

Manor Minutes
Volume 15 Issue 3
January 19, 2024

- Congregational Meeting – January 21, following Worship
 - Dartball – January 23 @ Home 7pm
 - Choir Practice – January 25, 6:30pm
- Stay up to date at www.fairhillmanorchurch.org/calendar

There will be a **Congregational Meeting** following the worship service Sunday, January 21, to review and approve the 2023 Annual Report and the revised Giving Policy. Following the Congregational Meeting there will be a brief training and review for **Elders and Deacons**.

2024 Offering Envelopes are available in the Narthex. If you are unable to pick your envelopes up please call the office and we will try to arrange delivery.



Souper Bowl Luncheon and Cornhole Tournament – February 11

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.

Children Worship & Wonder Storyteller Training – February 23 & 24

Night at the Wild Things Game – June 7

STILL NEEDED



Thank you to everyone that donated peanut butter last week. Rev. Chris took **32 jars** of peanut butter as well as 5 boxes of miscellaneous food items that were in the donation center. The **Community Circle Food Pantry** is very appreciative of these items but told Rev. Chris they are still in need of peanut butter. If you would like to donate a jar of peanut butter (any kind, any brand, any size) drop it off in the Narthex and Rev. Chris will deliver it to the food pantry. Thank you for responding so generously.

Daffodil Days

It's time to order daffodils from the **American Cancer Society**. Order forms are available in the Narthex and can be found at the end of the Manor Minutes. Paid orders are due to the Church Office by February 10. Flowers will be delivered the week of March 18. Thank you for your continued support of the American Cancer Society.





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

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Minister
Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor
Elders: Rita Puskarich, Bread
Kevin Puskarich, Cup

January 21, 2024 – 10:15am

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Charlotte Stillwell

Leader: Happy are those who place their trust in God,

People: who sing God's praise with a new song.

Leader: God's wondrous deeds are many and great.

People: Their number is greater than the stars in the sky.

Leader: Happy are those who wait patiently for God,

People: who cry out to God with their whole heart.

Leader: For God hears our pleas and listens to our requests.

People: God is steadfast and faithful.

All: Let us worship the One for whom we wait.

Opening Hymn

"We Are Walking"

Jody Mullis, pianist

We are walking in the light of God, we are walking in the light of God. We are walking in the light of the light of God. We are walking, walking, we are walking, walking, we are walking in the light of God.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Pastor Gena

Great and Holy God, you come to us, calling us by name to follow you and to carry out your work in the world. You come, bringing us good news of great joy: the time is now, you are near, your kingdom is breaking forth among us. Open our eyes to see you, open our ears to hear your call, open our mouths to share the good news of your love.

Merciful God, sometimes we don't want to do what you are calling us to do. There is too much at stake, too much to leave behind, too much else going on. Sometimes we don't really like the people you call us to care about. We are worried and afraid and unsure about what might happen. In spite of all this, thank you for using us anyway to do your work. Thank you for giving us more and more chances to respond and to follow your lead. Thank you for putting up with our insecurities and excuses. Overwhelm us with the glory of your presence that we might respond with joy and readiness to your call. But if we don't, please don't give up on us. Keep coming back to us, growing us up into being your faithful followers.

Good-news God, open us to know deeply in our hearts the good news of Jesus. Help us to seek and to search until we find it. For you have opened the pathway between ourselves and you. Nothing can keep us from your love and grace. We are free from striving to make ourselves worthy of your love. You open the gates to life abundant and life everlasting. Help us to find and to enjoy a personal relationship with Jesus our Savior.

Compassionate God, we raise to you our concerns, knowing that you are near and that you care. Please draw near those who are fleeing from you or do not know you. Tend to those who have been hurt by your

church or no longer feel welcome. Please strengthen and encourage those who have heard your call to ministry of any form. Bless all who lead your church with creativity and insight, energy and sensitivity. Please come alongside those who feel empty and alone, those who struggle to find meaning and purpose, those who search for you and cannot find you. Grant strength and recovery to those who are sick or facing surgery or struggling with long-term illness or disease. We lift all of these concerns to you, along with those we name now in our hearts...

Great and Holy God, come to us again, calling our name. Through the power of your Holy Spirit, we will follow your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ, who teaches us to pray this way...

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:

“Emmanuel, Emmanuel”

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel.

God with us, revealed in us, his name is called Emmanuel.

First Scripture Reading

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Linda Reese

Anthem

“Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring,” by J.S. Bach

Choir

Children’s Message

Rev. Stillwell

Today I brought some snowflakes to show you. I bet you are wondering how can I get snowflakes in here without them melting. Well have you ever cut paper into snowflakes?

(Demonstrate by cutting a few snowflakes and then show how they are all different.)

If we had time and I let you each cut out your own snowflake and chances are there wouldn’t be two that were exactly the same.

It is said that there are not two real snowflakes that are alike. Did you ever wonder how God can think of so many different shapes for snowflakes so that not one is exactly the same as another?

Well God doesn’t do that with just snowflakes, God did that with people too. Some of us are tall, some are short. Some have darker skin, some have lighter colored skin. We have different colored hair. Some have long noses, others have shorter noses. It is also said that no one has the same fingerprint. Hold out your hands. Look closely and compare your fingers and you will see that not one is exactly the same and any other How can God think of so many different patterns of fingerprints?

That’s how great God is. God is infinitely creative, but, even though we are each different, we all have one thing in common, we belong to one God. We all have different talents, abilities, and personality, but they all come from God. If that’s the case then we should celebrate the ways we are different and unique because that is just another reflection on God. Let’s be glad for our difference because they make us who we are and who God created us to be, and let us also be glad that, unlike snowflakes, we won’t melt as soon as we come inside!

Second Scripture Reading

Mark 1:14-20

Rev. Stillwell

It is fitting that after telling the story of Christ beginning his ministry with his baptism in the Jordan River the lectionary takes us to the Gospel of Mark which moves on quickly to the gathering of disciples. This passage in Mark can be split into two separate but related sections of the gospel. First, we hear Christ announcing his own ministry when he says, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”

You can say that this is the gospel in a nutshell. The time has come, the kingdom is here, repent, and rejoice. That’s it. That in its most basic form is what we are called to do and be as Christians. Amazing isn’t it, all the different rules, explanations, and requirements that human beings have placed in the way of Christ’s commandment are nothing compares to these words.

But, after Jesus makes this pronouncement, he then goes about finding people who will follow him, who will repent and rejoice, and who will tell others about the kingdom that has come near. You might say that the first two verses we read are the facts of the gospel, and now Jesus moves on to show us the acts.

The first four people that Jesus calls to be disciples just happen to be two pairs of brothers; Simon and Andrew and James and John. The brothers are all fishermen applying their trade at different points along the shores of the Sea of Galilee. As Jesus sees them he simply walks up to them and says, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people.’ And immediately they left their nets and followed him.” Next, he walks a little further, and he sees James and John and simply calls them, “and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.”

Well that was easy. No argument or debate, they do not even ask him who he is. We are left to presume that Jesus’ fame had reached their ears, and they must have already had a spiritual stirring within them that caused them to give up what they had and leave everything behind. But why them? What was so special about them? Certainly there were many who had heard of the coming messiah and longed to follow him. Who were these men? Being fishermen they were average, working class people, and, although James and John’s father was able to hire men to work, that doesn’t mean that they had any particular wealth.

We are not given any special reason as to why these men apart from others more powerful, wealthy, educated, connected, and maybe even faithful were chosen, but Christ saw something special in them that they, themselves, probably did not see. Although these four men and the other eight disciples would do and see great things in Christ’s presence, they would fall short of his service many times as well, particularly when he needed them most, still, knowing their shortcomings, their limitations, and their weaknesses, Christ called them to follow him, forgave them when they abandoned him, and commissioned them to spread the word of the kingdom and to build the church.

That is how Christ chose kingdom servants. If the world chose people worthy of being Christ’s followers what criteria would they use to judge? Would it be who is the best looking? Then people would have plastic surgery in order to be a Christian. Would it be who is the most talented? Then it would like an American Idol tryout to find the true followers of Christ. Perhaps it is the most ruthless and cunning. Then church would be like Survivor and every week we’d vote someone out. How many weeks would you last? Thankfully, Christ called his disciples on the basis of none of these things, nor did he choose the most popular, the strongest, or even the smartest. Instead he called ordinary people to follow him, and he calls, me and he calls you, and he calls everyone, no matter who they are to follow him, for Christ sees past the outer appearance to the inner heart to the potential of every person, born in God’s own image, to be witnesses to God’s power, bearers of God’s love, and servants in God’s Holy Kingdom

When I was a teen-ager my minister once saw something in me that I did not and nominated me to be on the Youth Steering Committee. This group would meet a couple of times a year to plan church camp and this got me involved and started on my path as a minister. The meetings weren't even that interesting, but there was pizza, cute girls, and new friends. More than anything I felt a sense of ownership over camp and got me wanting to go where as before I wasn't that interested.

This experience was for me an incredible moment of time in my life. Theologians like to make a distinction when they talk about time between kronos and kairos. Kronos is human time. It is the time that we measure on clocks and calendars. The time of the mundane and the ordinary. Kairos time is God's own time. Occasionally there are moments when kairos, God's time, erupts in the middle of everyday kronos. Certainly the gospel story is just such a time. The very first words of Jesus in the gospel of Mark are, "The time is fulfilled".

We too can have kairos moments in our life. A moment where you feel Jesus' call to come and follow him, a moment where you understand even just vaguely God's wonder and love, is a kairos moment, and they come in all shapes sizes. Some people have incredible kairos experiences where their life changes and the earth shakes. I had my kairos moment with free pizza and new friends.

The pizza has long been eaten, and I haven't been in contact with many of the people at those meetings for years, but the path I started on many years ago has led me to this point in time. I would certainly never think that I could baptize someone, marry a couple, bury a person, and preach to you, if not for the faith my minister showed in me once.

The church lives on kairos moments. The thing with kairos moments like the one I had is that many of them do not seem so significant at the time, and it is only in retrospect, looking back from a span of many years, can we see the impact they had on our lives. We cannot plan or know when these moments will happen. We can only provide opportunities for them by imitating Christ and calling others to help in the labor of the church and by imitating the disciples by responding to that call.

Some times in the life of the church we see only certain people as being right for certain jobs, as a result the same people do the same thing again and again. Meanwhile there are others waiting to be asked. We need to see with the eyes of Christ in order to see not just what someone has done, but what someone could do if we show some faith in them. If you are a committee chairperson or you are in charge of a church project and you need helpers to follow you try to see that just because someone hasn't done something in the past does not mean they will not be good at it in the future.

Now, on the other hand, we also need to be receptive when others ask us to help somewhere. We are all so busy and if we're asked to do something for the church it can be tempting to see it as a hassle and yet another thing to do. Simon and Andrew and James and John had things to do, but they left them behind in order to follow Christ. If someone asks you to give of your time for an act in the life of the church try to remember that following Christ brings with it some commitment, some sacrifice, and some work of all the followers. See yourself through the eyes of Christ and see the calling as the disciples saw theirs. See the calling as an honor that someone sees something in you that you are not so sure you possess.

Remember the experience of those disciples. By accepting the calling they were often inconvenienced, many times scared, frequently unsure of their own abilities, and sometimes saddened, but the joy they experienced when they finished their journey was a thousand times greater than if they had never followed him. The journey of a thousand kairos moments begins with a simple call. As long as the church continues to call those who may not consider themselves worthy to work for the kingdom, and as long as there are people to humbly accept that call the churches work will continue.

Call to Offering

Gary Ford

Trusting in the promise of life abundant, let us share our lives and prayers, our gifts and our hopes with the one who is turning the world around.

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

Sacrifices and offerings you do not desire, O God, but the transformation of our hearts and minds. This we know. As we await your revelation in the world, fashion us and all that we offer this day into a living testimony of your glory. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Rev. Stillwell

There is something quite beautiful about a fresh snowfall. For all the hassles and aggravation of having to drive on slippery roads or shovel your driveway twice in the same day, when a snowfall comes and all is covered in its pure whiteness it is as if the world is being cleansed. There is a scene of rebirth and renewal as dirty buildings and patchy lawns have a completely clean new covering, and walking through a neighborhood or a wood after a snowstorm brings with it a feeling that all is being wiped clean to start afresh.

Of course the feeling doesn't last long. It isn't long that the snowplow comes and covers the white snow in black cinders and turns all to a brown and ugly slush. Each winter we gain glimpses of a pure and clean world only to be brought back to cold reality soon after.

This is sort of what it's like to come to church each week where we receive a glimpse of what it is like to be washed clean as the pure driven snow, only to quickly fall back to the harsh coldness of the world. Yet, while the snow goes away the grace of God experienced in the act of communion and in worship with Christ is a gift that is always available.

Come to this table today and find the truth in the saying, "pure as the driven snow" and relax, because this isn't snow you'll have to shovel.

Communion Hymn*"In the Bulb There Is a Flower"* Carson Throckmorton, organist

In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree; in cocoons, a hidden promise; butterflies will soon be free! In the cold and snow of winter there's a spring that waits to be, unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Rita Puskarich

Most holy and merciful God, we praise you and are thankful that we are your children. We gather around this table as your family. You receive each one of us with love and forgiveness. Like John who baptized Jesus, we do not feel worthy to the tasks you set before us. However, with courage and strength You give us, thru belief in Your son, Jesus, we are empowered to do your will in this world. We ask that you bless this bread and the cup and all who share it in this room or at home. May we be cleansed, encouraged and renewed as we remember Jesus life death and resurrection. 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

“Spirit”

Carson Throckmorton, organist

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow through the wilderness, calling and free, Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea. You moved on the waters, you called to the deep, then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep, and over the eons you called to each thing, “Awake from your slumbers and rise on your wings.”

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

Let us go forth as workers together with God proclaiming the Good News, performing deeds of mercy and kindness and giving evidence of Christ's love in all that we do. And may the grace of God be with us all. Amen.

Name: _____

American Cancer Society
Daffodil Sale

_____ Bunch of Daffodils \$12

_____ Bunch of Tulips \$15

_____ Mini Potted Daffodils \$15

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

_____ Vase for Daffodils \$5

_____ Vase for Tulips \$10



To order, please return this coupon to Karen Thomas or place in the Church Office mailbox. Orders must be prepaid and are due by February 10, 2024. Make checks payable to “American Cancer Society”.

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
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 Alexy
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
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
Sheila Harris
Aryn Hess
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
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
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