

Manor Minutes
Volume 15 Issue 15
April 12, 2024

- Choir Practice – April 18, 6:30pm

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

Wild Things

**FMCC Night at
Washington Wild Things
Friday, June 7, 7pm
Fireworks Night**

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

**Jody Mullis will be singing God Bless America
during the 7th inning stretch.**

**Sign up in the Narthex for tickets and parking
passes.**

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

Recycle your **solar eclipse glasses** in the Narthex. They will be sent to underserved communities and schools around the world to use during future solar eclipses.



May 19

- Baptisms
- Last day of Sunday School & CW&W
- Sunday School Teacher & CW&W Volunteer Recognition
- Pentecost and Sunday School Celebration Cookout after Worship
- Wear **RED**



The **Bethany Class** will be meeting at Eat'n Park for lunch on Tuesday, April 30th at Noon.

Need a Ride to Church?



Rev. Chris will be available to pick anyone up with the church van who lives within a 15-minute drive from the church and needs a ride to Worship on Sunday morning. Please call or text Rev. Chris (412) 956-6590 to make arrangements.



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

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

April 14, 2024 – 10:15am

Prelude

Carson Throckmorton, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Charlotte Stillwell

Leader: Come in, all who are tired and thirsty.

People: The Good Shepherd leads us to grassy meadows and restful waters.

Leader: Come in, all who are anxious and afraid.

People: The Good Shepherd protects us and leads us through dark valleys.

Leader: Come in, all who are empty and exhausted.

People: The Good Shepherd fills our lives with goodness and faithful love.

Leader: Come in, to be refreshed, to rest, and to receive.

People: The Good Shepherd has brought us here.

Opening Hymn

"Blessed Assurance"

Jody Mullis, pianist

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! O what a foretaste of glory divine! Heir of salvation, purchase of God, born of his Spirit, washed in his blood. This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long; this is my story, this is my song, praising my savior all the day long.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Pastor Gena

Living God, you are alive and active in our world and in our lives. Thank you for calling us to get up and come together this morning. Whether with reluctance or hesitation or fear or joy, we are here, and we give you thanks. Come and speak to us this morning; let us know the comfort of your presence as we sit together. Draw us to yourself, even if we aren't sure we belong here, even if we don't think we know you well enough to qualify. Help us to sense your joy in the curiosities of our hearts, our determination to plant ourselves where hope is found. May we follow our hearts to you as we worship.

All-knowing God, forgive us when we compare ourselves with each other, wishing we were more like someone else, vying for more of your love and affection, judging ourselves by how others seem to know and love you more. We know that each of us is the one you love. You are working in each one of our lives in different and wonderful ways. Help us to trust you with our lives, turning to you for guidance and direction. When we see how you are working in the lives of others, turn us from jealousy toward celebration. And make us ever more sensitive to your directions, your movements in our own lives.

Thank you for experiences which lead us to new understandings. Thank you for those who have revealed you to us, who have helped us to see you moving in our lives, who have helped us to understand what you are teaching us. Thank you for those who have taken the time to listen to our hearts, to walk with us on our journeys. Develop in us a hunger to know you more, a thirst to understand your word written in our

lives and in the pages of Scripture. Give us new excitement in knowing Jesus. Renew in us our baptisms, that it may seem like just yesterday we were experiencing those waters washing over us.

Thank you for this community of faith, for the bonds of trust we form here in which we can learn from one another, challenge each other, study the Scriptures together, and practice loving each other and learning to live with each other. Give us the courage to speak up, to reach out, to ask for help when we need it.

Be with those who are traveling, those who are moving, those forced from their homes, those searching for a new home and a new life. Be with those who need help, those who are asking for help. Be with those who are new in their faith, those with many questions, those seeking answers. Be with those preparing for baptism. May we, as their community of faith, prepare to welcome them, celebrate your love for them, and commit to growing together in you.

We pray for our world, that peacemakers may emerge wherever there is conflict. Give our leaders wisdom in making decisions on behalf of all of us. Give us the insight and courage to uproot injustice and plant your love for all in its place.

We pray for all who are in need of comfort this day. Comfort those who mourn, lift up those who are sick, strengthen those awaiting words of hope. Come and surround with your love and peace those we have named aloud and those we name now in our hearts...

Trusting in your mercy, we commend to you all those we have named and those whose needs are known only to you. Show us how to love, we pray.

And now may we find your joy bubbling up within us that we find ourselves on our way rejoicing, having been here with you and with our friends, pondering your word and sharing with each other. May we find ourselves rejoicing on the way, proclaiming the good news of your love everywhere we go, with our words, our choices, our welcome and our care. We pray all of this in the name of the one who is always on the way with us, our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ, who teaches us to pray, 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:

“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 Reading

1 John 3:1-7

Serena Dube

Anthem

“Beautiful Savior,” by David Allen

Choir

Children’s Message

Pastor Gena

Have you ever lined up dominoes so they’ll knock each other down? What has to happen first so all the dominoes will fall?

Someone has to provide a starting action that sets the other actions in motion. Without that beginning action, the other actions don’t happen either. But when someone starts the action, then one action leads to

another and another. We call this process a chain reaction. We can push just one domino, which pushes the next one, which pushes the next one, and so on, forming actions linked together, like a chain!

We hear in the Bible about another kind of chain reaction that's been going on for a long, long time. In a letter called 1 John, we read this in chapter 4, verse 19: "we love because God first loved us." The author of this letter reminds us that love is a chain reaction! When someone loves and cares for us, we learn how to love, too. Our love grows when we share it with others. They share the love they receive from us, and the love keeps going like a chain reaction.

I wonder who started the first push setting all of this love in motion. 1 John 4:19 gives us a clue, doesn't it? We love because God first loved us! God set the chain reaction of love going by giving us love as a gift. Because God loves us, we become part of the chain reaction, keeping and growing God's love in the world!

Dear God, thank you for loving us and starting the chain reaction of love. Show us how to keep your love going until every person knows you love them and care about them. Amen.

Second Scripture Reading

Luke 24:36b-48

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

"The Flesh and Bones of Faith"

Rev. Stillwell

When my wife and I were dating we lived right next door to each other in college and therefore saw each other all the time. Then I went to seminary in Texas for almost 4 years and the amount of time we spent in each other's physical presence was greatly limited, sometimes going as much as four months at a time without seeing each other. It was good to be able to communicate over the computer or the phone and in letters, but there is nothing like being in person. There is nothing to compare to the first hug after several months, because there is no substitute for the feel of flesh and bones.

Think of how people must have felt when they were called to go off to war. For some of you this is no mental exercise but a real life memory. A few years ago I heard about a soldier in Iraq, who was ordered to return home, but the communications were crossed and lost, and his family were never given the notification. So one day as they went about their everyday routine, which now included a few prayers for the safety of their son whom they had not seen in about a year, there was a ring of the doorbell. When they opened their door he stood there smiling as big as ever. At first they could not believe their own eyes. This was simply too good to be true and even though they could see him they thought certainly they must be dreaming. It wasn't until they embraced him and felt the flesh and bones of his existence did they know it was true. He had returned.

Greeting a loved one who has been gone for a long time and whom you feared might never return must be one of the greatest sensations we can know, but it must pale in comparison to coming back from the dead. Not that I have had this experience, but that is exactly what we have in the passage that we have read for today. It is the point in which Christ appears to all of his disciples gathered together in one place, and, as you might imagine, they felt that it was simply too good to be true.

A disciple named Cleopas and an unnamed disciple encountered Jesus on the road to Emmaus. They spoke with him a long time but did not realize who he was until he stopped to eat with them. Upon their sudden realization he disappeared and the bewildered and excited disciples returned to the "11 and their companions", as Luke tells us, to tell them what had just happened. When they do they discover that Jesus has also appeared to Simon even though Luke does not detail this encounter for us.

In the midst of this excitement, as the two tell all what they had seen, and the rest tell them what Simon had just said, Jesus appears, and when Jesus, who was believed to be dead, arrives, they all take him for a

ghost. After all, they know that he had died and they know that he had been placed in a tomb, and now he simply appears like a good ghost does. In fact Luke says, “Jesus himself stood among them,” as if he suddenly appeared in the same way he had disappeared on the road to Emmaus.

Whether not you believe in ghosts I think that this is a reasonable conclusion, but the disciples should have known better. For they had heard what Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James had said about his tomb being empty. They had heard Simon say that Christ appeared to him. They had also heard that two others had seen him and eaten with him, but despite all this good news still they cannot fully believe it.

It is fair to say that they are confusedly joyous and joyously confused. Many biblical translations read that the disciples did not believe because of their joy. The NIV says “while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement”. In other words, this sight before them of their risen master healed of his wounds and cleansed of his blood standing before them as they never thought would happen again was just too good to be true. Nothing in this world could bring about this much joy so they believed that this vision was not of this world.

But Jesus assures them that he is real by saying to them:

³⁸ ‘Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.’

In the gospel of John we read about Thomas not believing until he touches Jesus’ wounds. For this he is remembered as “Doubting Thomas”, but here all the disciples go one further than Thomas. Even after they touch him still “in their joy they were disbelieving”.

Perhaps to prove that he is real Jesus sets about doing what anyone who had been dead for three days would do. He eats. You have heard about comfort food, I am sure, but here the food brings comfort not to the one eating, Jesus Christ, but to his disciples as they watch him eat. He asks them for food, and they cannot even speak, but simply hand him a fish, and Christ eats while they watch in stunned silence.

Thomas gets labeled as the Doubter as if that is what is unique about him, but Luke shows us that all the disciples doubted, and we have doubted as well. For we all have had those experiences where something was just too good to be true. We have all wanted to pinch ourselves to see if we are dreaming. That desire comes from wanting to feel the reality of our surroundings and to know that the flesh and bones that are experiencing this great and unexpected joy are solid and real.

As Christians we talk a lot about Heaven and the spirit world, but our faith lives with us in this world. We all find our faith in the flesh and bones of real life. Although we can talk about having a spiritual relationship with Christ it makes itself known in our actual relationship with each other. Following Christ then isn’t just an academic spiritual exercise, but a real commitment with real results.

Sometimes we can talk about Christ resurrected so much that we forget about Christ crucified. When we do that we focus on the glory of the next life to the point where we might feel that all that is left to do is to wait for that day to come. We forget that he is with us in the here and now and goes through what we go through with us.

But we cannot, for there is still so much living to be done for all of us.

When Christ was resurrected he did not first go to Heaven, but instead came to see his friends, and twice now he has eaten with them for he knows the world in which they live. A world that is made of blood and

sweat, tears and grit, flesh and bones which must bear the burden of work and worry. So he takes some time to bring them joy in this world before he leaves for the next. He wants them to know that his resurrection is real.

Sandy Patty wrote a hymn that I heard sung by Johnny Cash that sings:

There are some things I may not know
There are some places I can't go
But I'm sure of this one part
My God is real for I can feel
Him deep in my heart.

The love of Christ isn't something we will experience one day, but something we can experience now as an assurance that future promises of an eternal life in Heaven are not too good to be true.

The gospel of John calls Jesus the word made flesh, because first God was known in the words of scripture, and then God was known in the flesh of Christ. After Christ ascended into Heaven God has been made known through the Holy Spirit but God did not abandon flesh and bones. Instead God continues to be made real in all of those who have believed the story of Christ's resurrection. In this way we are the body of Christ together and alive in the world.

Let us rejoice that the gospel is more than just this world, and more than just flesh and bone, but let us also rejoice that the good news of Jesus Christ is not just for the next life someday when we die lest we fear that the good news is too good to be true. Rather it is good because it is true and it is true because we can feel the joy in our flesh and the truth resonating in our very bones.

Call to Offering

Serena Dube

What shall we return to the Lord for God's many gifts? What praise shall we sing to God for the blessings we have received? Let us pray our vows and give our tithes to the Lord in the presence of God's people.

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

Holy One, we offer these gifts with gratitude for the many ways you care for us. Use these gifts, and our very lives, O God, that all might have life, and have it abundantly. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Rev. Stillwell

The world is a vast and wondrous place of which most of us see very little in our lifetime. Before I moved to Texas I could not conceive of the distances of the states west of the Mississippi. I used to think that El Paso was relatively close to Dallas since they were in the same state, and then I was told that if you lived in El Paso and you wanted to go to the beach it would be faster to go to San Diego than Houston.

Likewise, friends I knew there had trouble figuring out the geography of the eastern states. One friend who had spent all her life in the Texas took a trip to Maryland in the fall, and she told me she loved it because she had always wanted to visit New England. Well I laughed and told her that technically she was still in the south since she hadn't crossed the Mason Dixon line let alone been to New England. She told me, "All those eastern sates look the same to me."

It strikes me that we human beings think that we know and understand a lot, but if we cannot even come to grips with the vast distances in other parts of our own country how can we possibly fully understand the vastness of God?

Well we cannot on our own, and when we come around this table we do so not to celebrate that we know everything there is to know about God who made the whole world. We come to confess that we do not, and that we need God's help in Jesus Christ who came so that we might understand a small glimpse of the truth God has in store for us. Around this table God does not care about what you do know. God is much more interested in hearing you admit to how much you do not know.

Come to this table and confess your smallness compared to the infinite magnitude of God, and let God carry you to a place that you cannot fully comprehend, but that you can fully enjoy.

Communion Hymn "Open My Eyes, That I May See" Carson Throckmorton, organist
Open my eyes, that I may see glimpses of truth thou hast for me; place in my hands
the wonderful key that shall unclasp and set me free. Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see. Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Prayer for the Bread & Cup Linda Reese
Gracious Lord, your Son, the risen Jesus said to his disciples, "thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations." We are the recipients of that repentance and forgiveness of sins. Bless this bread and cup, the emblems of that suffering for our salvation. Keep us ever mindful of that gift of salvation as we go from here and proclaim his grace. 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
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 "They'll Know We Are Christians" Carson Throckmorton, organist
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord, we are one in the Spirit, we are one
in the Lord, and we pray that all unity may one day be restored: And they'll know we
are Christians by our love, by our love, yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

Benediction Rev. Stillwell
May Christ's love fill you this day with the living and enduring word of God that you may go forth to transform the world.

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!

Prayer List:

Homebound Members:

Mrs. Mary McDonough
949 Bruce Street
Washington PA 15301

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

Elinor Newman (Southmont)
835 S Main St, Rm 513
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

Ed Alexey
Avery Allen
Jeannie Allison
Terry Bailey
Donna Bakaitis
Jim Banish
Martin Berisford
Eleanor Boyles
Mabel Brooks
Leslie Byron
Sandra Carman
Clayton Chalfant
Leslie Chalfant
Denise Charles
Wanda Chicone
MaryAnn Coates
Zach Correll
Ruth Cox
Irma Davis
Sue Donaldson
Benjamin Dube
Jessica Duke
Libby Eberhard
Thomas Farabee
Kathy Moninger-Ford
Jay Freudenberg
Lois Gayman
Sue Golsky
Joe Greene
Bonnie Gregg
Theresa Hancher
Irma Harper
Sheila Harris

Rick Herrnberger
Aryn Hess
Janet Houston
Ed Jackman
Dallas Jacobovitz
Kenger Family
Ivy Lacock
Ty Lacock, Jr.
Bob Lanning
David Leonard
John Lewis
Lee Martin
Dave McConnell
Pam McCord
Norm McDonough
Ruth Mikuta
Dick Moninger
Bob Morgan
Paul Myers
Joe Neckerman
Michaela Nixon
Sandy Nixon
Carmen Oliverio
Peggy Oliverio
Deborah Patterson
JoAnn Piatt
Bo & Patty Pryor
Rick Rafferty
Cathy Rentgen
Jeannie Riffle
Lori Riffle
Betty Jo Riggle

Emily Cope Robinson
Dave Ross
John Samida
Debbie Sekorky
Sam Sheller
Valerie Shetler
Hannah Simpson
Doug and Tracy Smith
Darci Sprowls
Cathy Stewart
John Stewart
Bernard Teagarden
Beth Teagarden
Jane Teagarden
Thad Turner
Tammie Wallace
Gary Weaver
Tom Williams
Addison Wittenberg
Sarah Wittenberg

In the Military

Lance Dague	Andrew Gregg
Terrell McClain	Zachary Keene
Brandon Lipscomb	Sarah Lipscomb
Travis Ringer*	Emily Chase
Dylan Demain	

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.

*currently deployed