

Manor Minutes
Volume 15 Issue 6
February 9, 2024

- Dartball – February 13 @ Home, 7pm
- Ash Wednesday Service – February 14, 5pm
- Personnel Committee – February 15, 3pm
- Choir Practice – February 15, 6:30pm

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



Special Board Meeting – February 11 following worship to confirm the 2024 Ministry Leaders and to approve a payment in excess of \$1,000 for the Trustees to repair the church heating boiler system.

The SouperBowl Luncheon and Cornhole Tournament is February 11. You do **NOT** need to bring soup or enter the cornhole tournament to attend. We hope to have a large crowd to enjoy food, fun and fellowship!

Lent Devotionals Available – February 11

Please take one per family.

Ash Wednesday Service – February 14 at 5pm

We will have song and scripture, prayer and short meditations, ashes will be received and communion will be shared. The service will also be on Zoom, and if anyone would like to receive ashes but cannot make it to the service, please let Rev. Chris or Pastor Gena know and arrangements will be made for a time to give them.

Lent Devotional Study via Zoom – We hope you will join us in a discussion of the readings of our Lenten devotional “Go To Jerusalem” which will be hosted by Rev. Chris and Pastor Gena on Mondays at 7pm during Lent via Zoom starting February 19.

Children Worship & Wonder Storyteller Training – February 23 & 24

Night at the Wild Things Game – June 7

Emergency Contacts – Just in Case

If an emergency happens to you while you are at the church, we need to be able to give first responders information to ensure you the best care. Please make sure you have an emergency contact phone number or two on file at the church. It is also helpful if your emergency contact(s) have your updated essential medical information should that be needed.

You can send this information to the Church Office through email to fairhillmanor@yahoo.com or call Karen at (724) 225-8610.





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

February 11, 2024 – 10:15am

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Serena Dube

Leader: As we live and as God lives,

People: God will not leave us.

Leader: When fire devours and storms blow us astray,

People: God will not leave us.

Leader: When truth is veiled and confusion reigns,

People: God will not leave us.

Leader: When the world changes around us,

People: God will not leave us.

Leader: When we long to speak but find no words,

People: God will not leave us.

Leader: When all around us is silent,

People: God will not leave us.

Leader: When faithfulness feels beyond us,

People: God will not leave us.

Leader: As we live and as God lives,

People: we worship the One who will not leave us.

Opening Hymn

“This Is the Day”

Jody Mullis, pianist

This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made, that the Lord has made; we will rejoice, we will rejoice and be glad in it, and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord’s Prayer

Pastor Gena

Holy God, your glory shines like a bright, welcoming fire, enlivening us as it dances, warming us in its awesome glow! In the face of Jesus the Christ, we have seen your glory, the essence of who you are – grace, mercy, healing, and love. Give us ears to hear your voice, thundering like a mighty storm, whispering like a small child, breath hot in our ear. Give us courage to listen to you and to follow your beloved Son.

Thank you for moments of wonder and awe, connection and encouragement, joy and hope; let us soak them in that we may carry them with us as we endure the long, painful walks of our lives. Thank you for loyal friends, who walk with us on life’s journey, who stick by us through it all. Thank you for those who teach us the faith, who take us under their wings as apprentices on the way. Move us from spectators to witnesses, ready to embrace and embody what we see and hear. Help us to put time and effort into our faith, training to become your disciples. And in time, show us how to pass the faith on to those who come behind us.

Holy God, please be with those who are getting ready to say good-bye – to friends, to loved ones, to jobs and neighborhoods, to pets and companions. Give a measure of your holy presence to those who are feeling abandoned. Be with those who are bringing good news and those who have difficult news to share. Use our hands to bring food to those who are hungry and hope to those who have none. Be with those who have too much rain and those with not enough. And now bless those whose names we call to mind, those for whom we are thankful and those who need your help and care...

Holy God, interrupt our lives – our views, our plans, our intentions – with the wonder of your glory. Give us glimpses of your splendor, an awareness of your divine presence. And then give us the courage to listen to and follow your Son, the Beloved, even when that may lead to rejection from the world. Give us a spirit of power, wisdom, and bravery that we may minister in your name, reflecting the radiance of Christ's presence into our world. As we enter this transition from Transfiguration to Crucifixion, from glory to suffering, fill us with your spirit that we may endure the path to Jerusalem with you and stand faithful. We pray all of this in the name of your Son, the Beloved, Jesus the Christ, who taught 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

2 Kings 2:1-12

Rita Puskarich

Anthem

“What God Ordains is Always Good,” by J.S. Bach

Choir

Children's Message

Pastor Gena

Are you planning to watch the Super Bowl game this evening? Many people eat snacks during the Super Bowl. What snacks do you like to eat? I read that more than 112 million pounds of food will be eaten just during the Super Bowl this year. That's a lot of food! And more than 1.4 billion chicken wings will be eaten! We sure eat a lot during this one football game.

About thirty years ago a young pastor named Brad Smith was meeting with his youth group at Spring Valley Presbyterian Church in Columbia, South Carolina around the time of the Super Bowl. He prayed this prayer: “Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat.” That gave him and the kids in his youth group an idea. Maybe they could encourage people to donate money or a can of soup to help people who were hungry in their town. That first year, 22 churches joined together and raised \$5,700 dollars. Now, thirty years later, churches and schools all over the country participate in what is known as “The Souper Bowl of Caring” (learn more at tacklehunger.com).

One way we can love others like Jesus did is to help those who are hungry to get food. Each week people here at church bring in food to share, and once a month Rev. Chris takes that food to the Community Circle Food Pantry here in Washington. Maybe the next time you are grocery shopping, you could ask to buy a can of soup to bring to church for the Food Pantry.

Today we are having a soup luncheon after worship. While we are having fun eating soup together and playing cornhole, we are also remembering the people in our community who don't have enough to eat. Together we will give money and cans of soup to our Community Circle Food Pantry.

I wonder how else we can help feed those who are hungry. Imagine – if everyone watching today's Super Bowl football game gave just \$1 to help those who are hungry, we would collect over \$200 million!

Let's pray together the prayer that Brad Smith prayed all that time ago.... "Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat." Amen.

Second Scripture Reading

Mark 9:2-9

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

"Transfigured Not Transformed"

Rev. Stillwell

"Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white."

This event described in all four gospels is called by the church the Transfiguration of Christ. We don't really use that word, transfiguration, much. Usually we say transformed. In my favorite comic strip, Calvin and Hobbes, Calvin had a box he called his transmogrification machine, but transfigured is usually reserved for this event suggesting that it is more than a mere transformation.

Transformations are very popular today. I don't know anybody who doesn't want one, including me, and many of us work hard and spend a lot of money to get one -- a new face, a new look, a changed appearance.

I have seen with my own eyes lots of transformations. There are the prom pictures that people share every spring of their sons and daughters all dressed up, and seeing them reminds me of my own prom when I put on a tuxedo for the first time and pinned a corsage on my date wearing her best dress. I have been in and to more weddings than I can count and it is amazing the work that goes into getting ready for that day. Conversely my parents saw a transformation the time they came to pick me up after a week at church camp and all the boys thought it would be cool to shave each other's heads. My parents didn't like my transformation as much as I did that day. Truth be told I didn't like it for long and began to grow it back, but it takes much longer to grow hair than cut it.

Transformations are big business because we are very aware of the face we present to the world, so we will alter our face to our advantage if we can. Sometimes the change is not just in looks but in our whole image even our name. Reginald Dwight did not think that name projected the right image for a budding rock star so he became Elton John. In the same way Austin Richard Post isn't the kind of name that people look for in a rapper so he called himself Post Malone. Cassius Clay wanted a name that conveyed his new found faith and so Muhammad Ali was born. Marion Morrison didn't think that name could work for a movie star, and so he became John Wayne.

These name changes aren't a recent development, of course, as anyone who has read the Bible will know. Remember that Abram became Abraham. Sarai became Sarah. Jacob became Israel. Saul became Paul. Simon became Peter, which means, "The Rock" almost two millennia before Dwayne Johnson took the same name.

Transformations, therefore, are not new nor are they the exception. They are the rule. We are all being altered in the appearance of our face, our countenance. We are all changing. To live is to be continually transformed. I once met an author named James Still who came to our class to talk about his book when

one of the students asked him if he was the same person who wrote his book, forty years prior. I am sure that the person asking the question was thinking metaphorically, or spiritually, but Mr. Still surprised me and I think her when he answered physically. He said that the cells in our body are always dying and being replaced so that every seven years a person has not one cell in their body that they did seven years before. So we are literally not the people we once were, and we are all transforming all the time, but who are we becoming?

We are being transformed but Jesus was transfigured. I think there is a difference there. Jesus' transfiguration was not a triumph of cosmetology. Jesus was "transfigured" meaning that the figure, the image, the look that he had, the face that he showed to others was changed over. The appearance of his face changed. Jesus had a different look, but that was all. He was not transformed into something that he had not been previous to this moment, rather his true nature was momentarily revealed. That is what makes this so special and why we use this word so rarely. I can change my name, my hair, even my face but that does nothing to reveal who I truly am.

That may in fact be why we desire transformation so much. We would rather people be distracted by our outward nature so as not to notice our inner being.

Also note that, Jesus did not have it done to himself, rather it was given to him. Luke's Gospel says that Jesus was praying when it happened, and as it turned out, it happened at the best of times. It happened just before Jesus' life changed direction dramatically, just before Jesus turned his face toward Jerusalem, toward danger, and toward death.

That transfiguration -- that change in Jesus' face, that change in direction of his life -- is most appropriate for the Last Sunday after the Epiphany since in many ways it is the mother of all epiphany stories because it reveals Jesus as a prophet par excellence, and above all, as God's Beloved Child. In this way the transfiguration bridges the two seasons, from the Epiphany to Lent and reminds us one more time of the specialness, the uniqueness of Jesus' identity. Luke's version of the story reports a voice from the cloud: "This is my Son, my Chosen."

I say that Jesus' transfiguration happened at the best of times because just before suffering, just before trial, just before a difficult test, just before a dangerous journey is the best time to receive reassurance and the best time for your friends and family to receive reassurance too.

All of us need to see the glory of God before we face the hard times. All of us need the reminder of God's presence and God's purpose when we go through any "valley of the shadow of death."

Before leading Jesus toward the final confrontation in Jerusalem, God visited Jesus, and his friends, with an experience of glory, and in this way Jesus' true nature was revealed from behind all of the things that distract from it.

Over the centuries, Christians have learned to trust that sequence, even to bet their lives on it; suffering will come, yes, but before the suffering, there will be a strengthening visitation of glory, a reminder that Jesus -- and we -- are never asked to face suffering alone. It may not always seem that way but the Jewish people are wise to remember the time when God delivered the Israelites from suffering in Egypt as they do on Passover. Even though none of them were in that number they remember it in order to say that, just as God delivered in the past, God will deliver in the present. We Christians should remember the resurrection whenever we feel like we are facing the cross, to say that God will not deliver us from trial and tribulation, but God will lead us through.

Sometimes we do get our own special transfiguration before a crisis, an assurance that no matter what happens we will be safe with God. But even if that does not happen, we are still not unprepared. We always have Christ's transfiguration to encourage us. Through the Scriptures and by faith, we can see God's glory before the cross; we can glimpse God's plan before the suffering, we can believe God's purpose in the crisis even before we live through the crisis. Therefore, instead of reading: "Jesus took with him Peter and James and John and led them up a high mountain," try reading this: "Jesus took with him you and me up to the high mountain."

You and I can be witnesses of Christ's transfiguration just as surely as Peter and Jesus and John were. We are in that story too. Through faith we are with Christ in the glory of his transfiguration. And his glory gives us strength just as it gave Christ strength. And we can be transfigured as well; not transformed but transfigured. Through faith we will not be turned into something we have never been but our true nature can be revealed. That is what growing up is. A child becomes a teenager, becomes a young adult, becomes an adult, and in many ways they are becoming who they were always intended to be. Who are we becoming?

That's a good question for this bridge Sunday between Epiphany and Lent. It's a good question because we have no choice. We are continually becoming someone different, continually changing, continually being transfigured. But just who are we becoming? If we call ourselves Christians we should be continually becoming like Christ.

We should be helping the needy, forgiving those who wrong us, going the extra mile, recognizing the divinity in each human being. But there are others in this world calling us to follow, calling us to hate and to attack, calling us to punish and take. In the end we will all be transfigured and our true selves revealed. So again let us ask ourselves in all that we say and do, who are we becoming? Are we becoming someone of whom our Lord will say "I do not know you?" or are we becoming someone of whom God will say "With you I am well pleased?" You do not need to know the answer now, make a holy Lent by asking this question of ourselves throughout these forty days. In fact, I do not think you can ever know this answer for sure, but if you keep asking yourself the question, "Who am I becoming" it will go a long way to getting you the answer that you want.

Call to Offering

Von Lacock

Our gracious God has given us more than we could ask for or ever repay. The Lord has blessed us with love and filled our lives with grace. Let us now bring our offering that we may be instruments of God's love, mercy, justice, and salvation. Amen.

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 mercy and compassion, may these offerings be for the world: peace and justice, love and kindness, comfort and hope; may these offerings be for our church: honor and openness, gratitude and thankfulness, inspiration and expectation. Blessed those who seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with you, our God.

Invitation to Communion

Rev. Stillwell

In the gospels we are told of the Transfiguration of Jesus who shone forth in brilliant light accompanied by Moses and Elijah to reveal himself as the Christ. At this table we participate in Christ's death and resurrection, but we also participate in his transfiguration. For we come to this table tired and hungry, and we leave renewed in compassion and hope. We come as sinners, and we leave as sinners forgiven and

redeemed. Notice that Jesus was not transformed but transfigured. To transform is to change the nature of something while to transfigure means simply to change its outward appearance. Jesus did not need to be transformed for he was always the Christ; instead his outward appearance was simply changed to let his true nature be revealed. We too do not need to be transformed, for we are and always have been created in the image of God, but at this table we do need to be transfigured, for we do not always show it. May the elements we receive this morning help us to show our true nature to the world

Communion Hymn “*All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly*” Carson Throckmorton, organist
All who hunger, gather gladly; holy manna is our bread. Come from wilderness and wand’ring. Here, in truth, we will be fed. You that yearn for days of fullness, all around us is our food. Taste and see the grace eternal. Taste and see that God is good.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup Linda Reese
Loving God, Peter, James, and John traveled to the mountaintop and experienced the transfiguration with Jesus. We all seek to share a mountaintop experience with Jesus. Because of His death and resurrection, at this table we share a mountaintop experience with Jesus and with one another. Bless the bread and cup, the emblems of that sacrifice for our salvation. As we leave here, let us continue to seek the mountaintop experience. 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
People of God, God has shined life into you. You have seen it. Now go and let your lives shine. Amen.

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 534
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Alice Cokeley
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Carol Brown
36 Old Hickory Ridge Rd, Rm 213
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Doris Sorice
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Ed Alexy
Avery Allen
Jeannie Allison
Terry Bailey
Donna Bakaitis
Jim Banish
Martin Berisford
Eleanor Boyles
Mabel Brooks
Leslie Byron
Family of Jen Caldwell
Sandra Carman
Clayton Chalfant
Leslie Chalfant
Denise Charles
Wanda Chicone
MaryAnn Coates
Aimee & Jim Coture
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
Judy Hanning
Erma Harper
Sheila Harris
Aryn Hess
Janet Houston
Ed Jackman
Dallas Jacobovitz
Kenger Family
Ivy Lacock
Ty Lacock, Jr.
Bob Lanning
David Leonard
Darla Lewis
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
Sam Sheller
Valerie Shetler
Hannah Simpson
Alexa Skariot
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