

Manor Minutes

Volume 12 Issue 9

March 5, 2021

ZOOM – LIVE at 10:15 am

Zoom log in information is available on the last page of the Manor Minutes.



Lenten Bible Study with Rev. Chris – March 8, 7pm via Zoom

Board Reports due to office – March 8

Revision to Constitution Committee meeting – March 9, 1pm via Zoom

Weekly Lenten Service – March 10, 7pm by Fairhill Manor

Personnel Committee – March 11, 5:30pm via Zoom

Elders Meeting – March 11, 7pm via Zoom

Board Meeting – March 17, 6pm via Zoom

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

Children Worship & Wonder

We invite children age 3 – Grade 5 to participate in Children Worship & Wonder. Join CW&W on Zoom around 10:30 am (contact Pastor Gena for the login information). To learn more and register your child(ren), <https://fairhillmanorchurch.org/children-worship-wonder>

Tween Team

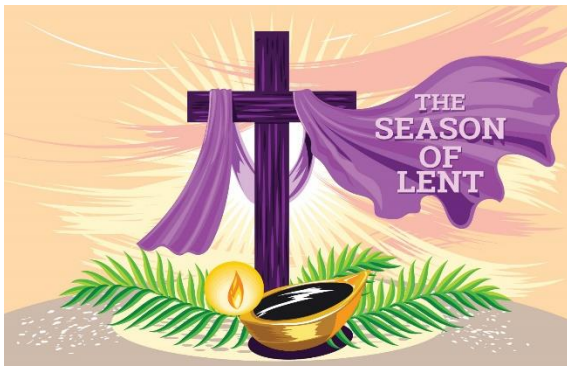
Gather online via Zoom with 4th-7th Graders on Sunday evenings from 5-6 pm. During Lent we are centering our time together around our Lent devotional for families, “Faithful Families: Lent and Easter Devotions.” JC Leasure and Pastor Gena are the co-leaders.



The Outreach Ministry wishes to thank everyone who donated to the Drive-Thru food collection last Saturday. 542 units of food were collected and \$1330 was donated. What an awesome job!!

Congratulations on the arrival of twins for Ty and Kerri Lacock. Continued prayers for Ivy Lynn and Ty James (micro-preemies) and also for Mom, Dad and big sister, Allie.





Fairhill Manor Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)

351 Montgomery Ave.

724-225-8610

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Pastor

Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor

March 7, 2021

Prelude

Audra Allen, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship*

Gene Sheller

Called by Christ, we gather as one.
Blessed by God's wisdom, we gather to learn.
Amazed by God's love, we gather to worship.

Opening Hymn

"Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation"

Audra Allen, organist

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer*

Pastor Gena

Adapted from Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year B, Volume 1

Wonderful God, the heavens are declaring your glory! The skies are proclaiming your handiwork! We join their chorus in praising you, lifting our voices and our hearts in awe of your majesty. You, O God, are good; you are merciful and just. Your ways are the best ways. When we walk in your ways, our lives are sweet, as sweet as honey in the comb.

And yet in spite of all of your teaching, your guiding, your sending your own Son to show us the way, we still act foolishly, we are still weak. So we come to you, confessing our sins, seeking forgiveness, trusting in your wisdom and strength rather than our own. Merciful God, we sin against you without even knowing it. Clear us, we pray, of any unknown sin, and save us from willfully ignoring your way. Forgive us for worshiping anyone or anything except you; keep us faithful. Forgive us for failing to honor all our relationships – with those closest to us and those who are distant neighbors. Help us to speak words of blessing and kindness, rather than words that belittle or destroy. Turn us away from violence, falsehood, and selfishness. Forgive us for thinking everything depends on our efforts and power, for you are the God who made us, led us out of our bondages to things which do not satisfy, and brought us into your beloved community. Help us to depend on you alone, resting in your peace.

We rejoice, for in Christ Jesus we are forgiven and set free to live again in faithfulness with God and with one another! Thanks be to you, O God.

We give you thanks for the great generosity of this congregation, through time and effort, through thoughtfulness and diligence, through resources and skills shared. Thank you for the opportunity to work together as your beloved community, practicing your ways as a congregation, listening well to each other, honoring each person as your child, holding each other's pain, walking through life together. We miss each other, O God. Bind us together more closely as we near the time when we can worship you side by side, together in body as well as in spirit.

Holy God, we know that you hear our prayers. We know that your ways, your timing, your way of answering are not always understandable to us. Help us to feel your presence in the midst of our burdens as well as our joys.

We pray for people who are victims of crime, from petty theft to murder. We pray that those harmed will find healing and a sense of safety. Hold especially close to your heart, O God, those who have lost a loved one to violence; and help us to offer tenderness and care in their struggles and grief. We pray also for those who have committed crimes, that they may seek and find forgiveness, and begin a new life of responsibility and integrity before you and in the community.

We pray for healing and reconciliation where trust has been broken, hostility has flared, or misunderstanding has grown. Restore us not only to one another, but reconcile us to ourselves and to you, loving God. If restoration proves beyond hope, then grant new beginnings and possibilities for all. In every relationship, we seek your grace as we honor others by caring for them, being truthful, and working for their welfare.

Root out in us any jealousy toward what others possess, and let generosity grow in and among us instead.

Gracious God, we pray for those who are ill, in mind, body, or spirit; for those lonely and isolated from community; for those burdened by guilt or grief, by depression or despair. We lift especially these on our hearts this morning to you in the silence of these moments...

Do not let us turn inward as a church, lest we shut out or neglect those who long for a community of welcome and companionship. Send us out in love, with open eyes, ears, and hearts. Make us true neighbors to one another and true children of your own calling.

We pray in the name of Christ, who has come to set us free, the prayer he teaches 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.

Anthem

“People Get Ready,” performed by Dan Baker

Children’s Message*

Pastor Gena

Adapted from https://rfour.org/childrensmessage_b_15.html

Let's talk about something that's a little bit gross. Have you ever had a cold or had allergies where your nose was all stuffed up and you had to breathe through your mouth? Do you like that – being all stuffed up? So...what do you do to "unstuff" your nose? Someone, maybe a parent, might give you medicine to take. And, at least in the past, maybe when you were younger, someone might help you blow your nose by putting a tissue to your nose and telling you to blow your nose. So when a parent gave you medicine and helped you blow your nose, that person was helping you get your breathing all cleared up, right?

Talking about this gross stuff about noses might help us think about today’s Scripture story. Jesus is starting his life's work (which we might call his "ministry"). During his ministry, Jesus taught people how to better pay attention to God. Jesus also shared God's healing love with the people around him. One way to think about what Jesus did, then, is to say that Jesus helped clear things up. Jesus helped clear up people's confusion about God and Jesus helped people's sicknesses get cleared up.

In today's scripture story, we hear about another area that Jesus helped clear up. That place was the Temple. There were all these things in the Temple that were stuffing it up, that were keeping the people from being able to pay attention to God – so Jesus went and cleared it out.

Sometimes, our lives get stuffed up, just like the Temple got stuffed up. And when that happens, we have a harder time paying attention to God – just like when our noses are stuffed up and we have a hard time breathing. But today's story reminds us that when we invite Jesus into our lives, then Jesus can help us get our lives cleared up, just like he cleared out the Temple. This is one of the ways that Jesus helps us to better pay attention to God.

Dear God, thank you for Jesus who helps us clear up our stuffed up lives so that we can pay better attention to you. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Scripture Reading*

John 2:13-22

Gene Sheller

Sermon*

“Spring Cleaning”

Rev. Stillwell

A little boy is in his room, where all his toys and clothes are in piles on the floor, when his mother walks in. She says to him, "Your room is an absolute mess, clean it up now!" "But I like my room this way, it keeps me organized and I know where everything is" says the boy.

The mother replies, "How in the world do you know where anything is?" The little boy responds, "Well mom, if everything's on the floor then I know where it is."

That is actually very close to something I told my parents once, and I find my children telling me over and over again. Now that I'm an adult I spend a lot of time cleaning up. I clean up after myself, and I clean up after my children. I enjoy having a clean and organized room now more than I ever did as a child, and, yet, I must confess that not only am I still good at making a mess, I am even better at living in one, but the mess I make is not so much the result of a room full of scattered toys and cluttered books, but an unclean heart soiled by sin and stains I cannot clean myself.

It seems to me that this is the perfect time to talk about the need to clean the mess of our lives because we sit now in the middle of Lent, which is a time for examination, and, if we do this honestly, we will see that there is much that needs cleaned. If you have ever sat and really looked at a room in your house, at first it looks fine, but the closer you look the more obvious, dirt, dust, cobwebs, and stains that you don't notice on a daily basis become obvious.

That is the way with our sins. Sometimes they are obvious. Other times we have just become accustomed to them as part of our daily surroundings. I think that is a good way to think of the idea of sin. It can easily be described as making a mess of our lives and then living in that mess without making an attempt to clean it up, or making such a mess that we don't even know where to begin.

Like the boy in the story we need to get our room in order but how? Charlotte always tells me it is too hard to clean her room but it wasn't too hard to make the mess. She often says it is too hard, and I usually end up helping her, but I won't unless she starts to clean up the mess herself. This usually takes place after I tell my kids that if they do not clean their rooms themselves I will do so, and they will not like how I will do it.

If I could clean their room I would clean it like the way that Jesus cleanses the temple in the story we have just heard from the Gospel of John. I would go through and drive out all the things that make the room unclean, which would involve dirt and dust but would also involve Legos and dolls, stickers, and clothes. If I emptied their room of all their toys then it would be clean. But I promise that I would not use a whip.

The story we have heard today is usually referred to as “the cleansing of the Temple.” Isn’t it interesting that we give this story such a title when there is no actual cleansing taking place? There’s no soap, no scrubbing, no dusting or sweeping, just Jesus removing the things that make the temple unclean.

As Passover was approaching, Jesus went to the temple and was appalled at what he saw there. For this highest of Holy days people had come from all over Judea with the intention of making sacrifices that were required by scripture and had to be done in the only temple there was. But when they did they would have their animals that they brought for sacrifice inspected and if they had blemishes they would not be able to sacrifice them. Instead, they would have to buy animals from the vendors at the temple. You can see how this practice had the potential for abuse. Likewise, there were moneychangers who ensured that Greek and Roman currency was converted to Jewish and Tyrian money.

A common interpretation of this passage is that Jesus was reacting to the practice of money changers routinely cheating the people, but it is also the case that a good deal of money was stored at the temple, where it could be loaned by the wealthy to the poor who were in danger of losing their land to debt. The Temple establishment therefore co-operated with the aristocracy in the exploitation of the poor. In fact one of the first acts of the First Jewish-Roman War was the burning of the debt records in the archives.

And so seeing this, Jesus made a whip of cords and he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. He told those who were selling the doves "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!"

This story is well known because it represents perhaps the greatest anger Jesus shows. It speaks volumes that Jesus gets significantly angrier at those who turned the temple into a market than to those who crucified him. Let us take note that Jesus’ harshest words and actions were often aimed at the religious establishment of his day. This is not always so and certainly there were good Pharisees and priests, but it suffices to say that nothing seems to get Jesus more angry than hypocrisy.

So on the surface of this story we can say that Jesus drove the sinners out of the temple, but in reality I think he let them in. A Jewish person was to go to temple during the high Holy days of which Passover was the highest and make a sacrifice. This was done to restore relations with God, but they could not go unless they had followed the law to the letter. How many people do you think completely and totally followed the law without fail?

As Paul has taught us, the purpose of the law was to show us that we cannot be righteous on our own. I can guarantee you that many people went to the temple to make a sacrifice even though they were not completely righteous and Jesus never condemned them. Likewise, you can be sure that many people didn’t go to the temple at all because they did not feel worthy. They had to wait until their life was in order before they could go, and I bet most of those people never made it.

In our passage, we see Jesus attacking hypocrisy, but not the hypocrisy of imperfect people worshipping a perfect God as many defined it in his time. Rather, Jesus attacks the hypocrisy of telling people they can only worship once they are good enough, because the fact of the matter is that no one is good enough and the worse off you are the more you need God. The messier your life, the more help you need to clean it up.

I once put on the church Facebook page a saying I came across that said, "Not going to church because there are hypocrites there is like not going to the gym because of the out of shape people there." I haven't been going to the gym lately, but when I did I saw a lot of out of shape people there, including me, but that is why we were there. In fact, if the only ones there were in great shape I probably would be too embarrassed to show my face.

I have been going to the church my whole life and I have seen a lot of hypocrites there as well including me. By that I do not mean two-faced people but people who pray to God and worship a perfect lord and vow to follow the commands and teachings of Jesus Christ, but who do not do it perfectly. I'm talking of people who often fall short, who backslide, who forget, who like the apostle Paul, "do not do the good they want to do, but the evil they do not want to do--this they keep on doing." Instead I am talking of the true hypocrite who believes that they can call themselves faithful because they believe that they are better than others in some way.

Time and time again I have this discussion with people who do not come to church because they do not feel they are good enough to come to church. They don't say so in these words but they consider themselves to be like the lamb or the dove that a pilgrim brought to the Temple for Passover only to learn that they were blemished and could not be used as an offering.

We are an offering to God, and we are blemished. We are messy. Our lives are messy. Our hearts are messy, but we offer them anyway, because that is the only way they can be made clean. Our presence in church, our desire to speak to God and pray to God is an offering of faith and devotion which is, thankfully, the only sacrifice God wants of us, and, because of Jesus Christ, all that is needed.

As he cleansed the temple the Sadducees asked:

"What sign can you show us for doing this?"¹⁹ Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."²⁰ The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?"²¹ But he was speaking of the temple of his body.

In this act Jesus foreshadows the end of temple sacrifice. Now he takes the idea of the temple and he relates it to his own body.

As the temple was the symbol of God's presence to Israel, Jesus will be the symbol of God's presence for the whole world. This is a major statement about Jesus, about the Christ. This is my Chosen One. God was in Christ. We hear it said in other places, but Jesus here today in the cleansing of the temple is relating his life to the presence of God.

This is good news, but it also can be why people are reluctant to go to church. If this is a house of God, they reason, they fear that they will defile the house of God if they bring their sin-filled soul there like the money changers did, but the money changers defiled the temple by turning it into a place for business and exploitation rather than worship and grace. Jesus did not cleanse the temple by kicking the hypocrites out but by kicking out the people and the systems that prevented the hypocrites from coming to get the help they needed.

As we continue through Lent we have examined ourselves, and we know we want Christ to cleanse our heart, to drive out all things that defile it and make it a mess. This is great because this is also the time of spring cleaning. While you are busy cleaning your house or your office or your garage, take some time also to clean the most important room of all, the room of your heart.

Let's do some spiritual spring cleaning to get our house of faith in order. We think of the house of God like a museum that needs to be kept spotless, but I like to think of it as a vacuum that helps to make clean all who encounter it. This does not happen simply by sitting in its pews, however. It happens by prayer and confession, by acknowledging that we are sinners with blemishes too many to count.

So let's clean our spiritual house by continuing to come to God's house where we can bring our dirt and leave it knowing that the house of God is not defiled or dirtied by the dirt we bring in. Let us ask Christ to help us drive out unclean spirits and sins that make a mess of our lives.

The help he offers is immense, and all you need to do is to simply ask for his help. We also need to make sure that our particular house of God is welcoming to all who come in and has no obstacles or unnecessary conditions for those who seek Christ's help to clean up the mess of their life. And we need to let others know who it is that will clean their souls, Jesus Christ. He wasn't there to help us make the mess, but he will be there to help us clean it up. In fact he is the only one who can.

Call to Offering*

Gene Sheller

It is easy to offer our money and our gold, but God desires our hearts and our lives. Even as we offer our gifts this day, let us reflect on how we might give our hearts and lives, so that others may know the truth of God's wisdom and love.

Dedication of Offering Prayer*

Rev. Stillwell

May the gifts we bring be gifts of love. May the offerings we share be offerings of our hearts. May each gift be blessed by your grace, that others may know the truth of your wisdom and your love. Amen

Invitation to Communion*

Rev. Stillwell

If you have ever tried to remodel your home you know that it is hard work. You have to tear things down and destroy them before you can build them back up and finish them. Along the way there is back breaking work, sweat, and calloused hands. There are mistakes, and there are projects that often take longer than expected and are harder than you thought. Even through all of this you would not be saddened or upset about doing it. After all, you chose to do it for a reason. It is all worth it in the end.

The same can be said of remodeling yourself. When you work on changing the things in your life that need improvement, you must first identify them, and then begin tearing them down and apart before you can remodel them better than before. We recognize the need to not give up when remodeling our home. After all, if you quit fixing up your living room before the walls were painted and the carpet laid down, how comfortable would it be? At some point in the process you are forced to finish it because you know how uncomfortable life would be if you didn't.

But how often are we willing to quit remodeling ourselves? When the going gets rough and the pain of change becomes too much to bear how easy is it to quit? As we come to the table in this time of Lent we know that Christ calls us to improve ourselves and remodel our lives so that they are more like his. If you start to get tired of all that work think to yourself how uncomfortable life would be if you quit in the middle of your renovations. Take this time to go to Christ and ask for his help in your remodeling project. He was, after all, the son of a carpenter, I am sure that he can help.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup*

Peggy Oliverio

Our faithful Father, we join together today at your table and give praise to you for all you have done and continue to do for us. Knowing we don't deserve it, you continue to show your love for us. You went to the temple to pray and found a market place focused on business instead of a sacred place in your Father's

house, you became angry because it was no longer honored as a sacred place of worship where you could pray, meditate and give praise to your father. May this remind us that God's house is sacred and to always honor our Father's house. As we share this bread and wine we pray for the faith and strength to stand up for what is right and not take the easy path. In Christ's name I pray. Amen

Words of Institution*

Rev. Stillwell

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

Closing Hymn

"Put Your Hand in the Hand"

Jody Mullis, pianist

Benediction*

Rev. Stillwell

Go forth in gratitude for what the Lord has done, for what the Lord is doing, and for what the Lord is yet to do in the days ahead.

* You can listen to these pieces of worship at

<https://fairhillmanorchurch.org/worship-audio-files>

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

The logo for "Prayer Requests" features the words in a stylized, purple, cursive font. Below the text are several green, wavy lines that resemble grass or a decorative flourish.

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!

Avery Allen
Donna Bakaitis
Bill Behrens
Bristol Allan Berry
Abby Blanchard
Mark & Susan Britko
Jordon Burk
Wanda Chicone
Emily Cope Robinson
Ruth Cox
Irma Davis
Sue Donaldson
Jessica Duke
Libby Eberhard
Fred Engle
Jay Freudenberg
Joe Greene
Bonnie Gregg

Sloan Amelia Hagy
Judy Hanning
Aryn Hess
Ed & Harriet Jackman
Dallas Jacobovitz
Bob Lanning
Ty & Kerri Lacock
Cheryl Leach
Lee & Betsy Martin
Don Melvin
Ruth Mikuta
Dick Moninger
Georgette Murray
Peggy Oliverio
Deborah Patterson
Joyce and Denny Paul

Sadie Reese
Betty & Charles Riecks
Betty Jo Riggle
Chip Rogers and his parents
Jim and Barb Roupe
Theresa Shape
Colby Simkovic
Doug and Tracy Smith
Cathy Stewart
John Stewart
Beth Teagarden
Gary Weaver
Nikki Wells
Tom Williams
Chuck & Mary Wiseman
Sarah Wittenberg
Preparing for Baptism – Nyka Rash

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

Mrs. Mary McDonough
949 Bruce Street
Washington PA 15301

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

Fairhill Manor wishes to extend its heartfelt sympathy to Rose Ann Gorby and her family on the passing of Russell on Friday, February 26. Please keep this family in your hearts and prayers.

With Heartfelt
Sympathy

ZOOM – LIVE

Zoom Worship this Week - Live from the Sanctuary at 10:15am!

"Join a Meeting" on Zoom at 9:45 am 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 Pastor Gena (724) 263-0033. She will share these during worship. At 10:15 am, mute yourself on Zoom (Not sure how to do that? Login at 9:45 am and someone will help). Those on Zoom are visible to each other for the entire worship service. If you would like to see but not be seen, click Stop Video on your Zoom screen.

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 a – 2 pm. The Church phone is forwarded to Karen's cell phone.

Pastor Gena is off on Friday.

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 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.

The logo for Givelify, featuring the word "Givelify" in a stylized font where the "i" is green and the "v" is blue.

Lent

To mark this special time of the Christian year, a time of examination and preparation leading to the celebration of Easter, we have two exciting opportunities to grow stronger in our faith and spirituality.

Zoom Bible Study

On Monday, March 8, from 7-8:15pm via Zoom, Rev. Chris will continue the Lenten Bible Study on the Gospel of John. The curriculum is written by Rev. Adam Hamilton based on his book, "John: The Gospel of Light and Life". The only reading required is to read four or five chapters of the Gospel each week. NO registration is necessary just click on the zoom link which will be emailed on Monday.

Weekly worship services

We are teaming up with other Disciples of Christ congregations in the area to provide a weekly mid-week worship service during the season of Lent. Each church will take a turn to lead a worship service each Wednesday at 7 pm to be shared to all churches via Zoom, Facebook, YouTube, whatever their method is. Details on how to watch each service will be emailed each week so stay tuned! The schedule for these services is as follows:

Mar 10 - Fairhill Manor Christian Church
Mar 24 - Washington First Christian Church

Mar 17 - Central Christian Church in Uniontown
Mar 31 - Brightwood Christian Church

Lent Devotionals and other resources are available at www.fairhillmanorchurch.org/lent

Username: fairhillmanor@yahoo.com

Password: lent2021

Please fill out this order form and return to the Church Office with **payment** by March 15. Indicate the number of flowers you would like. The cost per plant is **\$10**. Make checks payable to "**Fairhill Manor**" and indicate "Easter Flowers" in the memo.



#_____ Tulips (6" pot)

#_____ Mums

#-----Hyacinths (3 bloom)

**Orders with payment are due by
March 15, 2020**

Given by

In Memory/Honor of

(circle one)

In Memory/Honor of

(circle one)