

# Manor Minutes

Volume 12 Issue 27

July 9, 2021



“In the Garden” Sermon Series discussion – July 14, 1pm-2pm via Zoom

Elders Meeting – July 14, 6pm Shepherds Room

**Board Meeting – July 14, 7pm Library**

Personnel Committee – July 15, 4pm Library

Stav 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.

## 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!



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](mailto:jerrypuskarich@yahoo.com).

### 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.



## Fairhill Manor Christian Church

*(Disciples of Christ)*

351 Montgomery Ave.

724-225-8610

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Pastor

Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor

July 11, 2021

### Prelude

Audra Allen, organist

### Welcome

Pastor Gena

### Call to Worship

Donna Stenski

The earth is God's and everything in it. We belong to our God.

Lift up your voices in praise and thanksgiving. We lift our voices in glory and honor to God.

May our lives be an honor and glory to God, For the Lord is our hope and our salvation.

### Opening Hymn

*"Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"*

Audra Allen, organist

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty,  
who rules all creation.  
O my soul, worship the wellspring  
of health and salvation.  
All ye who hear,  
now to God's temple draw near.  
Join me in in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord, who o'er  
all things so wondrously reigneth,  
who, as on wings of an eagle  
uplifted, sustaineth.  
Has thou not seen?  
All that is needful hath been  
granted in what God ordaineth.

### Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Pastor Gena

God of the Garden,

You teach us what it is to be happy – to be planted in your love, to grow in your ways, to bend toward your light. When we do this, we are deeply nourished, our spirits are alive and healthy, producing wonderful fruits just when the time is right. You continually fill us up with your nutrients, sustaining us so that our spirits do not flag, our hope does not completely run out.

We know what it is like to try to find happiness in the things and people and experiences that we can see and hold. We revel in the burst of delight, of belonging, of satisfaction, but it never lasts long enough, it never solves all of our problems, and deep inside we find ourselves alone again. You know how jaded and tough, how fierce and self-reliant, how prickly and controlling we can become in order to force others to satisfy our needs – or to protect ourselves from the deep hurt and pain that comes when they can't or won't. Show us a better way, we pray. Teach us how to trust in you. Show us what that looks like. We want to withstand the storms and the heat and the disappointments and still be flexible and ready to love, full of thanksgiving and peace in you.

Come and transplant us again into your love, Great Gardener. May your love, being pulled through us, flowing into every part of us, cleanse us of our fear, our self-loathing, our guilt and shame, our confusion and anxieties. Replace these toxins with deep love, well-being, and wholeness. Planted in your love, we are finally where we belong.

Thank you for your great love. Thank you for this community of faith that truly works together as one body. Thank you for each person who finds a place here, for the unique gifts that you have given each

one of us for the good of all of us. Help us to keep searching until we find ways to serve that fit who we are and give us great joy. For it is in serving together that we find you in each other and we find our own deepest joy. You have given us all we need; help us to look within ourselves and find your gifts waiting there.

We pray for those who do not know the security of your love, the deep rootedness of being planted in you. We pray for those who are being abused physically or emotionally, for those who live in the chaos of addictive homes, for those who never know when the next meal or the next hug are coming. Show us how to reach out with love, how to welcome all into your presence. Show us how we can be people and places of peace and comfort, of strength and support, of hope and love in the midst of others' storms.

We pray for our earth, your marvelous creation. Inspire us to take care of our home as you have asked us to, that it may flourish now and in the future, nourishing and sustaining and bringing delight to generations to come.

We pray for those who are suffering, adjusting to new and shocking diagnoses, feeling deep pain and anxiety in their bodies, wondering how to live another day without a loved one who has died, slowly watching a loved one slip away. Bring hope and new meaning to these, we pray.

We pray now, lifting to you the names of those you already know so well, those who need your special presence and care... Thank you for abiding with these loved ones.

And now, give us a deep sense of your presence with us as we go throughout our days. No matter what happens, help us to know that we belong to you. We pray all of this in the name of your loving son, Jesus the Christ, and we pray as he teaches us, saying...

*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.*

**Prayer Response:**

*“Lord, Listen to your Children Praying”*

*Lord, listen to your children praying, Lord, send your spirit in this place;*

*Lord, listen to your children praying, send us love, send us pow’r, send us grace.*

**First Scripture Reading**

**Psalm 1**

Gary Ford

**Special Music**

“I Shall Not Be Moved,” African-American spiritual

Jim Cope

**Children’s Message**

J.C. Leasure

If you could be a plant what would you be? Would you be a small wild flower in a valley full of flowers? Would you be a potato nestled inside the ground? What about a big tree with your branches stretched way up reaching for the clouds? There are many different plants you can choose from.

What are the ideal growing conditions for you as a plant? What type of fruit or blossom would you produce?

In our Bible readings today if you put your trust in the LORD you are described as a tree, but not just any old tree. You have the perfect growing conditions. You are planted by the water that will never run dry. When it gets really hot out you don't have to worry because you will still produce fruit. What this means

is if you trust in Jesus you will be blessed beyond all measure and he will take care of you. If we are described as trees, then Jesus is the water that we put our roots in. When we trust in Jesus, we will always produce good fruit.

"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28

## **Second Scripture Reading**

## **Jeremiah 17:5-8**

Rev. Stillwell

## **Sermon**

## **“Like a Tree Planted by the Water”**

Rev. Stillwell

Whenever you plant a garden you have a variety of plants to choose from but you can put them all in to two broad categories; the annuals, which only live once and the perennials, which come back each year, hopefully. I say hopefully, because nothing is guaranteed and after a bad winter, not all of my perennials come back. In particular I had two beautiful lavender bushes in my front planter that froze to death after a bad winter a few years ago. I waited and waited hoping they would come back but by June, having shown no signs of life pulled them and put two new small ones in and hope that they will live.

Likewise, a rose bush did not survive the deer, and even the ivy took a big hit. But while those perennials were not so perennial I also have an annual that is anything but. Ten years ago we planted lemon sage which is an annual herb and it grew well and made the garden smell like Pledge, which I take to be a good thing. The plant died when winter came, but when spring came it grew back on its own. Not only that, but it started sprouting . . . everywhere. We have three raised garden beds, but now the lemon sage started growing outside the garden perimeter where we are trying to grow grass. If this keeps up this annual, which has managed to reseed itself without any help from us will take over the backyard. You know what they say? When life gives you lemon sage and making lemon grass.

So, in my garden I have had annuals come back and perennials not come back, but one thing that has surprised me the most was our tree, which my wife called the bait-and-switch tree. It was a medium-sized tree that sat in front of the house and turned bright red in the fall, and it was only after we bought the house, that it became apparent to us that the tree was dying, and, within two years, we had to remove it. It was a shame because it was pretty, and because a tree is something you should be able to count on. Nothing in this world is permanent, but trees are about the closest living thing we have to that. Trees are old and majestic and to see one in full growth is to see a living thing that has known much more life than you. There are trees that have seen the Civil War. There are trees in this area that may have been growing when George Washington was fighting in the French and Indian war. The oldest tree that we know of is called the Great Basin Bristlecone Pine and can live to be over 5,000 years old.

On top of all of this, many trees also give us food, so it should come as no surprise that trees were the centerpiece of the original Garden and a tree is the centerpiece of that future garden, and trees are mentioned throughout the Bible as a metaphor from which we can learn much.

In particular, today, we heard from the first Psalm in which those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers are compared to trees planted by streams of water. Likewise, the prophet Jeremiah says that those who trust in the Lord, “shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream.”

From the two scriptures we have heard today we learn many things. First, it is said that when you plant a tree you are putting your faith in the future, because it will be awhile before they grow and bear fruit, and they will quite likely outlive you and even your immediate descendants. This is why Nelson Henderson famously said, “the true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit.” To

do so is to believe that we owe a debt to the next generation, and that debt comes from the trees that previous generations gave to us.

Likewise, the trees we enjoy were planted by someone long ago, and we reap the benefit of their forethought and their generosity. While many of them may have been planted by your parents or grandparents, most of the trees we enjoy were planted by God, which is to say that they were not planted, but developed from trees whose seeds fell to the earth and grew. Consequently, from trees we learn how much we owe God, and we also learn that there is no way to truly pay God back for the abundant generosity of God's creation. Instead, we are told to pay it forward.

And this is what we do as church. We cannot pay back those who built this building or founded this congregation. They are gone, their families are gone. Can we pay back those who taught us the stories of Jesus or sang us the hymns of the faith? I suppose, if they are still living we could give them money or a cake, but I expect that what they would really like us to do is to teach the stories, sing the songs, share the words of life with those who are coming after us.

Secondly, we learn that trees are firm and solid. They grow slowly but it is because of this that they last. They are the living embodiment to the saying, "slow and steady wins the race". The sight of a tree should remind us that our time is short and small compared to a tree and even the oldest tree is small and fleeting compared to the Lord our God. This is vitally important because we will not see the results of many of our actions or know what God has in store for the future, but we should not despair. Rather we should trust in God to do more than we can even think possible and know that life existed long before us and will continue on long after. Planting a tree should be humbling for us, but also inspiring as it gives us a sense of the vastness of God's knowledge.

Thirdly, trees have experienced much and yet have learned to prosper by sending their roots deep and drinking up the water. When floods and storms come and damage other forms of life, the tree soaks up the rain and holds the ground in place and grows. Any old tree has scars that come as a result of damage from lightning, holes from woodpeckers, scabs from rot or infection and yet, because of their size and depths of the roots they live.

Because of this the prophet, Jeremiah, says if a person trusts in God:

<sup>8</sup>They shall be like a tree planted by water,  
sending out its roots by the stream.  
It shall not fear when heat comes,  
and its leaves shall stay green;  
in the year of drought it is not anxious,  
and it does not cease to bear fruit.

Let us, therefore, make like a tree and send our roots deep into the solid firm presence of God and drink deep the living water of Jesus Christ.

Finally, the tree is not anxious in a time of drought. My garden withers and dies if I don't water it almost daily, but I don't worry about watering my trees at all, because they are so deeply rooted that they draw their water directly from the source.

God longs for the church to be like that as well. What would happen to us if we could not get to church, if the minister was not able to call on you, if you were sick and could not get to Bible study, would your faith wither and die? Often people get out of the habit of church and, once they do, they have a hard time coming back, but if our faith were deep rooted like a tree we would feel close to God at all times and places.

We need to be like a tree that is planted by the water, so immersed in God's Spirit that we are constantly watered and refreshed, and when we are we can offer shade to those who are scorched and fruit to those who are hungry.

If you can be like a tree planted in the soil of God's word, receiving the rays of God's Holy Spirit, and soaking up the living waters of Jesus Christ, then you will prosper and live longer than any tree that the world has ever known. You will be neither an annual nor a perennial, but you will be an eternal.

### **Call to Offering**

Donna Stenski

With what shall we bring our praise and honor to God? As we bring offerings and gifts this day, we are invited to reflect on the myriad ways we might offer our words, our actions, our lives, and our very being in praise and honor to God.

### **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

With what shall we bring our praise and honor to God? As we bring offerings and gifts this day, we are invited to reflect on the myriad ways we might offer our words, our actions, our lives, and our very being in praise and honor to God.

### **Invitation to Communion**

Rev. Stillwell

Whenever I go away for a week I come back wondering what the garden is going to be like. I hope that the plants have shot up and that the peppers and tomatoes are coming in, but mostly I hope that it is still there at all. A week without monitoring the garden means that weeds have come in. It means that insects may have eaten leaves. It means that deer may have noticed that no one is around and come by for a bite and it means that if it has been hot and dry the plants can be wilted or dead. This is why we must spend at least a little time in the garden every day just making sure everything is alright.

The same is true in our prayer life, for if we go a prolonged time without checking in with our spiritual garden, who knows what will have found its way in. We may find weeds of envy and strife, swarms of fear and hurt, or perhaps we will just feel parched because we have not watered our hearts with God's grace for a while. That is why we come to this table each week, to reflect on what we have heard and what we have done, to ask forgiveness for our sins, to ask for help with troubles in the day ahead and to give thanks. It is important that we do this on a regular basis so that we can tend, maintain, and care for the garden of our faith.

Let us come to the table and water our Spirits with the river of grace God offers. Let us come to this table so that the fruits of the spirit may grow in our life and we will have an abundance to share with others as Christ has shared with us.

### **Communion Hymn**

*"One Bread, One Body"*

Audra Allen, organist

[Refrain] One bread, one body, one Lord of all, one cup of blessing which we bless.  
And we, though many throughout the earth, we are one body in this one Lord.

Gentile or Jew, servant or free,  
woman or man, no more. [refrain]

Many the gifts, many the works,  
one in the Lord of all. [refrain]



## Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Linda Reese

Gracious God, Creator of the Garden of Life, we thank you for the gift of your Son, Jesus, the Christ who taught us how to live and trust in you. With his death and resurrection, Jesus paid the price for our salvation. With Jesus help, let us be like the trees planted by streams of water and grow in the seeking of justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with our God. Amen.

## Words of Institution

Rev. Stillwell

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

## Sharing in Communion

### Closing Hymn

*"Great is Thy Faithfulness"*

Jody Mullis, pianist

Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father, there is no shadow of turning with thee; thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not; as thou hast been thou forever wilt be. [Refrain]	Summer and winter and springtime and harvest sun, moon, and stars in their courses above join with all nature in manifold witness To thy great faithfulness, mercy and love. [Refrain]
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Refrain: Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!  
Morning by morning new mercies I see;  
all I have needed thy hand hath provided.  
Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

## Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

May the prosperity of God shelter you and shade you. May it fall on you like the rain and shine upon you like the sun. May it be with you all of your days causing you to grow strong and close to the Lord.

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

### 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

**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!

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 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

Fairhill Manor extends its sympathy to the family of Charles Riecks, who passed away Thursday, July 8. Please keep his wife, Betty, and his family and friends in your thoughts and prayers.



#### 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

*On behalf of my sister Susan Britko & our parents Chuck & Mary Wiseman, I would like to thank Ed Palfreyman, Craig Dotson, Von Lacock, Jim Cope, Pastor Gena, Isaac, Kevin & Rita Puskarich, Kathy Ford, & Barb Moninger for their gracious time in helping with Mark's Memorial Service Dinner. And thanks to all who attended the service as well as sent many cards & continued prayers. We are blessed."*  
Vicki Tipton

Fairhill Manor has entered a new era: the age of anytime, anywhere giving. We are now signed up with **Givelify**, the mobile giving app for places of worship and charities.

Givelify gives you a beautiful, easy giving experience using your smartphone. There are no frustrating web forms to fill out, and recurring gifts are easy to set up and modify. Even better, it's free to download and use. It's safe and secure and gives you access to your complete giving record.

Want to see how it works? [Watch the demonstration video](#) that shows you all about how to make and track donations.

Ready to get started? [Download](#) the Givelify app for Android or iPhone.

