

**Manor Minutes**  
**Volume 16 Issue 29**  
**July 18, 2025**

- No meetings this week.
- Pastor Gena is on vacation through July 26.
- Karen is on vacation through July 27.

Stay up to date at [www.fairhillmanorchurch.org/calendar](http://www.fairhillmanorchurch.org/calendar)



There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex for help needed before and during the Spaghetti dinner.

**The Bethany Class will meet at  
Eat'n Park on August 19 at noon  
for lunch. Everyone is welcome ☺**

## RuMmage \$ALE

No prices on items.  
Pay what you want.  
Take what you need.

Set up Tuesday, August 5, 9am-1pm  
Set up Wednesday, August 6, 12pm-3pm  
Set up Thursday, August 7, 9am-1pm  
Sale Friday, August 8, 9am-6pm  
Sale Saturday, August 9, 9am-2pm

If you can help during any of these times,  
please sign the sheet in the Narthex.

## Thank You

Connie and I thank everyone for your prayers, texts, emails, phone calls, cards and helpful things after my unsuccessful lung biopsy and extended hospital stay on June 18. We're blessed to have a loving church family. I'll meet with Dr. Otero, thoracic surgeon, to discuss the next step. You're all a special blessing to our family. Gene and Connie.

## Wild Things

FMCC Night at  
Washington Wild Things  
Friday, August 22, 7pm  
Fireworks Night

Tickets - \$10/person  
Parking Pass - \$2/car

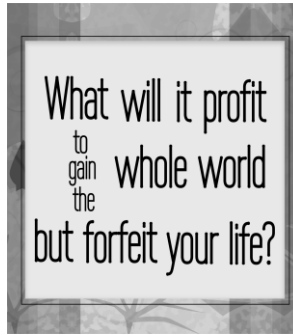
Sign up in the Narthex for tickets and parking passes.

Please turn in cash or check  
(payable to FMCC) to the office by **August 3**

## SAVE the DATE

**Church Picnic**  
Washington Park  
Kiwanis Pavilion  
September 7, 1:03pm

If you have any "gifts"  
that can be used for  
Surprise Bingo, save  
them for the picnic.



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

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Minister  
Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor  
Elders: Connie Sheller, Bread  
Gene Sheller, Cup  
July 20, 2025 – 10:15am

**Prelude**

Sam Johnson, organist

**Welcome**

Rev. Stillwell

**Call to Worship**

Gene Sheller

Leader: We come into God's presence,  
People: **Like green olive trees in the house of God.**  
Leader: We drink deeply from the waters of life,  
People: **Like young saplings in the courtyard of the Lord.**  
Leader: We ripen in the light of God,  
People: **Like the fruit of God's vineyard.**  
All: ***Come! Let us worship.***

**Opening Hymn**

*"O, How I Love Jesus"*

Sam Johnson, organist

There is a name I love to hear, I love to sing its worth; it sounds like music in my ear, the sweetest name on earth. O, how I love Jesus, O, how I love Jesus, O, how I love Jesus, because he first loved me!

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

Rev. Stillwell

Loving God, your presence in our lives is a joy to the heart and a blessing to the spirit. Your movement in our midst is like a basket of summer fruit—a delight to the eye and a pleasure to the tongue. Speak to us your words of life, that we may sit at your feet and know that we are yours.

When the winds of life buffet us, O God, we need your hand to hold us and your love to make us whole. Speak words of peace to our aching hearts, that we might find the courage to embrace the fullness of life you place before us. Correct our sight when our vision fades, and lead in right paths when we lose our way.

We come into this holy space, O God of the ages, asking for your blessing, only to find that the abundance of your love is already around us.

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.

Open our doors, that we may become vessels of your blessing to a world still in need of salvation.

All this we pray in the name of Jesus Christ. 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 22**

Linda Reese

**Special Music**

“Prelude in C Major,” by Bach

Charlotte Stillwell, piano

**Children’s Message**

Rev. Stillwell

My friend, Melanie, once told us a story about her niece who was five years old. She and her niece tried to draw a picture of God. What do you think that would look like?

Melanie, an adult, did what I would probably do and that is draw a bright shining cloud with beautiful rays of light coming out, and her niece was not impressed.

She said, “that can’t be God.”

“Why not?” Melanie asked.

“Because it doesn’t have feet. God has feet”.

This childlike vision of what God is like that Melanie’s niece drew was a simple vision of a God who is very similar to human beings, only much greater. God, in her mind, as in the mind of most children, is a person strong and tall with two arms and two eyes, and two massive, massive feet.

When we read the scriptures, particularly in the Old Testament, we see that God must have needed these feet because God is always leading God’s people and God is always walking among them. In Eden, God walked through the garden in the beginning of creation. Even as the Hebrews wandered in the desert God walked with them for 40 years. As they entered the Promised Land God walked with them. Especially as they escaped the bondage of Egypt, as we see in this text, God was always present and leading.

Have you seen God? I haven’t either, but I know about God because of people who taught me about God like ministers and Sunday School teachers. I also know about God because of people who have shown me kindness and when people have come together to help each other with no regard for what they could get in return.

When I think back on that humorous conversation between Melanie and her five year old niece I realize that, as is so often the case, it was the innocent wide eyed child who was able to see much more clearly than the cynical, rational grown up. The little girl was right. God does have feet, yours and mine.

**Second Scripture Reading**

**Matthew 16:24-28**

Rev. Stillwell

**Sermon “What will it profit you to gain the whole world but forfeit your life?”**

Rev. Chris Stillwell

You’ve seen it in a dozen movies. Heard it said in a hundred TV shows. A man walking down a dark alley at night, a woman on a stagecoach in the wild west, a teller in a crowded bank, all go about their daily business when a man in a mask steps up to them, points a gun in their face and demands, “Your money or

your life.” I hope none of you have ever been in this situation, but if you were what would you do? It probably depends on how much money you have in your wallet or your purse.

Maybe you would refuse to give up your money on principle, but I imagine most of us would reluctantly hand it over knowing instinctively at least that our life is worth so much more than any amount of money. But what if the man making the demand was Jesus Christ, himself?

It is strange to picture Jesus in this way. He never wore a mask, certainly never carried a gun and the words he uses are different, but still the meaning is the same when he says. “For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life?” These are the words of Jesus as he rebukes his disciples, and, although they are not as menacing or directly threatening as “your money or your life,” they have the same effect.

In this passage Jesus’ disciples, particularly Peter, are ashamed at his prediction of his coming suffering. Jesus told the disciples quite plainly what was in store for him; suffering, rejection, crucifixion, resurrection. As you can imagine that was shocking and disturbing news to the disciples, so Peter just has to say something.

Immediately before this passage Peter guesses correctly that Jesus is the messiah. It is the first open declaration by any of the disciples of Jesus’ true nature, so maybe getting this one thing right went to Peter’s head, because now he takes Jesus aside and “rebukes” him.

Can you imagine knowing that someone is the son of God and scolding him like he is your son as Peter did? Why would he do this? Is Peter God? No. Is Peter in charge of Christ? Of course not. Does Peter know what Jesus must do in order to fulfill his role as the Messiah? Peter thinks so.

Peter expects the Messiah to overthrow Israel’s enemies in triumphant victory. He expects him to punish the unrighteous, cast out the gentiles and, most of all, glorify those who followed him, but Jesus expects suffering, rejection, humiliation. There is obviously a different understanding between what Peter thinks it meant be the Messiah and what Jesus thinks it means.

Peter wanted fame and fortune from following the Messiah, James and John wanted to sit on his left and right hand, and you can bet that all of the disciples in some way or another expected some wealth and privilege to come out of following him, but little did they know that by forsaking these things they would receive something far greater; eternal life. This is why Jesus says to Peter and the others:

If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>35</sup>For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. <sup>36</sup>For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life?

The desire to gain the world is also known as the sin of greed and it is one of the greatest desires of all. It has existed since the beginning of time, and is alive and well in our time as well. I recently read an interesting article in the business section of the newspaper that told of a company that was bucking conventional wisdom. Whereas most companies try to maximize their profits by paying their employees as little as possible, this company paid their workers well and claimed that this actually helped business. According to the article the average worker made \$4 an hour more than the workers of their closest competitor and had more benefits.

The writer of the article was writing from the slant that this should be a business plan for disaster, but, in fact this company was the most profitable chain in its category. The reason cited for this by the CEO was

the belief that higher paid workers reduces the cost of employee turnover, reduces the amount of employee theft, increases the quality of the worker that they can hire, and increases productivity based on the sense of having a stake in the success of the company. The profits of the company are also increased because the CEO and CFO take a salary in the hundreds of thousands as opposed to the executives of their competitors who make hundreds of millions.

I thought it was a shining example of a business that benefitted the community as well as itself, so I was incredibly disheartened to read the list of criticism that they received from Wall Street analysts who said that they were cheating their investors. Even though their stock was high and growing, the commentator noted that the investors could make even more money if the company didn't pay their employees so well. I was dismayed that a company that tried to do the right thing by its workers and by the communities in which it is established, was criticized for doing just that.

I was dismayed but not surprised. For these comments are just more evidence that the sin of greed is so prevalent in our society. It is not greed to want to make money or earn a living. It is not greed to want more than you have. These are normal desires, and it certainly has been shown that one person making money can make money for others. This is certainly a good thing, but it becomes a sin when the pursuit of money overwhelms all else. It becomes a sin when, in order to get more you have to actively ensure that others have less. It becomes a sin when more is never enough.

One glance at a paper, one moment watching the news will give us countless examples of greed pervading Wall Street, Washington, even the church, but what does this have to do with us? After all we are not the ones guilty of fraud, insider trading, or embezzlement. None of us I trust will ever be the poster boy or girl for greed, but it is still a temptation that every person faces.

For each person there is the temptation to steal from others who have more, and while that temptation is usually easily overcome, there are more subtle temptations such as fudging on the income tax return or not saying anything when you're given too much change at the store. There is also the temptation a person faces to spend all that he has and more in order to live the life of his dreams.

Perhaps you've seen the commercials of the man who seems to have it all. Stanley had the big house, a country club membership, a pool and even a brand new car. When asked how he does it, Stanley responds with a contrived smile, "I'm in debt up to my eyeballs!"

The American Dream is to have more and to do better than our parents, and this is great if we can do it in a way in which we are still able to make moral actions, generous contributions, and responsible decisions. But if we have to mortgage all that we have in possession of a dream that is more marketing than reality, then what does it profit us?

Worst of all these temptations is the temptation a person faces to hoard his or her money in a vain attempt to preserve their life. Jesus told the story of the rich miser who buried his gold in a field, and every day he came to look at it, until one day a thief stole it. When the man saw what had happened he was dismayed, but his neighbor said to him, "Bury a stone instead. The stone will be as useful to you as the gold. For when you had the gold, you never used it." Being a Christian doesn't mean we have to be poor. It doesn't mean that we are not allowed to have gold or to want gold, instead being a Christian means we must ask ourselves how we have used our gold. Like our talents we are not to leave them buried in the ground, nor are we to sell our souls to get more.

If we hoard our money in order to save our life, we will find that we have lost it, for we will find that we will always worry that we do not have enough, and we certainly will not want to give any away to help

others. We don't all have to be monks. We can have nice things, but we cannot see the pursuit of money as the ultimate goal.

If we find ourselves falling prey to this temptation do not be surprised if you find yourself confronted by your savior pointing a cross at you and demanding, "Your money or your life."

### **Call to Offering**

Carol Daniels

Like a field ready for harvest, our lives bear the marks of God's love and care. May we, who bear the fruit of God's labor, rejoice as people who have been blessed. Remembering those who are in want, let us bring our tithes and our offerings

### **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

Loving God, like baskets of summer fruit, you fill our lives to overflowing. May the offering we return to you this day reflect our gratitude for your many blessings. May they show our commitment to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. Through your goodness and the sharing of these gifts, may the world come to know the richness of your love. Amen.

### **Invitation to Communion**

Rev. Stillwell

If you want to lose weight there are many things you try. You can starve yourself, take pills and supplements, or you can do what my friends in Jr. high did when they needed to make weight for wrestling and dress yourself in garbage bags while running up and down the already hot stairwells of our school. These days there is also surgery and liposuction, but if you do these things without addressing the underlying reasons that you are overweight you will put the pounds back on eventually. I know this all too well because, to paraphrase Mark Twain, losing weight is the easiest thing in the world to do. I've done it a thousand times.

It is similar when it comes to losing spiritual weight. If you come to this meal looking to lose spiritual weight you can confess your sins and ask forgiveness but without sincerity you'll be back asking to be forgiven of the same sins again and again. Human beings have a tendency to be creatures of habit that is why it is essential that we acknowledge that we cannot lose the weight of sin and guilt without someone's help and without a concerted effort on our part.

There are no gimmicks, no tricks, no shortcuts, or pills we can take. The only way for us to lose the weight that weighs down our soul is to seek forgiveness and Christ's help, and we know that we will always be here at this table waiting for us.

Here we have a meal that is not only low in calories, but in fact will help us lose weight as we eat it. For at this table our stomachs are not filled but our hearts and should are made full even as we shed the things that have weighed them down. May each of you leave this table empty of sin and full of grace and find that the more full of grace your heart becomes the lighter it feels.

### **Communion Hymn**

*"Sweet Hour of Prayer!"*

Sam Johnson, organist

Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer! that calls me from a world of care, and bids me at my Father's throne make all my wants and wishes known. In seasons of distress and grief, my soul has often found relief, and oft escaped the tempter's snare by thy return, sweet hour of prayer!

## Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Connie Sheller

Father, we hear you say: "Follow Me," but many times we choose another way. But Your mercy always grants us "next times." We follow you today by coming to your table to partake of the bread and cup, known to us as Jesus' broken body and shed blood. Thank you for calling us repeatedly so we may have fullness of life everlasting. 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

"Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me"

Sam Johnson, organist

Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee; let the water and the blood, from thy wounded side which flowed, be of sin the double cure; save from wrath and make me pure.

## Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

Though we may leave God's house, we do not leave God's presence. Like trees planted by the water, we will plant our roots in the soil of holy love. Heeding the joy of God's call in our lives, we go to share God's love for all.



Grayson Daniels (second row, second from right) at Camp Laurelview.

Watch for his story in the August Newsletter.

Thank you to those that sent cards or letters to Grayson while at camp. Camp mail is the best.





## It's Time to Make School Kits!

Our goal this year is to make **100** school kits to donate to Church World Service for distribution to children who need them.

How you can help:

1. Purchase one or more items for the School Kits, we will assemble together. Choose one or more tags from the bulletin board in the Narthex. Be careful to purchase exactly what is listed on the tag. Remove all packaging from the items you have purchased and return the items to the containers in the Narthex with the tags.
2. Contribute \$15 to purchase items for a complete School Kit. Checks and cash may be placed in the offering plate; please make a note that your gift is for "school kits." You can also give on Fairhill's Givelify with the selection "CWS Kits."
3. Purchase items and assemble one or more School Kits yourself by following these instructions:

<https://cwskits.org/assemble-kits/school-kits/>





**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

Chuck 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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Carol Brown  
36 Old Hickory Ridge Rd, Rm 213  
Washington PA 15301

Doris Sorice  
880 S Main St, Apt 336  
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Barb Bailey  
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  
Kari Johnson  
Brandon Keenan  
Von Lacock  
Marylee Lawrence  
David Leonard  
CJ Martin  
Linda 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  
Dee Ryan  
Mike Ryan

John Samida  
Gene Sheller  
Valerie Shetler  
Doug Smith  
Darci Spowls  
Wayne Starnes  
Cathy Stewart  
Beth Teagarden  
Jane Teagarden  
Ginger Throckmorton  
Cece Watson

**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.