

# Manor Minutes

Volume 12 Issue 30

July 30, 2021



“In the Garden” Sermon Series discussion – August 4, 1-2pm via Zoom  
Stewardship/Finance Ministry – August 10, 6pm via Zoom  
Elders – August 11, 6pm Shepherds Room  
Personnel Committee – 4pm Library  
Wild Things Game – August 13, 7pm  
Stay up to date, check [www.fairhillmanorchurch.org/calendar](http://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.



Rev. Chris will be on vacation August 14-17.  
Pastor Gena will be on vacation August 21-28.

*Thinking of you*

Please take a minute to send a note to Ruth Cox. Her address is:

3821 Wilson Blvd, Apt 515  
Arlington, VA 22203



Take a minute to check out the church's website [www.fairhillmanorchurch.org](http://www.fairhillmanorchurch.org). You can find a wealth of information including:

- Online Bulletin
- Present and past issues of the Manor Minutes
- Present and past issues of the Newsletter
- An easy link to Givelify
- Church Calendar



## Fairhill Manor Christian Church

*(Disciples of Christ)*

351 Montgomery Ave.

724-225-8610

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Pastor

Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor

August 1, 2021

### **Prelude**

Audra Allen, organist

### **Welcome**

Pastor Gena

### **Call to Worship**

Linda Reese

As one body in Christ, we gather together this day.  
Blessed by one Spirit, we gather in unity and love.  
Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made Heaven and earth.  
We call upon the Lord, and worship God's holy name.

### **Opening Hymn**

*"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"*

Audra Allen, organist

Love divine, all loves excelling,  
joy of Heaven, to earth come down;  
fix in us thy humble dwelling,  
all thy faithful mercies crown;  
Jesus, thou art all compassion,  
pure, unbounded love thou art;  
visit us with thy salvation,  
enter every trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe thy loving Spirit  
into every troubled breast;  
let us all in thee inherit,  
let us find the promised rest;  
take away the love of sinning,  
alpha and omega be;  
end of faith, as its beginning,  
set our hearts at liberty.

### **Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer**

Rev. Stillwell

We come before you, O living God, to renew our tired spirits for it is the rest that we find in you that calls forth new strength. Let us rest in you awhile and feel you surrounding us in safety and love.

For the weary, we pray for comfort and peace.

For the worried, we pray for solace and reassurance.

For the suffering, we pray for relief and hope.

For the joyous, we offer thanks and praise.

Gracious God, we want to live as people worthy of your calling. Help us to recognize your gifts and blessings, that we may live up to our calling and bless others with our words and our lives. When we fall short, have mercy on us.

Help us all to set our priorities differently, so that you come before all other demands in our lives - for only then, we know, O God, may we be filled with your life once again for the fullest living on this earth. Hear our prayers and grant us your peace.

When we don't know our mistakes, speak truth to us with your loving guidance. Create a new heart within us, a heart full of love and gratitude. Nourish us with the grace of your presence, that we may indeed live as people worthy of your calling.

As people worthy of your calling we recommit to living this call: by conducting ourselves with humility, gentleness, and patience; by making every effort to preserve our unity, and accepting one another with love, and by celebrating our various gifts, that we may grow in every way into Christ.

*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 1:26-31**

Sandy Todaro

**Special Music**

**“Summer Song,” Robert Lau**

Audra Allen

**Children's Message**

Rev. Stillwell

Have you ever planted anything? Perhaps you took some packages of seeds and planted a garden of vegetables. If so, you know that the type of soil that you have is very important to the success of a garden. If the ground is too hard, or full of rocks and weeds, you probably won't have a very good crop of vegetables.

Jesus once told a story about a man who went out and planted some seeds. Some of the seed fell on the path where the ground was very hard. The seeds just lay on top of the ground and the birds came and ate the seeds. Some of the seed fell on rocky ground. The seeds sprang up quickly, but when the sun came, the plants dried up because they didn't have good roots. Some of the seeds fell among weeds and plants grew for a little while, but the weeds took over and choked them out. Fortunately, some of the seed fell on good soil and the plants grew strong and healthy and produced a good crop.

In Jesus' story, the Word of God is the seed, and we are the soil. Often, when we come to church, the preacher is preaching, but we aren't really paying attention. Perhaps we are thinking about what we are going to do that afternoon or about what we did yesterday. We are hearing the Word, but we are not listening. That is like throwing seed on the top of the ground. It won't ever grow into anything in our life. There are other times when we hear the Word and we get excited about it, but then our excitement fades and we drift away. That is like the seeds that fall on the rocky ground. The plants spring up, but then they don't grow because the roots are too shallow.

Sometimes we hear the Word and we believe what it says, but we want to keep on doing the same things we have been doing. That is like planting the seed in with a bunch of weeds. If that happens, then it will not be long before the weeds overcome the plant that was growing from the seeds.

When we hear the word, and we listen and try to understand what it says and put it into practice in our daily life, then we are like good soil. We are like soil where the seed takes root and grows and produces a plentiful harvest. That is the kind of soil that Jesus wants us to be. What kind of dirt are you?

Let us pray. Lord help us to be like good soil, ready to receive your word, and ready to grow faith from your word that will bear fruit in the world to be shared.

## Second Scripture Reading

## Galatians 5:13-26

Rev. Stillwell

### Sermon

### “Be Fruitful”

Rev. Stillwell

Last week we talked about weeds and how they represent human nature, and they do, or least they can. Within every human heart there are weeds, which, as Christians we call sin, that grow and grow and if left unchecked will push out the things we want to grow in our heart until, we, as people, are nothing more than a weed, taking up resources and space, choking the joy and life out of the world.

That is what we could be, and some people are. Sometimes when you know why someone does something terrible it makes it a little better because at least you understand, but a heart full of weeds finds no joy in anything they do, only in taking the joy of others.

We all have known and encountered weeds in our life, and we wish we could pull them out of our lives like we pull the weeds out of our flowerbeds, or spray them with weed killer, but if we were to do that; if we were to respond to them in effect the same way they treat us, we would not really kill the weeds, but instead would kill the other things that we really do want to grow in our heart, and that is the fruit.

Do you have fruit growing in your heart? I remember when I was young; accidentally swallowing a watermelon seed and then being terrified because my brother told me a watermelon would grow in my stomach. Now I know that will not happen, so how can fruit grow in our hearts? Well the fruit in the heart is actually fruit of the spirit and this fruit is not really strawberries or lemons, but, as the apostle Paul writes, “the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.”

These are the fruits that we should want to grow in our hearts, and we could learn something about how to grow them from how we grow the fruits in our garden. A man went out to grow his garden and scattered his seed on the ground, but he did not plant them in the dirt and they were eaten by birds and animals and nothing grew. Upset about this he told his neighbor who said, “Man, you have to plant the seeds into the soil. The soil nurtures and feeds and tells the plant that it is okay to come out of the seed,” so the man did as he was told and put new seeds into good, rich soil.

He waited and waited and little came up and what did withered and died. Again he went to his neighbor with complaints and again the neighbor tried to straighten him out. “Look, you have to water the plants that come up. The soil is the foundation where the plants’ roots take hold, but the plant thirsts for more, so you have to water them.” So the man did as he was told, he planted new seeds in good soil in the shade of his deck and watered them every day, but without sun the plants did not grow very tall and produced no fruit.

Again the man complained to his neighbor and again his neighbor told him what to do saying, “The sun is the final piece. The plant uses the sunshine to make food and it pulls nutrients from the soil. You need all three - water, sun, and soil - for your garden to grow.” The man thought about this for a minute and said, “this was all a lot easier when I was just growing weeds”.

It is easier to grow weeds of course, but we all know that nothing worth having is easy. So to bear the fruit of the Spirit we also must have good soil, water, and sun. For us, the soil is the thing in which we have been rooted and raised. Our home lives as children, our education, our knowledge, all nourish and sustain us.

It starts with the love we receive from our parents. There is an instant bond at birth born from having been carried for nine months, and that bond is strengthened by the constant care and love our parents showed us even when we were too young to know or remember. Having been raised in love we will have every opportunity to bear fruit. Where love has been lacking there is still hope, however.

There is still hope for the second thing we need is water, and I would argue that this life giving water comes to us in the form of tears. It would be nice to think that we should always have happy carefree lives, but we won't. The tears that come with sadness from experiencing loss in life are the tears that water our soil so that we will know that nothing in life is guaranteed. Likewise, having our own experience of grief will make it much easier for us to be empathetic and compassionate towards others who grow through similar things.

God came to us in the form of Christ and suffered as he did so that he could demonstrate that he does know the troubles we face. One of the most beautiful verses in all of scripture is the shortest; Jesus wept. This one verse shows that God in Christ cares and loves and understands as Jesus wept on hearing of the death of his friend, Lazarus, who he knew he would raise. In order for us to bear fruit that will glorify God we must also go through the trials of life that others experience.

Finally we need sunshine in our life. We need the moments of joy and celebration that feel like the first rays of a new day's sun on our skin. We may not be able to perform photosynthesis as the plants can but, we can convert the good and happy times of our life into spiritual food that will nourish us and make us grow.

Like a fruit tree these three things, the water, the sun, and the goodly soil are needed for us to bear fruit, but there is one thing more.

Fruit will never grow itself. Branches cannot grow fruit on their own. The soil and the water are taken in through the trees roots and the sun through its leaves. It cannot grow without all the work that goes into making it happen. A garden requires patient labor and attention. Plants do not grow merely to satisfy ambitions or to fulfill good intentions. They thrive because someone expended effort on them.

Likewise, the same is true for us. A branch by itself will bear nothing. It must be connected to a healthy, vibrant vine, and that is why Christ calls himself the true vine, for if we abide in him, then each of us will be branches that will bear fruit.

One more thing can be learned from our garden. You may think to yourself, but I have no fruit in my garden, only vegetables like tomatoes and peppers, but did you know that tomatoes and peppers actually are fruits? Commonly we think of fruits as the sweet plants we grow in the garden and vegetables are the savory, but in fact, fruits are defined botanically as the mature part of a plant that bears seed, while vegetables are any other edible part of a plant.

Why is this important? Because that is the final lesson that fruits of the garden can teach us about fruits of the spirit. It seems to me that Paul may have known about this distinction when he chose his metaphor, because just as tomatoes are designed to distribute the seeds of the tomato plant throughout the world, so too are the fruits of the spirit designed to be shared for in them are the seeds of faith that might grow in another's heart.

The fruits of the spirit must also have seeds, so that love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control are fruits that we cannot only share with others, but that we can use to help others grow those fruits for themselves.

In the end this is the only weed killer there is for us. We could of course, actually kill the weeds in our lives, the people who trouble us or who upset us, but in doing so the fruits of our spirit will all be killed as well. Much like pesticide we would destroy our garden in an attempt to save it.

But Jesus teaches us to shower our enemy with love, to walk a mile in another person's shoe, to judge not lest we be judged, and this does not mean that we approve of everything someone does, rather it means that we confront a person whose behavior angers us, upset us, or hurts us in a way that disarms them. By returning hate with love, bitterness with joy, lack of self-control with self-control we have the only thing proven to rid the world of weeds, the gospel.

In the garden Adam and Eve were told by God to be fruitful and multiply, and we have one traditional understanding of what God meant by that. I do not wish to contradict that interpretation, but simply suggest that there is also another way to be fruitful given to us many years later by God through Paul, and that is to grow the fruits of the spirit in our heart so that through showing love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control followers of Christ will multiply throughout the earth.

### **Call to Offering**

Linda Reese

Whatever measure of grace and giftedness you have been given, it is enough. From this measure, you are invited to share yourselves with God and with God's world. Let us give as we are able with glad and generous hearts.

### **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**

Pastor Gena

Receive these offerings, O Lord, for your work in the world. Bless us as we give of our resources and of ourselves, and bless those who will receive these gifts. May our offering sow seeds of hope and bear the fruit of love wherever they are sown. Amen.

### **Invitation to Communion**

Pastor Gena

Most Sundays of his adult life, Wendell Berry has taken Sabbath walks in the woods around his Kentucky farm – and many Sabbath poems have been born along the way. Here's one of his best.

“1985, V” by Wendell Berry

How long does it take to make the woods?

As long as it takes to make the world.

The woods is present as the world is, the presence of all its past, and of all its time to come.

It is always finished, it is always being made,

the act of its making forever greater than the act of its destruction.

It is part of eternity, for its end and beginning belong to the end and beginning of all things, the beginning lost in the end, the end in the beginning.

What is the way to the woods, how do you go there?  
By climbing up through the six days' field,  
kept in all the body's years, the body's sorrow, weariness, and joy.  
By passing through the narrow gate on the far side of that field  
where the pasture grass of the body's life gives way to the high, original standing of the trees.  
By coming into the shadow, the shadow of grace of the strait way's ending,  
the shadow of the mercy of light.

Why must the gate be narrow?  
Because you cannot pass beyond it burdened.  
To come in among these trees you must leave behind the six days' world,  
all of it, all of its plans and hopes.  
You must come without weapon or tool, alone, expecting nothing, remembering nothing,  
Into the ease of sight, the brotherhood [*and sisterhood*] of eye and leaf.

Let us make our way up through the six days of our lives during which we toil and plan, make our way up through the days which are ours, to this Sabbath table in the woods. Here we find time different, always being made anew and yet always finished somewhere. The story always being told in new ways and yet always finished in love and mercy and grace. The beginning and the end are lost in each other here at this table.

Come through the narrow gate from the six days of your sweat and toil, your loneliness and pain, your accomplishments and task lists. Come through the narrow gate to this table in the woods, not because you are one of the few who can make it through the narrow gate, not because you have earned it, lived your life just well enough to make it where few others can. Come through the narrow gate where all can come, if only we will lay down everything that will make us too wide to fit through. We come to this table in the woods as our full, gloriously made, wonderfully loved selves. Each of us as vulnerable, as naked of all that protects us, as we were in that original garden with God. For this table is a weekly stopover in that garden, in the kingdom of God, where we are loved, cherished, where we are fed and nourished. We are welcome here. Come, the narrow gate is always open. Come, lay down everything but you yourself. Let us feast together with the one who made us and knows us and yet still loves us more than we can imagine.

### **Communion Hymn**

*"Seed, Scattered and Sown"*

Audra Allen, organist

Seed, scattered and sown, wheat, gathered and grown,  
bread, broken and shared as one, the Living Bread of God.  
Vine, fruit of the land, wine, work of our hands,  
one cup that is shared by all; the Living Cup, the Living Bread of God

Is not the bread we break a sharing in our Lord?      The seed which falls on rock will wither and will die.  
Is not the cup we bless the blood of Christ outpoured?      The seed within good ground will flower and have life.

### **Prayer for the Bread & Cup**

Connie Sheller

Our Kind and Loving Father,  
We are very thankful for the love and grace you show to each of us continually. We give you thanks for sending your Son, Jesus Christ, to the earth to teach us how to live with love and grace for others as well as for ourselves. As we partake of this bread, we remember his broken body on Calvary and with this cup we remember his shed blood on that cross. We give you, thanks Father, for our risen Savior, whom we believe in, which gives us the promise of eternal life. 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

*"Breathe"*

Jody Mullis, pianist

This is the air I breathe (repeat)  
Your holy presence living in me.  
This is my daily bread (repeat)  
Your very word spoken to me.  
And I, I'm desperate for you  
And I, I'm lost without you

### Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

You are heirs of God, members of Christ's body and sharers in the promises of the gospel. Go now into the world, full of the boundless riches of Christ, and reveal to all people the magnificent mystery of God's plan for creation.

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Worship services can also be found on the Church website or on YouTube,  
[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLmlH3qzih\\_fzHCC2X0Jhc\\_sfniJ7C1O3X](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLmlH3qzih_fzHCC2X0Jhc_sfniJ7C1O3X)

**PRAYER  
REQUEST**

**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](http://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!

### Southmont-Presbyterian Medical Center

Bill Behrens Rm 437  
835 S Main Street  
Washington PA 15301

### Homebound Members:

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

Alice Cokeley  
149 Meadows View Rd  
Washington PA 15301



Don Ainsley  
Ed Alexy  
Avery Allen  
Donna Bakaitis  
Tom Barnhart  
Bill Behrens  
Bristol Allan Berry  
Abby Blanchard  
Susan Britko  
Mabel Brooks  
Wanda Chicone  
John Collar  
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

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  
Cathy Rentgen  
Betty 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

### ***Don't Wait Until Tomorrow***

Do you long for the day my friend, when forever you will be  
Side by side walking with your Lord in perfect harmony?  
Do you long to sing His praise with angels from above?  
To bask and rest in His embrace, surrounded by His love?

My precious friend, don't wait until tomorrow to be blessed.  
Reach out and touch His heart today and find sweet peace and rest.  
Lay hold on faith, rest in your King, then watch your desert bloom.  
His roses will grow in your life today and shed their sweet perfume.

**Poem by Donna Word Chappell**

# 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 <https://cwskits.org/assemble-kits/school-kits/> 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.