

Manor Minutes
Volume 13 Issue 31
July 15, 2022



Book Club – July 18, 7pm via Zoom

Rev. Chris will be on vacation July 23 – July 30

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

Save These Dates:

- August 21 – Children Worship & Wonder restarts
- September 11 –
Sunday School restarts 9:15am
Church Picnic **1:03pm** at Washington Park
- December 10 & 11 – Drive Thru Nativity



BAKERSFIELD, Calif. (KEWRO) —

The Bakersfield community came together for Parker Stone's 10th birthday. Stone was born July 10th, 2012, as a premature and seemingly healthy but 10 days later he was transferred to UCLA on life support with nonketotic hyperglycinemia. His parents were told his life would be short and he wouldn't make it past his toddler years. But Sunday he got to celebrate making it to the double digits and so far he's received 447 cards to celebrate from people locally and in Alaska, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Nevada, and so many other states too. (See photo on page 9)



**BOOK
CLUB**

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.

- "Seven Women: And the Secret of Their Greatness"
by Eric Metaxas, published
by Thomas Nelson, Inc. on October 25, 2016.

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.**

Bless Their Soles

The shoe racks for **Bless Their Soles** are now in the Narthex. Take a card or two, buy the appropriate sized shoe (doesn't have to be fancy, just new), bring the shoes and card back to church and put on the shelf.

If you have any questions, please call Amy at (724) 207-3945.



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

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Minister
Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor
Elders: Cara Hritz, Bread
Jackie Nelson, Cup
July 17, 2022 - 10:15am

Prelude

Audra Allen, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Serena Dube

Leader: Come from the busyness and the business of the day.

People: We come to let go of the ways of the world.

Leader: Come and turn aside the temptation to do the things that are only done in the shadows.

People: We come to embrace what God offers us, God's presence and unconditional love.

Leader: Come to find refuge and the way to live in Christ's great love.

Opening Hymn

"How Firm a Foundation"

Audra Allen, organist

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in God's excellent word!

What more can be said than to you God has said, to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Pastor Gena

Ever-present God, we are looking for you, searching for you. There are times when you seem lost to us, hard to find, a bit of a puzzle, as if you are hiding from us. Make yourself known to us during this hour of worship, we pray. We need to see you clearly, to hear you clearly, to receive your wisdom – even if it is a bit beyond our understanding. Do not pass us by. Come and rest here with us.

Forgive us for our lackluster search for you. Forgive us for spending more time and effort on everything other than welcoming you into our lives. Forgive us for ceasing to believe that you can make a way where there seems to be no way. Give us the energy and the will to search for you with our whole hearts, for you are precious beyond anything we can achieve or buy. Give us patience to listen for you, to wait long enough for our own busy minds to slow down and to finally give way to your still small voice. Give us renewed trust in your creative power to bring newness and life and joy where only fear and division and loss can be seen.

Creating God, you are always able to do a new thing. Come and do that new thing among us. And make us new, day by day by day. Redeeming Christ, you are always taking the messes of our lives and bringing meaning and purpose out of them. Come and redeem our brokenness. And make us new, day by day by day. Sustaining Spirit, we cannot live apart from your strength, your mercy and your grace. Come and breathe your breath in us that we may live in your way. And make us new, day by day by day.

Thank you for your guiding presence in our lives. For this congregation, we give you thanks. For its constancy in our lives, for the ways it has helped us to reach out to others over the years, for the ways it has sustained us in difficult times, we give you thanks. Guide us, we pray.

We pray now for the many among us and around us who need your presence, your care and your love. We pray for all who are vulnerable or marginalized, that they may be seen by others and that their needs may be tended to. We pray for those struggling with the long-term effects of illness and disease. We pray for those who are dying and for those who love them, that you may receive them all in your loving embrace. We pray especially for the elderly among us, who represent our roots and our memories, that they may use their experience and wisdom to help younger people look to the future with hope and responsibility. We pray for all who are sick or in difficulty, and for those who are coming to their aid. We pray for all of those whose names we have heard aloud this morning, for all those named on our prayer list, especially those in care facilities and at home, and these concerns that we hold in the silence of our hearts.

Open our minds, our hearts, our very selves to receive your peace, your joy, and your grace. We worship you as we lift high your name above all else. You are our God, and we want to live in your ways. Show us how. We pray all of this in the name of our Lord and our Savior, Jesus the Christ, who is still teaching 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: *“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 **Genesis 18:1-10a** Linda Reese

Special Music Audra Allen

Children’s Message “Jesus’ Trial,” in honor of Charlotte Stillwell Pastor Gena
from *“Following Jesus: More about Young Children and Worship,”* by Sonja M. Stewart

Second Scripture Reading **Luke 15:8-9** Rev. Stillwell

Sermon **“Who Throws a Party?”** Rev. Stillwell

Losing things is the worst. I hate when it happens. It is a feeling like none other, because you don’t know where it is and you don’t know where to look, so you search back in your mind and think of all the places you have been and you search and when you find what it is that you have lost, if you do at all, you feel good, but you never get back that time that you spent searching for something you thought you had.

The things I have lost most often are the things I carry with me the most; my phone, my iPod, my keys, my wallet. Of these the phone is the easiest to find since you can usually call it and follow the sound of the ringer, but, as my children will tell you, my phone is usually out of power too, so there’s that. Keys aren’t too bad to lose because you are aware that your keys are missing as soon as you get to your car.

My wallet and my iPod are harder because you can set them somewhere and not realize that they are missing until much later. I once had this happen to me. I searched everywhere for my wallet knowing it should have been in the church but worrying it might have fallen out of my pocket in a parking lot, and just as I was about to call and cancel my credit cards and find out how to replace my license I saw a

drawer in my desk and something in my brain said, "Check there". I put down the phone, opened the drawer, and saw my wallet which I had placed there about a week before.

Two days later someone at church told me that a phone had been found and someone had placed it on my desk. After the service I walked into my office to see my iPod which had been missing for a month sitting on my desk. It seems I sat it down while I was doing something at the church and it went unnoticed for some time.

These two things together were valuable in that they would cost a good bit of money to replace and that they gave me great pleasure and convenience. I was overjoyed to have found that which I had lost, but, I tell you, I did not throw a party.

Relief is one thing and joy another, but who throws a party when lost things are found? Think of the most important thing you have lost and then later found and ask yourself, "Did you throw a party?" I imagine you did not and it is hard to think of a possession that would provoke such a reaction.

Now imagine all the coins you have lost. In our lifetime you have lost dimes, nickels, pennies galore, in the seat of your couch, the floor of your car, and who knows where else. I am sure you have even passed lost coins by and decided it wasn't worth bending down to pick them up.

I have lost and found many coins in my life and I cannot say that any of those moments occasion even a passing memory. But Jesus chooses this as a source of inspiration for his parable of the Woman and the Lost Coin. Assuredly there is not an actual woman who did the things he suggests in his parable. Here we can safely assume that is a hypothetical question when Jesus asks:

Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, "Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost."

The answer would most likely be, no woman. Instead she loses a coin, finds it a week later while cleaning up, and thinks to herself, "Oh I must have dropped this," and then goes about her day. It is a hypothetical question because no one calls their friends together to rejoice over finding a coin that was lost. This is one of three parables Jesus tells in a row with more or less the same point in which the lost are found and in the first two, the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin the man who finds the sheep and the woman who finds the coin call their friends together to celebrate with them. In the next parable, the Prodigal Son, the father explicitly throws a party to celebrate his son who was lost and now is found.

In each, they call their friends to rejoice with them. They throw a party. I get why the father throws a party, I can kind of get why the shepherd throws a party on finding the lost sheep, but who throws a party for finding a lost coin?

Most commentators suggest that the ten coins was all the woman had, therefore, if any of us lost a tenth of our wealth and found it we would be pretty happy, but considering how little she had, throwing a party would surely have cost more than the coin was worth.

Others suggest that the coin was valuable because it made up an ornament for her head. It was customary for Jewish women to wear a headdress made of ten coins as a sign that they were married much as a wedding ring does for us today. There is no evidence of this, at least as far as anything Jesus says and if he wanted us to think that he probably would have said. Attempts to explain it that way are attempts to work backward. To look at the action, the woman sweeping her house and searching for this coin and

throwing a party when she finds it and explain it, because who throws a party for finding a lost coin? Attempts to explain the parable in this way miss the point. Who throws a party for a lost coin? Not us, but God does, and we are not talking about coins.

We judge things by their rarity and we find coins all the time and don't think much of it. Often we see coins on the ground and pass them up. No one throws a party when they are found, but God does, because God is not finding coins. God is finding us, and despite the feeling that humans are everywhere, God does not overlook us.

There are billions of coins throughout this world and now the world's population is approaching 8 billion, and we could be tempted to think that supply decreases value, but we hold within us a gift more valuable than any treasure and no matter how many souls there are each and every one is of infinite value to God. We are all pearls of Great value, sheep of the fold, coins in the purse and the love of God cannot abide our loss.

The Interpreters Bible comments on this parable that the mind of Jesus moved in "direct vitality not in complicated patterns" meaning that we must not over think or over interpret this parable, or any really. The character being a woman, the number of coins being ten, the light that is needed is not representative of anything. They are just parts of the story needed to convey the message that God does not value the way the world values. The world steps over coin after coin, doesn't even think it is worth bending over for but God seeks like a shepherd, rejoices like a father, sweeps like a woman in search of one more. God always wants one more, but God is not greedy, rather God is generous.

This is why there is a party. Again Jesus says:

⁹When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, "Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost." ¹⁰Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.'

There is joy over one sinner who repents but it is not enough that God alone feels that joy; God must call the angels together and celebrate with them just as the woman called her friends to rejoice. God rejoices when a sinner is saved, and so should we. We should not ignore it or be cynical or be jealous that someone might get the same rewards as us despite our having been found first. This is a recurring motif of the parables.

Children are often obsessed with the word fair as they learn that the world isn't fair, but one thing we can rejoice over is that God is not fair. It isn't fair that God grants the kingdom, and forgiveness, and mercy to those who do not deserve. It isn't fair that a person who believes all their life gets the same as those believe at the end. It isn't fair. It is grace, and let us be thankful for it. We do not throw a party when we find what we have lost but God does, and that's what the church is. That's what our communities of faith are called to be. We're the space where we hold one another in our losses and encourage one another in our searching and in our digging and in our believing and in our hoping and where we celebrate with one another in the things that we have found. We don't just come to worship or pray, but celebrate, to rejoice, dare I say to party?

We lose much in this life. From small things like coins, to irreplaceable things like keepsakes. The worst things we lose in life are never things, but when we come to worship we come to celebrate the good news, that God is like a woman who sweeps, a woman who searches, a woman who never stops looking for one more coin. We lose much in our life, but thanks to the steadfast love of our Lord, we, ourselves, will never be lost.

Call to Offering

Charlotte Stillwell

Let us give in the spirit of gratitude. Let us give with a prayer on our lips. Let us give with confidence that God will use our gifts.

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

Most loving God, most welcoming God, we bring these gifts to you, knowing that you will use them according to your purposes. We dedicate ourselves to your way,

Invitation to Communion

Rev. Stillwell

I have a friend who never passes up a coin that she sees in the street or on the floor. Whether it's a penny or a Susan B Anthony dollar she picks it up and puts it in a jar with other coins labeled "found money". It is something she has been doing for years and, although she doesn't throw a party when a coin is found (at least not one to which I have been invited) she often announces it on Facebook. It is a little thing that she does but one that causes her to see the world in a different way. To her the world is full of surprises and treasures. There are gifts lying all around, perhaps she even subscribes to the notion that there is luck involved if the coins are found heads up. The point is that searching for these coins brings her joy, and they also add up. I do not know what she has purchased with these coins but I do know that she has collected over a hundred dollars.

The point is that it adds up. I like to think the same thing about God's grace. We find grace all over the place in unexpected places. A smile from a stranger, a conversation with someone who is lonely, a hand extended in help to those who need it. It might not seem like much but, a little here, a little there, over time it all adds up. I would like to think that but I would be wrong, because God's grace doesn't just add up, it multiplies.

We come to this table with much to be thankful for and much for which to ask forgiveness. We offer our coins, as small as they are, and we ask for God's grace which is so much. We do this with confidence knowing that we are of more value than any found money. We are priceless for we are found people. Let us share in this meal, comforted in the knowledge that each one of us is to God like a coin that a woman found, only so, so much more.

Communion Hymn

"Be Known to Us in Breaking Bread"

Audra Allen, organist

Be known to us in breaking bread, but do not then depart;
Savior, abide with us, and spread thy table in our heart.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Cara Hritz

God of new life,

We have come together at this table today to celebrate and give thanks. No matter how far away we stray, you seek us. You celebrate our return to you. As we take this bread and drink this cup, we're reminded of how much you love us. A love so great that you gave us your only son. A love so great that you bring back your children no matter how many times they turn away. As we go into the world this week, let us carry your love with us. 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.

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

"Softly and Tenderly"

Audra Allen, organist

Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling, calling for you and for me;
patient and loving, he's waiting and watching, watching for you and for me.
Come home, come home, ye who are weary, come home;
earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling—calling, "O sinner, come home!"

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

Remembering God's grace, remembering God's promises, remembering God's will for your life,
go forth in confidence and joy.

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

Zoom Worship will continue to be live at 10:15am 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
Rev. Chris (412) 956-6590.



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

Chuck and Mary Wiseman
880 S Main St, Apt 214
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Ed Alexy
Avery Allen
Terry Bailey
Donna Bakaitis
Jim Banish
Mabel Brooks
Carol Brown
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
David & Lois Gayman
Joe Greene
Bonnie Gregg
Nancy Gregg

Kyle Hallam
Aryn Hess
Ed Jackman
Dallas Jacobovitz
Kenger Family
Bob Lanning
Libby LeDuff
John Lewis
Lee & Betsy Martin
Dave McConnell
Paul Myers
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
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



New organ speakers were installed behind the banners. You can see where the light is on above the banner. This is where the organ speakers are located. Thank you to Jerry Puskarich for being here at the church and helping with the installation.

