

Manor Minutes
Volume 12 Issue 46
November 19, 2021

The Story – November 21 – Chapter 10 Saul: Sstanding Tall, Falling Hard

Baptism Sunday – November 21

Congregational Meeting following worship – November 21

Hanging of the Greens – November 21, 5pm

Dartball – November 23, 7pm @ Fourth Presbyterian

Thanksgiving – November 25

Church Office Closed – November 26

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



HANGING OF THE GREENS

Come One, Come All!
Sunday, November 21, at 5 PM

We will be putting up and decorating the Christmas tree and adorning the Sanctuary with candles, wreaths and greens. Everyone is invited to help. Appetizers will be available and Jody will bless us by playing Christmas carols! Come and join the holiday fun. Questions, please contact Connie Sheller.

Advent Devotionals will be available on the Welcome Table in the Narthex this Sunday. Please take 1 per family.

Red and White Poinsettias can now be ordered for our Christmas Eve display. The Poinsettia Tree needs at least 30 poinsettias to complete. There is an empty tree on the bulletin board in the Narthex to watch the progress of our poinsettia tree.

Order forms can be found in the bulletin and also in the Narthex.



Thomas Campbell Apartments is asking affiliated churches if they would be willing to donate **items for gift bags** for its residents. This is not a request for "BIG" gifts but small things like candy, small puzzles and things that would fit into a gift bag. There will be a box for donations in the coffee center. Deadline for donations is December 12.

In The Coffee Center

There is a box in the coffee center that has **AA batteries** that have been used in the sound room but still have life left in them. Please take what you can use. Batteries could be used in remotes, toys (we are in the season where folks will be buying toys and needing extra batteries), flashlights, etc. Please take only what you can use at this time. These batteries have previously been used and will have a shortened battery life.

Disciples Mission Fund Thanksgiving Offering November 21





Fairhill Manor Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)

351 Montgomery Ave.

724-225-8610

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Pastor

Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor

November 21, 2021

Prelude

Katie Seymour and Lexie Shaffer, flutists

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Serena Dube

Through stories of faith and acts of grace, we are reminded that God is always here.
By God's presence, we are guided. Through God's word, we are instructed.
With God's Spirit, we are formed. Come, let us lift our voices in praise,
and offer our lives in service to God.

Opening Hymn

"O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing"

Audra Allen, organist

O for a thousand tongues to sing
my great Redeemer's praise,
the glories of my God and king,
the triumphs of God's grace!

Jesus, the name that charms our fears,
that bids our sorrows cease;
'tis music in the sinner's ears,
'tis life, and health, and peace.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Pastor Gena

On this Thanksgiving Sunday, I would like to share with you a type of prayer or practice that I recently learned in a mindfulness class. This prayer is based on just a piece of that practice called "Loving Kindness" or "Loving Friendliness." I learned it from my teacher, Carol Greco, PhD from UPMC Integrative Medicine.

Loving God, we are grateful to sit in your presence this morning, to have the possibility of feeling your love for us. We are thankful that sitting in your presence, feeling your love for us, is something that is always available to us, always accessible to us in any moment of our lives. Thank you for giving us the capacity to love – to love you, to love ourselves, to love others.

And so we direct our own feelings of friendliness and compassion toward ourselves first, asking you to open our hearts to feeling completely loved with no strings attached. We welcome your love for us into this space as we repeat this blessing to ourselves....

May I be safe and protected and free from all inner and outer harm. May I be happy. May I be at peace, calm and contented. May I be as healthy, as whole, as strong as is possible for me. May I care for myself with joy and with ease. May I experience kindness.

And now we imagine the faces of people we care about – our family, a dear friend or two, a pet – and we invite them into this space of loving friendliness, of wholeness and well-being. We give thanks for these dear ones and ask you to shower them with your love as we bless them...

May you be safe and protected and free from all inner and outer harm. May you be happy. May you be at peace, calm and contented. May you be as healthy, as whole, as strong as is possible for you. May you care for yourself with joy and with ease. May you experience kindness.

And now into this field of lovingkindness, into this space of shalom, we invite people who are suffering. Maybe they are people we actually know. Maybe they are groups of people we read about in the news. We invite into your presence those who are sick. Those who are filled with anger. Those who do not have what they need to live well. Those who are imprisoned, whether rightly or wrongly. Those who are suffering deeply. And we give thanks that your love is available to these people who suffer. We bless them together...

May these who suffer be safe and protected and free from all inner and outer harm. May they be happy. May they be at peace, calm and contented. May they be as healthy, as whole, as strong as is possible for them. May they care for themselves with joy and with ease. May they experience kindness.

And now we allow this shalom field to expand even further in every direction. Maybe even to all beings everywhere. To the whole planet. And we give thanks to you, loving God, for each being you have created. And we cast this blessing far and wide to your whole creation...

May all beings, everyone everywhere, be safe and protected and free from all inner and outer harm. May we all be happy. May we all be at peace, calm, and contented. May we all be as healthy, as whole, as strong as is possible for us. May we care for ourselves with joy and with ease. May we experience kindness.

As we begin soon to prepare for your coming into our world, open our hearts more and more to experience the wonder of your love for us and for all creation. We join our voices together as we pray the prayer 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

1 Samuel 1:1-19

Linda Reese

Children’s Hand Bell Choir

“We Gather Together”

Children’s Message

J.C. Leasure

Do you remember seeing any Baby Dedications at church? Those are always a highlight of the service, and I don't think there is anyone who doesn't enjoy a good baby dedication every once in a while. What do you think it means to dedicate a baby to God? When moms and dads dedicate their babies to God they are promising to raise them how God wants them to be raised. The parents promise to take care of the baby, and teach them about the love God has for all of us. The church also promises to support the family and baby in prayer, and show the love of God to the child as they grow up. Today we are hearing about a baby dedication that happened in the Old Testament. We are going to hear the story of Hannah and her son Samuel. Hannah wanted a child of her own so much that she prayed to God for one. She even promised God that if he would give her a baby that she would give it back to him; to be God's servant. God was

good to Hannah and gave her a son, named Samuel. Hannah kept her promise and gave Samuel to the church to raise. We will see later on that Samuel will become a pretty important person in God's story. Today when babies are dedicated in the church, they're not normally given to the church to be raised by the pastors or elders, but the church still has a part in helping to teach children about God. Today we are going to see part of this in action. We will be seeing some of our friends and family be baptized. Baptism is a sign that someone has chosen to accept Jesus as their savior, and they made the decision to dedicate their lives to following him. Our friends have been helped by the church to understand what baptism means and the importance of dedicating their lives to Jesus. During this week, ask your families about your baby dedication or ones they remember. If you know someone that has been dedicated, pray for them and see how you can help them see the love of Jesus. Also pray for our friends and family that have dedicated their lives today, and encourage them to keep following Jesus as they keep growing.

Second Scripture Reading

1 Samuel 1:21-2:10

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

“The Lord Remembers and Reminds Us”

Rev. Stillwell

There is no greater gift than a child. This is something that is always true but we feel that truth all the more as we approach the time when we will be celebrating the gift of God as a child to us in the form of Jesus Christ, and we know that the longing for a child is a theme that runs throughout the Bible. While Mary was young and not expecting a child others had long awaited one. Sarai had given up hope for a child in our old age and fell down laughing when God promised one to her. Although their wait was not as long as their ancestor's, the same was true for Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist, and to Rebecca, the mother of Jacob and Rachel the wife of Jacob. The infertility of the biblical mothers has two effects: it heightens the drama of the birth of the eventual child, marking Isaac, John, Jacob, and Joseph as special; and it emphasizes that pregnancy is an act of God.

As it was with these women, so it was also with the woman who takes center stage in our story today. Hannah was a woman who had waited a long time for a child to be born to her. Like the women before her Hannah wanted nothing more than a child and she looked on with jealousy as her sister wife, Peninnah, gave her husband, Elkanah, children, so she went to the sanctuary at Shiloh daily to pray for the Lord to open her womb. Anyone who has ever had trouble conceiving a child can sympathize with the first part of Hannah's story, for there is no greater gift than a child to those who long for one, and when they come every parent has high hopes for their child as Hannah did for the son that God would give her.

In her prayer, she asked God for a son and in return she vowed to give the son back to God for the service of God. She promised that he would remain a Nazirite all the days of his life. The word Nazirite means “one who is separated” because they are separated from the community for God by taking special vows to not drink wine, not cut their hair, and not to do anything that would make them ritually impure. When God answers her prayer a child is born to Hannah whom she names, Samuel, which means “Heard by God”, because God heard her prayer and then she turns around and dedicates him to God.

So far this all makes sense, and is in keeping with what we do. We have a child, name that child, and in our tradition dedicate that child to God at infancy and hope they will make the choice to be baptized in God's name at the age of decision and go on to love God and follow God as best they can, but for Hannah dedicating Samuel was no simple affair. Instead, after the child was weaned, she left him in the care of a man named Eli, who was one of the last judges of Israel. He was also the high priest and upon hearing Hannah praying blessed her. He was dissatisfied with his own sons and took Samuel and trained him to be a priest, and from time to time Hannah would come to visit him.

A story that began so familiar to our experience has now become very foreign to our experience. Upon receiving that which her heart desired the most she gives him away, or we might say gives him back by

giving him to God. It was one thing to dedicate him to God's service but another to give him over to Eli to raise. Hannah's "song" of exultation that we have just heard in our second reading prefigures Mary's song following the annunciation (Lk. 1:46-55), but it is surprisingly odd against its narrative backdrop. Both women receive a blessing from God in the form of a child, and both receive a vision that their child will do great things, but Mary gets to raise her child and Hannah does not. Having just relinquished control of the child that she so desperately desired we are right to ask where is her "victory"?

Here is where the Upper Story and the Lower Story of the Bible diverge. Hannah's story is important because it is how God chooses to introduce Samuel, who will become the first prophet since Aaron and will commence a long line of prophets whom God will use to choose the first kings of Israel. In some ways he will be more important than a king as he interprets God's will for them and let's then know when they have strayed. Hannah's victory is that her name is remembered today as the mother of Samuel and she was rewarded with five more children, but for our purposes today, Hannah is another mother who longs to have a child and then longs for that child to grow up right and to be a good person, who will do good, maybe even great things.

It is what every parent wants. There is no greater gift than a child to a family and to a church, and, while our children may not have the impact of Samuel, we know that each one is special, and each one is created with a gift to bring to the world, and to the body of Christ. Some have the gift of singing, and some drawing. Some have the gift of humor while others the gift of storytelling. They all have the gift of knowledge. They may not know as much as we who have lived longer, but they know differently and they see in new ways, and they bring these gifts with them when their parents bring them to the church. Each parent does so, so that their children may be taught in the ways of the faith, but we know a secret and that is God brings them so that they may teach us as well.

That is why we are grateful for every parent and often times grandparents and aunts or uncles who bring a child to be taught at Fairhill Manor Christian Church for with each child we become more like Christ who taught us "Truly I tell you, anyone who does not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

With this in mind let us give thanks on this day that we do not have to give them up in order to give them back to God as Hannah did, but only allow God a few seconds to let the Holy Spirit work wonders in their hearts in the waters of baptism, and they will be returned to us very much the same as before they entered these waters but different as well. The change may not be noticed right away. They may still complain about homework, or be unable to keep their room clean, but they are being transformed by the grace of God which has begun its saving work in them today.

As we watch these four be baptized today let us give thanks for our own baptism, for what better gift could we have than God descending on us and into our lives? Such is the miracle of baptisms. Healing comes to us in many ways through the Water, the Word and the Spirit. Time and time again, we find references to the washing power of baptism. Through this regeneration we are made clean in the sight of God. In the process, we are bestowed with the Holy Spirit who strengthens us and keeps going when we falter. God's Spirit enters our heart and there the Spirit affects acceptance of God's gift of grace. Through baptism, God invests us with the merits of Christ and cleanses us from our past making us acceptable in the sight of God.

When Hannah's prayer for a child was answered it is described as "the Lord remembered her". When we gather for a baptism we celebrate that the Lord remembers us as well. For baptism is given to us as an assurance of pardon and by being fully immersed in these waters at the threshold of young adulthood we are given a reminder of God's love and mercy. That is the glorious thing of which Baptism assures us – God's mercy and pardon, the forgiveness of sins and the blessings of the Holy Spirit. As we reflect not

only on the baptism of these four blessed gifts from God, we should look to our own baptism as well with gratitude and joy. Our baptism was a gracious washing, cleansing us of the guilt we have and bringing into our hearts the Holy Spirit. We should remember that that blessing is still with us at this very moment. The promise stands. We reminded of God's saving grace every time we remember our baptism, and today four more people will enjoy that reminder that last a lifetime and beyond.

Anthem "Celtic Laud," by Craig Courtney with flute accompanist

Declaration of Faith

Serena Dube

As members of the Christian Church,

We confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and proclaim him Lord and Savior of the world.

In Christ's name and by his grace we accept our mission of witness and service to all people.

We rejoice in God maker of heaven and earth, and in the covenant of love which binds us to God and one another.

Through baptism into Christ we enter into newness of life and are made one with the whole people of God.

In the communion of the Holy Spirit we are joined together in discipleship and in obedience to Christ.

At the table of the Lord we celebrate with thanksgiving the saving acts and presence of Christ.

Within the universal church we receive the gift of ministry and the light of scripture.

In bonds of Christian faith we yield ourselves to God that we may serve the One whose kingdom has no end.

Blessing, glory and honor be to God forever. Amen

Baptism

Anthem "Wade in the Water," by R. Fair and M. Barrett

Call to Offering

Serena Dube

As the Church, we are called to serve. Our service begins by offering our lives to Christ, and continues through the gifts we give, that the Church may continue to witness to the word of God.

Let us give as we are able.

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

Knowing we have been blessed, we present these gifts to bless others. Realizing we have a responsibility, we wish to do our part. Knowing that there is satisfaction in helping, We offer these gifts with joy.

Bless us Lord and bless these gifts that we may each be a blessing to others.

Invitation to Communion

Rev. Stillwell

We human beings eat a lot. This is true of some more than others to be sure, but it is not uncommon for any of us to have three meals a day, plus snacks and dessert. We eat so much and still feel hungry so quickly. Think for a moment of the greatest and most filling meal you have ever had and then ask yourself how long did that feeling of being full last. For me it is always Thanksgiving, and I remember one year going to a true Texas Thanksgiving which means that they had three types of stuffing. It was glorious and

I was so full as to be in physical pain, but by the next morning I was hungry and in need of food again. I think it suffices to say that we human beings are always hungry.

God knows this as he provided for the Israelites in the desert and he knew this when he sent Jesus Christ who fed so many. But God also knew that Christ would not be with the people forever and very shortly after he left they would be hungry again. That is why he gave us this meal, but, although this meal does little to fill our physical hunger, it does everything to fill our spiritual hunger

Each Sunday we gather around a table where the menu is the same and the community universal. Around this table our emptiness is filled by the amazing grace of a God who loves us completely and desires to commune with us.

To paraphrase Hemingway, at this table we observe a moveable feast for it can be shared anywhere and at anytime, but it is all the more special when we share it together on a Sunday, and even more so as we share it with four more people today. It has stood throughout the centuries and shared on every continent in every nation as a reminder that all of God's children are called to fellowship with God and with each other. When we break bread in Christ's presence any meal becomes sacred and even strangers become family, but this meal, the Lord's Supper, is a feast we take with us and the only one that leaves us truly filled.

Communion Hymn

"Now We Come Before God's Presence"

Audra Allen, organist

Now we come before God's presence,
full of joy with songs of praise
for the cup and bread life giving,
healing all our sinful ways.

Bread of life, so freely given,
keeping hungry spirits fed.
We, in turn, with great thanksgiving,
freely share our worldly bread.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Linda Reese

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid, you have called us and we come. We come to this table, a place where we are loved for who we are, your children. As we eat this bread and drink this cup, help us to remember Christ's sacrifice for us. Nourish us and strengthen us so that we may witness to your name, live by your Spirit, and walk the paths of justice and compassion. 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 Holy Communion

Presentation of Baptism Certificates

Call to Discipleship

Rev. Stillwell

Closing Hymn

"I've Got Peace Like a River"

Jody Mullis, pianist

I've got peace like a river, I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river in my soul (Repeat)
Vs. 2 I've got joy like a fountain
Vs. 3 I've got love like an ocean

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

May the fullness of his grace remain with you through the challenges of this week. May you pass on the grace you have received to those around you as you work and serve and rest. Amen.

Recorded worship services can be found on the Church website or on YouTube,
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) 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!

Homebound Members:

Phyllis Cimino
317 Wellness Way
Strabane Trails #325

Alice Cokeley
149 Meadows View Rd
Washington PA 15301

Mrs. Mary McDonough
949 Bruce Street
Washington PA 15301

Ed Alexy
Avery Allen
Lisa Amistade
Terry Bailey
Donna Bakaitis
Jim Banish
Tom Barnhart
Abby Blanchard
Susan Britko
Mabel Brooks
Denise Charles
Wanda Chicone
John Collar
Emily Cope Robinson
Ruth Cox
Irma Davis
Jessica Duke
Libby Eberhard
Fred Engle
Jay Freudenberg
Jett Fuller
Derek Gardiner
Lois Gayman
Joe Greene
Bonnie Gregg

Kyle Hallam
Connie Hanning
Aryn Hess
Ed Jackman
Dallas Jacobovitz
Family of Pam Kloss
Ty, Kerri, Allie, Ivy &
Ty James Lacock
Bob Lanning
Marylee Lawrence
Libby LeDuff
Frank Lippert
Lee & Betsy Martin
Dave McConnell
Don Melvin
Michaela Nixon
Ruth Mikuta
Georgette Murray
Deborah Patterson
Bo & Patty Pryor
Kayda Richards
Cathy Rentgen

Betty Jo Riggle
Dave Ross
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
Baptism – Nyka Rash
Owen Stillwell
Eli Graff
Molly Johnson

New Address for Chuck & Mary Wiseman
Southminster Place
880 S Main St, Apt #214
Washington PA 15301

In the Military

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

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 Office hours: Closed November 26

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 Tuesday during the school year.

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

Puzzle!

Complete this Bible passage by adding the missing vowels.



F _ r by gr _ c _ y _ _ h _ v _
 b _ _ n s _ v _ d thr _ _ gh
 f _ _ th, _ nd th _ s _ s n _ t
 y _ _ r _ wn d _ _ ng; _ t _ s
 th _ g _ ft _ f G _ d — n _ t th _
 r _ s _ lt _ f w _ rks, s _ th _ t
 n _ _ n _ m _ y b _ _ st.

_ ph _ s _ _ ns 2:8-9, NRSV



Answer: For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God — not the result of works, so that no one may boast. Ephesians 2:8-9, NRSV



The beautiful poinsettia tree that adorns our sanctuary each Christmas Eve is a tradition that we all look forward to every year. Please fill out this form and return it to the church office by **November 30th with payment**. Indicate the color and number of poinsettias you would like to order. Cost per plant is \$10. Please **make checks payable to "Fairhill Manor" and indicate "Poinsettias" in the memo line**. Plants may be picked up following the Christmas Eve service.

_____ RED Poinsettias

_____ WHITE Poinsettias

ORDERS are due by November 30th

Given by

In Memory/Honor of

(circle one)

In Memory/Honor of

(circle one)

In Memory/Honor of

(circle one)

Additional Comments: