Manor Minutes Volume 12 Issue 28 July 16, 2021



"In the Garden" Sermon Series discussion – July 21, 1-2pm via Zoom **"Safe Conduct" orientation – July 25 following Worship** Stewardship/Finance Ministry – August 10, 6pm via Zoom Elders – August 11, 6pm Shepherds Room Wild Things Game – August 13, 7pm Stay up to date, check <u>www.fairhillmanorchurch.org/calendar</u>

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 Picnic

- September 12, 1:07pm
- Kiwanis Pavilion Washington Park
- Chicken, Hot Dogs & Drinks provided
- Bring a covered dish and/or dessert
- BINGO
- Something fun for everyone!

There will be an orientation to **"Safe Conduct"** for children and parents required under Fairhill Manor's Safe Conduct Policy. Any child that attends Sunday School, CW&W or any youth activity at the church and their parents must attend. This orientation will be held directly after worship on July 25 and August 1. Lunch will be provided. Please RSVP by <u>July 20</u> to:

Candy Wasalasky <u>mcdonaldcandy@comcast.net</u> (724) 554-5421 Jerry Puskarich <u>jerrypuskarich@yahoo.com</u> (724) 503-5658

Indicate which day you will be attending and the number of family members who will be present.

Thank you for responding to this important matter.

ABC123... It's time to make School Kits!

Join your Outreach Ministry in making School Kits which will be donated to children in need through Church World Service. Our goal this year is to make **123** School Kits.

More information is in Pastor Gena's Children's Message, on the last page of the Manor Minutes and also the bulletin board in the Narthex!



We currently have (1) opening on the **Personnel Committee** and (2) openings on the **Stewardship/Finance Ministry**. If you are interested or have any questions please contact Jerry Puskarich at (724) 503-5658 or email jerrypuskarich@yahoo.com.

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

> Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Pastor Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor July 18, 2021

Audra Allen, organist

Audra Allen, organist

Rev. Stillwell

Pastor Gena

Gene Sheller

From far and near, we gather together, called to unity in Christ. Built into one body, we are the dwelling place of God. May God guide our steps and direct our ways, that we may reveal God's love in word and deed.

Opening Hymn

"Come, Thou Almighty King"

Come, thou almighty King, help us thy name to sing; help us to praise: one God, all-glorious, o'er all victorious, come and reign over us, ancient of days.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Holy Spirit, flow through our worship today. Dwell in us this day and all days. Speak through our words, breathe into our thoughts, and gather us together as one community of faith. Build us together on the foundation that is ours in Christ Jesus, who is our cornerstone. Flow through our days, that we may be reflections of your presence.

We come together as your people, and pray for one another. Where there is sadness bring us joy. Where there is struggle bring relief. Where there is darkness shine your light.

Help us always, Lord, to shine your light into others' lives that our whole world may be made brighter. Holy God, help us to care not only for each other which is your body, but for your creation as well. We confess that it is sometimes easier to hear the groans of creation and the cries of the earth in the devastation of forests and pollution of water, than it is to hear the groans of our own spirit and the loss of our own dignity.

It is easier to spot the weeds that grow in the lives of our adversaries as they tear the fabric of love asunder, than it is to see the same weeds that grow within ourselves as we fall back in worry, and become slaves to our fear.

You have not given us a spirit of slavery to fall back into our fear, but rather a spirit of adoption as children of God. Yet the hurts we nurse within often keep our hearts in bondage and prevent us from claiming our true freedom in Christ Jesus.

Release us, Holy One, from the chains that bind us, that we may be a people of hope once more.

Release us, Great Spirit, that we may be truly free. Amen.

Prelude

Welcome

Call to Worship

Come, thou incarnate Word, gird on thy mighty sword; our prayer attend: come, and thy people bless, and give thy word success; Spirit of holiness, on us descend.



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	Job 12:1-9	Jeannie Allison
Special Music	"Be Thou My Vision," arrangement Carol Tornquist	Audra Allen

Children's Message

Pastor Gena

Have you seen the "Back to School" signs out already? Isaac and I saw big "Back to School" signs in the front windows of the Dollar Tree on Wednesday. It seems like it's too soon to see those signs, but I like to think of them instead as a sign that it's time to make some School Kits for Church World Service!

These School Kits include some basic school supplies that will help kids who can't get these materials to be able to learn this year. What are some supplies you usually buy for school?

Some of those same supplies are in the kits that we are going to make! Here's a checklist of the items that go into a CWS School Kit. I need someone to read each item off the list and get ready to check it off as we find that item in our pile of things. I need some people to look for the item and some others to pack them in the bags.

We are going to start with a nice, sturdy gallon size Ziploc-type bag. We will put our school supplies in there. I wonder why this kind of a bag might be really useful to a kid going to school in a refugee camp where they might live in tents and go to school outside under trees?

We need *one pair of blunt scissors (rounded tip only) removed from the package*. Why do you think we want rounded tip scissors? Why should we remove them from the package? One reason is that shipping these kits to their final destination is expensive – and every little bit of weight might make it even more expensive.

Three 70-count bound notebooks or notebooks totaling 200-210 pages (no loose-leaf or filler paper). Why not loose-leaf paper?

One 30-centimeter 12" ruler removed from packaging. I wonder why we would want to send a ruler with both inches and centimeters on it?

Six new, unsharpened pencils with erasers (removed from the package). Why not send six nice mechanical pencils?

One hand-held pencil sharpener (removed from the package). I wonder why this is important.

One large eraser (no pencil cap erasers). Do you ever use up the erasers on your pencils?

One box of 24 crayons (only 24). I wonder why we should send only 24 crayons. Why don't we take the crayons from their packaging?

One 12"x14" to 14"x17" finished size cotton or lightweight, solid colored canvas bag with cloth handles (no logos). No reusable shopping bags or backpacks. A backpack might be nicer. I wonder why we can't send those.

If you and your family want to make a few more of these School Kits, you can find a checklist like this one in the Narthex.

If you would rather focus on buying one type of thing for the kits we will make together as a congregation, that's good too. There are lots of sticky notes back in the Narthex that say things like, "buy 10 rulers" or "buy 5 packs of crayons." Take one or more sticky notes for things you would like to buy. Be sure to write your name and phone number on the list so we know who took which sticky notes. You have three weeks to bring your items back to church. Make sure you take the packaging off the items (except the crayons!). There will be containers in the Narthex for you to put your items in so they are sorted and ready to go.

Maybe you would rather give some money to help ship the School Kits where they need to go - or you would rather give some money so someone else can go out and buy items for the School Kits. That's good too! You can put money in the offering plate – just write checks to the church and make sure to mark it so we know it is for the School Kits. Or go to Givelify and give money for the School Kits there.

On August 15, four weeks from today, you will want to be sure to be here because that day we will pack the School Kits right after worship right outside in the parking lot so everyone can help!

In school we learn our ABCs and our 123s, don't we? So we are calling our School Kit drive "ABC123" this year. Our goal is to make 123 School Kits just like these ones. ABC123! Let's do our best to help other kids around the world get to learn a little easier this year.

Dear God, thank you for giving us ways to help other kids in our country and around the world have what they need to learn and grow. May we feel your love as we gather our supplies over the next couple weeks. And may the kids who use the school supplies this year feel your love every day as they use them. Amen.

Second Scripture Reading

Job 14:1-14

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon "Ask the Plants of the Earth and They Will Teach You" Rev. Stillwell Last week we talked about annuals and perennials, this week we hear Job's take on the matter for, having suffered the loss of his family and his wealth, he is "comforted" by his "friends". I use both of these words loosely for if you read the entirety of the book of Job you see that Job's friends are more intent in defending their understanding of how the world works than Job's honor. So to describe his sorrow he compares his sorry state with the world around him. He says:

ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you'For there is hope for a tree, if it is cut down, that it will sprout again, and that its shoots will not cease.8 Though its root grows old in the earth,

and its stump dies in the ground,

9 yet at the scent of water it will bud and put forth branches like a young plant.
10 But mortals die, and are laid low; humans expire, and where are they?
11 As waters fail from a lake, and a river wastes away and dries up,
12 so mortals lie down and do not rise again; until the heavens are no more, they will not awake

Job has, of course, been having a hard time, and death is all around him and he does not have the promise of resurrection even to assuage his sorrow. So he complains to God about a lot of things, but here in particular he complains that God has given human beings less than plants. Trees that seem to die often come back, not just the perennials but also plants that can grow from shoots and clippings.

I'm sure you've seen such a thing. A tree that you have cut down to a stump will sometimes have sprouts that will come up. There are many times when plants seem to die but do come back. In fact it is the great metaphor that God gave to King David, saying to him that his throne will endure forever. Referencing this, Isaiah said "the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples and Christians took that to mean Jesus.

So Job sees this wonderful thing that trees have, and that plants can sometimes have, and he is impressed, but then he goes on and says, "mortals die and are laid low, humans expire and where are they? As water spills from a lake and river wastes away and dries up so mortals lie down and do not rise again till the heavens are no more. They will not awake or be roused out of their sleep." It's a pretty hard word, as is most of the book of Job. I really like the book of Job in its entirety, but much of it consists of pretty heavy words. The reason I like it is because these are words we all must wrestle with, and these are questions and frustrations, if not outright pain, and struggles, that we have to deal with.

I like the fact that the book of Job does not pull punches. It does not hide anything. There is a great deal of struggle and pain, and if we can't deal with that we will not make it through to the other side. I like the fact that God knows what he's talking about here. We've all had it bad but, I don't know that anyone's had it worse than Job, and it's good to know that. To recount: he was a well off man, who had wealth and livestock, and he had a great big family, and pretty much overnight, he lost it all because of a whirlwind. His family and wealth were destroyed by the whirlwind and his reputation was destroyed over the course of the next 30 chapters as his friends accuse him of having sinned or having brought this upon himself in some way.

It's an understatement to say that Job was having a hard time. Death is all around him, loss is all around him, now he's even struggling with his faith, and he does not have the promise of resurrection even to assuage of sorrow. At this time in Jewish history the idea of the afterlife is a little nebulous. There's a place called Sheol that all people go to. It's not necessarily a paradise, and there's really no promise of a seeing your loved ones again. It's really just this place that you go to after your life ends.

So Job's complaint is, if God can bring new life for trees and shrubs why wouldn't God do at least as much for people? In effect Job asks the age old question, "Is this it?" That is a good question, because, if it is, there are many people in our lives we know who have too short of a life, and the oldest person you know, even if they are 100 years old, in the grand scheme of things their life span is a blip. We talked before about how some trees can be as much as 5000 years old, yet again, in the grand scheme of things, it's not that long,

Life is short which is why nothing is better to a gardener, than the unexpected resurrection of a plant. There's a place that we went to buy our plants which originally was dollar store and then they started selling some plants on the side. So we went at the beginning of the season where I bought a few, and then we noticed that, as the season went on they got cheaper. That is until one time I went in July and we walked in to discover a barren wasteland. That is how it seemed but what had happened is that they were done selling plants, which means they were done watering their plants. A couple dozen or so barely alive plants sat on a shelf next to a sign that said "Free". I took a few including some that I didn't even know what they were, took them home, and some of them died, but half of the plants came right back and decorated our yard for a couple of months. Also there were perennials that we took, and looked at, and with a little bit of water, a little bit of shade, a little bit of TLC come back every year and are among my favorite plants.

The best example I have of this is, pumpkins. Every year after Thanksgiving is over we take our pumpkins, and my kids and I take them and we smash them. It is a fun afternoon of throwing things off our deck and watching them explode. It makes a big mess, but then we clean up the mess and we just dump it in our garden and we leave it. We don't tend it, we don't care for it. We do nothing. And right now, those pumpkin plants are growing, and the point is that we don't have to do anything and they just come back. It is a wonderful thing, the resurrection of a plant.

So why can't something like this happen to people? We are more dear to God than the plants, yet there is death all around and Job saw no hope and no purpose. I'll say to you that when I read the book of Job a lot of times it sounds like people I know who are not Christians. I know people who aren't Christians, and really have no faith at all and who are very good and moral people who make very good choices in their life, and yet one of the big things that separates Christians and non-Christians, particularly people who have no faith at all, is how we face death as the Apostle, Paul, writes, "We do not grieve as those who do not believe, or those who do not have hope."

When people watch the news and they read the papers and they look at the world oftentimes non-Christians, atheists, or people who just aren't sure if God exists have no hope. So often people who do not know Christ sound a lot like Job, but I will also say, sadly, just as often people who do know Christ or claim they do sound like him as well. It's important, therefore, for us to understand that Job was written long before Jesus came so of course he did not know him, but now we should or do. If we know Jesus then we know that Jesus answers Job, not directly, of course, since e not on the Earth at the same time, but when someone asks us as a question very similar to the question that Job asked, we can answer with a teaching that Jesus gave his disciples.

He said to those who are near him:

"I tell you do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, the body more than clothing. Look at the birds of the air. They neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are not you have more value than they can any of you by worrying at a single hour to your span of life. Why do you worry about clothing. Consider the lilies of the field how they grow. They neither toil nor spin, and I tell you even Solomon in all his glory was not close like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown in the oven will he not much more clothe you, you of little faith. Therefore do not worry saying, What will we eat?, or What will we drink?, or What will we wear?, for it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things, and, indeed, your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things, but strive first for the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well."

This is one of the most important things Jesus has ever said. We are worth more than these things; these plants, these animals. We are worth more than all of them, and God will give us more, but that does not

mean clothes and food and wealth, rather it means the things that we need to live in this world. Plants are annuals and perennials and some can live much longer than we do in this world, but human beings are the ones who have the opportunity to be eternal. And this knowledge would not have brought back Job's children, as it does not bring back our loved ones, but it teaches us to grieve with hope and joy, and the promise of our reunion by resurrection.

So if we do as Job suggests and ask the plants of the earth we will learn that this is not the end. There is more than what we see in this world. There is more than what we see on our TV screen or read in our paper. Job was more right than he knew for he said this out of frustration and anger and pain. And when he said this, he meant it to be a statement that the plants will teach you the meaningless of life that God has created this life, in which we will live for a short time, and inevitably all die. But Jesus turns it around to show us that the plants and the animals, they will teach us how meaningful life is. God in all His glory will do so much for them, how much more will God do for us?

Job had the BC view, the before Christ view of the world, in which we look at the plants and animals and see that this is all there is, but Jesus gives us so much more. For now when we look at the plants in our gardens, when we look at the flowers in our flower beds. We see how beautiful the lilies are and how bright and majestic the sunflowers have become how tall and rigid the corn is growing, how vibrant the kale and lettuce, how sweet smelling the tomatoes we see the beauty of each plant and flower, how wonderful each fruit is in bloom and we know that God has taken so much care and made these plants, which today are beautiful, which tomorrow will be eaten so beautiful to look at and taste. I always use plants as a symbol of resurrection as they are returned from a sort of death, and my thought is that if God will give a type of resurrection to the plants won't God give more to human beings who surely are worth more in God's eyes.

Ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you, of the God who created the earth and all that is in it, Ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you the care that God has taken and every little thing no matter how seemingly small, and even insignificant it is to our eyes. Ask the plants of the earth and they will teach you are the fleeting nature of life in this world. Ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you that mortals do lie down and do not rise again to strive, unless they strive first for the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be given to us as well. Amen.

Call to Offering

Gene Sheller

Let us continue to give in the spirit of gratitude now that our second government PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) Loan has been forgiven.

Let us give with a prayer on our lips and a prayer from our heart. Let us give with confidence that God will use our gifts. Let us give believing in God's promise that whatever we do in God's Holy name is never in vain.

All those of you who have continued to give through the pandemic have really helped FMCC continue our ministries.

We are thankful this day for you and for the news that we have received about the PPP loan forgiveness, but we realize that our commitment to giving has not ended.

Bless all of those who are giving on this day!

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

We return a portion of these, your gifts, to you with our thanksgiving. Bless them with the power of your love, that they may touch the lives of others and inspire them to join us in giving you thanks and praise in the name of Jesus the Christ. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

It seems that since the beginning of the Church we have been struggling to live together despite our differences. When the Church was just beginning, the main difficulty was trying to figure out how Gentiles and Jews could worship and serve together. We don't face that issue now, but we certainly have found enough other issues to struggle with, haven't we? We still struggle with trying to bring together people from different classes, politics, and thought. Paul says to the Ephesians that we "have been brought near by the blood of Christ" and "in his flesh he has made all groups into one" (Ephesians 2:11-22). It is here at the Table that we remember the blood and body of Jesus, broken in order that we, both individually and as a group, would be made whole. In Jesus we are already one. May we sense this gift of unity today as we share this meal together.

Communion Hymn

"A Hymn of Joy We Sing"

In memory of the Savior's love, we keep the sacred feast, where every humble, contrite heart is made a welcome guest.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Lord, your children come to You today asking for your help. We are all sinners and we have fallen short of Your glory yet You continue to hold our hands. We pray and ask for forgiveness and we ask for blessings. But, we experience sickness, sadness, and cry out to You for help. Lord, we want you to listen to us when we need to listen to You. We need to trust ourselves less and trust in You more. Father, may we start today, right now, at this table. May we be faithful as Job. May we be patient. As we take this bread and cup may its true meaning strike at our hearts and have us recognize that we are Your children and that waiting and listening to You is what we need to do. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

Words of Institution

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 in Communion

Closing Hymn"Blest Be the Tie That Binds"Audra Allen,organistBlest be the tie that bindsWhen we are called to part,our hearts in Christian love:it gives us inward pain;the fellowship of kindred mindsbut we shall still be joined in heart,

is like to that above.

Pastor Gena

Pastor Gena

Audra Allen, organist

By faith we take the bread of life

by which our souls are fed,

that was for sinners shed.

and hope to meet again.

the cup in token for his blood

Gary Ford

Pastor Gena

Benediction

May Christ's words nourish us, like the sunshine and the rain, and help us grow strong and secure in faith, by faith.

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



Southmont-Presbyterian Medical Center Homebound Members:

Bill Behrens Rm 437 835 S Main Street Washington PA 15301

Don Ainsley Ed Alexy Gary Anderson Avery Allen Donna Bakaitis Tom Barnhart **Bill Behrens** Bristol Allan Berry Abby Blanchard Susan Britko Mabel Brooks Wanda Chicone Emily Cope Robinson Coretta and family Ruth Cox Irma Davis Jessica Duke Libby Eberhard Fred Engle Jay Freudenberg Jett Fuller Derek Gardiner Lois Gayman Joe Greene **Bonnie Gregg**

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!

Phyllis Cimino 317 Wellness Way Strabane Trails #325 Washington PA 15301

Judy Grover Sloan Amelia Hagy Kyle Hallam **Connie Hanning** Aryn Hess Ed & Harriet Jackman Family of Caleb Jackson Dallas Jacobovitz **Bob** Lanning Ty, Kerri, Allie, Ivy & Ty James Lacock Libby LeDuff Frank Lippert Lee & Betsy Martin Dave McConnell Don Melvin Michaela Nixon Ruth Mikuta Georgette Murray Karen Palfreyman **Deborah** Patterson **Betty Riecks**

Mrs Mary McDonough 949 Bruce Street Washington PA 15301

Rev. Stillwell

Betty Jo Riggle Jim and Barb Roupe John Shadeck Theresa Shape 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 Preparing for Baptism – Nyka Rash

> 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

ABC123... It's time to make School Kits!

Join your Outreach Ministry in making School Kits which will be donated to children in need through Church World Service. Our goal this year is to make **123** School Kits.

How you can help:

- 1. Purchase one or more items for the School Kits that we will assemble together. Choose one or more sticky notes in the Narthex. Sign your name and phone number next to the number(s) of your sticky note(s) on the record sheet. Purchase the items and return them to the boxes in the Narthex by **Sunday, August 8**.
- 2. Contribute money to purchase items for the School Kits or to help ship the School Kits. Give on Givelify or put money (marked "CWS Kits") in the Offering Plate.
- 3. Make one or more complete School Kits. Find full instructions at <u>https://cwskits.org/assemble-kits/school-kits/</u> or in the Narthex.
- 4. Help assemble our 123+ School Kits on **Sunday, August 15** right after worship.

Here's what you'll need

- One pair of blunt scissors removed from the package (rounded tip, only)
- Three 70-count bound notebooks or notebooks totaling 200-210 pages (no loose-leaf or filler paper)
- One 30-centimeter / 12" ruler
- One hand-held pencil sharpener removed from the package
- One large eraser (no pencil cap erasers)
- Six new, unsharpened pencils with erasers (please remove pencils from the package)
- One box of 24 crayons (only 24)
- One 12"x14" to 14"x17" finished size cotton or lightweight canvas bag with handles (solid color or kid-friendly fabric, no logos, reusable shopping bags or backpacks)

Optional: Loose school kit items may be placed in a large Ziploc type bag to keep them together. Remove the air, seal the bag and place inside of the cotton/canvas bag.

Value: \$15.00 Processing fee: \$2.00 per kit

Watch for more about making Church World Service Hygiene Kits in September!

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 Friday.

If you need anything at any time, please call the Church Office phone at 724-225-8610.