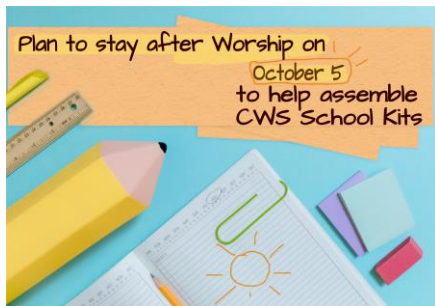


**Manor Minutes**  
**Volume 16 Issue 39**  
**September 26, 2025**

- Blessing of the Pets, September 28, 4 PM
  - Dartball – September 30, 7 PM @ Home
  - Stewardship/Finance Ministry, October 1, 5:30 PM
  - Choir Practice – October 2, 6:30 PM
- Stay up to date at [www.fairhillmanorchurch.org/calendar](http://www.fairhillmanorchurch.org/calendar)



**October 5, immediately after worship**



**October 26, 2pm parking lot**

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



The **Reconciliation Ministry Special Offering** is September 28 & October 5. The Reconciliation Ministry strengthens our capacity to be remembered, reconnected, and restored as God's beloved by disrupting racism and oppression. You may give to this ministry by using the envelope included in the bulletin, on Givelify or directly to: <https://reconciliationministry.org/giv/>

Our **DRIVE-THRU** Nativity will be Saturday and Sunday, **December 13 and 14**. 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!



 **RaiseRight.**  
**GIFT CARD PROGRAM**

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: Jody Mullis, Bread  
Chuck Riggle, Cup

September 28, 2025 – 10:15am

**Prelude**

Sam Johnson, organist

**Welcome**

Pastor Gena

**Call to Worship**

Charlotte Stillwell

Leader: Sheltered by God,  
People: We come now to worship.  
Leader: Invited by Christ,  
People: We come now to pray.  
Leader: Welcomed by the Spirit,  
People: We gather as the people of God.

**Opening Hymn**

“Shout to the Lord”

Jody Mullis, pianist

My Jesus, my Savior, Lord there is none like you. All of my days, I want to praise, the wonders of your mighty love. My comfort, my shelter, tower of refuge and strength. Let every breath, all that I am, never cease to worship you. Shout to the Lord, all the earth, let us sing. Power and majesty, praise to the King; mountains bow down and the seas will roar, at the sound of your name.

**Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer**

Rev. Stillwell

In the quietness of this place, O Lord God, we invite you into the secret places of our lives.  
We open our minds to receive your Word.  
We open our hearts to accept your love.  
We open our wills to submit to your Lordship.  
We open our eyes to see your glory.  
We open our entire selves to receive your Spirit.  
For those who cannot leave behind the hurts of the past, we ask your help.  
For those who live with bitter regrets, we ask your help.  
For those whose relationships have gone sour, we ask your help.  
For those who have been betrayed by someone they trusted, we ask your help.  
For those who have had opportunities but abused and neglected them, we ask your help.  
For those who have failed in matters of personal integrity, we ask your help.  
For those who find it difficult to make and keep friends, we ask your help.  
For those who have failed so often that they wish to give up, we ask your help.

As we rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep, make us present to the full humanity of those we walk alongside. May those who live the complex reality of joy mixed with sorrow not be pushed to claim one or the other, but may we all discover how to embody our full emotions, while remaining open and receptive to the emotions of others.

As we attempt to live in harmony with one another, make us mindful of those too often neglected in attempts to balance the scales, or those who are asked to bear the greater burden of that balance. May the wisdom of those less heard be woven into the fabric of our communities, even as those of us who get more attention discern the wisdom of humility and listening.

As we refrain from repaying anyone evil for evil, make us conscious of the root causes of evil in our world. May we work together not only to treat the symptoms of evil, but also to address the conditions that make evil possible.

As we seek to live peaceably with all, make us alive to the full possibilities of peace, not just the absence of conflict but the presence of justice, and an environment where all can flourish. May we look for all the ways that your peaceable kingdom.

O God, we lift up to you our prayers for situations both near to us and far away, knowing that you hear us and call us to find ways to respond. All these things we pray in Jesus' name. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Amen

*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.*

**Prayer Response:**

*“Glory Be to the Father”*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

**First Scripture Lesson**

**Psalm 91:1-6; 14-16**

Carol Daniels

**Anthem**

“Children of God,” by Vicki Courtney

Choir

**Children's Message**

Pastor Gena

I'm going to teach you a special handshake. Do you think you know it well enough that you could teach someone else? Let's go and try that.

What would make it hard to teach someone else how to do the handshake?

In today's story, we hear Jesus tell his disciples to go and do with others what he has done with them. He tells his disciples to go out and find their own students and teach them the same things that Jesus had taught to them, the disciples. In other words, the disciples are being told that they have learned so well from Jesus that they are now ready to teach like Jesus did, the very same things that Jesus had taught.

I wonder what would make it hard to teach other people what Jesus taught. I wonder when we might be ready to teach other people like Jesus did. I wonder what we would teach them. I wonder how we can get ready to teach other people. It will probably take a lot of paying attention to and learning about what Jesus did. It will probably take a lot of practice on our own until we get it down. And sometimes we may need to go back to Jesus to remember how to be like him.

Let's think about a couple CW&W stories we know about Jesus. What did Jesus do in the story when he spent time with the children? I wonder if we could welcome and make other people feel loved and included. What did Jesus do in the story with Bartimaeus? I wonder if we could help people get what

they need and be able to be among other people. What did Jesus do in the story with Zacchaeus? I wonder if we could help people who feel like they have done bad things change their ways and make things right with the people they have hurt.

We can learn from Jesus, just like the disciples did, and then practice those ways of living and then teach those same things to others – just like Jesus did.

Dear God, thank you for Jesus, who taught the disciples and us how to live and to love – and then teach others the same things. Amen.

## **Second Scripture Reading**

**Matthew 28:18-20**

Rev. Stillwell

## **Sermon**

### **“Gathering to Grow”**

Rev. Chris Stillwell

When I was in college I was in a fraternity, which everyone seems surprised to hear when I say that. Believe me I was surprised too. I never imagined myself joining a fraternity and I had no intention of doing so, but I found that I couldn't help it. I don't mean that I was forced to join, but that the people I liked the most, the people I wanted to spend the most time with, and the place where the most fun was happening was the Phi Tau house. I can't say I succumbed to peer pressure. It was more like I succumbed to friendly fun.

There were things I did not like about it. There were meetings and dues, and I wasn't friends with everyone in the fraternity, but the things I did like far outnumbered the dislikes so that last year I was pleased to attend my fraternity's 100th anniversary celebration with old friends and many new ones. It was a good experience for me, but, of course, it isn't for everyone.

That is why we were always trying to think of ways to grow our fraternity. We wanted to increase our numbers so that we could do more things and have more fun, and also just so we could continue to exist. Each year we had to work to convince freshmen to join our house all the while competing with five other fraternities on a small campus, but mostly, we found ourselves competing with people like me who didn't like the idea of joining a fraternity at all. We found that the best away to get people to pledge wasn't to promise any connections after they graduated, wasn't to tell people they would be cool only if they joined us and slandered the other houses, or to use peer pressure of any sort. The best success we had was simply to have fun together and show people by our actions how much we liked to gather and how much we liked to be together.

Nothing draws a crowd like a crowd they say, and I think that thinking worked for us. In the end I joined a fraternity not for parties but for people. I know how strange this will sound, but maybe the church should be more like a fraternity. Don't misunderstand me, I am not suggesting something like Animal House, but I am saying that we be a place where people just like to gather, because the church is a place where their friends are.

As we preach on Biblical principles for Christian living we will jump around in our scripture selections because we will discuss practices inspired by Christ. Today we have heard what is called the Great Commission, which is Jesus' final words to his disciple shortly after his resurrection and right before his ascension; therefore, we usually read this scripture right after Easter. We hear it today because today we are discussing the making of disciples and Jesus' commission to his disciples concerns just that when he said:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Here, at the beginning of the church, Jesus knew that the church would die out unless new disciples were made and the book of Acts is the telling of how the church grew. Flash forward to now and we are the latest in a long line of churches wondering, how are we going to make new disciples? How will we grow? A thousand books have been written on the subject and I personally haven't found any to be that helpful. If there was a secret it would be sold for a high price.

Most churches I know struggle with evangelism and aren't sure how to go about it, and if a person were to be asked to serve at a soup kitchen, to bake a pie for a church dinner, or read something during worship I imagine most people would be much more likely to say yes than if they were asked to evangelize. After all, what is evangelism anyway?

At its most basic level it is telling people about Jesus. It is sharing the good news. That isn't so hard, but these days the word “evangelism” has a lot of bad connotations. It reminds me of TV preachers who use it to line their pockets or politicians who dress in Christian clothing to obtain power and do very un-Christ-like things in his name. We might also think of people who evangelize by telling people they are going to Hell if they aren't exactly like them.

I understand why evangelism is sometimes an uncomfortable topic, but let me just say this. Fellowship is evangelism. Worship is evangelism. Service is evangelism. Nothing attracts a crowd like a crowd, therefore it is important that we gather as much as we can and enjoy ourselves while doing it.

I mentioned last week that we live in world starving for community, and I know the need for community as much as anyone, which is why I gravitated to a fraternity in college and also why I have gravitated to the church my whole life. From the time I was a kid until now the church was a place where I found acceptance, validation for my gifts, food and fun. All of these things are hallmarks of community.

Jesus knew this when he gave the disciples the great commission. He knew just telling the gospel, story was the first part, but without a community to sustain each person the flame of faith would burn out. So the disciples gathered at the mountain in Galilee before he left them. They gathered in the temple to await the Holy Spirit. They gathered in their homes and later churches. They gathered so that they could grow, and so should we.

When I came here five years ago we weren't able to gather much. Slowly but surely we have begun to do more, and we have really seen the fruits of our labor this year. A spaghetti dinner and two rummage sales were designed to bring in funds to help with our deficit, but just as importantly they brought fellowship. We continue to have our worship and Sunday school. We have had Bible Studies and picnics. Even in sad moments we gathered for funerals and meals for the bereaved, and, when our basement was flooded, we gathered to help clean the mess.

We need to gather so that we can grow, because more than anything people join a church because it is a place where they enjoy themselves and feel they belong, and people are much more likely to come to a church if invited by a friend rather than by the pastor, and we need to have more things to invite people to. It is important to note that no person can attend or help with everything, but the more opportunities we have to gather the more opportunities we will have to grow.

Our stewardship theme this year is “Gathering to Grow”, and I hope you will mark your calendar for November 16 when we will have our appreciation luncheon. In the meantime I hope you will evangelize by telling the good news of Jesus Christ and inviting your friends and neighbors to be a part of our community.

### **Call to Offering**

Chuck Riggle

Generous God, open our hearts and our wallets to be as generous with others as you are with us. May we be generous givers of our time, talent, and treasure that others may find in us generous and loving friends. In gratitude and joy, we give our offerings now. Amen.

### **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

Loving God, we offer our gifts this morning in gratitude for your teaching, guiding presence with us. May these offerings be used to spread your love far and wide, that there may be more wholeness and well-being in our world. Amen.

### **Invitation to Communion**

Pastor Gena

Isaac and I have two cats. They are brother and sister, Peaches and Puma. They make lovely companions for each other – until Puma gets tired of Peaches and hides herself to get a break, and Peaches goes around the house meowing for her. Peaches can be a bit overbearing. If I’m working on a cross-stitch, he’s sure he needs to sit right on the instructions. If I’m working on my laptop, the keyboard makes the best place for him to settle.

Peaches likes to dart outside – sometimes. You never know when he’s going to bolt out. I decided maybe I could work with Peaches instead of against him; I bought him a harness. Now when I ask him if he wants to go outside, he jumps up on the bench where I put his harness on and readies his nose to go through the head hole. When I say wait, he waits for me to attach the very long leash, and outside we go – usually under the cover of darkness so no one can see how odd we are.

Recently I’ve been removing crabgrass from my lawn – for better or worse, I’m not yet sure. I’ve spent a couple afternoons out on the corner of the lawn – the busy corner of North Avenue and Central. Of course, Peaches wants to be a part of what’s happening, especially if it’s outside. I thought I was doing him and the lawn a big favor with these outside, weed-pulling sessions.

It turns out that I couldn’t even listen to Jeopardy or to my audiobook because so many neighbors stopped by to chat. The neighbor across the street just had to come over and see the cat on the leash. The very punctual dog-walker stopped on his way around the block. A neighbor that moved away 5 years ago happened to be driving by and stopped to check in. The neighbor up the hill offered his crabgrass for my weed-pulling pleasure, and said he would pray for Dad and his surgery. I offered to pray for him and his wife and their medical issues. Another neighbor stopped by to ask if I had seen the elderly man who lives next door. I had, and she was greatly relieved.

What started as an activity I wasn’t even sure I should be doing – out on the busy corner with my cat on a leash pulling crabgrass - ended up being an unexpected delight for several days and evenings in a row.

I wonder what other unorganized, spontaneous actions might foster community, sharing and understanding. We begin each week with a community meal here at this Table – and we miss it when, well, we miss it. Perhaps this week we can take a little bit of the community we experience here every

week and foster a little community like we find at this Table and bless our neighbors and ourselves in the process. You may not have a cat on a leash or an overabundance of crabgrass in a small lawn, but you may be surprised at what other hidden delights you find right where you are.

### **Communion Hymn**

*“For the Bread, Which You Have Broken”* Sam Johnson, organist

For the bread, which you have broken, for the wine, which you have poured,  
for the words, which you have spoken, now we give you thanks, O Lord.

### **Prayer for the Bread & Cup**

Jody Mullis

Gracious Heavenly Father we thank you for this day. As we read in Psalm 91, “You who live in the shelter of the most high, who abide in the shadow of the almighty will say to the Lord, my refuge and my fortress.” And for this we thank you Lord. I trust also that in Matthew 28 it says “Let us go therefore and make disciples of all nations.” As we take this bread and cup we ask that it strengthens us and fortifies us and we ask all of this in your precious name, 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.  
(1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

### **Sharing Holy Communion**

*You will receive the bread and cup together. Please hold them; we will take each together as one body. Disciples of Christ believe in an Open Table. All who profess Christ and follow Him are welcome to share His meal. Gluten free wafers are available in the Narthex.*

### **Call to Discipleship**

Pastor Gena

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

If you have come to know Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior and you would like to profess that you intend to begin a life of faith, learning to walk in his way of Love, you are welcome to contact one of the Pastors to take this step. If you would like to join this part of the Body of Christ at Fairhill Manor Christian Church, to covenant to journey together in this life of faith, please reach out to one of the Pastors to learn more. We all take these moments to rededicate our lives to following Jesus.

### **Closing hymn**

*“Lord, You Give the Great Commission”*

Sam Johnson, organist

Lord, you give the great commission: “Heal the sick and preach the word.” Lest the church neglect its mission, and the gospel go unheard, help us witness to your purpose with renewed integrity. With the Spirit’s gifts empower us for the work of ministry.

### **Benediction**

Rev. Stillwell

In all of your sorrows, may you find comfort. In all of your silence, may you find peace. In all of your striving, may you find strength. In all of your successes, may you find fulfillment. In all of your gathering, may you find God.

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**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](http://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 Berezney  
Jeff Caldwell  
Bryan Carter  
Wanda Chicone  
Angel Corbett  
Ruth Cox  
Dave Davis  
Sue Donaldson  
Craig Dotson  
Benjamin Dube  
Connie Faust  
Kathy Moninger-Ford  
Barb Graff  
Doris Haniford  
Irma Harper  
Sheila Harris  
Alberta Haught  
Aryn Hess  
Danni Iams  
Ed Jackman  
Kari Johnson  
Brandon Keenan  
Von Lacock  
Marylee Lawrence  
David Leonard  
Pastor Dave Mansfield  
Charlie McConnell

### **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  
Candy Wasalasky  
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
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.