

Manor Minutes
Volume 13 Issue 3
January 21, 2022



The Story Chapter 14 Kings: A Kingdom Torn in Two – January 23

Prayer Shawl – January 24, 11am Parlor

Dartball – January 25, 7pm @ Chartiers Cross Roads

Choir Practice – January 27, 6:30pm Choir Room

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

There is a **storage container** in the Narthex for you to place your food donations in for **Heaven's Basket** food pantry. The items that Heaven's Basket is most in need of are: mashed potatoes, rice, condensed soup, pasta/pasta sauce, macaroni & cheese, canned fruit, canned vegetables, pancake mix/syrup, oatmeal, peanut butter, and jelly. **Food distribution will be January 29th from 10 am-Noon** at the First Church of the Nazarene if you would like to volunteer to help or know of those in need.

Bethany Class

Updated Bethany Class Sunday School Schedule 2022

January 23: Praise God with Joy - Psalm 100

January 30: Praise for God's Ultimate Justice - Psalm 9:1-12

February 6: No Bethany Class

February 13: Praise God for Past Deliverance - Psalm 107:1-9, 39-43

February 20: Praise God for His Presence - Psalm 84

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

For January 23, think about your favorite Psalm and why it is so meaningful to you.

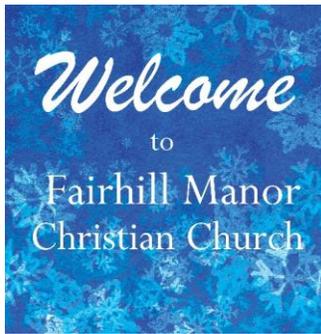
The Bethany Class Zoom will open at 8:30 am. The class will begin at 9:15 am.

Meeting ID: 883 3055 7258 Passcode: 344061

Hope to see you at church or on Zoom. Linda Reese

Drop your **empty printer ink cartridges** in the office or in Karen's mailbox. We can turn in 10 cartridges per month to Office Max and receive credit to use to purchase office supplies.

As of January 19, 2022, you can order free at-home tests online at www.COVIDTests.gov. Four tests per family will be mailed to you.



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
Diane Palfreyman, Cup
January 23, 2022 - 10:15am

Prelude Audra Allen, organist

Welcome Pastor Gena

Call to Worship Serena Dube

We come here to open our lives to God. We come here to receive grace.
We come here to be encouraged. We come here to prepare for service.
Come, let us worship in the house of the Lord.

Opening Hymn “All My Hope on God Is Founded” Audra Allen, organist

| | |
|---|---|
| All my hope on God is founded, who does still my trust renew. Safe through change and chance God guides me, ever faithful, ever true. God unknown, God alone, seeks to claim my heart as home. | Human pride and earthly glory, sword and crown betray our trust; though with care and toil we build them, tower and temple fall to dust. But God’s power, hour by hour, is my temple and my tower. |
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Installation and Consecration of Church Officers

Statement of Purpose

Presentation of Officers

Please come to the front of the sanctuary as your name is called. If attending by Zoom, please unmute your computer.

Charge to the Officers and Congregation:

Do you each accept the office to which you have been called, and do you promise, the Lord being your strength, to fulfill its duties faithfully? And do you consecrate yourself this day to offer your devotion and gifts to the advancement of Christ’s mission here at Fairhill Manor Christian Church?

Officers: I do.

Do you pledge your eager support to the work of God in this congregation under the leadership of these with whom you share ministry in this body of Christ; and pray God’s blessings upon them as together we seek to support one another in selfless service?

Congregation: We do.

Prayer of Installation and Consecration

Declaration of Installation

Blessing

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Rev. Stillwell

O God of all seasons and purposes under heaven, we come in this season of new beginnings to pray for guidance in all the aspects of our lives. Help us to remember that no matter what happens, you are always with us— in times of joy and sadness, life and death, silence and speech, dancing and mourning, war and peace you walk beside us. May we always live in such a way that we reflect the glory of your name.

O Lord of all things, we pray for a cure, You send us healing.
We pray for continued life, You give us new life.
We pray death will not come, You overcome death.
We pray in anguish, You weep with us.
We pray in fear, You teach us to laugh.
We pray for ourselves, You give us each other.
We pray for miracles, You fill us with love.
We pray for the future, You shower today with blessedness.

As we are mindful of the past, let us pray for the future. We ask that you shower your blessings on others and show us how we may bless one another as well as be a blessing to your world. Bless those who are sick and those who care for them. Show a light to those who are in darkness. Lift the lowly and humble the proud, make us instruments of your peace.

Holy maker of stars and planets, mender of broken dreams, fountain of joyful news, we stand in awe of your glory. We cry out with the psalmist in wonder, as your word is proclaimed in the silent song of the cosmos. We cry out with your faithful ones, as your presence is made known in the stories of your people at all times and places.

When the people returned from captivity in Babylon, you gave them your precepts to sustain them, as they rebuilt the city. When Jesus read the words of your prophets to his hearers in the synagogue, he reminded them of your promise to release captives, to restore sight to the blind, and to free the oppressed. Today, you call us to be members of the body of Christ, your embodied Word made flesh, and to offer healing and wholeness wherever we go. May our songs and our stories, our praise and our thanks, be pleasing to you as we pray as Jesus taught.

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

1 Kings 12:1-19

Linda Reese

Children's Message

Cara Hritz

How many of you like to play on the snow? Do you like when it's snowing outside or when it's hot in the summer? I like the summer better but I do think it can be fun to play in the snow. Something I like about snow is the way it reminds me of Jesus. In the Bible, in Isaiah 1:18, it says "The Lord says, "Come, we will talk these things over. Your sins are red like deep red cloth. But, they can be white as snow. Your sins are bright red. But you can be white like wool." Seeing everything covered in fresh, clean, white snow makes me think of the way Jesus takes our sins away and makes us pure like the white snow. I hope next time you see new snow you'll remember what God said and how he makes us white and clean like snow. Let's pray.

God, thank you for the beautiful snow this week. Thank you for the perfect way you designed the world to teach us about you. Each time it snows, use it to remind us of the way you take our sins and make them white like the new snow. Amen

Second Scripture Reading**1 Kings 12:20-24**

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon**“More We Less Me”**

Rev. Stillwell

“At what point shall we expect the approach of danger? By what means shall we fortify against it? Shall we expect some transatlantic military giant, to step the ocean, and crush us at a blow? Never! All the armies of Europe, Asia and Africa combined, with all the treasure of the earth in their military chest; with a Bonaparte for a commander, could not by force, take a drink from the Ohio, or make a track on the Blue Ridge, in a trial of a thousand years. At what point then is the approach of danger to be expected? I answer, if it ever reach us, it must spring up amongst us. It cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen, we must live through all time, or die by suicide.”
--Abraham Lincoln Lyceum Address

These words from one of Abraham Lincoln's earliest and most famous addresses described the danger America faced when he was a member of the Illinois State Legislature. Two decades later, as he ran for president, the nation was in even worse shape. Divided against itself he warned a civil war was near and he sought to pull the nation back from the brink. As we all know he was not able to do so, but at least he was able to ultimately preserve the union, though hundreds of thousands of lives were lost in the process.

In our story for today we see another nation that is as divided as ours was then, but this story has the opposite result - a nation divided and destroyed but with no war. We begin with the end of King Solomon's life. Solomon had wisdom, which the scriptures defined as a listening heart but later in his life his heart had stopped listening. It had stopped listening to God and to his people. Consequently, Solomon's reign begins to falter. In fact, he was married to Pharaoh's daughter, and, although he was not the daughter of the pharaoh of the exodus, like that Pharaoh Solomon's heart had become hardened causing him to conscript his people in hard labor building the temple and expanding the city of Jerusalem. What God had said through Samuel that a king would do, Solomon had done.

Here we see the upper story of God's view. God sought to return the Israelites to God's own heart, and used the law to do so, but the people wanted a king in order to be like other nations. God had said a king would not be good. God had said that the kingdom would be torn from Solomon. God saw that the Israelites were not following the law, and the pieces were put in place for the nation's downfall in an

attempt to bring them back to Torah obedience. In the lower story we see a story that is as old as kingdoms and nations themselves. A king dies, and as people compete for the throne the nation splinters.

Initially Solomon's death brought the people some hope that they might find relief from their toil. However, the new king, Rehoboam, who was Solomon's son, sought the advice from the young men he had grown up with. I think of this as an echo chamber in which Rehoboam sought the advice of those he knew would not challenge him. They advised the king to show no weakness to the people, and they told him to say to the people, "My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions" which Rehoboam did figuratively at least.

This is the main reason for the opposition to Rehoboam's new reign, but it was exacerbated by the historical opposition between the north and the south of Israel. The two sections had acted independently until David succeeded in uniting all the tribes, though the jealousy of the tribe of Ephraim was ever ready to develop into open revolt. There were religious and cultic considerations as well. The building of the Temple was a severe blow for the various sanctuaries scattered through the land, and the priests of the high places probably supported the revolt. The Jewish historian, Josephus in his Antiquities, wrote that the rebels exclaim: "We leave to Rehoboam the Temple his father built.(Ant., VIII., viii. 3) Those seeking to rebel turned to a man named Jeroboam who King Solomon had made superintendent over his tribesmen in the building of the fortress, Millo, in Jerusalem and of other public works, and he naturally became aware of the widespread discontent caused by the extravagances which marked the reign of Solomon.

Influenced by the words of the prophet Ahijah, he began to form conspiracies with the view of becoming king of the ten northern tribes; but these were discovered, and he fled to Egypt, where he remained under the protection of the Pharaoh until the death of Solomon. After this event, he returned and participated in the delegation sent to ask the new king Rehoboam to reduce their burden. When Rehoboam added to their toil the people were led in revolt by Jeroboam.

It would be easy to see Jeroboam as the hero who, like Moses, was freeing his people from oppression, but while in revolt he did something Moses would never have done. He made two calves of gold and said to the people:

"You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. Here are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt." He set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. And this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one at Bethel and before the other as far as Dan. He also made houses on high places, and appointed priests from among all the people, who were not Levites. (1 Kings 12:28-30)

So we can see that there are no good guys here if we define that as people after God's heart. Rehoboam is forced to return to Jerusalem for his own safety. Once that occurred, the ten northern tribes made Jeroboam their king, thus fulfilling God's earlier promise that the kingdom would be torn from Solomon's son. Rehoboam is understandably angry so he assembles an army of 180,000 men for the purpose of trying to take back the rest of the kingdom from Jeroboam, but for a change, Rehoboam actually listens to God when God tells him not to fight against his own relatives in the northern kingdom. This is the one and only time we see Rehoboam listening to or obeying God, but by now the damage has already been done.

So without a war, without the loss of one life, the Kingdom is divided. The Northern Kingdom is called Israel, is made up of 10 tribes, and is ruled by Jeroboam. The Southern Kingdom is called Judah made of two tribes—Judah and Benjamin—and is ruled by Rehoboam. Israel as David knew it, will not be reunited for another 400 years.

This is a story of dismantling, division, separation. A lot of decisions by a lot of people led to the point in which the nation which God had created for God's people came undone, but the reason can all be summed up with one word -selfishness. From David wanting Bathsheba for himself, to Solomon building God's temple while ignoring God's laws, to Rehoboam being rash in his first decision, to Jeroboam seizing the opportunity to gain power, the fall of the our biblical characters almost always comes down to selfishness. As we explore the continued fall of both Judah and Israel we will hear the words of the prophets explaining why such a fate had fallen God's chosen people, and time and again they will cite the selfishness or the self-centeredness of the people.

I find the situation of Israel 3000 years ago sadly very appropriate to ours today. We as a nation seem to be trying our best to take Lincoln's warning in his Lyceum address as a challenge. We are a house divided and as Christ and Lincoln pointed out, a house divided cannot stand yet everyday our division grow s deeper propelled by people who benefit by it, and I think there are many reasons for this, but the most obvious to my eyes are that there is the same as I ever was; selfishness. To put it mildly there is simply way too much "me" and not enough "we" in our society.

Too often in every area people ask themselves what a decision means for me and not what it means for we. We look to ourselves first and to other second. Beware of the leader who constantly says me or I and rarely says we or us. Perhaps self-centeredness or hard-heartedness is a pandemic even worse than the Corona virus, and we as the church could be a much needed corrective, but often church is just as divided. We do not always have to be of one mind, and churches rarely are. If we are made up of many people we will be of many minds, but we do need to be of one spirit and that spirit has to be a spirit of "we" rather than "me". Again I want to empathize that scripture defines wisdom as a listening heart and when our heart is filled with "me" then it is not a heart that is listening to the voices outside of it, including, and especially the still, small voice of God. In all aspects of our lives we need to have listening hearts. We need to have more "we" and less "me".

We must each remember that our decisions can have a negative impact that create ripple effects that can last generations, so in all of our decisions including what words we use to speak to each other let us not be hasty, and let us turn to God in help in making our decisions rather than, as Rehoboam did, the people who we assume will tell us what we want to hear.

Just as decisions can have a negative impact, so too can they can have a positive impact. Consider how your decisions impact your family, your business, your neighborhood, and even your world. Think not just in terms of right now, but for the future, even in terms of generations. How will you be remembered? What will your great grandchildren be able to say of you and how you responded to the division of this very moment? What do you want them to say? Consider the ripple effect of your decisions, and know that if your decisions are based on "me", they will often lead to division and failure, but if they are based on "we" they will be more constructive and healing.

Again and again God called on the Israelites to think more of "we" and less of "me", and when the prophets like Isaiah spoke of God's salvation it was always for a people, not any one individual. We know that division, separation, exile are recurring themes in the biblical story, but they are not the end. The story goes on and calls us to salvation and reconciliation with God and with each other. We cannot have one without the other. Think of our world as a series of concentric circles with God in the center. We are each on a different point some of us very far from each other. Even if we are completely opposite each other, if God is at the center then as we get closer to God we will get closer to each other as well. If "we" think we more than we think "me" then before we know it, the division and separations that we experience from both God and from each other will fall away for they are intricately related.

Let us not as a nation, as a church, as a people fall into the division the Israelites experienced. Let us turn to God today with a listening heart and ask God to help us start a new life today, one that is better than any we have known, one that is more loving and more healing than the world is offering, one that has a lot more “we” and a lot less “me”.

Call to Offering

J.C. Leasure

Holy Word, Holy Breath, Holy Maker of all, with gratitude for making us one body, we share our gifts with one another and with the world. 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

Pastor Gena

God of life and of new life, bless these gifts that we have given that they might bind up the broken places in our lives and in our world – even those places we fear may never be put right again. We put our trust in you. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Pastor Gena

Why is it so hard to look at our mistakes and learn from them? This is a question we considered in our Sunday school class this morning as we learned about the many mistakes the kings of Judah and Israel made. There were so many.

Is it hard for you to look at your mistakes? It was always hard for me to look at my mistakes when I got a test back in school. I hated seeing what I had done wrong. Life mistakes are hard to look at too. I think it’s because I tend to focus on the failure and pain, not so much on the things I learned.

It’s hard to be reminded of our mistakes, let alone look at them with a loving, thankful gaze. Do you remember Jesus’ disciple Peter who three times denied even knowing Jesus on the night before Jesus was killed? Talk about a difficult mistake to look back on. Yet every time he heard a rooster crow, which would have been a daily sound, Peter probably relived the guilt and shame of that night.

But what if we could train ourselves to have a different response to our mistakes? What if Peter decided not to feel guilty every time he heard the rooster crow but instead chose to be reminded, “Yes, I did mess up really badly. But through my horrible mistake, I also learned that Jesus loves me more than I can imagine. Jesus forgave me. I really know that to be true now!”

Today as we take the bread and the cup, we are reminded of our many mistakes that separate us from each other and from God. We just keep making them, don’t we? But maybe today we can focus more on the joy this bread and cup remind us of – we are loved! We are forgiven! Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Jesus.

Inspired by <https://christianstandard.com/2021/10/a-rooster-reminder/>

Communion Hymn*“Lo, I Am with You”*

Audra Allen, organist

| | |
|--|---|
| Lo, I am with you to the end of the world. | Lo, I am with you in the breaking of bread. |
| Lo, I am with you to the end of the world. | Lo, I am with you in the breaking of bread. |
| Lo, I am with you, Lo, I am with you, | Lo, I am with you, Lo, I am with you, |
| Lo, I am with you to the end of the world. | Lo, I am with you in the breaking of bread. |

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Cara Hritz

Gracious God,

We are so thankful that you meet us at this table. As we eat this bread and drink this cup, let us be filled with your love. This week, we saw your creation covered in a blanket of fresh snow. Let each snowfall this winter remind us of the way your cover our sins and turn us white as the fresh fallen snow.

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**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 every hour; stay thou near by; temptations lose their power when thou art nigh. |
| I need thee, oh, I need thee; every hour I need thee; O bless me now, my Savior, I come to thee. | 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

As you depart from this place: Leave yesterday behind. Live for today. Plan for tomorrow.
Anticipate eternity. For God is the Lord of all of life.

Recorded worship services can be found on the Church website or on YouTube,
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLmIH3qzih_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.



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
John Collar
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
Connie Hanning
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
Georgette Murray
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
Beth Teagarden
Nadine Teagarden
Gary Weaver
Nikki Wells
Tom Williams
Chuck & Mary Wiseman
Sarah Wittenberg
Marcie Yocum

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!

Answer each statement (based on Matthew's gospel)
 True or False by circling the letter in the correct column.
 Then write each circled letter on the appropriately
 numbered line below to discover why Jesus died.

| | TRUE | FALSE |
|---|------|------------|
| 1. Jesus healed Peter's wife <i>(Matthew 8:14).</i> | E | (N) |
| 2. Jesus fed the 5,000 with two loaves and five fish <i>(14:17).</i> | R | A |
| 3. At Jesus' Transfiguration, Peter saw Jonah and Elijah <i>(17:3).</i> | M | S |
| 4. The rich, young ruler decided not to follow Jesus <i>(19:22).</i> | T | C |
| 5. Jesus said the temple had become a "den of robbers" <i>(21:13).</i> | I | G |
| 6. Famines and earthquakes are signs of the end of the age <i>(24:7).</i> | V | D |
| 7. Jesus tells a story of the six wise and six foolish maidens <i>(25:1-13).</i> | F | A |
| 8. Judas betrayed Jesus with a secret handshake <i>(26:48).</i> | P | L |
| 9. The Roman governor Polonius interrogated Jesus <i>(27:11-14).</i> | W | O |

N

3 2 8 6 7 4 5 9 1

Answer: N, A, S, T, I, V, A, L, O; salvation