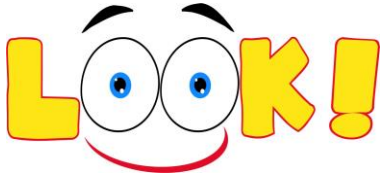


Manor Minutes

Volume 12 Issue 26

July 2, 2021



Prayer Shawl – July 6, 11am Parlor

Stewardship/Finance Ministry – July 6, 6pm via Zoom

Pastor's Cabinet – July 8, 2pm Library

Personnel Committee – July 8, 3pm Library

July Board Reports due to office – July 7

Elders Meeting – July 14, 6pm Shepherds Room

Board Meeting – July 14, 7pm Library

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

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.

Fairhill Manor extends its to the family of Mark Britko, who passed away Friday, June 25. Please pray for his wife Susan, sons Chad and Colin, parents-in-law Chuck and Mary Wiseman, sister-in-law Vicki Tipton, and all of their family and friends. A memorial service will be held at Fairhill Manor Christian Church on July 5 at 4pm.

With Sympathy

Fairhill Manor Christian Church is now taking applications for students of our church that will be attending college this fall and wish to apply for a **\$2,000 scholarship under the Reese Scholarship Program**. Applications are available on the FMCC Website. Just go to fairhillmanorchurch.org then click on Ministries and Reese Grant. You will need to move down to the Internal Application which can be downloaded to a PDF. When it is completed, please email it to finance@fairhillmanorchurch.org. The applications are marked on the form to be submitted by July 1 but since we are a little late in sending this out, we will extend it to July 15th. Should you have any questions please contact Jerry Puskarich at (724) 503-5658 or email at jerrypuskarich@yahoo.com. Applications received will be reviewed and awards made in early August.



We give thanks to Rolinda Sprowls for her years of dedication to the **Prayer and Care Ministry**, sending cards to those in need of encouragement and support on behalf of our congregation. Thank you, Rolinda, for your ministry!



We are looking for someone to carry on the Prayer and Care Ministry's work of **sending cards**. Do you like to work behind the scenes in a quiet but meaningful way that really makes a difference to people in need of connection and support? Do you like to encourage others by sending cards? Maybe this is one of the ways God has gifted you. Would you share that gift with our congregation? Let Pastor Gena know. She will orient you to the tasks involved and make sure you have the materials, support and resources you need.

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 4, 2021

Prelude

Jody Mullis, pianist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Serena Dube

When winds tear into our vessels, God's grace will be our guide.
When insecurities mount up within our souls, God's strength will be our guide.
When hardships weaken our resolve, God's mercy will be our guide.
When insults rip and slander stains, God's courage will be our guide.
When vulnerability saps our faith, God's presence will be our guide.

Opening Hymn

"Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory"

Jody Mullis, pianist

Mine eyes have seen the glory
of the coming of the Lord;
he is trampling out the vintage where
the grapes of wrath are stored;
he has loosed the fateful lightning
of his terrible swift sword;
his truth is marching on. [Refrain]

He has sounded forth the trumpet
that shall never call retreat;
he is sifting out all human hearts
before his judgment seat;
O be swift, my soul, to answer him;
be jubilant, my feet!
Our God is marching on. [refrain]

[Refrain:] Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah!
His truth is marching on.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Rev. Stillwell

With glad and grateful hearts, with thanksgiving flowing from sea to shining sea, we gather this day to sing a song of praise to you, O God, for our country, our world, and for one another.

We give you thanks, O God, for our nation, for its north and south, east and west, for its mountains and rivers, trees and forests. We give you thanks for the hope it has given to us, and we pray that you will give us strength to make it all that it is not yet and pray for the day when the country realizes its fondest dreams of liberty and justice for all of your children.

We give you thanks for the world that you created and promise to do better caring for it than we have done. We pray for those throughout the world who feel the sting of hunger, the pain of disease, and the violence of war. We confess that we have not done all in our power to bring these things to an end, and we pray that your Holy Spirit will guide us to find ways to do more as stewards of your creation.

We give you thanks, Lord, for one another. From near and far we come to worship you and find our place in the body of Christ. For those who are here we give thanks. For those at home and on Zoom, we give thanks. For those traveling and those who are visiting, we give thanks. For those who are sick, place

bound, hospitalized, we give thanks, and we pray that they will feel the presence of the church through the Spirit's tether.

In particular we pray for those on our prayer list and those whom we have mentioned this morning. We lift them up into your care and surround them with our love.

We give thanks to you, O God, among the peoples of the earth. We sing praises to you among the nations. Your steadfast love is as high as the heavens, and your faithfulness extends to the clouds. We exalt you above the heavens, for your glory extends over all the earth. We pray to you in the way your Son taught us...

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 2:4-15

Kevin Puskarich

Special Music

“America the Beautiful”

Jody Mullis and Jim Cope

Children's Message

Rev. Stillwell

Welcome everyone and happy Fourth of July. Do you have plans to celebrate today? I imagine most or all of you will go someplace to watch the fireworks which are going to be going on all over the place tonight. I like fireworks. They are bright, colorful, and surprising. You hear them go off but you have no idea what they will look like until they explode in a dazzling display of color and light.

Fireworks are many things. They are loud. They are pretty. They are short. I have seen a lot of fireworks, and they are all wonderful, but none of them last for more than a few seconds at most.

Do you know what does last? Stars. Stars are also in the sky, and they are also bright and beautiful, but not nearly as much as fireworks at least to our eyes. Sometimes we take the stars for granted and when fireworks are exploding in the sky we do not even see them, but I wonder, would you want your faith to be more like fireworks or do you want it to be more like stars?

I suspect if we answered without thinking we would say fireworks, because they are flashy, and, while stars twinkle, they don't catch our attention nearly as much as fireworks do, but they are always there. Because of that people have used them for centuries as guidance like the North Star or the constellations. Sometimes they bring hope when people wish upon them.

Fireworks are nice, but if I could choose between fireworks or stars I would pick the stars. Likewise, we don't want our faith in Jesus to burn bright and beautiful for a moment and then be gone like a firework. We want it to burn steadily and constant like the stars in the sky. Fireworks dazzle and delight for a time, but Jesus remains steady and constant as the northern star and so should our faith in Him.

Second Scripture Reading

Revelation 21:9-14, 22:1-5

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

“Come to the Garden”

Rev. Stillwell

The English writer and garden designer, Mirabel Osler, once said, “There can be no other occupation like gardening in which, if you were to creep up behind someone at their work, you would find them smiling.” This may be true for many, but clearly Mirabel hasn’t been to visit me when I am in the garden. You will usually hear me swearing at a groundhog or the aphids or the slugs.

It's interesting, I really do enjoy gardening, but, like a lot of things, it gives me a great deal of frustration that I like the idea of gardening a little bit more than gardening itself, still, I'm working on it. As a matter of fact, I think there are a lot of people who like the idea of faith a little bit better than the actual reality of it so I think that's teaching me something right there.

Still, the reason I keep a garden is because it is beautiful. Every year Jessi and I wonder if it is worth the trouble when we could easily go to the farmer’s market and buy a bushel of peppers from local professionals who really know what they are doing for as much as we spend on plants and seeds, but that isn’t the point. I argue, as the late, great Texas songwriter, Guy Clark, sang, “Only two things money can’t buy, and that’s true love and homegrown tomatoes.”

Apparently the people who lived in our house before us did not feel the same way, as our backyard when we moved in was nothing but gravel So we said, “we're going to get rid of it, and that's going to be our garden.” We were so young. We were so naive. Just move the gravel, but it wasn’t that easy, so we finally said, “The gravel is going to stay here.” We decided to make raised beds. So easy, you just make a raised bed. No problem, except that first we had to get the bricks and build them and then we had to fill it. That was just the first part, and so the point is, is that over the last 15 years we have been working really hard and getting a very small, small amount of vegetables. And we still do it.

One day we're going to get good at this. One day our faith is going to be great. One day we're gonna figure it out. We've been terrible at it, but we keep going at it and going in it because we think it's worth it, and for at least right now we see the flowers blooming we see the plants going up and any vegetables we get are a bonus.

It should go without out saying I don’t walk in my garden. It’s not that big. I just like to sit and look at it, because there is something about it that is soothing and comforting, and I know that I am certainly not the only one. Gardens capture our imaginations and our spirits, and the reason for this should not be too hard to understand. For in the beginning God gave us a garden not just to til and eat out of, but to live in. We come from a garden and we will all get planted in the end becoming fertilizer for other plants. So there is something about gardens that is deeply familiar to us.

In the book of Genesis we read that God planted a garden and placed humans in it. So when we garden we are recalling a past home, a past state, where we were at peace with one another and all things. So gardens remind us of our best selves that spark of divinity in each human soul, but we also like gardening because in that act we are also acting like God, the Great Gardener.

In fact, the Bible says no vegetation existed on the earth because there was as yet no rain and no one to til the land. Therefore, we see that human beings have apart to play in the creation of creation. Woods and forests can happen without human help, but a garden is a combination of God and human effort. Perhaps there is no place in this world where humans and God are closer than when we walk together in the garden, and when we work together in the garden.

From this passage and from human experience we learn that gardens equal paradise. A garden contains many things whether vegetable or flowers, but more than anything it holds all the wonderful aspects of nature with none of the bad. After the fall, humans were kicked out of the garden and the world changed and growing things became difficult, and so too did human beings understanding of nature change.

To many, nature means natural, and we like things that are natural but also nature means wilderness and that can be a less comforting image. The Israelites used wilderness indiscriminately as a term that was meant for the desert or the forest, any place outside of human community and therefore outside of God. Now, today, it is possible for human beings to be so separated from nature that the idea of spending time in it is terrifying let alone living in it.

A funny song tells the tale of a world that suddenly returns to its natural state where all around is nothing but flowers, and the singer takes the unexpected turn of lamenting the loss of real estate, Pizza Huts and 7-11's rather than celebrate the natural beauty of the garden that surrounds him.

It amuses me, because I understand, and to some degree I sympathize. A few years ago we visited George Washington's Gardens. It was a nice place to visit but I wouldn't want to live there. Perhaps the desire for heated rooms and a roof over our head and the need for internet and cable television is an indication of the fall of human nature and our desire to coerce tomatoes and cucumbers from the ground is evidence of the better angels of our nature.

Regardless, the image of the garden runs throughout scripture reminding the people from where they came and also to where they are going for in the book of Revelation we get the image of another tree, not the one of the knowledge of Good and Evil but the Tree of Life. This is not a new tree, for it also was in Eden as the source of eternal life in the Garden, from which access is revoked when humanity is driven from the garden. The Tree of Life in John's revelation is beautiful, and it is situated in a garden in a city, which is the new Jerusalem.

Now that is how I like it. This is a garden, not to live in, but to accentuate where I live. Paradise is now described not as garden, but as a city with a garden. A little bit of nature in the midst of our human dwellings. For gardens are really a combination of nature and one's will as we will discuss this summer, and often gardens can be one against nature as we too often experience.

So given this it makes sense to think that we can learn a lot about God's nature as we work with nature in our gardens. The Romantics believed that nature was the best way to learn about God, and I certainly hear so many people say that they experience God in nature the most, so let us spend the summer asking what do the gardens we work in or visit reveal to us about God? What aspects of God's nature are revealed to us in our gardens?

We will discuss abundance, generosity, time, grace, control, care, and so much more. But let me tell you the very first thing I learned in the garden, humility. It's not humility about God that I learned in the garden, but humility for myself and how great God is. On the one hand gardening seems so simple. Follow three easy steps and you get flowers and food, but so many things can go wrong. So when I look at my plants that have been eaten by bugs, leaves snipped off by groundhogs, flowers that I just can't keep watered or the tomatoes last year that died because they got too much water, then I look at the world and see all the wonderful things God has grown I know two things. God is great and I am not God.

This is actually quite comforting, because, if we are honest, we know that if the world hinges upon human skill and ability we are in trouble. Yet, knowing that, God has asked us, calls us to join Him in the garden and use what skill we have to work with God in the Garden of Creation.

The knowledge that we know very little, the knowledge that God is so much greater than we are, this is the first step to true knowledge, so let us join together and walk with God in the Garden this summer and see and learn and taste all the wonderful things that the Great Gardener is growing for us right now.

Call to Offering

Serena Dube

Despite the sufferings and challenges on our journeys, your power transcends human weakness. We celebrate your generosity by sharing treasures, talents, and time along our way. No matter where we travel or which hardships we face, we sing your name in every corner of the earth. With our songs of praise, we share our gifts with your creation. Amen.

Doxology

Dedication of Offering Prayer

Pastor Gena

Divine Giver, all that we have is a gift from you, and your grace is just what we need. Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts that they may increase your blessing to others, through the grace and mercy of Christ. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Pastor Gena

It helps to know the beginnings and endings of things. You might have seen our kids doing some work during worship this summer. We call this “worship work.” They do things like mark the week’s Scriptures in their Bibles, work on a children’s bulletin, say thank you to someone leading worship, find certain symbols in the sanctuary and draw them, listen carefully for specific words and themes during the Children’s Message, think of someone to pray for during the prayer time – things that help them be more engaged with worship.

It helps to know the beginnings and endings of things. So as a starting place we often practice finding the books at the beginning and ending of the Bible. At the beginning is Genesis and at the ending is Revelation, the two books we read from today. These books tell us the story of how God was with us in the beginning and is our Creator. And the story of how God will be with us in the end and is our Re-Creator. And all the books of the Bible together tell us the story of how God is with us all along the way, asking us to be in a relationship with God and follow God’s ways.

It helps to know the beginnings and endings of things. Last week I asked the kids to draw one symbol that is on the front of our Communion Table. Have you ever noticed the symbols here? The first one is Alpha, the first letter of the Greek alphabet. The last one is Omega, the last letter of the Greek alphabet. The beginning and the end. Alpha and Omega together are an old Christian symbol used to represent God and/or Jesus. And in between the Alpha and the Omega on our table is another symbol for Jesus, IHS. These are the first three letters of Jesus’ name in Greek. This Table tells us the story of how Jesus was with us in the beginning. And the story of how Jesus will be with us in the end. And it reminds us of how Jesus is with us all along the way.

It helps to know the beginnings and endings of things. Here at this Table we rest in the knowledge that we are held from the beginning to the ending of our lives – and into new life – by our God. May this Table remind us that we are never alone, that nothing can separate us from God’s love as shown to us in Jesus. From our beginnings to our endings and beyond, we are welcome at this Table.

Communion Hymn*“Let Us Break Bread Together”*

Jody Mullis, pianist

Let us break bread together on our knees (on our knees) Let us drink wine together on our knees (on our knees)
let us break bread together on our knees (on our knees) let us drink wine together on our knees (on our knees)

[Refrain:] When I fall on my knees,
with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me (on me)

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Craig Dotson

Lord we give thanks for the chance to worship as a congregation in your house. We feel a special sense of independence on this holiday Sunday after the experiences we have shared over the past 16 months. We take this important time in our worship service to give attention to the unique sacrifices made for us so long ago. Perhaps after the sacrifices we have felt over the past period we will more fully appreciate the gifts we enjoy every day. We pray for your continued guidance on our spiritual journey under your watch. We offer our prayer in your name. Amen

Words of Institution

Pastor Gena

For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.
(1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

Sharing in Communion**Closing Hymn***“In the Garden”*

Jody Mullis, pianist

I come to the garden alone, while the dew is still on the roses; and the voice I hear, falling on my ear, the Son of God discloses. [Refrain]	He speaks, and the sound of his voice is so sweet the birds hush their singing, and the melody that he gave to me within my heart is ringing. [Refrain]
--	--

[Refrain] And he walks with me, and he talks with me,
and he tells me I am his own,
and the joy we share, as we tarry there,
none other has ever known.

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

May the grace of the Word of life rest upon you; the love of the Source of life embrace you;
and the transforming power of the Breath of life be planted in your heart this day and all your days.

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

PRAYER REQUEST

Southmont-Presbyterian Medical Center Homebound Members:

Bill Behrens Rm 437
835 S Main Street
Washington PA 15301

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

Mrs Mary McDonough
949 Bruce 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
Lois Gayman
Joe Greene
Bonnie Gregg

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 & Charles Riecks

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

Church Office hours: The Church Office will be closed July 5, in observance of Independence Day

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.