

Manor Minutes
Volume 16 Issue 10
March 7, 2025

- Bible Study – March 10, 6-7pm via Zoom
- Dartball – March 11, 7pm @ Home
- Elders Meeting – March 12, 5:30pm Shepherds Room
- Board Meeting – March 12, 7pm Small Fellowship Hall
- Choir Practice – March 13, 6:30pm

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



March 17 – **Lent Bible Study**, 6-7pm via Zoom
The second session of the Lent Bible Study will be centered on chapters 5-7 of Mark 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 17 – **FMCC Blood Drive** in the Large Fellowship Hall from 11am-3pm. To schedule appointment, go to www.vitalant.org or contact the Church Office at (724) 225-8610.

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 20 – **Easter**

Lent Devotionals are available in the Narthex.
Please take one per family.



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. All paid orders need to be returned to the Church Office by **March 30**.

Rummage
\$ALE

During these 40 days of Lent, we often choose to give up something in the lead up to Easter. Consider decluttering. Daily for the 40 days, go to a closet or cupboard and take out an item that you no longer use or need. Save these items for the **Rummage Sale** that FMCC has scheduled for May 8-10. By decluttering, you will be supporting the church financially. All proceeds will go the church's general fund. Complete details are to follow.

Linda Reese



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

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Minister
Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor
Elders: Chuck Riggle, Bread
Jody Mullis, Cup

March 9, 2025 – 10:15am

Prelude

Sam Johnson, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Kevin Puskarich

Leader: Welcome home, beloved children of God!

People: Gathered in God's arms, we come to worship.

Leader: Sheltered in God's love, we come to grow in love.

People: Abiding in God, we seek solace and comfort.

Leader: Even as God sends us on wilderness journeys,

People: We trust that God is with us, guiding and protecting our days.

Opening Hymn

"Great Is the Lord"

Jody Mullis, pianist

Great is the Lord, he is holy and just, by his power we trust in his love. Great is the Lord, he is faithful and true, by his mercy he proves, he is love. Great is the Lord and worthy of glory. Great is the Lord and worthy of praise. Great is the Lord, now lift up your voice, now lift up your voice: Great is the Lord, great is the Lord.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Pastor Gena

In the quietness of this moment, in the stillness of this place, draw us to yourself, O God. Even as we give thanks for the many ways you provide for us, still we seek the shelter of your refuge. Hear our needs, O Holy One. Transform this time and space into a place flowing with milk and honey – a place where you are among us, a place where your mighty hand and your outstretched arm protect us, a place where you alone are worthy of our worship.

Holy Lord, as we embark on this journey of reflection and repentance, of looking within and turning around, our weaknesses are ever before us, and we need your strength. Forgive us when we let things take your place at the center of our lives. Forgive us when we make choices contrary to your will. Forgive us when we are so absorbed by what we want that we miss the opportunities to lift up and care for those around us. Come, be with us on this journey as we set our faces toward Jerusalem. Make us keenly aware of your mercy and grace as we try again to live in your ways of life and love.

We pray now for all who are hungry – whether hungry for power and glory, or hungry for a meal. Show us that you alone can satisfy our deepest needs, and feed us from the abundance of your good creation.

We pray for the church in times of trial - whether tested by great change or tempted by the safety of things as they are. Give us peace when anger and fear threaten to divide us, and challenge us when we are too comfortable. Broaden our vision and show us the way forward, we pray.

We pray for leaders in high places – whether determined to help those who suffer or distant from the cries of the oppressed. Open our eyes to see your saving power at work, and open our ears to hear calls for justice.

In the quietness of our hearts, we give you thanks for the ways you move among us, and we lift into the light and warmth of your embrace those about whom we worry Speak your words of hope and love through us. In the name of our Savior and Lord, Jesus the Christ, we pray as he teaches us ...

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

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

Rita Puskarich

Anthem

“By Your Mercy,” by Courtney

Choir

Children’s Message

Rev. Stillwell

Are there things you do before you go to bed and when you wake up? You probably go into the bathrooms to brush your teeth and wash your face. Why is it important to wash your face? It is after all the part of you everyone sees, and if you saw someone with something on their face you might tell them so they could clean it off and not be embarrassed. So don’t you think it is odd that many people came to church to get their face dirty this week.

This past Wednesday people put these ashes on their forehead as a reminder that:

God made us from the dust of the earth.

God breathed life into us to make us like God

And, eventually, someday, we all die and our bodies return to the dust of the earth.

Why would we want to be reminded of that? It sounds kind of spooky but they put the ashes on their head in the shape of a cross. Why would they do that?

By making that mark it becomes a reminder that because of Jesus our souls do not become dust but instead go to him. Therefore, what is sad becomes very good. I hope you don’t forget to wash your face before bed but I also hope you don’t forget that Lent is a time to remember, and to return to the life God first breathed into us—the life of creating, and loving, and learning, and blessing.

Second Scripture Reading

Luke 9:51-62

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

“Let’s Face It”

Rev. Stillwell

As we come to the beginning of Lent we are still far away from Easter, and yet the shadow of the cross can already be seen and felt. This story from the gospel of Luke announces that, “When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem.”

It will take Jesus awhile to get there. 10 chapters, which make up 40% of Luke's gospel, will be taken up describing his journey that he is embarking upon figuring that things will not end well. Luke specifically mentions the end being that he writes from the other side of history knowing what will happen, but it's clear that Jesus's disciples don't know what is going to happen.

His followers expect Jesus to go to Jerusalem and shake things up so to them this trek to Jerusalem is an opportunity to recruit more followers and get more support. This is very evident when they come across a Samaritan village and Jesus sends people ahead of him to prepare the way.

It does not go well and Jesus is not received by the Samaritans. Already there is opposition as Jesus knew there would be. Jesus response is to go to another village. But to spend your time with people who want to hear you rather than those who have already made up their mind, but that is not how James and John see it.

The Sons of Thunder as Jesus called them, fresh off of their experience witnessing the transfiguration and probably feeling very pleased with themselves and their place in Jesus's esteem, act like they are Jesus's enforcers when the Samaritans refuse him. They want to dole out punishment for those who do not share their love of JESUS.

It should not surprise them that this would happen. The Samaritans were a different sect of Judaism who believed that they worshiped God in the right way and in the right place and that those who worshiped in Jerusalem in the temple were wrong. Upon hearing that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem, they believed he had nothing to do with them.

James and John react strongly to say the least, and I understand being upset. If they truly believe that Jesus is the messiah than it is distressing to see him treated with disrespect, but the Disciples seem a little too eager to wreak destruction don't you think? Jesus has already told them to turn the other cheek if someone strikes you and they want to call down fire from heaven for not wanting to listen to a sermon.

There is much in these two verses that strike me as odd. Did they really think Jesus wanted this to happen? And, if so wouldn't Jesus have been the one to do it?

I think that they wanted to do it and they were asking Jesus's permission. Jews and Samaritans had long had a great antipathy towards one another, and it seems like James and John were almost eager to have a reason to smite the Samaritans. After all, what good is following a messiah if you can't get him to help you smite your enemies? It seems that they were more interested in the way that Jesus could help serve them rather than how they could serve him.

The other thing that strikes me is that they believe that they have the power. Where does that belief come from. Elijah the prophet did just as they described once long ago, but they had never done. Their nicknames were the Sons of Thunder, but many speculate that this nickname came from this incident. They seemed to think that bearing witness to the Transfiguration gave them access to some sort of power and they show how they intend to use the power Christ gives them.

Before we judge the disciples too harshly we should ask ourselves, if we were given such power would we use it any differently?

If Christ gave us the power to do what we wished, would we use it to serve him or ourselves? Would we even know the difference? How often do we ask to serve Christ by doing what he wants and how often do we ask Christ to serve us by allowing us or helping us to do something that he would not want us to do?

We may not want to bring down fire on someone but we are tempted to judge another with less compassion than we would want Christ to judge ourselves. Even though Christ said, “Judge not lest you be judged,” one of the great temptations of the Christian faith is to do just that. I know all too well how easy it is to ask Jesus to let me judge this person. That person who cut me off in traffic, that person who is a little different, that person who seems to be a lot wealthier than me.

Once I worked with a very difficult person. Everything I did was wrong, but then I noticed that everything everyone did was wrong to her. I admit to experiencing joy and a sense of justice when she was fired, but then I felt shame that we would never work things out. It was nice not to stress going to work so much, but it would have been better if I could have gotten to know her better and found out why she was the way she was.

And sometimes I might have been short tempered with a coworker and I would think to myself, at least I wasn't like her, but that was wrong too. Another great temptation each Christian faces is the temptations to compare his or her sin over against the sin of another. There are always others who are worse than us. While this may be so, we are all still sinners and recognize that in the words of Christ, “There are none righteous. Not one.” Likewise, seeking to justify our sin in comparison to another's is itself a sin. Therefore we all need to come to this time in a spirit of repentance asking for the forgiveness that comes from God alone.

So the Samaritans did not receive Jesus. Many people today do not receive Jesus. Then again many who claim they do are more interesting in using his name to serve themselves rather than using their life to serve his name.

Lent therefore, is not just a time to contemplate sin, it is a time to contemplate our own sin. We may not want to call fire down on people who reject us but still we are tempted to judge or condemn, or write off someone who is different than us in some way, and the worst part is that sometimes we think that this is what Jesus wants us to do.

Throughout this chapter Jesus tries to teach his disciples what it means to follow him. It means denial of their own agendas. It means the least will be greatest. It means that there is not a certain in crowd. It means that “all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.” It means that much of what we believe about the power of the messiah is different than the reality of the Messiah.

Jesus certainly has the power to call fire down from Heaven, but he doesn't. Even when he gets to the cross he doesn't, so if we want to serve Christ we have to love, serve, and forgive like he did. Our Lenten journey has begun as we follow Christ to Jerusalem and the cross. His disciples followed him completely misunderstanding who he was and what he was about. Will we do the same?

Let us pray, Gracious God help us with all we face this week, this month, the rest of our life. Help us to set our face upon you and let you lead us. Help us to be more like your son in all that we do so that others might receive you because we have represented you well.

Call to Offering

Serena Dube

As the ancient Hebrews were called to offer the first fruit of the harvest, so we are called to offer our gifts of gratitude to God. May God move in our hearts and minds, as we give generously, gratefully, and joyfully.

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 abundance, we offer these gifts, along with our praise and thanksgiving. You generously pour out your love and the gifts of this good earth to us, each and every day. Bless the gifts we return to you now, that they may bring abundant love and sustenance to many in need of your blessing. With grateful hearts, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Rev. Stillwell

At Bethany I sat next to a man who spoke of his minister growing up. He only had one sermon, and no matter what text he preached on and no matter what illustrations he used it all came round to the same point, this was a hard week to be a Christian, but the next week was going to be even harder so you all need to get ready for it. Not a bad sermon or a lesson to learn.

We each come to this table having faced trials this week. We come here to confess our sins and ask forgiveness for what has happened in the past, help and fortitude for what we are currently facing, but, also to ask Christ's help for what we will face.

Of course none of us know what we will face. We may have some idea, some inkling of what is to come, but the truth is that none of us really know what is in store, and that is appropriate because the disciples truly did not know what was in store for them.

It was easy to follow Christ when things went well and when they understood what was happening, but on the night in which this act was consecrated Christ told them a number of things they did not understand and when the hard and wholly unexpected trials came there way their faith faltered.

Let us learn from their example. We don't know what we will face in the days ahead, but we know that if we have Christ with us, his strength, his love, and indeed his grace will be sufficient to see us through until the next time we meet around this table.

Communion Hymn

"Lord, I Want to Be a Christian"

Sam Johnson, organist

Lord, I want to be a Christian in-a my heart, in-a my heart, Lord, I want to be a Christian
in-a my heart. In-a my heart, in-a my heart, Lord, I want to be a Christian in-a my heart.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Chuck Riggle

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for the privilege of worshipping in these holy surroundings this morning. Our presence here is always a humbling experience. We are especially grateful for the opportunity to participate in the special act of communion and be reminded, once again, of its significance. The bread reminds us of your son's broken body and the cup reminds us of the blood he shed during his crucifixion. Now, we ask for your blessing on us as we partake of these significant elements. In Jesus' 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

"I Have Decided to Follow Jesus"

Sam Johnson, organist

I have decided to follow Jesus, I have decided to follow Jesus,
I have decided to follow Jesus no turning back, no turning back.

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

With God as our guide, we go into the world. With Christ as our companion, we go strengthened for the journey, and led with love.

Bible Quiz

According to Matthew's account, what was torn when Jesus died?

- A. Mary's headdress — she tore it as a traditional Jewish sign of grief
- B. A Roman guard's sash — Peter grabbed and ripped it in anger
- C. Jesus' robe — the soldiers divided it among themselves
- D. The temple curtain — torn in two from top to bottom

Answer: D (See Matthew 27:51.)

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

Alice Cokeley
900 N Cass Lake Rd, Apt 324
Waterford MI 48328

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

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

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

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

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
Jett Fuller
Barb Graff
Irma Harper
Sheila Harris
Paul Harton
Alberta Haught

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

John Samida
Valerie Shetler
Doug Smith
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.



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)