

**Manor Minutes
Volume 13 Issue 29
July 1, 2022**



No Book Club – July 4

Stewardship/Finance Ministry – July 6, 5:30pm Library

July Board Reports due - July 6

Personnel Committee – July 7, 4pm Library

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



Book Club Update

We will not meet on July 4.

We will conclude "Everything Belongs" with Chapter 6 on July 11 at 7 pm on Zoom.

Our next two books will be:

- "Seven Women: And the Secret of Their Greatness" by Eric Metaxas, published by Thomas Nelson, Inc. on October 25, 2016.
- "Christianity and World Religions" Revised Edition by Adam Hamilton, published by Abingdon Press on September 18, 2018.

We will begin "Seven Women" on July 18. We will continue to rotate facilitation among ourselves, meeting via Zoom on Monday evenings at 7 pm. All are welcome. If you need help ordering and/or paying for a book, please contact Pastor Gena.

**FMCC Night at
Washington Wild Things
Friday, Sept 2, 7pm
Fireworks Night**

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

**Jody Mullis will be singing
the National Anthem**

**There is a sign-up sheet in
the Narthex for tickets and
parking passes.**

**Please turn in cash or
check (payable to FMCC)
to the office by July 31.**

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

"Join a Meeting" on Zoom at 9:45am using the following 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
Pastor Gena (724) 263-0033.



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

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Minister
Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor
Elders: Jackie Nelson, Bread
Cara Hritz, Cup
July 3, 2022 - 10:15am

Prelude

Audra Allen, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Isaac Mayen

Leader: Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

People: Sing praises to our God. Give thanks to the Lord of hosts.

Leader: God's anger may flash for a moment, but God's favor lasts a lifetime.

People: Sing praises to the Lord. Come let us worship the God of our salvation.

Opening Hymn

"All Creatures of Our God and King"

Audra Allen, organist

All creatures of our God and King, lift up your voice and with us sing; Alleluia, Alleluia!

O burning sun with golden beam, O silver moon with softer gleam,

O praise God, O praise God, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Pastor Gena

Holy God, your faithful love toward us never ends! It is as sure and dependable as the sky over our heads. We praise you!

We've gathered together in this place to offer you our worship and our thanksgiving; to declare to any who will listen that you are our God, and we are your people. May Your Spirit be at work among us as we worship, opening our eyes to the light of your presence in this place.

Loving and Sustaining God, you call us to obedience, to follow you in all things; to give up the unhealthy and distracting things we cling to, and to give ourselves wholeheartedly to your purposes. We confess that we don't always find this easy to do. We confess that it is often very difficult to let go of what is comfortable and familiar, even if it is not good for us.

Forgive us, we pray. Help us to know that you stand ready, at all times, to sustain us, to provide everything we need, and to point us on the way to life abundant.

Give us courage to faithfully follow your leading, even when we cannot see the outcome, even when the path you call us to seems impossible to comprehend.

God of grace, we praise you for your infinite mercy. You have brought us from slavery to freedom, from despair to hope, from death to life! Holy is your name!

In the dry times of life, O God, as well as the fresh summer mornings, your Spirit comes to us with soul-quenching refreshment. Thank you for these joys in our lives...

Remind us, again and again, to trust in you, to drink deeply of the life you give, and to keep our hope keenly focused on your kingdom. Your kingdom is a world made right, bodies made whole, relationships healed, abiding peace and justice. Help us to seek your reign, to pray for it, to work for it, even as we pray for those troubles close to home and far away which burden our hearts this day.

We pray for those whose lives are endangered by war and unrest, those who struggle for justice, and those who seek after peace.

We pray for those who are suffering, imprisoned, hungry, addicted, homeless and poor.
We pray for those who tend to the needs of others.

Hear our prayers, gracious God, for those we have named this day and for those we name in the silence of our hearts.

May we carry from this place a sure faith and a confidence in your wellspring of goodness, made known to us in Jesus the Christ in whose name we pray...

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 **Isaiah 66:10-14** Kevin Puskarich

Special Music “Peace Like a River,” by Larson Jim Cope

Children’s Message “Jesus and the Tax Collectors” in honor of Isaac Mayen Pastor Gena
from *“Following Jesus: More about Young Children and Worship,”* by Sonja M. Stewart

Second Scripture Reading **Luke 18:9-14** Rev. Stillwell

Sermon **“Unity Through Humility”** Rev. Stillwell

It has been quite a week in the life of our country to be sure. Between Supreme Court rulings and insurrection hearings there is almost too much news to cover even in our age of 24 hour news coverage. To some the nation is saved and to others it is doomed. This description fits the past couple of weeks but really it fits the past couple of years and the words of the Irish poet W.B. Yeats comes to my mind. In a poem titled “The Second Coming” he wrote:

*“Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world, the
blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere the ceremony of innocence is lost. The best
lack all conviction, while the worst are filled with passionate intensity.”*

He wrote this after the First World War in the middle of the Spanish flu, and the poem paints a pitiless, apocalyptic picture of a post-war world except of course another world war was on its way. In the midst of so much division and vitriol that can now be delivered so easily through social media it might seem

quaint to talk about Jesus' parables. After all they are such short things about quaint subjects like yeast and seeds, but it seems to me that they are more important than ever.

Jesus uses storytelling to communicate truth. The often prophetic act of storytelling points us to deeper truths about God and humanity and hints at what might be instead of what is. It invites us to find ourselves within the narrative, and provokes us, if we let it, to transcend our own narratives so that we might join God's larger work--join the narrative of the kingdom-coming. Some of us will be comforted by these tales others challenged. Most of us, if we are honest with ourselves, will be both at the same time. This is as it should be since the aim of parables is not to comfort, but to provoke and invite. So when Jesus tells this story to his disciples, his aim is not to school them on temple etiquette, nor to build the case against the Pharisees, but to hold a mirror up to them. Jesus aims to show us the real divide: the divide between the world that is and the world God intends for us. And yes, the division is deep.

Our story for today is centered on two characters; a Pharisee and a tax collector. Two men are gathered in the same house of worship, praying to the same God, but speaking two very different prayers. Jesus notes that the Pharisee stands alone. He prays, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all my income,' (18:11-12). The Pharisee should be thankful! He is right to give thanks that he has been trained to live a life that is so focused on God and good works. Far away from this Pharisee, the tax collector beats his chest, hangs his head in shame and says his prayer: "God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" The tax collector is also right to pray for God's mercy.

We have no indication that either of them go home and change their patterns of behavior. It is not a change in behavior that Jesus lauds. The sin of the Pharisee is not the thanksgiving/bragging itself, but the distance he puts between himself and the tax collector--both people of God. The Pharisee stands alone, by intention. Scholar, Richard Swanson states in his commentary on this passage, "The Pharisee's fault is a simple one: he submits to the Roman colonial scheme by fracturing the people of God. He sees only the separation between himself and the tax collector, which is precisely what the divide-and-conquer regime needs him to see". Who benefits from this division? Not the Pharisee. Not the tax collector. Not the kingdom.

The tax collector, who in this temple scenario is made an outsider, confesses. He is a sinner. He has missed the mark, turned away from God. In his moment of confession, he turns back. What would it look like if we all took the posture of the tax collector? There is a time to give thanks, to be sure--but in this divided time, perhaps it is time to confess. The call to confession should especially resonate with those who might stand to benefit from a land that is divided, from a lack of shared interest and power. What might we have to confess?

One is that our actions have not always lived up to our words. We sing "They Will Know we are Christians by our Love", but too often people know we are Christians by our judgement. Other times we, like the Pharisees, have embraced the way of empire rather than ways of the kingdom. But more often than not we have simply spent too much time looking at the specks in other peoples' eyes while ignoring the logs in ours. Our faith is one that should cause us to look outward at the needs of others and the world while causing us to look inward at our own faults, sins, and needs for improvement, but too often we succumb to the temptation to reverse that order.

So when we hear this simple story of Jesus', we are tempted to see the man of great faith as the hero and the tax collector as the goat, but Jesus asks us to consider placing ourselves in different shoes than we would like. The tax collector was justified not because he was not a sinner, but because he knew it and confessed it. Likewise, the Pharisee stands condemned not because he was a sinner, he was, but because he thought he was not, or believed that his sin was fine in comparison to another. In this way Jesus'

parables always provoke, but they also invite. This story stands as an invitation to be connected in our thanksgiving and especially in our confessing. Let the confessions begin in our homes: in the places we live, with the people we love. Let them continue in our places of worship. Let the confessions be made public such that they might reshape local and national discourse. Let us confess that we have not done enough to assuage the division in our nation and also that sometimes, in our language, whether spoken by our lips or our fingers on a keyboard, have at times added to it. With confidence, let us confess and receive assurance--even when we turn from God, that God is faithful still.

As we follow Jesus Christ we cannot assume that we are immune to the same arrogance and hard-heartedness of those whom Jesus challenged. We must realize that none of us are perfect, and that is why God became human. We must always remember that no one needs to become perfect in order to be loved by God. Instead, God redeemed and exalted us, even in our sinfulness, out of love for us.

Like the Pharisees and Jesus before us, we love to stand on the promises of God because they make us feel safe and secure, but we must not let them make us feel smug, for one of the promises of God is that¹²All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted. When you are interacting with another person, never be the exalted one, always be the humble one.

One chapter earlier, Luke tells us that Jesus was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming. He answered, "The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed; nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For, in fact, the kingdom of God is among you." I believe this is true but only if we are humble enough to see it.

I believe we just might reach unity through humility because in doing so we stop thinking about ourselves and start listening to others, or we stop complaining about others and ask ourselves how can we make the world a better place. You all know the song, "What the world needs now is love sweet love". It surely does, but it also needs humility. Let it be so and let it begin with me.

Call to Offering

Donna Stenski

Weeping may last the night, but joy comes with the morning. God has turned our tears into shouts of thanksgiving. Let us be grateful for the many blessings in our lives, as we collect today's offering.

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

Knowing that in our world, in our community, and in our church, so many people are facing storms in their lives, we present these gifts in the hope that they may be a lifeline to those who are feeling overwhelmed. Take them, dear Lord, and use them to calm the storms in their lives.

Invitation to Communion

Rev. Stillwell

Jesus' harshest words were reserved for the Pharisees, not because they were faithless or even bad people, but because they too often pointed fingers at others and not themselves. They were not necessarily more sinful than others but they were unaware of their sin; they were so often very aware of the sin of others. If we follow the logic we see that arrogance and self-righteousness are the qualities that most offend Christ leading him to say "all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted."

Humility is, therefore, not just a virtue but a requirement of a confessing and practicing Christian. I also find it is also the quality most looked for by non-Christians. We should be always mindful of this when

we gather at this table for here we remember that the one who could have destroyed entire armies with just a word laid his life down. This goes beyond what we would simply describe as humility, but if Jesus could humble himself in such an unfathomable way certainly we can humble ourselves in some small way. Likewise we should be humbled for the lengths he had to go to get us to know and believe who he was.

As we share in this meal we come for grace and salvation. We long to be filled by Spirit and love, but, if we are observing this meal in a worthy fashion as Paul described it to the church in Corinth, we will also receive a dose of humility.

Communion Hymn

“One Bread, One Body”

Audra Allen, organist

One bread, one body, one Lord of all, one cup of blessing which we bless.
And we, though many throughout the earth, we are one body in this one Lord.
Gentile or Jew, servant or free, woman or man no more.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Jackie Nelson

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.

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

“O Beautiful for Spacious Skies”

Jody Mullis, pianist

O beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties above the fruited plain!
America! America! God shed full grace on thee,
And crown thy good with servanthood from sea to shining sea.

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

May the Lord bless you and keep you, may the Spirit fill you and humble you so that Christ may receive you and exalt you. Amen.

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



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
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Ed Alexy
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Abby Blanchard
Susan Britko
Mabel Brooks
Sandra Carman
Clayton Chalfant
Denise Charles
Wanda Chicone
Emily Cope Robinson
Ruth Cox
Irma Davis
Benjamin Dube
Jessica Duke
Libby Eberhard
Fred Engle
Jay Freudenberg
Jett Fuller
Derek Gardiner
David & Lois Gayman
Doug Graff
Joe Greene
Bonnie Gregg
Nancy Gregg

Linda Hainer
Kyle Hallam
Judy Hanning
Aryn Hess
Ed Jackman
Dallas Jacobovitz
Kenger Family
Ty, Kerri, Allie, Ivy &
Ty James Lacock
Von Lacock
Bob Lanning
Libby LeDuff
John Lewis
Lee & Betsy Martin
Dave McConnell
Don Melvin
Joe Neckerman
Homer Nixon
Michaela Nixon
Carmen Oliverio
Ruth Mikuta
Deborah Patterson
Bo & Patty Pryor
Kayda Richards
Cathy Rentgen
Betty Jo Riggle
Dave Ross
Jim 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
Terrell McClain
Brandon Lipscomb
Daniel Robinson
Shawn Dallatore
Andrew Gregg
Zachary Keene
Sarah Lipscomb
Travis Ringer
Emily Chase
Dylan Demain



A wonderful washing

David's prayer of repentance reveals a desire to be cleansed of his sin.

Directions: Unscramble the words on the left. Then match them with the correct phrases from Psalm 51 (NIV) on the right.

ETRCAE _ _ _ _ _	_____	out my transgressions (v. 1)
HSAW _ _ _ _	_____	away all my iniquity (v. 2)
RSEEROT _ _ _ _ _	_____	me with hyssop, and I will be clean (v. 7)
WNERE _ _ _ _ _	_____	me, and I will be whiter than snow (v. 7)
TLBO _ _ _ _	_____	your face from my sins (v. 9)
DIHE _ _ _ _	_____	out all my iniquity (v. 9)
NATRG _ _ _ _ _	_____	in me a pure heart (v. 10)
LNSECAE _ _ _ _ _	_____	a steadfast spirit within me (v. 10)
LBTO _ _ _ _	_____	to me the joy of your salvation (v. 12)
WHS A _ _ _ _	_____	me a willing spirit, to sustain me (v. 12)

Answer: blot, wash, cleanse, wash, hide, blot, create, renew, restore, grant