

Manor Minutes
Volume 16 Issue 18
May 2, 2025

- Stewardship/Finance Ministry – May 5, 5:30pm
- Choir Practice – May 8, 6:30pm

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

Rummage Sale & Bake Sale
May 8 and 9, 10am-5pm
May 10, 9am-12 pm

Pay what you WANT.
Take what you NEED.



Bring your rummage sale items
to the church on May 5, 10am-2pm
May 6, 10am-2pm
May 7, 1pm-5pm

Volunteers are needed for setting up on
May 5, 6 & 7.

Volunteers are needed
to help during the sale
May 8, 9 & 10.

Baked Good items are needed for
May 8 & 9.
Cookies, Cakes, Brownies, Cupcakes,
Pies

Sign-up sheets are in the Narthex.

Hangers needed!
Please try to bring your clothes with
hangers.



Registration 5:30 PM
Meeting 6:00 PM

Taco Bar Dinner
Cost: \$15

*Christian Church
Of Connellsville*
(Disciples of Christ)

212 S. Pittsburgh St.
Connellsville, PA 15425
(724)-628-3802
disciples1st@yahoo.com

Please RSVP by May 8th

Sign up in the Narthex.



Board Reports due May 7th
Board Meeting May 14, 7pm

2024-2025 Dartball Year End Results

Most Team Home Runs – Fairhill Manor (121)
4th in standings out of 15 teams

Perfect Attendance – Carmen Oliverio

55 & Over

- Average – 2nd Place, Russ Knight
- RBI – 3rd Place Tie, Bob Hanning
- Singles – 1st Place, Russ Knight
- Home Runs – 2nd Place, Bob Hanning

Ladies

- RBI – 3rd Place Judy Hanning



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
Chuck Riggle, Cup
May 4, 2025 – 10:15am

Prelude

John Stahlman, pianist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Presentation of Dartball Trophy for Most Home Runs

Bob Hanning

Call to Worship

Kevin Puskarich

Leader: With trumpet sounds and singing hearts,

People: We come to praise the Lord.

Leader: As faithful witnesses of Christ's grace and love,

People: We come to praise the Lord.

Leader: Coming here with our doubts and our faith,

People: We come to praise the Lord.

Opening Hymn

"Joyful, Joy, We Adore Thee"

John Stahlman, pianist

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love; hearts unfold like flowers
before thee, opening to the sun above. Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, drive our
fear and doubt away; giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day.

Recognition of Deacon Emeritus Honorees

Carolyn Blackhurst and Lela Davidson

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Pastor Gena

God of grace, you have given us minds to know you, hearts to love you, and voices to sing your praise.
Fill us with your spirit during this hour of worship, we pray. We praise you, gracious God, Power of Life,
for you have not abandoned us to a living death of sin and despair but have lifted us up from these graves
together with your son, Jesus the Christ.

Creating and sustaining God, we come with thanksgiving for these moments when we can ease the pace
of our lives and listen for your voice. Create a spirit within us that truly draws us toward you and toward
our brothers and sisters; a spirit deep, perceptive, gentle and bold. Clear our minds, open our hearts, and
touch us with your presence and your power, we pray.

Merciful God, we confess our sins to you in these moments. For the ways in which we have intentionally
hurt one another, forgive us. For the ways in which we have unknowingly or unintentionally hurt one
another, forgive us. For the ways we could have acted in generous, loving or helpful ways and did not,
forgive us. How wondrous is your great forgiving love, mighty God.

Holy God, we come lifting to you the joys and concerns, the hopes and dreams of our lives. May we be open to your voice as we see with new eyes, and hear with new ears, the direction you are showing us to go.

Bless, we pray, this gathering of your people, that we may grow and flourish in your love and grace. We pray for those who are rejoicing, who are relieved, who have what they need, who have laid down heavy burdens, who are experiencing the joy of friendship and love. Hear our prayers for those whose lives have touched us – those who are in pain, those who are ill, and those who grieve. We pray for those who are recovering from wind, from fire, from flooding, from destruction of any kind. Hear our prayers for those who are living in violence – in communities, in homes, in hearts and minds. Hear now our prayers for all we have spoken and for all that is hidden in our hearts...

May your grace empower us as people of faith to better serve you in the common places of our lives, and in the people we meet on our faith journeys. May our lives be a living witness to your resurrection. All of this we pray in the name of the Risen and Living Christ, as together we say...

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

Psalms 30

Connie Sheller

Special Music

“My Shepherd, You Supply My Need”

Jim Cope

Children’s Message

Rev. Stillwell

Good morning everyone. I wonder if you find it easy or hard to share. Can you think of a time when Jesus shared? Certainly there are the stories in which Jesus took a few loaves of bread and some fish and fed thousands of people with it. In that story, Jesus didn’t share since it wasn’t his bread or his fish, but he blessed those who did the sharing and it fed many. He also shared food and time and knowledge with his disciples especially at the Last Supper. Later, when he was resurrected, he shared food with his disciples on the shore of the sea and that is how they knew who he was. Finally, he shared the Holy Spirit with his disciples when he went to Heaven so that they would not be alone.

Because Jesus set the example of sharing, his disciples did as well. When the church grew the book of Acts tells us they shared all that they had and none were in need. This is the magic of sharing. We all have some but when we share we have so much more because of what we can do together. You can see that throughout the church. Each choir member can sing by themselves but when they sing together it is even nicer and we get to experience it as well. People who buy a couple of things at a grocery store share some and the church is able to have dinners and support those in need. Everybody has a gift and they share it and find that they have not lost that gift. Rather they have gained something more.

This is what it means to be a Christian. I have a puzzle, and as you can see it is about half done. Each of you has a puzzle piece and you could keep it to yourself. It would look nice, but it would be incomplete, but if you shared it, what happens? The puzzle becomes complete and a larger picture emerges. I want

you to know that you are a piece of God's puzzle and when you share your gifts and yourself, you help create a more beautiful world. I hope that makes it easier for you to share the gifts God has given you.

Second Scripture Reading

Acts 6:1-8

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

“Servitude”

Rev. Chris Stillwell

As we enter into May we come into gardening season. It feels like I spend two months to get my yard and garden ready and often don't have much to show for it. Last year was one of the worst in part because it was so hot and dry that I barely got anything out of the garden. Two years before that my tomato plants were so big they were taking over my patio.

It seems like everything in my yard is feast or famine. We have a rhododendron plant that will not grow and I believe that is because it is in the shadow of a bush that was normal sized when we bought our house but is now actually bigger than the house. We planted lilacs that have grown so tall that we can no longer see anything out our living room window. And then there is the hops bush.

I planted two hops bushes and put up a trellis with the idea that they would grow up it and look nice while giving a pleasant citrus aroma in my back yard. I cannot believe what a monster this thing has become. As my kids were performing in “Little Shop of Horrors” this year I could not help thinking that Audrey II was like that plant in my back yard that takes over everything unless I fastidiously trim it.

When trying to grow something the worst result is not growth. The second worst result is explosive growth. This is the kind of growth that is such you can't keep up with it, and you worry that if you do not direct it, it will fail, die, go in the wrong direction, or some other bad fate.

This is true of plants, and it is true of the church. After Jesus ascended into Heaven the apostles were not worrying about growing figs or mustard tress. Instead they were growing the church and having so much success that it was becoming a problem. What a good problem to have, but it was a problem nonetheless.

What began with 12 had grown into the thousands and with it came the headache of how to organize and care for these new followers. This is especially problematic because the apostles were not just trying to have a weekly worship service. The book of Acts tells us that they were creating a community.

Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. ³³With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. ³⁴There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. ³⁵They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

This intentional community was the beginning of the church and the model later used for monastic communities and it sounds wonderful, but of course not easy. Some held back their wealth and did not share, while others did not receive what they needed.

This is where we are at the beginning of our reading where Luke writes:

Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food.

Here is a dispute within Christianity where the Christian widows who were Hebrew were getting cared for to the exclusion of Christians who were Greek. So now we have a church growing so fast that it was having trouble maintaining itself and a crisis was growing.

I am told that the Chinese word for “crisis” is made up of two word-symbols – one meaning “danger” and the other “opportunity.” That’s what a crisis is: a danger and an opportunity rolled up together.

The church was growing so much that it was in danger of collapsing so the apostles used this crisis as an opportunity to create a new office, the deacon. Now this word is never mentioned in this passage but the apostles say, “It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables.” The word deacon is derived from the Greek word *diákonos*, which is a standard ancient Greek word meaning “servant” or “waiter”.

As a result seven men are chosen to take care of making sure the widows are cared for, so in effect we have here the origin of deacons in the early church. Later a woman, Phoebe, is mentioned in Romans 16:1–2 as a deacon or deaconess of the church in Cenchreae. Nothing more specific is said about her duties or authority, although it is assumed she carried Paul's Letter to the Romans.

Just as an interesting side note we can go even earlier than this when it comes to talking about church deacons. In Mark, Jesus heals Simon’s mother in law, and when he does she began to serve them. Again in this passage we see the word, *diakonos*, “ministry, service.” This is the same root that gives us the word “deacon”. What’s more, the word *diakonos* literally means “to kick up dust” — this is an active, practical, on-the-move, change-the-world sort of work. In short, she is lifted up to serve. She is freed for ministry, to kick up some dust and get some things done. She is the pioneer who blazes the trail for the group of women at the crucifixion who stay and keep watch and remain with Christ’s body, even as the twelve disciples panic and flee.

Deacons and deaconesses, collectively called the diaconate, therefore have been important figures in the life of the church from the very beginning. They are the ones who get things done. That is the case in any church but especially a Disciples of Christ church since our deacons are used primarily for serving and preparing communion. Since we do that every week, the diaconate are important pieces of the church’s puzzle.

We are very different from the early church but there are two ways in which we must continue to be similar if we want the church to grow. The early church did not grow because their worship service was so exciting and their kids programs so innovative. It certainly did not grow because they captured the levers of power in the Romans Empire. In fact just the opposite was the case. Even after Constantine became the first emperor convert to Christianity this reprieve from persecution was short lived because two emperors later his nephew, Julian, became emperor and began a campaign to bring Rome back to the old gods.

For this Christians have called him Julian the Apostate but even he had to admit that Christians were on to something when he wrote letter to his high priest demanding that he encourage the priests to act more like Christians. He wrote:

It is disgraceful when no Jew is a beggar and the impious Galileans [Christians] support our poor in addition to their own; everyone is able to see that our coreligionists are in want of aid from us.

The church was so impressive in its helping those in need that even its enemies had to give it begrudging praise. As a result the church survived this last purge and became the faith of the empire. The apostle preaching was important to be sure, but the church would not have survived without its deacons.

So, first, for church to grow it must meet people's needs and not just the needs of its members. The other way for it to grow is to have strong deacons. Today it's not just widows that get fed, and when we worship we are not talking about meals. Now we are talking about the Lord's Supper and making sure that all receive the bread of life and the cup of forgiveness.

Preaching is important. Music is important. Maintaining our building and having a nice sanctuary is important, but for two thousand years the church has survived and thrived because of the waiters, the servants, the deacons. They are the people who kick up the dust of complacency in order to serve.

In every gospel Jesus extols the virtue of serving as being the highest act of any Christian. He says:

Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me. – Matthew 25:40

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. – Mark 10:45

The greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. – Luke 22:26

Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. – John 13:14-15

As we strive to grow God's church, may we all strive to be servants and waiters so that the needs of others will be met and in doing so those who receive bread will also receive the bread of life.

Communion Hymn

"Let Us Break Bread Together"

John Stahlman, pianist

Let us break bread together on our knees; let us break bread together on our knees.

When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun, O Lord, have mercy on me.

Invitation to Communion

Pastor Gena

As a people who have been reborn by the power of Christ's resurrection, we are gathered by our loving God to share the gifts of Christ's Table. He has offered himself to us in this meal, and promises to be known here in our midst when we gather in his name. The gifts of God are for all the people of God. Let us unite our hearts and minds at this Table of memory, of unity, and of love.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Linda Reese

Gracious Creator, the Lord's Supper reminds us that we are part of Your past, present, and future story. Continue to guide us as we continue to do the work started by the seven deacons chosen by the apostles. We thank you for your gift of unmerited grace. As we partake, bless the bread and cup, the emblems of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross for our salvation. As we leave this table, continue to guide us, and may our on-going story be pleasing to You. 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

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

Call to Discipleship

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

“How Great Thou Art”

John Stahlman, pianist

O Lord my God! when I in awesome wonder consider all the worlds thy hands have made,
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder, thy power throughout the universe displayed.
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to thee; how great thou art, how great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to thee; how great thou art, how great thou art!

Benediction


Rev. Stillwell

Having been loved, go out and love. Having been pardoned, go out and pardon. Having been helped, go out and help. Having been served, go out and serve.

?? ? Bible Quiz ? ?

Who said to the prophet Nathan,
“I have sinned against the LORD?”

- A. Reuben, for selling Joseph into slavery
- B. Jacob, for deceiving Isaac and stealing his brother’s birthright
- C. Rahab, a prostitute
- D. David, considered Israel’s greatest king



Answer: D (See 2 Samuel 12:13.)

Fairhill Manor extends its sympathy to the family of Paul Harton who passed away on Friday, April 25. Please keep Sandy and her family in your thoughts and prayers.

Fairhill Manor also extends its sympathy to the family of Bob Bakaitis who passed away on Saturday, April 26. Please keep Donna and her family in your thoughts and prayers.



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
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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
Kim Fleissner
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 Spowls
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.