

Manor Minutes
Volume 16 Issue 23
June 6, 2025

- Bethany Class Luncheon – June 9, noon @ Eat'n Park
- Operating Deficit Task Force – June 10, 5pm
- Elders Meeting – June 11, 5:30pm via Zoom
- Choir Practice – June 12, 6:30pm

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



Gift cards available this week:

- Applebee's (2)
- Bob Evans (3)
- Cracker Barrel (1)
- Dairy Queen (1)
- Eat'n Park (3)
- Kohl's (1)
- Outback (2)
- Panera (2)
- Red Lobster (2)
- Texas Roadhouse (1)

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 ☺.

Thank you

Chuck Wiseman & family would like to express our deepest thanks & appreciation to Rev. Chris, Pastor Gena & all the wonderful church family who made Mary's Celebration of Life so absolutely beautiful! And also for the warm thoughts & prayers expressed in so many cards we have received.

**JOIN US
THIS
SUNDAY**

- Graduate Sunday
- Pentecost - **Wear RED**
- Last day of Sunday School and CW&W
- Sunday School Teacher and CW&W Volunteer Recognition
- Pentecost Picnic after Worship

**Are you
missing
your
favorite
hymn?
or
special
music?**

A large blue cross with a black outline is the central graphic. It is positioned over a musical staff that curves around it. The staff has several red musical notes and a red treble clef.

If you have a **favorite hymn** or **song** that you love to sing but we haven't sung it in a while, let Rev. Chris, Pastor Gena or the Church Office know and we will try to incorporate it in a service in the near future. Even those who join us on Zoom or Facebook can suggest music selections.



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

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Minister
Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor
Elders: Linda Reese, Bread
Carol Daniels, Cup
June 8, 2025 – 10:15am

Prelude

Sam Johnson, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Recognizing Our Graduates and Reese Grant Recipients

Call to Worship

Von Lacock

Leader: In rushing wind and cleansing fire ...

People: God's Spirit leads us here.

Leader: In courage found and faith renewed ...

People: God's Spirit fills our hearts with longing.

Leader: In visions seen and dreams made real ...

People: God's Spirit takes away our fear.

Leader: In rushing wind and cleansing fire ...

People: God's Spirit sends us to share Christ's love.

Opening Hymn

"Every Time I Feel the Spirit"

Jody Mullis, pianist

Every time I feel the Spirit moving in my heart, I will pray. Yes, every time I feel
the Spirit moving in my heart, I will pray. Upon the mountain, my Lord spoke, out his
mouth came fire and smoke. All around me looks so fine, ask my Lord if all was mine.

Expressing Gratitude to Our Sunday School Teachers and CW&W Volunteers

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Pastor Gena

Come, Holy Spirit, come again. As long ago you inspired, astonished, and confused your people on the
day of Pentecost, so come to us now. Fill our ears with the sound of your breath. Fill our eyes with the
brilliance of your presence in each other. Fill our hearts with your good Word.

Holy and Merciful God, we know too well our failure to listen as you guide us, our refusal to use your
gifts to serve and lift up each other. Forgive us for the divisions we nurture. May your mercy give us
peace with you, peace with ourselves, and peace with one another.

We give thanks for all those who have softened our hearts that we might be ready to receive your Spirit in
your time. We thank you for those who continue to proclaim the gospel with words and in service.
Thank you for those who are dreaming new dreams of how we might continue to be your church in
powerful ways into the future. Thank you for those who dare to cross divides and create understanding
between people who look and sound different from each other. Thank you for those who stand up and

speak your truth and those who in less obvious ways set things right slowly and patiently. Thank you for your Spirit who creates understanding between us, who helps us to find a way where we thought there was no way, who weaves together our skills and experiences and ways of being into something more beautiful than we could have imagined.

Thank you for the many ways we are able to be together. Keep us ever thankful for all the things we miss when we are apart. And bless those of us who remain at a distance. Continue to guide us, we beg you. As you have guided us so clearly in the past, come and show us the next steps forward as your church.

Please be with those who feel misunderstood because of their differences. Give us courage to embrace each person as your child.

We pray for those who are mourning this day. Come and bring your mercy where suffering and loss are beyond our comprehension, beyond any words of comfort we can come up with.

Please be with those whose lives are being turned upside down by violence and the uncertainty and chaos it brings. We cry for peace, for fairness and for understanding. Show us a new way to live together.

We pray for your wisdom. Keep us centered in you, comforted that you are our firm foundation.

Please be with those who are lonely, those facing difficult surgeries and treatments, those beginning long recoveries. Give them the strength of your constant company.

We pray now for all of those whose names we have spoken aloud this morning and for those on our prayer list. And we pray for these dear ones who are on our hearts and minds, whose names are well-known to you.

Come, Holy Spirit, come. Breathe new life in us that we might share the good news of your never-ending love far and wide. We pray this in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ, who has promised to be with us always, and 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: *“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.

Special Music “What a Friend We Have in Jesus,” arranged by Charlotte Stillwell
Charlotte Stillwell, keyboard and Jim Cope, trombone

First Scripture Lesson **Genesis 11:1-9** Linda Reese

Anthem “Be Strong in the Lord,” by Fedtke Choir

Children’s Message Rev. Stillwell

As you see, we have balloons today. You can have a lot of fun with a balloon. I’ve seen some people who can take a long, skinny balloon and make it into the shape of different animals. Have you ever tried that?

I've played a game where we toss round balloons up into the air to see how long we can keep it up without it hitting the ground. That's a lot of fun.

Look at the balloon I'm holding. I think it's a very nice balloon. It's a pretty color, and by looking at the shape of it, I think it would be a very nice round balloon. There seems to be something lacking in the balloon. Can anyone tell me what this balloon needs? (Pause for children to answer.) You're right. It needs to be filled with air! Before a balloon can fulfill its purpose, someone must breathe some life into it.

I think this balloon can help us learn something about the church. Today is a very special day we call Pentecost. It was the day that God sent the Holy Spirit to breathe life into the church so the church would be all that God intended for it to be.

Before God sent the Holy Spirit, the church was lifeless--like this balloon. The church was not telling people about Jesus. After the Holy Spirit breathed life into the church, people began telling everyone they saw about Jesus.

It didn't even matter if they spoke the same language. Everyone they told about Jesus understood what they were saying. Thousands of people were added to the church. The church became alive and was doing the things God had commanded.

Breathe life into your balloon, and remember that just as the balloon needs to be filled to be what it was intended to be, you and I need the Holy Spirit to fill us so we can be all that God wants us to be.

Second Scripture Reading

Acts 2:1-13

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

“The Limits of Language & the Lesson of Listening”

Rev. Chris Stillwell

Words are special things. I don't know if we stop to think of it too often like this, but take a second to think of how marvelous the gift of speech is. Animals communicate with a basic type of speech, but they can only communicate the most basic of things, when they want to mate or when there is danger. Cavemen communicated with a series of grunts and, as a result, they were not much better than animals. So the ability to form words into sentences and paragraph is special indeed.

The words of the Bible existed for centuries before they were written down in the form of stories that were told again and again and passed down from generation to generation. Wisdom, learning, and tradition, therefore, were not possible until words were created. With all that said, however, some words are more special than others.

For instance, love, hope, God, these words mean so much more than ordinary words, but even ordinary words, can sometimes take on new meaning or be made special by who says them. Words spoken by your boss can have more meaning than words spoken by your neighbor. Words spoken by your children, are infinitely more special than words spoken by a stranger. Words may be most special, however, when they come from mothers.

There is something about mothers which transform words. “It's all right” never had the healing, soothing effect for me when it came from my father as it did from my mother. Undoubtedly mothers have been blessed with a special language that soothes and calms like no other, but if you are not a mother you also can speak a language that is special. This is possible because God has made it possible for the Holy Spirit to transform our words and give them more meaning than we could ever intend.

This is vital because words, today, in our culture, have lost their value. There are radio stations dedicated to nothing but talk, political talk, sports talk, just talk. Occasionally there is an important story that demands a lot of attention, but mostly the radio personalities are just filling time. All talk all the time, and no listening.

Of course cell phones make it easier to talk, and text messaging makes it so that words are barely necessary. Have you ever been talking to someone who was texting someone else? When words can be reduced to a series of abbreviations, words have indeed become cheap.

This does not lessen our desire to understand or to be understood however. The study of languages may be more important than ever now that our world has gotten so small, and I am so grateful for translation tools to bridge the language barrier, but it would be nice to have an experience like the disciples did in Jerusalem two thousand years ago.

The reversal of the Tower of Babel is found in the book of Acts on the day of Pentecost after Jesus ascended into heaven. Having told his disciples to wait for the Holy Spirit in the city of Jerusalem, Peter and the apostles receive the Spirit and it causes the people there to proclaim, “in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.”

That day people had come from all over the empire and spoke many languages. You can imagine it was a confusing and chaotic scene, and so another language would seem to have made things worse, but the language of the Spirit brought them all together.

The Holy Spirit in Acts is a new language that everyone can understand, but I don’t think of that as new words so much as a way of speaking in which communication cuts through the language barrier.

One of my favorite episodes of my favorite TV show once had a character in it who didn’t speak. The assumption is that he couldn’t speak but at the end we learn that he just doesn’t. Finally when asked why he doesn’t speak he says, “Words are heavy things,” to which his friend agrees and responds, “If birds could talk they wouldn’t be able to fly.” That’s always stuck with me. I try to listen more than I speak and to choose my word with care because words are indeed heavy things, and because there is so much in our speech that can go wrong.

When we speak, people can misunderstand our tone, our intent, our body language, not to mention the words we use which can be chosen poorly or misspoken. When we text we can miss a word, mistype a word or be autocorrected into a word that we never meant. So many conversations are like that. Speech about God is like that as well. Our words are clumsy, so much sound and fury signifying nothing more than foolishness unless the Holy Spirit is present.

When people speak of things they have in common they begin to understand one another. We say things like “Now you’re talking my language,” even if we’ve been speaking the same language the whole time, but the language that everyone understands is rarely expressed in words, rather in smiles, hugs, and handshakes.

When you want to comfort a friend who has lost a loved one a comforting spirit is manifested better in a comforting presence and acts of generosity than in even the most eloquent of words. Sometimes the best word of encouragement is a smile, the best word of comfort is a pat on the shoulder, the best word of love is an embrace, the best word of grace is arguing with someone and still praying with them.

I do not believe we can overstate how much we need to gather as God’s people right now and ask the Holy Spirit to instruct us, shape us, remake us, and commission us. We need fresh languages of bridge-building. We need new words to rekindle love. We need the wind and fire of God to challenge our complacencies, reset our priorities, ease our anxieties, and move us out.

It is no small thing that the Holy Spirit loosened tongues to break down barriers on the birthday of the church. In the face of impossible difference, God compelled God's people to engage. From the beginning the call was to press in, listen, and speak.

This whole season of the church began with Ash Wednesday, and now Pentecost arrives to remind us that ashes do not have the final word, and that fire does not come only to consume. It comes also to bless, to call, to inspire, to give to us what we could never begin to imagine on our own.

The fire of Pentecost moves us toward speech, and this is a blessing and a miracle. This is not, however, where the greatest miracle lies. The miracle of Pentecost is not a miracle of speaking. It is a miracle of hearing, and of understanding.

On the day of Pentecost when thousands gathered from many countries speaking many languages they understood one another because the apostles spoke God's language, a language of love that told the story of Christ and in that language the Holy Spirit as present.

Whatever your words, in whatever language they are spoken, if they are spoken after having listened first with the love of Christ in mind, the Spirit will find a way to make them heard and understood. May the language you speak whatever the accent, whatever the grammar, whatever the vocabulary be filled with love for Christ and you will surely be speaking a holy language.

Call to Offering

Rita Puskarich

When the Spirit breathes upon us, we are filled with good things. When this breath is taken away, we return to the dust of the earth. In the time we have, let us give thanks and share our blessing with the world.

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

God of wind and flame, your Pentecost fire continues to touch us and bless our world today. May our offering bring the warmth of your love, and the glory of your holy flame, to those who are shaken by the buffeting winds all around us. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Rev. Stillwell

I have found that sometimes when I studied in class I usually studied just enough to get me to the next test. I would cram as much information as I could to be ready for the test, and if some of it stayed later that was fine, but if it all goes out of my brain once the test is over that would be fine too. That is why I thought it especially important that I had to take comprehensive exams at the end of my college experience. Otherwise, it might have been that what I learned was only temporary, but going back and reviewing all the things I learned in four years was especially gratifying and helpful to me after I graduated. It was challenging to be sure but gratifying as well.

I can tell you it has helped me these many years since. I feel like it might have been like that for the disciples, who heard so many things taught at the Last Supper that it would have been just about impossible to retain it all. So when Pentecost comes five weeks later Peter is able to stand up in Jerusalem and give them and all gathered a review of who Christ was and what he was about.

The Holy Spirit had been unleashed that day and allowed all who were listening to hear Peter's speech in their own language. Pentecost marked the commencement of the church and the graduation of Peter and the other 11 from disciples to apostles. Now they were ready to go out and preach the gospel, but I imagine they had to review from time to time the things that Jesus taught them

We do too, and we are fortunate to have the Bible that we may return to again and again and also this table where every time we come we remember the night when he was betrayed, and the things that he taught, and the way that he lived. Let us review his teachings, his life, his death, and his resurrection, so that we will never forget and come our final exam, we will be ready.

Communion Hymn

"The Old Rugged Cross"

Sam Johnson, organist

On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross, the emblem of suffering and shame; and I love that old cross where the dearest and best for a world of lost sinners was slain. So I'll cherish the old rugged cross, till my trophies at last I lay down; I will cling to the old rugged cross, and exchange it some day for a crown.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Linda Reese

Lord of Creation, today we celebrate your anointing of the apostles with the Holy Spirit and the birth of the church. At this table, we remember the broken body and shed blood of our Savior. Bless this bread and cup, the emblems of that sacrifice. As we leave this table, may our Spirit be renewed and refreshed to go forth and proclaim your love. 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

"Spirit"

Sam Johnson, organist

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow through the wilderness, calling and free, Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea. You moved on the waters, you called to the deep, then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep, and over the eons you called to each thing, "Awake from your slumbers and rise on your wings."

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

Go, blessed by the power of God's Holy Spirit. Go, warmed by God's sacred fire in your hearts. Go, inspired by the glory of our Advocate.



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!

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Connie Faust
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Barb Graff
Irma Harper
Sheila Harris
Alberta Haught

Aryn Hess
Danni Iams
Ed Jackman
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
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.