

**Manor Minutes
Volume 17 Issue 4
January 23, 2026**

- Pastor's Cabinet & Gathering to Grow – January 26, 5:30pm
- No Dartball – January 27, bye week
- Choir Practice – January 29, 6:30pm

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

Make plans for lunch with the BETHANY CLASS

Tuesday, February 24
Noon at Eat'n Park

Karen Thomas will be taking orders for daffodils and tulips for the American Cancer Society's Daffodil Days 2026. Spring is right around the corner and what better way to celebrate than with a bouquet of fresh flowers. Order forms are in the Narthex or you can call the Church Office (724) 225-8610 to order. All paid orders are due by February 17 and the flowers will be delivered to the church during the week of March 23.

Bunch of Daffodils: \$15

Bunch of Tulips: \$15

Mini-Potted Daffodils: \$20

Gift of Hope: \$25

A "Gift of Hope" is a bouquet of flowers that are delivered to a local cancer center/hospital/nursing home facility in our community.

Thank you for your support of the American Cancer Society.

**FREE
ADMISSION**

Fairhill Manor received coupons for free admission to the Remodeling Expo being held January 30-February 1 at Acrisure Stadium in Pittsburgh. The coupons are in the Narthex.

SouperBowl Lunch & 2-Person Team Cornhole Tournament

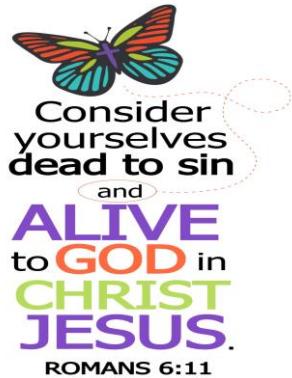
**Sunday, February 8, 2026
Large Fellowship Hall
following worship**

Sign up in the Narthex to bring a soup for lunch and to enter your team in the tournament. Donations of canned soup or cash will be accepted and donated to the Community Circle Food Pantry.

Since 1990 this event has been held on the same Sunday as the football Super Bowl to raise awareness about hunger in our community.

You do not have to bring soup OR enter the cornhole tournament to attend. Just come for the fellowship!





Fairhill Manor Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)

351 Montgomery Avenue

724-225-8610

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Minister

Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor

Elders: Gary Ford, Bread

Diana Crowe, Cup

January 25, 2026 – 10:15am

Prelude

Sam Johnson, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Von Lacock

Leader: Come, one and all. Gather together! For this is the day of the Lord!

People: Let us gather at the river that flows by the throne of God.

Leader: We have come to offer God our worship and praise.

People: Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Leader: The Lord's life and love are like a fountain rippling in our lives.

People: Let us receive the living water from the fountain that was not made by human hands.

Opening Hymn

“Come, Now Is the Time to Worship”

Jody Mullis, pianist

Come, now is the time to worship. Come, now is the time to give your heart. Come, just as you are to worship. Come, just as you are before your God. Come. One day every tongue will confess you are God. One day every knee will bow. Still the greatest treasure remains for those who gladly choose you now.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Pastor Gena

O Lord, sometimes your promises confuse us and seem like too little too late. Together with so many we cry, “If only you had been here, Lord, this wouldn’t have happened.” Lord, come and see our suffering. Come and see our grief, those we have loved and lost. Come and see our bodies, worn and achy, unable to do what they used to do. Come and see our families, torn apart with conflict and misunderstanding. Come and see our communities, where far too many cannot feed their families. Come and see our world, with leaders whose first priority is power and prestige, self-gain and control. Come and see, Lord. We will show you our suffering.

You are greatly moved, even to the point of tears, by the ways we are broken and torn apart, by what we have lost and the difficulties we endure. You have suffered as we do, enduring loss and grief, even death, to show that you understand and to promise that things will not be this way forever. In you, we are made new and resurrected to abundant life. In you, we are brought from oppression to agency. In you, we are unbound and set free. Praise be to you, O Lord.

Forgive us our sins, those ways we have hurt each other and ourselves. Help us to live as people of grace, as those who know what it's like to be extended mercy when we don't deserve it. As those who have experienced an opening in the clouds when the storm was heavy and persistent, never seeming to let up. As those who have tried so hard and have done everything we knew to do, knowing it would never be

enough, only to experience the relief of falling on you to fill in the rest. Help us to live as people of grace, extending the same mercy, sunlight and relief to others who may not seem to deserve it.

Lord, please use us to bless those who are in need of your care this morning. Show us how to love and lift up, to unbind and set free, those we have named aloud, those on our prayer list, and those we name in this silence...

You are the resurrection and the life. You are mercy and grace. You are the water that washes us clean. Yours are the hands extended to raise us to new and abundant life. It is in your name that we pray all of this together as you taught us, 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:

“Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying”

Lord, listen to your children praying, Lord, send your spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying, send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

First Scripture Lesson

John 11:17-44

Gene Sheller

Anthem

“A Time for Praying,” by Helvey

Choir

Children’s Message

Rev. Stillwell

Can you tell me what you think the word “ordinary” means? I’ve been thinking about this word some myself and one of the easiest ways I’ve found to explain what the word “ordinary” means is to say what it is not.

Something that is ordinary is something that is NOT special, NOT amazing and NOT hard to find. To be ordinary, then, is something we often try NOT to be, right? We try to be special, amazing, and important. And sometimes, it seems that we think we need to work really hard at being special, amazing, and important so that we are “more than ordinary”

In the time and place of Jesus, this is what the religious teachers looked for in their students – they looked for the people who were extraordinary to be their students. They thought they needed the best students to learn their special teachings and that the learning had to take place in the amazing and not-ordinary Temple, which was located in the fancy, special city of Jerusalem.

But Jesus did the opposite of all of this. In the Bible we hear that Jesus goes to a very ordinary town. Once Jesus was there, he then asked very ordinary people to be his disciple, and he tells these ordinary people who are from ordinary places, “I’m going to teach you how to do what I’m doing so that you can then do it, too.”

This is one of the things Jesus means when he tells them, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people.” Sometimes, when we hear the stories about Jesus, it is easy to think that he was able to do all those amazing things because he was really important, amazing, and special.

And, it might also be easy to think that we can’t possibly do what Jesus did because we are too ordinary and not amazing enough in comparison to Jesus, but, when we read the gospel we are reminded that that is NOT how Jesus thought or acted about us.

Jesus thought anyone – even the most ordinary people – could do what he could do, and then his ordinary disciples from ordinary places went and proved him right! Those ordinary disciples from ordinary places went and followed Jesus. Though it took them some time to learn what Jesus was teaching them, Jesus' disciples DID learn what Jesus was teaching them about how to live God's better way – and then they went and did many of the same things that Jesus had done.

So, if Jesus' disciples, who were ordinary people from ordinary places, can follow and do what Jesus did — that means we can too! No matter how ordinary or extraordinary we are – we can do the same thing as Jesus and the disciples did!

And that's the good news for today. Let's pray.

Second Scripture Reading

Romans 6:1-11

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

“Go Fish”

Rev. Chris Stillwell

This is a previous sermon from Rev. Chris with scripture Luke 5:1-11
for the purpose of the Manor Minutes only.

I grew up in the country so I knew a lot of fishermen, but I never became one of them. I am sure you have seen the bumper stickers people have on their cars that say, “I’d rather be fishing”. I can assure you that none of these cars are my car. I find fishing to be boring and pointless. Now if you are catching the fish to eat I get it, but when I went fishing with my dad and brother we were always a catch and release family, and I did never understand that.

In fact, one time I caught fish and I was insistent on bringing it home for my mom to cook. The fish was small and would have fed me at the most, and it would not have been worth the work of descaling and cooking it. I should also mention that I wasn’t a big fish eater, so for years we had a frozen and dead fish in our freezer.

I do know a fishing story is supposed to be flattering to the fisherman. Fishermen are supposed to talk about the monster fish they hooked but that got away, or they’re supposed to talk about the bait they use to make the fish just jump on your hook. If you like fishing stories then the Bible is for you, for there are many stories about fish and fishing, but Luke tells us today a different kind of fishing story. This story is about fishermen coming up empty after fishing all night and about a man that we don’t know if he has ever gone fishing commandeering a boat and telling the fishermen where the fish are.

If you have ever had the experience of someone who has never done your job telling you how to do your job, you might think these fishermen wouldn’t listen to Jesus, but he had a reputation and crowds had gathered to hear him, so they let him use their boat as a wayside pulpit, and when he was done he told Simon to row out to the deep and let down his nets for a catch. Simon, who would be called Peter said, “Master, we have been fishing all night long but have caught nothing. Yet at your word, I will let down the nets.”

After so many fish are caught that they have to summon nearby boats to contain the catch, a fisherman, Simon, immediately resigns from fishing and starts fishing for people.

I told you it was a different kind of fishing story. If there's anything to learn from this story, it's why some people aren't good at fishing. Some people aren't good at fishing because they refuse to go into deep water. Jesus told Simon, "Leave the shallows and go to the deep."

He says this because everybody knows that the schools of big fish are in the deeper water. The bigger the fish the deeper the water needs to be, and the first rule of fishing is you've got to go where the fish are, but, of course, we aren't really talking about fish.

Jesus was teaching a spiritual principal, so substitute fish for abundance of wisdom, or love, or healing, or peace. All those things we want in abundance. Some people don't catch these things because they simply refuse to go deep. Deep water is where the increase is. Deep water takes faith. Deep water is a risk. Therefore focus of mind and heart are needed, but, more than anything, you need trust.

The visibility in deep black water is next to nothing. You've got to trust the words and directions of others who have passed through deep water to make it there. Jesus is always inviting people to the deeper end of things, but shallow water is pleasant. It cools our feet when we enter without sending shock waves through our body if we had just dove in. You can see all the way to the bottom in shallow water so you know if something that touches your feet is harmless like a minnow or something more sinister.

As a result, staying in shallow water is such a temptation. Shallow water doesn't cost much; it doesn't take a whole lot of courage, but Simon knew the minnows wouldn't be enough to feed him. They were smaller than that fish in my parents' freezer. The minnows weren't the desire of his heart. The deep water of faith is where those things we say we want are swimming around. The shallow is where we begin the adventure, not where we finish.

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven. There is a time for classes and listening and a time to live what we've learned, a time to receive and a time to give back, a time to worship the Lord in church, and a time to be church and lead the world in the worship of the Lord. There is a time to wade our feet in the cool refreshing pool of shallow water and a time to plunge our whole selves into the deep end, Deep water is where we have to go to get what God has for us.

Some people aren't good at fishing because they don't like to go out into the deep water, but some people aren't good at it because they don't expect to catch fish. When Jesus tells Simon, "Let's go to the deep water," he doesn't stop there. He says, "...let down your nets for a catch." In other words, "Be prepared. The fish will come." What an encouragement.

There is a word here for us who go to church regularly. Week after week we go to the deep water of worship, but do we go preparing for a catch? Do we go believing that a blessing is just waiting for us? Or do we go to appease a spouse or be seen by others or, worse, just out of habit? Expectations count with God. It's all over the Bible.

Expectation is the first-born child of faith, "the substance of things hoped for." No expectation, no real faith. When we say we believe in God, we are not saying I am agreeing with some abstract idea; we're saying we expect the things that God has promised to us. We're saying that I'm a partner with the "giver of every good gift." And among those gifts God has promised us are fruitfulness and fish and forever.

I like how Jesus keeps pushing Simon's boundaries. "Leave the shore, Simon. Go into the deep, Simon. Try again Simon." These are easy in comparison to "Expect a blessing, Simon." Jesus was calling Simon to risk being disappointed in God. Us expecting and preparing to be blessed must make God's heart smile in some wide and extraordinary way. God probably says to himself, "They get it; I'm trustworthy, really."

Some people aren't good at fishing because they don't go to the deep water, and some aren't good at fishing because they don't expect to, but some people aren't good at fishing because they think they know more about fish than God.

Simon almost makes this mistake. In effect he tells Jesus in that exasperated tone, "Hey, we've been fishing all night. We know fish. The fish don't run in the day. Aren't you a carpenter moonlighting as a preacher anyway?" Some people think they know more about fish than God. It happens to all of us sometimes. It's not that we actually think we know more than God; it's just that we behave that way.

We hear God's instructions: Forgive a 70 x 7 times. Bless those who curse you. Give abundantly. What you do and do not do to the least of these you do and do not do to me. Forget your life and you'll gain eternity. Remember the Sabbath day, it's for worship and family not for catching up on work. We hear

them, but we ignore God's invitation to abundance. We say to God by our actions: I know more about marriage, more about healing, more about forgiveness, more about children, more about money than you do, God.

Simon, for just a split second, almost forgot that God is God. Modern culture doesn't really have any use for the word humility. Honestly being humble might be the most counter cultural thing to be in these times. All over social media you will find expert after expert explaining things to anyone who wants to hear and to so many more who don't and when they should perchance run into someone who is actually an expert in the field they very rarely defer to that persons actual experience and knowledge.

Simon, at that crucial intersection we all come to over and over again in life, decided that he didn't know everything, that his present emptiness and frustration had made him ready to learn. Now there's a good definition of humility, a readiness to learn.

You might be tempted to say that the net full of fish is the miracle of this story, but I disagree. The real miracle of this story is that Simon decided that God was God and that he would live that way beginning immediately.

Just look at what Simon says before the miracles begin to happen, "Master . . Yet, if you say so....". Simon is a professional. He knows a thing or two about his trade, but he hasn't been successful. It creates the problem of having no food, and no money, but it is also embarrassing. His frustration is real, his pain is real, his emptiness is real, and yet. And, yet, you are God and I am not. He calls him master and he trusts and obeys, and that's when miracles will begin to happen, that's when we will start catching fish, when we decide that God is God, when our lips and our lives agree that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Simon's full net is just a consequence of that fact, of that revelation. What a freedom Simon got that day, what a joy...that "God is the maker of heaven and earth..." and that all by God alone put the fish in the deeps and the sun and moon in the sky. God put the spout in the whale and the gills in the fish and all of the things that the fish need to survive in the deep so that one day, a poor, simple man like Simon could come by and catch one, if God cares enough for us to do all of that, what can God do with you when you're ready to catch fish?

Let's pray together.

Set us free, O God, from the belief that we are all we have and may you use us to as lures and bait to bring men and women and children into the deep waters of your love and grace where the kingdom awaits.
Amen

Call to Offering

Donna Stemski

We belong together in this house through the love of God that draws us together. We also know that God's love extends to the cosmos, so let us share our love with others through our gifts and our service of every kind.

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

Because of your generosity to us, God of love, we have courage to be generous. Bless our gifts. May they bring acts of generous love to make it clear that your love extends beyond the doors of this house. The entire cosmos is your house of love. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Rev. Stillwell

I was watching the TV show, The Office, this past week that is takes place in Scranton, PA, and I was impressed as I watched one episode that the cars in the parking lot were covered in snow and cinders. They looked just as our cars looked out in our driveway. I was impressed by this because often, shows on TV are almost all filmed in Hollywood and look like it even though they take place somewhere else. Another show we like claims to take place near Baltimore, but there are palm trees clearly visible in the background.

I was impressed by this attention to detail because I often lack such attention myself. I do well with the big important things in life but often I miss the details. I remember to bring the leftovers from the restaurant in from the car. I forget to put them in the refrigerator. I remember to bring all the things I need for work in the morning, but I leave my lunch on the counter. I buy gifts for Christmas but forget to save the receipts in case they need to be returned.

That is why I am so glad that our God is a god of details. All life on this planet is so detailed down to its tiniest little aspect. The balance of life is kept by an infinitely complex ecosystem and planned down to the last detail. Likewise, God sent Jesus Christ into the world to save us, and, although things went terribly wrong, God 's plan was so detailed that it did not fail.

Here at this table we come with the overwhelming realization that God has blessed us with a world so suffused with divine grace that we see it down to the last detail. Here we give thanks that in creating this world, creating us, and saving us from ourselves, God has dotted every I and crossed every cross so that we don't have to worry about every little detail.

We need only believe in Christ. They say that the devil is in the details, but I've only ever found God there, and for that I am truly thankful. Come to this table and let God take care of the details of your life.

Communion Hymn

"Let Us Break Bread Together"

Sam Johnson, organist

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.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Gary Ford

Jesus, you died on the cross so that we may live even though we have sinned. Your death means a new life for us if we are baptized and believe. When we are baptized our old life ends and a new one begins. We come to this Table to say to You and the world we believe You are the Christ who died to save us from sin. But, we must demonstrate that faith, so, we take this bread and cup to celebrate and give thanks for that new life that You have called us to live. 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

“Shall We Gather at the River”

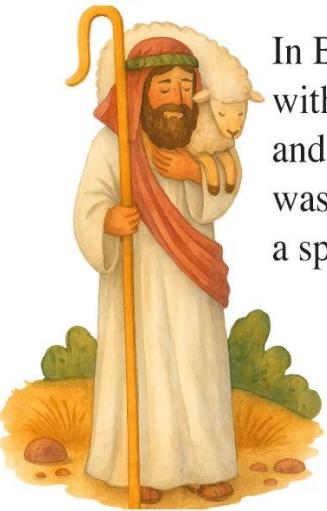
Sam Johnson, organist

Shall we gather at the river, where bright angel feet have trod, with its crystal tide forever flowing by the throne of God? Yes, we'll gather at the river, the beautiful, the beautiful river; gather with the saints at the river that flows by the throne of God.

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

May the Christ who offered himself to bear the sins of all, touch your life in a personal way. May his saving grace erase the darkness of the past and keep you in his loving presence. Amen.



Bible Quiz

In Bible times, shepherds spent most of their days with their sheep—guiding them to food and water and guarding them from danger. When a sheep was injured, the shepherd treated the wound with a special liquid. What was it?

A. Water
B. Honey
C. A Salt Solution
D. Olive oil

Answer: D (See Psalm 23:5, ESV)

THIS WEEK'S PRAYER REQUESTS

Homebound Members

Mrs. Mary Lou McDonough
949 Bruce Street
Washington PA 15301

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

Barb Bailey
Terry Bailey
Donna Bakaitis
Todd Barnhart
Vanessa & John Bereznay
Jeff Caldwell
Bryan Carter
Maci Caster
Wanda Chicone
Angel Corbett
Ruth Cox
Sue Donaldson
Craig Dotson
Benjamin Dube
Steve Engle
Connie Faust
Kathy Moninger-Ford
Terry Gahagen
Barb Graff
Irma Harper
Sheila Harris
Aryn Hess
Judy Hanning
Danni Iams
Kari Johnson
Shelly Kubincanek
Marylee Lawrence

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!

Southminster Residents

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

Southmont Resident

835 S Main Street
Washington PA 15301

Doris Sorice, Rm 554

Premier Resident

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

Transitions Healthcare Resident

90 Humbert Lane
Washington PA 15301

Doris Haniford, Rm 121

WeCare at South Hills

201 Village Drive
Canonsburg, PA 15317
Donna Bakaitis, Room 307

Charlie McConnell
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
Mike Ryan
John Samida
Valerie Shetler
Doug Smith
Darcy Sprowls
Wayne Starnes
Cathy Stewart
Jan Stillwell
Beth 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.



DAFFODIL DAYS 2026

Name: _____

American Cancer Society
Daffodil Sale

Bunch of Daffodils \$15

Bunch of Tulips \$15

Mini Potted Daffodils \$20

Gift of Hope \$25 (flowers donated to local cancer centers)

To order, please return this coupon to Karen Thomas or place in the Administrative Assistant mailbox. Orders must be prepaid and are due by February 17, 2026. Make checks payable to "American Cancer Society."