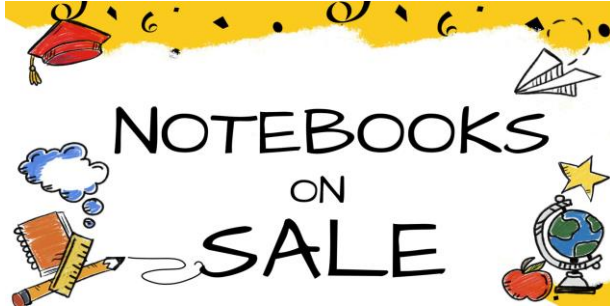


Manor Minutes
Volume 15 Issue 29
July 19, 2024

- Personnel Committee – July 25, 3pm Library

Stay up to date at www.fairhillmanorchurch.org/calendar



We will be collecting items for our **Church World Service School Kits** soon. But right now the **NOTEBOOKS** needed for the kits are on sale at Walmart for \$.45/each and Office Max for \$.50/each.

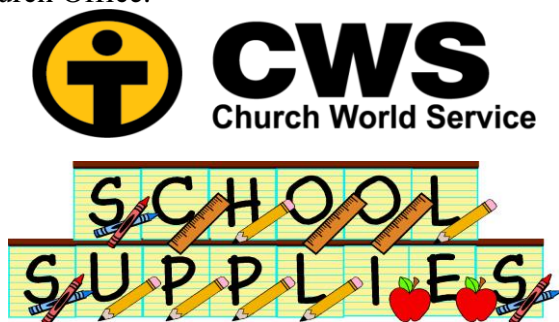
Each school kit needs 3 (70-page) spiral-bound notebooks.

- Take one tag (or more) from the basket in the Narthex 15 (70-page) notebooks.
- Write your name on the list so we know who has taken tags.
- Purchase your 70-page notebooks and bring them back to the church.
- Please return your tag with your 70-page notebooks so we can reuse the tags next year.

It is extremely important to only purchase 70-page spiral-bound notebooks as the kits must all be the same weight.

We will post the remaining items needed to complete the school kits soon. Our goal is to make **175** school kits this year.

If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Gena or the Church Office.



Organist Needed

We are looking to hire an **organist** to begin in August. The person may begin on piano and learn the organ as they go. The position involves playing for our weekly Sunday service at 10:15am as well as one choir practice a week from fall to spring and funerals and weddings when needed. Contact the church at fairhillmanor@yahoo.com if you or someone you know is interested.

Celebration Luncheon

On **August 4**, in honor of Carson Throckmorton on his last Sunday as our organist before he heads off to college, we will have a Celebration Luncheon. There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex if you would like to bring a side dish to the potluck luncheon. The church will provide the meat, drinks, and dessert.

The **Bethany Class** will meet at Eat'n Park on Tuesday, August 27, at noon for lunch. Everyone is welcome!





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

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

July 21, 2024 – 10:15am

Prelude

Carson Throckmorton, organist

Welcome

Rev. Stillwell

Call to Worship

Barb Bailey

Leader: When you are weary in your bones ...

People: here you will find rest.

Leader: When you are divided from family and friends ...

People: here you will find peace.

Leader: When you are discouraged and downhearted ...

People: here you will find hope and courage.

Leader: When you are looking for a shepherd to guide you ...

People: here you will find succor and peace.

Opening Hymn

“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love; hearts unfold like flowers before thee, opening to the sun above. Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, drive our fear and doubt away; giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord’s Prayer

Rev. Stillwell

Shepherding God, call us away to a deserted place, for we need your loving care. We need your Spirit to guide us. We need to apply your peace to our divisions. We yearn to abandon old grievances and embrace wholeness in our lives. We long to see all people, friends and adversaries alike, as beloved members of your household.

We confess that this is hard to do in a world of divisiveness and hate. In this time help us not to claim you for our side but to ask more if we are on your side. Forgive us our sins but remind us also to forgive others, and deliver us from the temptation to treat each other as if we are enemies.

Help us to drown out the calls of anger and turn off the broadcasts of demagogues and focus on the one who has taught us to love our neighbor and our enemy, who reminds us that it profits us nothing to gain the world but lose our soul.

O Healer of division, your Son came to abolish enmity and to create one humanity in his name. Unite us with your saints and bring us into the peace of your household, that we might dwell as one family through the one Spirit. Be present in our worship this day and seal us in the heart of Christ, our shepherd. Amen.

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:

“Glory Be to the Father”

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

First Scripture Reading

Leviticus 25:1-11

Linda Reese

Special Music

“Give Me Jesus”

Jim Cope

Children’s Message

Rev. Stillwell

Do you know that the Olympics are starting this week? I always enjoy watching them because I know that each athlete has worked so hard for a chance to win. Swimmers, runners, and gymnasts begin practicing when they are your age, and they spend a lot of time trying to be the best. When they do this they have to give up some things. They know that they will not be the best unless they give up unhealthy food, extra video game time, and sometimes play time with friends. They believe it is worth it when they win a medal.

It is similar to being a Christian. Paul describes being a Christian in Olympic terms. He says “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith”. In order to be a good Christian you have to give up some things. Do you know what these are? You have to give up lies, hate, grudges. As a Christian you will have to do something that can sometimes be harder than a pole vault or running a marathon. You have to be able to forgive people even who are not easy to forgive, and you are going to have to ask for forgiveness for yourself as well. It is hard, and that is why we need to practice, every day. In the end we will not get a medal, instead Paul says we will receive a crown of righteousness. I liked this because in the Olympics there is only one winner and only three people get a medal, but in our faith a crown is reserved for all who simply finish the race.

Second Scripture Reading

Matthew 18:21-35

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

“Forgive Us, As We Forgive Others”

Rev. Chris Stillwell

I once did a funeral for someone and when I asked the family if there were any scriptures she particularly liked they said that she liked the “Our Father”. That is the way that Catholics generally refer to the Lord’s Prayer, and so I made sure to incorporate it into the service. It is always interesting when I pray the Lord’s Prayer in a mixed group of people, because when I get to our portion for today, the part about forgiving, I usually stop speaking and just listen to the mix of people saying forgive us our trespasses, forgive our sins, and as we forgive our debtors.

In this prayer that all sects of Christianity pray, there is still some difference in how it is said. I don’t think there is any correlation between the denomination and the word choice. We say trespass. My home church used debts. The options derive not only from different translations, but from the different gospels which chose different words. Perhaps Jesus taught the prayer differently to different people, or maybe the interpretations to what he meant changed over time.

These words trespasses, sins, and debts mean roughly the same thing, but not exactly the same. Trespasses and sins can be used interchangeably. A good way to define sin is to describe it as a trespass against God. It is like a person is going against God, so to trespass against another isn’t just to walk on their property without their permission, but to sin against them. The third word, debt, is where the

differences lay. Certainly it is appropriate to think of our sins and our trespasses as spiritual debts that put us in debt to God, but evidence suggests that when Jesus taught this prayer he meant literal debts as well.

The gospel of Matthew came before the gospel of Luke, and in Matthew's version of the Lord's Prayer the word debts is used twice, but then Jesus follows by saying, "For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you;¹⁵ but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Luke follows by changing half of the prayer saying, "And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us."

The movement from debt to sins is likely to teach Jesus' hearers that as his followers they should not only forgive the debts of others but their sins as well. While it might seem strange to us to forgive the money a person owes, that was a prominent concern of the Old Testament. The law is full of such declarations going so far as to declare that every seven years anyone who is indebted to another so that even indentured servants are to be set free. Jewish people were not even allowed to charge interest to one another when loaning money.

You might wonder why God is so concerned about money and not spiritual things, but how one uses their money is a spiritual matter. Forgiving one's debts is the other side of give us this day our daily bread. God is not only concerned that people will have bread today, but also does not want them to be under the weight of debt that would ruin them tomorrow. This is God's way of ensuring that everyone is free from hunger and free from worry. It culminates in the parable we have heard, the parable of the unforgiving servant in which Jesus describes the Kingdom of Heaven as a place where literal debt is forgiven.

So Jesus' audience would have been very familiar with a religious leader telling them to forgive their debts, but Jesus wanted to take it further. It is one thing for a person to follow the letter of the law by forgiving a monetary debt, but they also needed to forgive sins against them as well, which is why Jesus and the gospel writers begin to conflate debts with trespasses and sins. The two go hand in hand and we need to remember that just as much as Jesus' audience did.

What is it to forgive someone but to erase the marks against them in your *ledger*. One of the best responses to grace I have seen came from a financial debt. My friend Darryl had bought a new truck and he had bit off more than he could pay when the monthly payments came due. I was there when he received a letter from his bank saying that their Christmas present to him was that he did not have to pay the December loan payment. Now this wasn't forgiving any of the actual debt but merely deferring it to the next month, but he was so relieved for this period of grace that it moved him to actual tears of relief.

At least with financial debt we know what we have to do to square it, but how much harder is it to settle our personal accounts with one another? If you have offended someone, how do you make up for it? If a woman cheats on her husband, what can be done to pay him back? If a man walks out on his children how does he begin to make up for it down the road? How do you put a price on these things?

When people owe us money we know exactly how much they owe and exactly what they must do to repay and still it is hard to forgive. If someone owes us one thousand dollars and we forgive them of that debt than we know that we are going to lose one thousand dollars, but if someone has hurt us and we forgive them what exactly are we losing?

We will lose the anger and the resentment that, unfortunately, sometimes fuels us. When others have wronged us, sinned against us, we can hold onto the wounds as power to hold over others. Anytime someone makes us mad we only need remind them of the way they hurt us in the past and they will be ashamed once again. We know, whether consciously or not, that forgiveness causes us to lose the hold we have on others, and maybe that is why it is so hard to do.

As a minister I often tell people that they need to forgive a person for the wrong done to them and just as often the resistance to forgive stems from the thought that the person who has committed the sin or incurred the debt doesn't deserve it and sometimes it is better to hold onto an old wound, we think, so we can prevent new ones from occurring, but all that really happens is that the old wounds grow, until they consume us in a pit of despair.

But that is why we should forgive. Forgiveness is just as beneficial to the person doing the forgiving as to the one being forgiven. When we forgive we let go of the pain, that has consumed us, we release the bitterness that has filled us, we lose the hurt that has haunted us, and at what cost? Well, if there wasn't anything a person could do to make up the debt, then might I suggest that you have lost nothing.

A movement to forgive the debt of third world countries was promulgated by many Christian leaders worldwide based upon the belief that freeing them of their debt would go a long way towards freeing them to live. Poor countries could not feed their people if they paid all of their GDP on interest of debt. There were many moral arguments put forth and the bible was quote repeatedly but, at the end of the day, the argument that won out, was that they would never likely be able to pay back their debt so what would the first world countries be losing? But the possibility of gaining countries that were developing and beginning to stand on their own feet was quite an incentive.

It is the same reasoning behind student loan forgiveness. It's not to say that people shouldn't pay back what they borrowed, but that many have far surpassed paying what they owe due to usurious interest rates. There should be a limit as to how much profit can be squeezed out of one person.

As with forgiveness of debts so too forgiveness of sins. If nothing will bring back what you have lost then you will lose nothing if you forgive, but what you will gain is immeasurable. Some take the words of this prayer and this parable to mean that God will only forgive us if we forgive others, but I do not think that is accurate. It is more accurate to say that God cannot save you unless you forgive, but, it is not that God is unmerciful, it is that you have entrapped yourself. When a person dies we often refer to that moment as letting go, but if we are holding on to sins, trespasses or debts incurred against us by others, we will be unable to let go, and then we will have lost everything.

I am reminded of that old saying about anger and hatred. To nurture our anger and hatred is like drinking poison hoping that it is going to kill the other person. And yet all it does is kill us and separate us from God's love. Seventy seven times! We forgive and forgive.

To forgive does not mean we condone what was done to us. To forgive does not mean we acquiesce or deny justice. To forgive means to refuse to let what happened destroy us and alienate us from God and from one another. It demands hard work and vigilance, but it is the way to life and discipleship and to God.

Jesus invites us to "forgive from our hearts." May we go that way knowing that forgiveness from our hearts will draw us nearer to the heart of God. Amen.

Call to Offering

Donna Stenski

From many places and ways of life, God knits us together into a holy community. From strangers, Christ builds us together into a holy temple in the Lord. With thankful hearts, let us be generous 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

Bringer of peace, you shaped your people and gave them a home. In gratitude for your steadfast love—for calling us to feed in your pastures and rest safely in your fields—we bring our gifts before you this day. May they offer the love of our shepherd to those in your tender care. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Rev. Stillwell

We come to this table carrying the heavy burdens of life and living, and before we take our seat, Jesus invites us to lay them down so that we might truly enjoy the meal. This is a table where we are expected to feast on the richness of faith and love and on a story that is still being written. We dine not as individuals, but as members of a community spanning space and time, with those who have gathered around tables like this one since the early days of the church.

At this table we lay down our burdens and our debts, and at this table we lay down the burdens and debts others have in us. When we have done, so then we find what this table really is

Here it is: the table of rest. Here it is: the table of renewal. Jesus invites us, calling, “Come to me! Lay down your burdens.” This table is food for the hungry. This table is hope for the weary. We are all hungry and weary. Here it is: the joyful feast of Jesus Christ. Let us partake that we may all be joyful.

Communion Hymn

“Come, Share the Lord”

We gather here in Jesus’ name, his love is burning in our hearts like living flame; for through the loving Son the Father makes us one: Come, take the bread, come, drink the wine, come share the Lord. No one is a stranger here, everyone belongs; finding our forgiveness here, we in turn forgive all wrongs.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Rita Puskarich

Words of Institution

Rev. Stillwell

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

(1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

Sharing Holy Communion

You will receive the bread and cup together. Please hold them; we will take each together as one body. Disciples of Christ believe in an Open Table. All who profess Christ and follow Him are welcome to share His meal. Gluten free wafers are available in the Narthex.

Call to Discipleship

Rev. Stillwell

If you have come to know Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior and you would like to profess that you intend to begin a life of faith, learning to walk in his way of Love, you are welcome to contact one of the Pastors to take this step. If you would like to join this part of the Body of Christ at Fairhill Manor Christian Church, to covenant to journey together in this life of faith, please reach out to one of the Pastors to learn more. We all take these moments to rededicate our lives to following Jesus.

Closing Hymn

“The Old Rugged Cross”

On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross, the emblem of suffering and shame; and I love that old cross where the dearest and best for a world of lost sinners was slain. So I'll cherish the old rugged cross, till my trophies at last I lay down; I will cling to the old rugged cross, and exchange it some day for a crown.









Benediction

Rev. Stillwell













Go forth from this place with your burdens lightened— not only by the nourishment of spirit that you have been given, but by the strength of knowing your burdens are shared in Christian community. Go forth to be God's voice of grace wherever you find yourself in the days to come.











Puzzle!














Use the grid to discover what James 5:13-18 advises when challenges loom.









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








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Answers: Pray in faith. Pray for each other. Pray earnestly.

Do you have a prayer request or need help? Please feel free to contact Rev. Chris (412) 956-6590) or Pastor Gena (724) 263-0033 directly and confidentially. Or scroll down on the opening page of our website (www.fairhillmanorchurch.org) to "Requests for Prayer or Help." There you can send an email which will go directly to Rev. Chris. We are One Body in Christ!

Prayer List:

Homebound Members:

Mrs. Mary McDonough
949 Bruce Street
Washington PA 15301

Chuck and Mary Wiseman
880 S Main St, Apt 214
Washington PA 15301

Elinor Newman (Southmont)
835 S Main St, Rm 513
Washington PA 15301

Alice Cokeley
900 N Cass Lake Rd, Apt 324
Waterford MI 48328

Carol Brown
36 Old Hickory Ridge Rd, Rm 213
Washington PA 15301

Doris Sorice
880 S Main St, Apt 336
Washington PA 15301

Ed Alexey
Avery Allen
Jeannie Allison
Terry Bailey
Bob Bakaitis
Donna Bakaitis
Jim Banish
Martin Berisford
Eleanor Boyles
Mabel Brooks
Leslie Byron
Sandra Carman
Denise Charles
Wanda Chicone
MaryAnn Coates
Zach Correll
Ruth Cox
Irma Davis
Sue Donaldson
Benjamin Dube
Jessica Duke
Libby Eberhard
Thomas Farabee
Connie Faust
Kathy Moninger-Ford
Jay Freudenberg
Lois Gayman
Sue Golsky
Joe Greene
Bonnie Gregg
Theresa Hancher
Irma Harper
Sheila Harris

Rick Herrnberger
Aryn Hess
Ed Jackman
Dallas Jacobovitz
Denis Keeling
Ivy Lacock
Ty Lacock, Jr.
Bob Lanning
David Leonard
John Lewis
Lee Martin
Shirley McClellan
Dave McConnell
Pam McCord
Norm McDonough
Ruth Mikuta
Dick Moninger
Paul Myers
Joe Neckerman
Michaela Nixon
Sandy Nixon
Carmen Oliverio
Peggy Oliverio
Deborah Patterson
JoAnn Piatt
Bo & Patty Pryor
Rick Rafferty
Cathy Rentgen
Jeannie Riffle
Lori Riffle

Emily Cope Robinson
Dave Ross
Sandy Ross
John Samida
Debbie Sekorky
Sam Sheller
Valerie Shetler
Hannah Simpson
Doug and Tracy Smith
Walter Smith Family
Darci Sprowls
Cathy Stewart
John Stewart
Bernard Teagarden
Beth Teagarden
Jane Teagarden
Thad Turner
Tammie Wallace
Jonathon Ward
Gary Weaver
Tom Williams
Addison Wittenberg
Sarah Wittenberg

In the Military

Lance Dague	Andrew Gregg
Terrell McClain	Zachary Keene
Brandon Lipscomb	Sarah Lipscomb
Travis Ringer	Emily Chase
Dylan Demain	

The brave men and women who serve our country make incredible sacrifices every day. We are forever grateful for their service and dedication. Please remember the military members that are deployed and away from their family that they may return to their homes safely.