

Manor Minutes
Volume 16 Issue 19
May 9, 2025

- Elders Meeting – May 14, 5:30pm Shepherds Room
- Board Meeting – May 14, 7pm Small Fellowship Hall
- Tri-County Men's Dinner – May 15, Connellsville
- Choir Practice – May 15, 6:30pm

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

BOARD
meeting
May 14, 7pm

Gift Cards Available

- 3 - \$25 Eat'n Park
- 2 - \$25 Bob Evans
- 1 - \$25 Applebee's

Purchase in the Narthex after worship with cash or check. At least 10% is given back to FMCC on each gift card purchase as a rebate.

(It would make a great Mother's Day treat.
Hint! Hint!)

Fairhill Manor will be celebrating **Graduate Sunday** on June 8. If you are graduating or you have a family member who is, please contact the Church Office to let us know. You can call the office (724) 225-8610 or send an e-mail to fairhillmanor@yahoo.com with the name of the graduate, school they are graduating from, and their relationship to Fairhill member.

Information is needed by **June 1**.



Blanket Sunday, May 11 Special Collection will be received during the Children's Message

Our congregation has always supported the Church World Service Blanket Sunday to change lives in our country and around the world. These blankets cost \$10/each. They are used for folks experiencing displacement, war, famine, natural disasters, homelessness, etc. This special offering will be received during the worship service on May 11. Checks can be written to Fairhill Manor with "blankets" in the memo or you can donate online through Givelify (on the church website under the More tab, and Give). Please give as you can.

"And don't forget to do good and share with those in need." Hebrews 13:16

Are you counting your daily blessings using a Blessing Box? Need a box? Ask Connie Sheller.





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

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Minister
Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor
Elders: Gary Ford, Bread
Linda Reese, Cup
May 11, 2025 – 10:15am

Prelude

Sam Johnson, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Rita Puskarich

Leader: The God of love and grace invites us in.

People: Blessed be the God of love!

Leader: The God of power and might welcomes us here.

People: Glory to God on high!

Leader: The God of wisdom and truth speaks to us now.

People: Praise the One who speaks truth to our hearts!

Opening Hymn

“Wash, O God, Your Sons and Daughters” Sam Johnson, organist

Wash, O God, your sons and daughters, newborn creatures of your womb. Number them among your people, raise like Christ from death and tomb. Weave them garments bright and sparkling; compass them with love and light. Fill, anoint them; send your Spirit, holy dove and heart's delight.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Pastor Gena

Loving God and Parent of all, we are grateful today to gather as children formed in your image. As a mother hen gathers her brood under her wing, so today gather us in, joined together to hear your teachings and experience your love.

We thank you for the women among us and around us in whom you have gifted the privilege and the challenge of being mothers and mother figures. Especially today, we thank you for all mothers, everywhere. Thank you for moments when mothers demonstrate your unconditional love and guidance. Thank you for a mother's encouragement and correction, her strength and perseverance, her comfort and support. Strengthen mothers in the ways they raise their children: grant them wisdom for the lessons they teach, discernment in the ways they discipline, patience and energy when they need it. May others grant them the thanks and honor they deserve – today and everyday.

We thank you for grandmothers, sisters, aunts, teachers, mentors, friends, and anyone, anywhere, who plays a mother's guiding role in the life of another person. Grant them the ability to model the example of Christ for all within their influence, that they might share the love that you have so freely shown to all of us.

We pause to remember those for whom Mother's Day is a source of discomfort, perhaps even anxiety and pain. We pray for those for whom this day brings melancholy remembrance of their own mothers who have died. We pray especially for those who are encountering this Mother's Day for the first time without their mother. We pause to give thanks for mothers who are no longer with us. We pray for mothers

whose children have died. We pray for those whose children are far away and those whose relationships with their children are not what they had hoped them to be. Grant your peace and comfort, we pray, and surround these mothers with joyful and treasured memories.

We pray with those for whom Mother's Day is a painful reminder of their own singleness, or their own inability to have biological children. Give them your special care and love, and grant them your assurance that they are not alone; neither are they without ability to make a lasting impact on the world.

And to those whose experience with and memory of their own mothers has brought enduring pain, remorse, and guilt, grant the power of healing and forgiveness, we pray. Remind us all of the ways we have wronged each other, and of the power we have, in your name, to bridge even the deepest divides.

Parent God, we bring before you these of your children who need your special care today. We pray for those we have named loud, those on our prayer list, and those, near and far, who are in our hearts and on our minds... God, among all of the many ways we describe you, you are a loving mother and father to us all. Thank you for your ever-present and unconditional love. It is in the name of your son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ, that we pray together....

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 23

Kevin Puskarich

Anthem

"Meekness and Majesty," by Jack Schrader

Choir

Children's Message

Connie Sheller

The Blanket Sunday special offering will be received during the Children's Message.

Second Scripture Reading

Acts 8:26-39

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

"Safe At Home"

Rev. Chris Stillwell

I am baseball fan and a Pirates fan which means I haven't had a whole lot to cheer about these past forty years or so. Every year I hope that this year might be a good year, because when it is good it is great. I remember the years at the end of the 1980's when they won the division three years in a row. I remember the excitement of winning the wildcard card game against the reds 10 years ago, but one of my favorite baseball memories was when the MLB All Star Game came to town in 2006. I remember that downtown Pittsburgh was just bedlam. People from all over gathered to see the best of the best, knock home runs into the river, to celebrate the memory of Roberto Clemente, and to indulge in America's pastime.

Few sports capture our imagination the way baseball does. There's something universally appealing and poetic about a game whose main purpose is coming "home". The batter is part of a team, a family, but at the plate, he is all alone. He has the cheers and support of his friends but in the end he succeeds or fails on his own. Then when he gets a hit, he travels the field, in enemy territory always afraid of getting thrown out. He gets by because of the oasis of hospitality that he finds on each base, and because of the help he

gets from friends that he meets along the way and his base coaches. Finally, if all goes well the prodigal son returns to home, and everyone cheers.

How much is that like life? You go out into the world to succeed or fail on your own merits supported by the love of your family and friends who cheer you on. You face each challenge hoping not to succumb to the difficulties life throws your way. With the help of others you succeed. Whenever you come home people might not get on their feet and cheer, but they're just as happy to see you safe at home.

With baseball being such an iconic sport perhaps if the 23 Psalm had been written today by an American it might read, "The Lord is my base coach, I will not be thrown out coming home," but of course it wasn't. The twenty third Psalm is quite possibly the most famous and well known six verses of scripture ever written. Its comforting words evoking God as a shepherd guiding each of us, God's sheep, into bucolic fields and keeping us safe from harm are read in many of life's difficult situations. Its brevity makes it an easy passage to remember.

In those days the shepherd was just about the most common job available, but it was also just about the most important job available as well. A person's wealth then was often measured by how much livestock they had. We read that Job was wealthy not because he had much money but because he had 7,000 sheep

The shepherd, therefore, was entrusted with keeping his master's wealth intact. This was a lot harder than managing a portfolio or handling investments. The shepherd had to care for the sheep, to guide them, and to bring them safely home each day.

Because of this, Psalm 23 is often read when we go to our final home. When we die it is the perfect passage to illustrate that feeling of going to our eternal resting place; the home that God has prepared for us. Because of this it is probably read in funeral homes more than in churches, but as powerful as this psalm is for crossing over into death the power of this psalm actually is even greater in life.

If the Lord is our shepherd than we shall not want, we will lie down in green pastures. We will be led beside still waters. We will be led in right paths, and no matter how dark or daunting life becomes we shall fear no evil.

We will feel this peace and comfort because we will know that the Lord prepares a table before us even in the presence of our enemies. And because of this goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our life, and we shall dwell in the house of the Lord our whole life long.

Clearly then this is a passage about this life even if it also has implications for the next. Look at these last two sentences: goodness and mercy will follow me all the *days of my life*. I shall dwell in the house of the lord my *whole life long*.

Even in the darkest times we will dwell in the house of the lord. Even in most frightening or uncertain moments we will dwell in the house of the lord. Even when we are weak, alone, and lost, still we dwell in the house of the Lord.

Think of that, sheep go wherever the shepherd leads them knowing that his rod will keep them safe and his staff will keep them from being lost. If God is our shepherd then life placed in God's trust is like being home even in the darkest, farthest places.

It's like carrying a bit of home with you wherever you go. When I lived in Puerto Rico it was the farthest from home I had ever been. The culture was very different and often left me feeling lost, but I knew that one day I would go home. The knowledge that I would eventually return to the comforts of home, turned what could have been a strange and alien land into a wonderful and exciting adventure, because I knew that no matter how far I traveled, all roads eventually led to home.

As the Israelites wandered for forty years in the desert the Lord provided all that they needed, water for their thirst, manna from Heaven and quails for their hunger. Though it was long and difficult and although they encountered many troubles along the way, still the Lord led them home to the Promised Land.

Just like the All Star game. During that game the National League took the lead when Carlos Beltran hit a single and then took second when the throw was sent to home base. Then, on the next pitch, after getting a signal from his base coach who was his only companion and guide on his journey, he stole third. After surviving the danger of striking out, grounding out, flying out, and getting thrown out, he had gone as far as he could possibly go from home and was now only 90ft away. He was so close and yet so far. With the all nine of his enemies focused on him alone in enemy territory he strayed slowly and cautiously from the oasis of safety that was third base, and, when the catcher could not corral a wild pitch, he stole home. After crossing the threshold of home he was greeted with cheers and celebration from his teammates and the fans. He had come home.

And we can be home as well. Whether we travel one thousand miles from home or none at all, God calls us home. For each of us must go out into the world on our own to stand or fall on our own character, yet we are never alone. For the Lord, like a shepherd leads us home and when we get there a feast awaits us. Yet, because we know this it is as if we carry a little piece of home with us wherever we go.

We know that if we get lost God will put us back on track. We know that if we hunger God will provide a feast. We know that if we feel alone God will give us the signals that will keep us safe.

If the Lord is our shepherd or our base coach we will fear no evil, no darkness, no predator or enemy, no wild pitch or fastball, in fact, if we know that if we let the Lord guide us no matter where we travel in life we will inevitably find our way to the home that God has prepared for us, how can we fear anything in this life?

Don't save this psalm for funerals only read this psalm anytime you find yourself worried afraid, or just a little homesick. Heed its words and you will always be safe.

Call to Offering

Gene Sheller

Jesus, in calling himself the Good Shepherd, said, "I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd" (John 10:16). Let us give generously so the words of Jesus can be fulfilled.

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

Rev. Stillwell

Generous God, we dedicate these gifts and offerings into your service. May our generosity flow abundantly into a world in need of your transforming love and grace. In your loving name, we pray. Amen

Invitation to Communion

Rev. Stillwell

In hearing the 23rd Psalm read, the phrase I usually hear the clearest is the phrase my cup runs over. I don't usually read the KJV of the Bible, but it is hard to not say my cup runneth over even though I would not say runneth in any other situation.

I may be drawn to that phrase because I am thirsty and enjoy drinking maybe more than I enjoy eating, but I think what is most special about it is that it is a symbol for abundance and blessing. It is the idea that we are given so much by a God who loves us so dearly we cannot contain it all, and we should not.

When we have more than we need we are called to give back and share with those who have less. To me a cup that runneth over is a metaphor for grace which Paul described in his letter to Timothy “is not limited or scarce; it overflows abundantly to those who believe.”

We come to this table to celebrate God’s grace and we are called to leave this table and share it. Like Phillip teaching the eunuch about the gospel, we are sent from this table to share the goodness of God’s grace to a world in need of forgiveness. We are not to stay at home enjoying the table that God has prepared and the cup that runneth over. Rather we are to go out into the world to share the cup of forgiveness and bring others back to the table.

Communion Hymn

“I’m Gonna Eat at the Welcome Table”

Sam Johnson, organist

I’m gonna eat at the welcome table, I’m gonna eat at the welcome table, Allelu.

I’m gonna eat at the welcome table, I’m gonna eat at the welcome table, Allelu.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Gary Ford

Lord, today we heard Psalm 23, and You are the good shepherd who leads us to calm and peaceful places. One of those places is this table. This table has been prepared with love and grace. May this bread and cup be a reminder of your body and blood which provides forgiveness and new life for all who trust and believe. 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

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

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

“Go, My Children, with My Blessing”

Sam Johnson, organist

Go, my children, with my blessing, never alone; waking, sleeping, I am with you, you are my own; in my love’s baptismal river I have made you mine forever, go, my children, with my blessing you are my own.

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

Blessed by God, may we bless the world in the week ahead. Loved by Christ, may we love others, in all we say and do. Empowered by the Spirit, may we follow faithfully where God leads.



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

Chuck and Mary Wiseman
880 S Main St, Apt 214
Washington PA 15301

Bo & Patty Pryor
880 S Main St, Apt 102
Washington PA 15301

Alice Cokeley
900 N Cass Lake Rd, Apt 324
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Carol Brown
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Doris Sorice
880 S Main St, Apt 336
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Terry Bailey
Donna Bakaitis
Todd Barnhart
Vanessa & John Berezney
Jeff Caldwell
Bryan Carter
Wanda Chicone
Ruth Cox
Sue Donaldson
Benjamin Dube
Connie Faust
Gary Ford
Kathy Moninger-Ford
Barb Graff
Irma Harper
Sheila Harris
Alberta Haught

Aryn Hess
Danni Iams
Ed Jackman
Von Lacock
David Leonard
CJ Martin
Pam McCord
Norm McDonough
Dick Moninger
Joe Neckerman
Carmen Oliverio
Peggy Oliverio
Michelle Oneal
Sandy Petry
Dick Pilgun
Betty Riecks
Jeannie Riffle
Joan Riffle
Lori Riffle

John Samida
Valerie Shetler
Doug Smith
Pat Sorice
Darci Sprowls
Wayne Starnes
Cathy Stewart
Beth Teagarden
Jane Teagarden

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.

Puzzle!

Unscramble the names of these biblical mothers. Look up the verse if you need help. Then use the letters on the numbered blanks to complete the message below.

VEE (Genesis 3:20)

6 11

NNAHAH (1 Samuel 1:20)

14

RBAHEOD (Judges 5:7)

18 3

KREEHAB (Genesis 27:5)

16 5

EHLA (Genesis 30:14)

1

CLEHRA (Genesis 30:22)

7 12

MOIAN (Ruth 1:22)

10 17 13

RAAHS (Genesis 17:19)

8

AMYR (Matthew 2:11)

2

ZEBLEHATI (Luke 1:13)

9 15 4

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12
 13 8 14 G F F G !
 15 4 16 10 17 3 18

Answers: Eve, Hannah, Deborah, Rebekah, Leah, Rachel, Naomi, Sarah, Mary, Elizabeth;
 A mother's love is a gift from God!