

Manor Minutes
Volume 13 Issue 10
February 18, 2022

The Story Chapter 18 Daniel: In Exile – February 20

Prayer Shawl – February 21, 11am Parlor

Dartball – February 22, 7pm @ West Washington

Choir Practice – February 17, 6:30pm

Stay up to date, check www.fairhillmanorchurch.org/calendar



If you have an article for the March Newsletter please make sure Karen has it by Monday, February 21st.

Thank you!

Bethany Class

February 20: Praise God for His Presence – Psalm 84

February 27: Praise God for His Greatness -Psalms 149:1-5; 150

The Bethany Class Zoom will open at 8:30 am.

The class will begin at 9:15 am.

Meeting ID: 883 3055 7258 Passcode: 344061



weekofcompassion.org

Week of Compassion is the relief, refuge, and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Your gifts to Week of Compassion bring hope out of despair, find blessings amid devastation, and help transform loss into new life. Your contributions bring tangible relief and change the course of lives.

When you give, you help rebuild communities recovering from disaster. You also empower farmers to grow new kinds of crops in a changing climate; you support refugees; you empower youth through education, and empower women through vocational opportunities. In so many different ways, your gifts of love have the power to transform lives.

Love is shelter. Love is a listening ear. Love is community. Love is a hopeful future. Love is a path forward. When all else seems lost, love remains.

We will receive the **Week of Compassion Special Offering on February 20 and 27**. If you would like to contribute, you may:

- Place a check in the offering plate with “Week of Compassion” in the memo
- Donate through the Givelify app located at www.fairhillmanorchurch.org under the “more” tab
- Give directly at www.weekofcompassion.org/donate.



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

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Minister
Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor
Elders: Cara Hritz, Bread
Jackie Nelson, Cup
February 20, 2022 - 10:15am

Prelude

Audra Allen, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Kathy Moninger-Ford

Leader: Come and learn the ways of life.

People: We have come to follow Jesus.

Leader: Love your enemies, and do good to those who hate you.

People: We have come to follow Jesus.

Leader: Bless those who curse you, and pray for those who persecute you.

People: We have come to follow Jesus.

Leader: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

People: We have come to follow Jesus.

All: Come and learn the ways of life as we worship the one whom we follow.

Opening Hymn

“Let the Whole Creation Cry”

Audra Allen, organist

Let the whole creation cry, Alleluia! “Glory be to God on high!” Alleluia!

Sun and moon, lift up your voice, Alleluia! Night and stars, in God rejoice, Alleluia!

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord’s Prayer

Rev. Stillwell

Lord God, we come to worship you whose love knows no bounds and whose grace spills over into our lives. You are our Creator, and you granted us being. If this were the only gift that you have ever given us it would be more than enough for us to worship you but you also call us to be more than we are.

Creator God, before we were born, before time began, you were. When time is finished, when the universe is no more, you will still be. Nothing can take your power from you. Nothing can limit or overcome your love, and in your presence we can only be silent before the mystery of your being, for no words of ours can do justice to your glory.

Beloved God, open our hearts to your healing word, our minds to your guiding word, our souls to your renewing word. May we be strengthened to live out your love in word and deed. May you strengthen, guide, and renew each of us as needed and send us out to strengthen, guide, and renew others.

Gracious God, we come before you now just as we are, with dreams and doubts, ideals and idiosyncrasies, baggage and burdens, secrets and successes, failures and faith, loves and longings, convictions and concerns.

Take all of who we are and help us to become what you have meant for us to be by the power of your Holy Spirit. This we ask in the way that your Son teaches 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 Reading

Daniel 3:1-15

J.C. Leasure

Anthem

“A Willing Heart,” by Fettke

Choir

Children’s Message

Pastor Gena

I want to ask you a very serious question: “What does love look like?”

In one of the books of the Bible, a man by the name of Paul, wrote some ideas about this. He said that love is patient, love is kind, and love is truth. He also said some things love is NOT: love is not rude or irritating and it does not do wrong to others. Have you ever heard that? Paul even says that love never ends. Wow!

What are some ways that you could show love toward another person? Maybe in your family or at school?

One of the ways we can show love is by helping others. This Sunday and next Sunday, we are collecting a special offering for Week of Compassion. Through Week of Compassion, we have the chance to help other people we may never meet – and sometimes we help people who we know very well. One way we helped through Week of Compassion recently was giving a \$5,000 emergency grant to Thomas Campbell Apartments after the fire there. That money will go toward helping people whose apartments were damaged get what they need. That sounds like a way to love other people, doesn’t it? Another one of the projects we have helped make possible through Week of Compassion was rebuilding a school after it was destroyed by a hurricane. Doesn’t that sound like a way to love another person? Would you want someone to help rebuild your school if it was destroyed?

There’s another way Week of Compassion has helped us show love to others, and I think it’s really cool. In a country called Myanmar, our offering helps women buy chickens. I wonder why it would be helpful to have a chicken. Well, the women can sell the chicken’s eggs to others so that they can have enough to eat and provide for their families. Did you ever think you could love someone by giving them a chicken! Well, you can.

You have a chance to show love to others through this offering, which you can help collect through the next week. Here is a special bank that will help you show love to others. At home, think about all the times you experience love. And with your family, maybe each night at dinner, or when you have breakfast, think and pray together about how you want to make a difference. Maybe you want to put in a coin or even a dollar for every time you feel loved.

Or maybe you want to count all the times you’ve done something loving toward another person and add an amount of money for every time. I bet you can think of a lot of creative ways to help! It’s a way of being mindful of all that we have, being grateful, and helping others. There might even be people here who would like to bring in some coins next Sunday to add to your banks. Let’s see how many coins we can collect!

Dear Lord, thank you for loving us so much and showing us how we can love others. Use the offerings we will put in these banks to change someone's life. Help us love those we will never even meet and those we see every day. With thankful hearts, we pray. Amen.

Second Scripture Reading

Daniel 3:16-29

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

“God Is No Super Hero”

Rev. Stillwell

Superheroes are very popular in our culture. Many people grow up watching their exploits in cartoons, movies, and in comic books, and most of us can admit to having a favorite superhero at one point or another. Whether it is Wonder Woman with her lasso and invisible plane, Batman with his black cape, the Hulk with his huge green muscles, or another superhero, it is easy for us to be mesmerized by their talents and their ability to always save the day.

For me it was Spider-Man. He flew all across New York City from one building to the next shooting his webs. His incredible strength and unbelievable athletic ability always kept him safe, and he never failed to catch the bad guys and turn them over to the police, like a friendly, neighborhood superhero should do. Well, even now that I'm grown up I still enjoy a good superhero, and I know that I am not alone because some of the most popular movies among children and adults over the past few years have been superhero movies. Spider-Man, Batman, Iron Man and the Avengers have all been hits on the big screen, and the biggest superhero of them all, Superman, is set to come back to theaters soon.

It occurs to me in the midst of our obsession with men and women who have remarkable, superhuman powers that they use for the good of all, that sometimes we like to talk about God like a super hero. I once had a friend named Todd who told me of a time in which he felt God's presence. He spoke of being a child and riding in a boat, but not on the water. Rather the boat was being towed to the river and while his father drove the car, he sat in the boat as it was being pulled behind. Clearly this is a story from an earlier time. An accident happened on the way and with no seat belt to restrain him he said he was thrown from the boat when he felt what he described as a presence holding him as if to protect him, so that when he landed on the ground, he was bruised a bit but otherwise no worse for the wear.

Maybe we all have stories like this to tell in which we were in a terrible situation, possibly a life threatening situation, and we were helpless to escape. Perhaps we have each been in a moment that we thought we would not get out of but we experienced a sensation that we can only think of as being the hand of God reaching down from the heavens and sparing our very lives.

Whether it was a car crash, a bike accident, a fire or some other unforeseen moment, I'm sure many of us might tell a story in which we believe that God, like Superman, came in at the last minute and delivered us from a terrible fate.

People have faith in super heroes because of the tangible results that they produce. Someone is falling from a building, Spider-Man swoops in and catches them. Someone is trapped in a burning building, Superman comes in and saves them. But what if the super heroes in which people had so much faith failed to rescue? Would people still have faith in them?

Our story for today reads like something out of the pages of a comic book. The Babylonians took exile from Jerusalem to Babylon and king Nebuchadnezzar wanted the elite, bright and young to serve in his court. In this way his kingdom was strengthened and the new exiles would settle and become comfortable in Babylon. Among them Daniel, Hanniah, Mishael and Azariah were taken from Jerusalem and renamed

Beltshazzer, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. In this way they were to forget about their old life and their old ways. But they did not, making these four teen boys were strangers in a strange land.

They make the most of it and are promoted in Nebuchadnezzar's court when Daniel interprets one of the king's dreams for him. Perhaps they could have had long and enjoyable lives in Babylon except for the fact that the king has a golden statue of himself made and requires all to bow down and pray to the statue. This is not required of Daniel but he will have his own trial later. IT does pertain to Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and they do not bow down s it would violate a core commandment of their faith. Perhaps they would have gotten away with this too, except that officials who were are jealous of them were quick to report to the king of their crime. As punishment Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego are thrown into a fiery furnace. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego needed a super hero to deliver them.

Though they faced a certain and terrible death, they did not trust in a hero to save them. They did not look back into their history and hope that Moses would come back to part the sea and deliver them from their danger. They did not believe that David would return and lead them to victory against their oppressor. They did not trust that Elijah would swoop down in a fiery chariot and snatch them from harm's way. Instead, they trusted in God.

They trusted in God and, though they were thrown into the fire that was so hot that it killed their guards, they were not harmed. They looked to no one else but their God. They put their trust in no one else but Yahweh, faced the flames together, and together they were delivered from harm.

It's a happy ending to be sure, but what would have happened if they had not been delivered? What if they were caught by the flames and burned to an agonizingly painful death? In their last moments would they curse God? Would they run out of the heat and simultaneously smother the flames while they bowed down to worship Nebuchadnezzar's statue and Babylon's gods?

According to their own words, they would have still followed their God. They would have not lost their faith. They say to Nebuchadnezzar:

“¹⁷If our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire and out of your hand, O king, let him deliver us. ¹⁸But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods and we will not worship the golden statue that you have set up.”

There are basically three levels of faith that we may have. First there is abstract faith. It is the belief of what God can do, but not necessarily what God will do. This is evident in the first part of their statement, “¹⁷If our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire and out of your hand, O king, let him deliver us.” This is a belief in what can do, if God chooses to do it.

The second level of faith is applied faith, the belief that what God can do God will do, and it is evident in their second sentence. “If our God whom we serve is able to deliver us, he will deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire and out of your hand, O king.” This is a faith based upon results. In this faith the three believe because God can and will deliver them from the fire.

But the faith of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego is not based on results. It is the third level of faith which we might call absolute faith. This faith they deliver with their last sentence, “¹⁸But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods, and we will not worship the golden statue that you have set up.”

Their faith is based on their belief that God's purposes are greater than their own, and whatever befalls them, still they will follow God. Though God is able to deliver them, it may be that God's purposes are

fulfilled by their not doing so. Their faith is not contingent on what God can do for them. No matter the end result to them, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego declare that they will worship no other God.

In many ways this type of faith makes them heroes to us, and, like our biblical heroes, we all want to be delivered from something. Maybe it is pain and disease. Maybe it is guilt and fear. Perhaps it is bills, debt, or an unsatisfying job. We can sometimes feel like we are tied to a train track, and we can hear the engine whistling along the wind coming for us, and we want a little divine intervention to step in and rescue us. It is easy to want to think of God like Superman. It is tempting to pray to God to just take care of our problems for us so that we won't have to do it ourselves. The trap that comes with this temptation and with this type of faith is that we may lose our faith when things do not work out the way we want. The bad news is that God is no Super Hero. God did not come in at the last second to rescue Jesus from the cross, and God will not come in at the last second to rescue us from our dilemmas. But here is the good news. God is better than any super hero for God uses us in our own deliverance. God does not always take away our pain, but God always helps us to bear it. God will not erase a past mistake that has left us guilt ridden, but God will lift the burden of guilt from our souls. God will not lift us from the railroad track, or stop the train that is bearing down on us, but God will give us the strength to untie the ropes that bind us and leave us feeling helpless.

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were not pulled out from the fire by the hand of God. But because of their faith and trust God was with them in the fire and they emerged unscathed.

They were to be a burnt offering to the Gods of Nebuchadnezzar. The Hebrew word for burnt offering is holocaust. The twentieth century author Elie Weisel, like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego before him, lived through a holocaust of his own. As a child he was taken to Auschwitz, along with his family, and he was the only one to survive. After many years of silence he decided to write about his experiences so that the world would never forget what happened, which he did in his book entitled, "Night".

In his book he spoke often of wondering why God did not come down out of the heavens and rescue him and the 6,000,000 other of God's chosen people from their torment. While so many others lost their faith in God Weisel did not. He later wrote, "I have not lost faith in God. I have moments of anger and protest. Sometimes I've been closer to him for that reason."

Those words, spoken by a man who longed for a super hero to deliver him, are the final and most important way that God is better than any super hero. The people who are rescued never get to know the super hero. They always hide their true identity and you never know if they will be there again when you need them. But that is not true with God. For whatever we go through in life, God goes through it with us, and each trial brings us closer together.

King Nebuchadnezzar asked Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, "Who is the God that will deliver you?" If anyone ever asks us a question like this we can truly say, "Our God" for our God is not some enigmatic, unknowable super hero, our God is a friend whom we know personally, and to whom we grow closer with through each passing trial. Whatever you are facing I pray God will deliver you from it, but I know that God may not. If that happened then I hope you will have the faith of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, the faith that says you will follow no matter what happens, because ultimately that is the faith that will deliver you.

Call to Offering

Serena Dube

Jesus said, "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over . . . for the measure you give will be the measure you get back." Now is the time to present our gifts and offerings to God with praise and thanks.

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

Pastor Gena

We offer these gifts, O God, in the spirit of love. May the gifts that we offer this day embody our loving response to your great love for us. Through these gifts, may others see clearly the love of Christ. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Pastor Gena

“When the storms of life are raging, stand by me. In the midst of faults and failures, stand by me.”

These are words from the hymn “Stand By Me” (*Chalice Hymnal #629*) by the African-American preacher and leader Charles Albert Tindley. In those two lines of the hymn, the connection between Week of Compassion and the practice of Communion comes into focus.

Physical storms like tornadoes or hurricanes, floods or fires ravage our homes and our communities. “When the storms of life are raging, stand by me.”

Spiritual storms, like broken relationships and socioeconomic injustice, ravage our personal and communal lives. “In the midst of faults and failures, stand by me.”

When we experience brokenness in any part of life – physical or spiritual, we turn toward Christ and to this communal meal, which draws us together in ways that are both mystical and comforting. Here we find the one who rules wind and water, who knows all about us, standing by us. The generous Christ invites us to his table today to receive the gifts of broken bread and crushed grapes. Let's encounter these elements anew as we observe this day of sharing; for mysteriously, it is through that which is broken that we are often made whole.

Taste and see grace in your midst. No matter what is happening, love is found at this table. Love is standing by. Love remains.

Communion Hymn

“Stand By Me”

Audra Allen, organist

When the storms of life are raging, stand by me;
when the storms of life are raging, stand by me;
when the world is tossing me, like a ship upon the sea,
thou who rulest wind and water, stand by me.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Cara Hritz

God of love and life,

We gather today thankful that you invite us to this table. We come here and lift up our hands and you fill them with your blessings. We come here with nothing and leave filled.

As we partake of this meal, remind us of Jesus who ate the same meal before he died on the cross. Remind us of the love we were shown with His sacrifice. Let us go into your world to do your work this week. Let us convey the love you have shown us to your children. Amen

Words of Institution

Pastor Gena

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.

Call to Discipleship

Pastor Gena

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 Need Thee Every Hour”

Jody Mullis, pianist

I need thee every hour, most gracious Lord;
No tender voice like thine can peace afford.
I need thee, oh, I need thee;
Every hour I need thee;
O bless me now, my Savior, I come to thee.

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

In your times of temptation, may God strengthen you. In your anxiety and trouble, may God sustain you. In your peril and danger, may God protect you. In your happiness and joy, may God renew and bless you.

Children’s Message, Offering Prayer and Invitation to Communion are adapted from the 2022 Week of Compassion Worship Resources. <https://www.weekofcompassion.org/2022.html>

Recorded worship services can be found on the Church website or on YouTube,
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLmlH3qzih_fzHCC2X0Jhc_sfniJ7C1O3X

Zoom Worship will continue to be live at
10:15 am each Sunday.

"Join a Meeting" on Zoom at 9:45am using the
meeting ID and password.

Meeting ID: **932 4557 4206** Password: **026316**
Fellowship with other "Zoomers" from
9:45 – 10:15am.

Text your prayer concerns to be shared during
worship to Rev. Chris at (412) 956-6590.

Church Office hours:

Karen is working from home on Monday, Tuesday and Friday,
9 am – 2 pm. She will be in the Church Office on Wednesday &
Thursday, 9 am – 2 pm. The Church phone is forwarded to Karen’s
cell phone and can be reached anytime.

Pastor Gena is off on Friday. Pastor Gena is working from home and
comes in to the church as needed. Feel free to text, call, email or set
up a time to meet with Pastor Gena.

Rev. Chris is off on Tuesday during the school year.

If you need anything at any time, please call the Church Office phone
at 724-225-8610.

PRAYER REQUEST

Do you have a prayer request or need help? Please feel free to contact Rev. Chris (412-956-6590) and 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 and Pastor Gena. We are One Body in Christ!

Homebound Members:

Phyllis Cimino
317 Wellness Way
Strabane Trails #325
Washington PA 15301

Mrs. Mary McDonough
949 Bruce Street
Washington PA 15301

Alice Cokeley
900 N. Cass Lake Road, Apartment 324
Waterford, MI 48328

Ed Alexy
Avery Allen
Terry Bailey
Donna Bakaitis
Jim Banish
Tom Barnhart
Abby Blanchard
Susan Britko
Mabel Brooks
Denise Charles
Wanda Chicone
Emily Cope Robinson
Ruth Cox
Irma Davis
Jessica Duke
Libby Eberhard
Fred Engle
Jay Freudenberg
Jett Fuller
Derek Gardiner
Lois Gayman
Joe Greene
Bonnie Gregg

Linda Hainer
Kyle Hallam
Judy Hanning
Aryn Hess
Ed Jackman
Dallas Jacobovitz
Family of Pam Kloss
Ty, Kerri, Allie, Ivy &
Ty James Lacock
Bob Lanning
Libby LeDuff
Lee & Betsy Martin
Dave McConnell
Don Melvin
Michaela Nixon
Ruth Mikuta
Deborah Patterson
Bo & Patty Pryor
Kayda Richards
Cathy Rentgen
Betty Jo Riggle
Dave Ross
Jim and Barb Roupe

John Shadeck
Hannah Simpson
Doug and Tracy Smith
Cathy Stewart
John Stewart
Bernard and Jane Teagarden
Beth Teagarden
Nadine Teagarden
Gary Weaver
Nikki Wells
Tom Williams
Chuck & Mary Wiseman
Sarah Wittenberg

In the Military

Lance Dague Andrew Gregg
Terrell McClain Zachary Keene
Brandon Lipscomb Sarah Lipscomb
Daniel Robinson Travis Ringer
Shawn Dallatore Emily Chase
Dylan Demain

Puzzle!

Using the code, complete this passage based on Ezekiel 34.

CODE																									
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Z	Y	X	W	V	U	T	S	R	Q	P	O	N	M	L	K	J	I	H	G	F	E	D	C	B	A

“As a looks after his
 H S V K S V I W

 when is
 H X Z G G V I V W U O L X P S V

 them, so will I after my .
 D R G S O L L P H S V V K

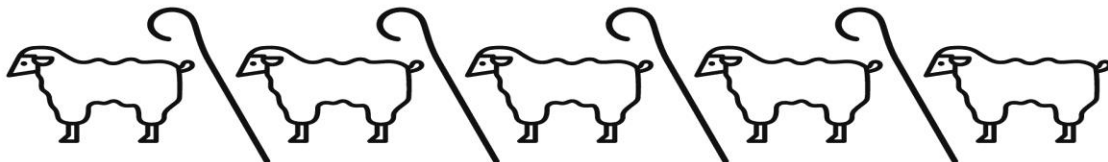
I will them and them.
 I V H X F V K Z H G F I V

I will for the and bring back
 H V Z I X S O L H G

the . I will up the
 H G I Z B H Y R M W R M Q F I V W

and the . You are my
 H G I V M T G S V M D V Z P

 ... and I am your .”
 H S V V K T L W



Answer: shepherd, scattered, flock, he, with, look, sheep, rescue, pasture, search, lost, strays, bind, injured, strengthen, weak, sheep, God