

Manor Minutes
Volume 16 Issue 11
March 14, 2025

- Bible Study – March 17, 6-7pm via Zoom
- Stewardship/Finance Ministry – March 19, 5:30pm
- Tri-County Men's Fellowship – March 20
- Choir Practice – March 20, 6:30pm

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

Important Dates

March 17 – **Lent Bible Study**, 6-7pm via Zoom
The second session of the Lent Bible Study will be centered on **Mark 5-7 and chapter 2** in Amy Jill-Levine's book, "The Gospel of Mark: A Beginner's Guide to the Good News." Feel free to join the study this week even if you were unable to join last week. The Zoom information will be sent on Monday via the Manor Minutes email list. If you do not receive the Manor Minutes via email, contact the Office to receive the link.

March 20 – **Tri-County Men's Fellowship Dinner** will be held at FMCC. There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex; **RSVP by March 17**. The dinner will include a pasta bar, salad, rolls and dessert for \$15/person. **Desserts** are needed for this dinner. Please sign up in the Narthex if you can donate a pie, cake or cookies.

March 30 – **Easter Flower** order deadline.

April 13 – **Palm Sunday**

April 17 – **Maundy Thursday** "Living Last Supper," 7pm at First Christian Church, Beau Street Washington

April 18 – **Good Friday** service at FMCC, Noon

April 20 – **Sunrise Service**, 7am
Breakfast following Sunrise Service,
(No Sunday School)
Easter Worship Service – 10:15am



Orders forms for **Easter Flowers** can be found in the Narthex, bulletin and Manor Minutes. You can order tulips, hyacinths, mums, or Easter lilies in memory of or in honor of someone. Paid orders need to be returned to the Church Office by **March 30**. All flowers are \$10/each.

Thank you to everyone who recycled their **empty medicine bottles**. We were able to save 642 bottles from the landfill and send them to Matthew 25 Ministries in Cincinnati OH. Matthew 25 Ministries uses the bottles to send prescriptions to third world countries.



Spring cleaning? Save your items for the Rummage Sale that will be held on **May 8-10**. We will not be renting individual tables to people. All items donated will be put out for sale with the proceeds going to the FMCC general fund.



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

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Minister
Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor
Elders: Sheila Harris, Bread
Linda Reese, Cup

March 16, 2025 – 10:15am

Prelude

Sam Johnson, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Gene Sheller

Leader: God, our light and our salvation, calls us to worship.

People: We gather in faith, confidence, and praise.

Leader: Come; seek the face of God.

People: God's face shines upon us with grace and love.

Leader: Be strong, my friends, for God is here.

People: Thanks be to God for this wonderful gift.

Opening Hymn

"Give Thanks"

Jody Mullis, pianist

Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One, give thanks
because he's given Jesus Christ his Son. And now let the weak say "I am strong";
let the poor say "I am rich" because of what the Lord has done for us.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Pastor Gena

Loving God, we invite you into this space among us this morning. And we invite you into our lives as we continue on this Lenten journey.

We are grateful for time and space to simplify, to wait, to cast away all that weighs us down – in the hope that we might receive you more fully in our lives. Would you help us make this Lent a season where we find our way out of darkness, where we find our way back to you?

Inspire us with new devotion to you. Help us release any guilt we carry for not following through with our Lenten disciplines in past years, in the first ten days of this season. Show us one way to draw nearer to you. Give us energy to try again this week.

During this Lenten season, we name our temptations and personal struggles. Give us strength to fight against the urges and the addictions that threaten to steal the joy from our lives, that threaten our health and our relationship with you.

We pray for the church this morning, that we might embrace our role as life-changer and life-saver in our communities. Remind each of us how integral we are to your work. Remind us that in your church, there is a home for each of us and a role for every one of us to play. Help us to hear your calling us during this Lenten season.

We pray for each of those we have raised in prayer, that you provide a person of faith to be with them on their journey and in their struggle... Help us to become for others people who are willing to risk everything to be the face of Jesus for them. Teach us to risk this Lenten season.

We lift our hearts in joyful praise and gladness these gifts and blessings ... Thank you for glimpses of your Kingdom in our midst. Slow us down long enough to sense you moving and working. Train us to see you anew.

During this Lenten season, we want to let go, but only so that we can grasp on to you. We want to empty ourselves, but only so that we can be filled up with your light, your love, your goodness.

We raise these prayers in the name of the one sure companion on our way, Jesus the Christ, who taught us to pray....

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 15

Linda Reese

Anthem

“Celtic Laud,” by Courtney
Flute solo by Emily Cope Robinson

Choir

Children’s Message

Pastor Gena

This morning we will read a part of *Make Room: A Child’s Guide to Lent and Easter*, written by Laura Alary and illustrated by Ann Boyajian, © 2016, published by Paraclete Press.

This is the Season of Lent. The church is dressed in purple. It is a time of waiting. And while we wait, we get ready. Purple is the color for getting ready.

During Lent, we make time to be with God. We pray with words, we sing or listen to music, we use paint or crayons to create many-colored prayers.

During Lent, we make silence. We practice listening. We read stories from the Bible and wonder what God might be telling us. We sit and rest in the quiet.

During Lent, we pay attention to how we live and the choices we make. We ask hard questions.

Lent lasts for forty days and forty nights plus six Sundays. It takes time to get ready.

Second Scripture Reading

Luke 10:25-42

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

“See a Good Samaritan. Be a Good Samaritan”

Rev. Stillwell

Today's reading from the Gospel of Luke is the story of the Good Samaritan, and it's such a familiar story that every time I preach on it, I feel like I need to begin by encouraging us to hear it again, to not assume that you know the story in another lesson, but to hear it again. We must hear it, not with ears that you

have heard it before but rather with alarm clock ears that say to your brain, “Wake up! It's time to hear the story fresh again,” because what do you think of when you hear the term Good Samaritan? You think of a good person, someone who helps, someone who's nice, someone who's kind. You think of a story in which a poor man falls into a ditch and another good man extends to him kindness and hospitality.

The other day at the grocery store, I observed one person holding the door open for another, whose hands were full grocery bags, and she smiled and said to her helper, “Thank you. You're my good Samaritan.” We think of a good Samaritan then as someone who helps another, as someone who is nice, but to the Jewish people to whom Jesus told this story, this was anything but a nice story to his listeners at that time, it was bizarre and scandalous that it would be a Samaritan who would help the stranger. The Samaritans did live next to them, but they were not their neighbor. For them, a good Samaritan would be an oxymoron. You know what that is, right, an oxymoron? Its two words that simply do not belong next to one another like crash landing, civil war, or freezer burn. To the people listening to Jesus that day, the idea of a good Samaritan or a Samaritan neighbor was oxymoronic, because the Samaritans were a hated people.

I like to think that we don't talk about whole groups of people like that today, but I know sometimes we do, or at least in the world that happens, but imagine a time in history when it was so common. Recall the words with which human beings have, at times, painted a whole people with one broad brush, and doing so drawing them all to be mean, terrible, bad. Sometimes we human beings do this during times of war, but sometimes we just do this. So when Jesus talked about the Samaritan being the neighbor, it wasn't the kind of oxymoron that made you laugh, it was the kind that made you cringe with discomfort. We need to unlearn the niceness of the story and listen to it as one who might find it troubling.

It begins in an interesting way. There is a lawyer who stood up to test Jesus and asked a question. Does he test him, or does he simply want to know? He says, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” What a good question to ask the Messiah and Jesus, almost like a therapist would, tries to draw the answer out from the man, as if the man knows it already saying, “What do you think?” The lawyer answers his own question by repeating the great religious truth that he has been taught, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.”

That's all there is to it, Jesus said, but the lawyer wasn't satisfied. Maybe that was too simple, maybe too hard. He wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus does what he often does which is to answer the question with a parable, the parable of the Good Samaritan. My guess is that the lawyer was looking for some boundaries to say, I can only love so many people or treat so many people kindly. I need to know where the limit is.

It's kind of like when Jesus tells his disciples to forgive seven times seven times. Does that mean you forgive 49 times and then really nail them on the 50th trespass? This man needed to know how many people he had to treat as his neighbor, and I expect that he was hoping it was just a small group, because you can't trust or help everybody in the world, right? We need some limits in our life. Can everybody really be a neighbor?

You might even say that today, we would not even necessarily call a group like the Samaritans the bad guys, because these days, as a culture, we often distrust everybody. Not everyone got this way watching too much CSI or news that make us feel like there's a murder a day. Some of us have come by this mistrust of humanity the hard way. Some of us have been burned in the ditches of life, ignored when we have fallen at the side of the road, not helped by the people that we expected to be there for us when we needed them. Perhaps we were even taken advantage of when we were in need, so much so that some of us have stopped looking for good Samaritans and started guarding against bad ones.

That's understandable, but here's the problem. When you start looking at the world that way, something happens to you, doesn't it? This is what I would suggest today, that if you can't see a good Samaritan, you can't be a good Samaritan. And likewise, if you can't be a good Samaritan, you can't see a good Samaritan. In the life of faith, seeing and believing are deeply related.

I saw something this week that helped me believe in what Jesus says. The Literacy Council invited Pastor Gena and I to a meeting of a delegation of Ukrainian citizens who came to our country to meet with government and nonprofit officials in order to learn more about how they can help people displaced by the war that has so upend their life. While one person got up to speak her phone went off with a terrible siren. While she was speaking in the comfort and safety of our church her town was being bombed. She turned her phone off like we would if it started playing a song in church and continued speaking.

The work that this group does is to help displaced person and I was struck by their compassion and their sense that they were their brothers and sisters keeper. I was also struck by their gratitude that our nation helped them in their time of need and I couldn't help but think a modern telling of this parable would be the good Russian who helped the Ukrainian on the side of the road or the good Palestinian who helped the Israeli on the side of the road and vice versa.

There are a million voices in the world telling you to be careful who you consider a neighbor. Many will not go so far as to tell you to hate others, although, sadly, more and more it seems are willing to go that far. Rather most will tell you to fear, to be concerned, to suspect and to find reasons why you shouldn't help, care, or love. Some good intentioned voices will tell you to care for those closest to you and if you have anything left then extend it outside your immediate circle, but that is not what Christ says.

After all, who faced the biggest risk that day? It wasn't the man who fell into the ditch. He was already in trouble. How much worse could it get? It was definitely worth the risk of letting someone take care of him, even if it was the Samaritan, but the person taking the biggest risk was the one who had the most to lose; the Samaritan himself. His life was fine, as far as we know, but by crossing over to help, he could have been tricked himself. He took a risk. Being and seeing good Samaritans is a position of risk, but as Jesus explained to his disciples that day and most days, faith is risk. Love is a risk. Giving of oneself is a risk, but it is risk with reward.

Knowing what was to come in Jerusalem Christ said, take the risk. See a good Samaritan, be a good Samaritan. I imagine each of you in church today knows what it feels like to pass by and to be passed by or to expect help and not received it. I trust that as followers of Jesus, you also know what it means to stop and care for those who are in need. If you're part of a church you decided that it's in a community of faith that you've come to discern the difference so that once you're out there in the world, you'll be able to see and be the character in the story you most want to be.

The lawyer in the story knew what it was to follow Jesus and to live a life of faith. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, with all your strength and with all your mind and your neighbor as yourself.

“But who is my neighbor? He was left wondering.

“The one you least expect” seems to be Christ's reply.

Be the neighbor you went to see. See the neighbor you want to be. If you want to see a good Samaritan, be a good Samaritan. That is the only way this world will ever change.

Call to Offering

Donna Stenski

As the ancients brought goats and doves to honor and bless God, we are invited to bring our gifts of earthly treasure to honor and bless God. Whether we offer coins or dollars, checks or electronic donations, all gifts honor and bless God. Knowing this, may we share our treasure as generously with God as God has shared earthly treasure with us.

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

Mighty God, bless these gifts, that they might bring strength to our faith, love to your world, and comfort to the forsaken. In your holy name, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Rev. Stillwell

I was recently watching an episode of the old TV show, Mash, and there was an interesting plotline in which a wounded soldier was restored to life by the work of Hawkeye and Trapper as well as a blood donation from an African American soldier. The man was elated to be feeling well until he learned of the origin of the blood he had received and it bothered him, even making him worried that his skin was getting darker. It was one of these things I struggle to wrap my head around but I know that attitudes like that were prominent in the past and are still with us today to some extent.

Did you know that Mr. Rogers broke ground by insisting that he be shown putting his feet into a wading pool with officer Clemons, whose skin was a little darker than his, because in 1969 many pools still did not allow black and white people to swim together.

Sometimes being a Good Samaritan means giving until it hurts. Sometimes it means sharing your blood, and sometimes it means something much less difficult like sharing a pool. Either way it involves crossing an invisible line and showing love and kindness to people the world tells you that you shouldn't.

It should not surprise us that Jesus told us to do this since, by all rights, God had no business showing love and kindness to the whole human race. According to the law we were sinners and hopeless, yet Christ came to us in our greatest need, bandaged our wounds, took care of our hunger, and forgave us our sins.

This he did through sacrifice and association and if we are to bear his name we are to go and do likewise. Because Jesus treated us like a neighbor we can come to this table and know that we will be welcomed and we will know that we are to leave this table and treat others as we would want to be treated

Communion Hymn

"Be Thou My Vision"

Sam Johnson, organist

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
naught be all else to me, save that thou art
thou my best thought by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Sheila Harris

Lord Jesus, we gather in your presence to remember your great love. Bless this bread and this cup, that as we eat and drink, we may be reminded of your body broken and your blood shed for our sins. May we be filled with your grace and live in the light of your resurrection. In your precious name, 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

“Just a Closer Walk with Thee”

Sam Johnson, organist

I am weak, but thou art strong; Jesus, keep me from all wrong;
I’ll be satisfied as long as I walk, let me walk close to thee.

Benediction


Rev. Stillwell

May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face; the rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand.

?? ? **Bible Quiz** ? ??

The precise number varies depending on the Bible version, but roughly how many times does the word “love” occur in the Old and New Testaments combined?

A. 200-300
B. 400-500
C. 600-700
D. 800-900



Answer: C

THIS WEEK'S PRAYER REQUESTS

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
Waterford MI 48328

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

Doris Sorice
880 S Main St, Apt 336
Washington PA 15301

Nolmy Aguille & Family
Terry Bailey
Bob Bakaitis
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
Paul Harton
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
Rick Rafferty
Betty Riecks
Jeannie Riffle
Joan Riffle
Lori Riffle
Nelly Rodriguez

John Samida
Elvia Mery San
Valerie Shetler
Doug Smith
Pat Sorice
Darci Sprowls
Cathy Stewart
Jane Teagarden
Beth 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.

If you would like to send Donna Bakaitis a card:

Donna Bakaitis
c/o TownView
300 Barr St, Room 300A
Canonsburg, PA 15371



Please fill out this order form and return to the Church Office with **payment** by March 30. Indicate the number of flowers you would like. Make checks payable to “**Fairhill Manor**” and indicate “Easter Flowers” in the memo.

#_____ Tulips (6” pot) @ \$10/each

#_____ Hyacinths (3 bloom) @ \$10/each

#_____ Easter Lily @ \$10/each

#_____ Mum (assorted colors) @ \$10/each

Orders with payment are due by March 30, 2025.

Given by _____

In Memory/Honor of _____
(circle one)

In Memory/Honor of _____
(circle one)

In Memory/Honor of _____
(circle one)
