

Manor Minutes
Volume 17 Issue 36
September 18, 2026

- Dartball – September 22, 7pm @ Jefferson Avenue
- Spaghetti Dinner Volunteer Workers Meeting – September 23, 5:30pm
- Choir Practice – September 24, 6:30pm (double check text msg)

Stay up to date at www.fairhillmanorchurch.org/calendar



Mark your calendar.
It's time to make Church World Service
School Kits!
Please plan to stay after Worship on
September 27
to put the kits together.



The Blessing of the Pets service will take place **Sunday, September 27 at 5pm** on the front lawn. You are invited to bring your pet on a leash or carrier to receive a blessing from Rev. Chris and Pastor Gena. Photos of your pet can also be brought to the service.

To celebrate your pet during the month of September, text a **photo** to Pastor Gena, or bring a photo to have the office scan, for us to display on the photo frame in the Narthex. Pets are an important part of our lives. Let's share photos of our pets with one another!



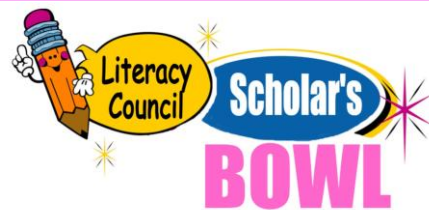
Nominations for 2027 Church Officers are now being accepted. A nomination form can be found on page 8 of the Manor Minutes and also in the Narthex.



On Saturday night, September 5, a rainstorm swept through Washington County, flooding our church basement once again. A simple thank you hardly seems enough for the folks who showed up—some on both Saturday and Sunday—to squeegee, shop vac, mop, and disinfect the floors, tables, and chairs. It truly takes a village, and we are thankful for each and every one of you.

Saturday help – Terry Houston, Von Lacock, Ed Palfreyman, Kevin Puskarich, Candy Wasalasky, Jackie Nelson, Brian Shaw, Pastor Gena, Isaac Mayen

Sunday help – Terry Houston, Tom Wallace, Kevin Puskarich, Ruth Campbell, Jackie Nelson, Candy Wasalasky, Gary Ford, Jerry Puskarich, Terry Allison, Brian Shaw, Rev. Chris



The Literacy Council will be holding their Annual Charity Trivia Event, Scholar's Bowl, on Thursday October 22, from 5-9pm at the Washington Elks Lodge, 138 E Maiden Street, Washington.

Would you like to be a part of a Fairhill Manor team (4-8 people) participating in the Scholar's Bowl? If so, contact the Church Office by September 22.



Fairhill Manor Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
351 Montgomery Avenue
724-225-8610

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Minister
Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor
Elders: Gene Sheller, Bread
Connie Sheller, Cup

September 20, 2026 – 10:15am

Prelude

Sam Johnson, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Linda Reese

Leader: Sheltered by God,

People: We come now to worship.

Leader: Invited by Christ,

People: We come now to pray.

Leader: Welcomed by the Spirit,

People: We gather as the people of God.

Opening Hymn

"This Is My Father's World"

Sam Johnson, pianist

This is my Father's world, and to my listening ears, all nature sings and round me rings the music of the spheres. This is my Father's world; I rest me in the thought of rocks and trees, of skies and seas; God's hands the wonders wrought.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Pastor Gena

Merciful and Almighty God, you see us in our isolation and meet us in our deepest need. We praise you that you have not stood at a distance from our brokenness, but, in the person of Jesus the Christ, you reach out your hand, enter our world and touch our lives with healing and redemption.

Lord, we confess that we have not always been faithful stewards of the community you have placed around us. We admit that we often protect our own comfort rather than reaching out to those who may be grieving or lonely or afraid. Show us those whom we can invite into the fold of your love.

Forgive us for the times we look past the beautiful family you have already gathered into this community of faith. We confess our tendency to look outward with anxiety, constantly wishing for larger numbers or a different makeup of people, while failing to cherish each other, the precious people right here with us.

Forgive us when our shared life is marked by complaints and resentment and criticism. Give us the wisdom, Lord, to steward our words, our suggestions and our ideas. Forgive us for asking for information for information's sake, rather than out of a true desire to comfort, protect or help someone in need. Forgive us for the times we burden others with endless advice and new projects without being willing to step in and share the weight of the labor, the disappointments and frustrations, the messiness of making things happen. Grant us a spirit of humility to support those who are laboring faithfully, listening and learning from them. Help us to know when to speak and when to stand back and support.

Turn our hearts to thanksgiving, we pray. Help us to deeply celebrate the people who are among us today – our unique gifts, quiet faithfulness, and diverse perspectives. Remind us that our primary, sacred job is simply to learn to live with one another, bearing with one another in love, deeply appreciating the hands that labor alongside us. May we steward this specific, present congregation with joy, trusting that the community we have right now is the exact body you call us to love right now.

We pray for those carrying heaving burdens – wrestling with chronic illness, physical pain, and new limitations. May your healing Spirit rest upon them and bring them peace. Bring to mind ways that we can reach out and bless each other in times of need.

Give us the wisdom of Jesus, we pray. Make us good stewards of our own limitations. Teach us when to withdraw to quiet places to pray, rest, and be refilled by your Holy Spirit. Save us from exhaustion. Remind us that our service flows best when it flows from our relationship with you.

We offer our hands, our hearts and our stories into your keeping. May our life together be a vibrant, joyful testimony to your goodness. In the healing name of Jesus we pray together...

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:

“Spirit of the Living God”

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

First Scripture Lesson

1 Kings 18:20-40

Gene Sheller

Special Music

Children’s Message

Pastor Gena

Today I have some bandaides with me. Usually, we use these when we get a scrape on our knee or a cut on our finger. They protect our wound and help it heal. But did you know that people can have “ouches” or “hurts” on the inside that a bandaide like this cannot fix? Sometimes people feel left out, lonely, or like no one sees them.

In our Scripture for today that Rev. Chris will be preaching on, a man had a terrible skin disease called leprosy. Back then, it didn’t just hurt his body – it hurt his heart too because no one would come near him. He was completely left out. But Jesus did something amazing. He didn’t just help the man from far away – saying “you are healed” from a great distance. Jesus reached out and touched him. Imagine how surprising that was – for the man and for the people watching. Jesus used his hands to show love and bring the man back among the people.

We hear the word “stewardship” sometimes at church. Sometimes we think it just means putting money in the offering plate or in the Sunday school offering. But stewardship means taking care of everything God gives us. And one thing God gives us every single day is people – classmates, neighbors, kids on the playground. Being a good steward also means paying attention and using our hands, our words and our time to take care of God’s people.

Jesus doesn't expect us to miraculously cure sickness, but he does expect us to steward our friendships. We can give "heart bandaides" to people who are hurting by inviting them to play, sitting next to them at lunch, or just saying "hi." What you're really saying is "I see you, and you matter."

Put one of these bandaides on your dresser or mirror this week. Every time you look at it, ask yourself, how can I be a good steward of God's people today? Who can I do something nice for or include or smile at?

Dear God, thank you for making us stewards of all that you give us. Give us the courage this week to reach out and be a good friend. Amen.

Second Scripture Reading

Luke 5:12-16

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

"Gather and Give to Grow"

Rev. Chris Stillwell

Whenever you want to do something big; something that will take great planning or which will require great effort, it is important and helpful to gather yourself. Now what does it mean to gather oneself? It's not like your thoughts are in one place, and your heart in another, while your body is in still a third place, and you have to assemble yourself before anything can be done.

It is not as literal as all that, but we can be in many places at once in our life at least in our hearts, our minds, and our spirits. That is why it is good to have some quiet time. It is right to have some time alone with just yourself. It is essential to take time to examine your thoughts, your feelings, your strengths, and your weaknesses, before trying to accomplish something; even if that something is as simple as getting through your day. It's either that or a second cup of coffee.

I know this is true through experience in my life. There have certainly been times when I have accomplished what I needed to on the fly or off the cuff, but things usually go better when I have a chance to gather myself and cultivate inner peace. Coffee helps for sure, but prayer works best. I also know we all need to do this because Jesus needed to do this.

Time and again we see in the gospels that Jesus needed time to pray, time to be alone, and time to recharge, either before he did something, such as his time in the desert for 40 days before his ministry began, or time after he did something, like in the passage we have read.

Here, Jesus has begun his ministry by calling his disciples and immediately, in the first town he visits, a man with leprosy asks to be healed. Word must have spread somehow regarding who Jesus was and what he could do for the man calls him "Lord" and doesn't ask but says, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean." Jesus is willing and the man is healed of his disease, but knowing what will happen if word of this spreads, Jesus orders him to not tell anyone.

I am sure you knew what was going to happen before Luke told us. Word spread and Jesus couldn't get a moment of peace to himself for all the people who needed healing. It is interesting to me how Luke tells it saying:

Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. ¹⁶ But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

The word "but" here makes it sound as if Jesus ran away from the demands and did not heal, but based on what else we know of him I expect that he did, but there was a time when eventually Jesus had to take care of himself. Scenes like this remind me of going to Steelers training camp where kids would line up for autographs from players who just spent all afternoon in the hot sun practicing and were eager to get to

the showers or dinner. I was particularly impressed with Juju Smith-Schuster who stayed and signed all the autographs he could (including for Owen), but I am sure if he had stayed there would have been even more. At some point the players had to leave, and there were some who were disappointed.

I don't imagine that Jesus healed everyone who came to him, for that was not his purpose in coming. His purpose was larger than any one person and greater than any one need, and so periodically we read that he found time to be alone to gather his thoughts, his spirit, and his energy so that the Kingdom could grow.

What is good for Christ is also good for the church, and we see that in its early day as Luke also writes in Acts that they needed to gather them together in order for the church to grow.

⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine [Grow] and fellowship [Gather], in the breaking of bread [Gather], and in prayers [Gather]. ⁴³ Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ Now all who believed were together [Gather], and had all things in common [Gather], ⁴⁵ and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need [Give] ⁴⁶ so continuing daily with one accord in the temple [Gather], and breaking bread from house to house [Gather], they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people [Grow]. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved [Grow].

From the very beginning the church had to gather and to give before it could grow. I have always had the feeling that the church is bigger than it looks. No church gets one 100% attendance even Sunday from its own members. Sunday morning attendance is important, but it is only one measure of our size and impact. The people who come one Sunday are often different people the next. Some come to Sunday school and are not always able to stay, while others help with projects and events, and still others are shut-in but give and pray for the church. Nowadays we also have 30 to 40 people each week worshipping on Zoom and Facebook. I have always wanted one Sunday where as many people as possible come so that we can see everyone in one place at one time and get a sense of how truly big our church is.

Likewise, every church has members it does not see too much because the church competes with an awful lot. I know many of you remember a time when church was the main event on a Sunday moving but, between sports, outdoor activities, vacations, chores and errands on a day off, the church has to be pretty good to compete with all of this. One pastor lamented: "The great task of the church is not only to get sinners into heaven, but to get saints out of bed."

This all would have been much less common fifty years ago, and it would have been unheard of in the early church. They wouldn't even have had a category for these kinds of statistics. Let's look at how this growing group of Christ-followers persistently and obstinately gathered together because the depth of our devotion will determine our impact.

First, they gathered in fellowship. Notice how these followers were committed to fellowship in verses 42, 44, 46: "And they continued steadfastly in...fellowship...all who believed were together...had all things in common...continuing daily with one accord." Turn over a couple chapters to Acts 4:32: "Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and soul."

The Greek word for "fellowship" means to "share something in common" or "to strive for a common goal." Here's a definition: "Real community is hanging out with others for a spiritual purpose." I like the phrase "one accord" in verse 46. It means singleness of purpose and to be of the same mind.

Related to this, there's no way to live out the "one another" commands in the New Testament unless you are in close fellowship with one another. It's also interesting that the word "saints" which refers to Christians, is used 62 times but is never once used in the singular. We are designed to gather together in community with one another for the glory of God.

This happens on Sundays to be sure, but happens also at the church picnic and dinners, and events. It happens when we meet to plan ministries and when we meet to do ministry. It happens in Sunday school and in our men's and women's ministries. It happens even when we are cleaning up a mess together or making a mess together.

It happens whenever we share in communion, which is why it is so essential to us. Verse 42 says that these committed Christians continued steadfastly in "...the breaking of bread" and verse 46 says: "...and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart." Shared meals played an important role in the life of the early church. Actually, the first rule of church growth is this: "If you feed them, they will come." When they met to eat, they also celebrated the Lord's Supper.

It happens when we gather in prayer. Verse 42 says that they also continued steadfastly "...in prayers." We see the emphasis of prayer in Acts 1:14: "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication..." Since prayer permeated the early church, we need to become more devoted to prayer ourselves. So, as we spend this fall gathering to grow, I invite you to take a few minutes every day to pray for yourself, your church, and your world.

It happens of course, when we gather in worship. I feel a feeling like none other when we are together to sing and worship together. It is so good to be able to gather ourselves because in that way it is like the body of Christ gathering itself together. Have you ever seen the cartoons where robots who transform can come together to make a giant transformed robot? That's the gathering metaphor for my generation.

The early church enjoyed gathering together in fellowship, communion, prayer and worship and in doing so they grew. They grew in their faith. They grew in their knowledge. They grew in small groups, and they grew in number

The fall is a time of many things. It is a time of celebration as we enjoy the good weather before winter comes. It is a time to go back to school and to gear up the ministry of the church. It is a time of homecomings as people return to church from their summer vacations and work. It is also the time of harvest as we gather all the blessings of God and give thanks for them and enjoy them before the new year begins.

We always have our stewardship emphasis at this time to take stock of what we have done, to give thanks for our many blessings, to prepare ourselves for the works that God is calling us to in the new year. It isn't just a plea for money but a time for us to gather ourselves, to gather our blessings, to gather our thoughts, and to gather our needs. More than anything we gather what we have so that we can see what we are preserving, what we are continuing, and what he hopes to create through our giving of time, talent, and treasure.

If we, like Jesus first, and the early church before us, take this time to gather in faith, prayer, and quiet contemplation, I think you will see us begin to grow in just as many ways.

Call to Offering

Donna Stenski

We are called to rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer, and contribute to the needs of the saints. With glad and generous hearts, let us share the offerings of our life with the Lord of all life.

***The 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

Generous God, thank you for showering us with your abundance and your love. Bless the gifts we bring before you now, that they may shower others with your abundance and your love. In your generous love, we pray. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Rev. Stillwell

Every fall my family and I look forward to going back to Bethany College for the annual Homecoming festivities. This is something we look forward to all year long, and it has nothing to do with the football game. We enjoy the campus in its autumnal beauty, we love getting dinner from our favorite restaurant, walk around campus, and enjoy the food and drinks at the alumni tents.

These are all great reasons to come home, but we go more than any other reason to see old friends. Friends come from all over the country to be by the shores of the Buffalo, and every year there is an old friend whom we haven't seen in years that we were not expecting. Even seeing the friends who we do see on a regular basis is a joy, because it is different when we are all together in that place that we still consider home even though we haven't lived there for 30 years now.

Every year my father-in-law asks me who Bethany is playing and who won the Homecoming football game, and I never know, but I know how much my friends' kids have grown. I know who is pregnant and who is getting married. I know who likes their job and who wants to move back. I know who is good at corn hole and who makes the best pepperoni rolls. Above all, I know that home is not the place where you live but the place where you belong.

Why do I mention this? Because church should be for us a homecoming each week. It should be the place where we go to see our friends and to feel like we belong. It should be the place where we feel love and accepted by the Lord who created us and who leads us. Our church is not big, but it is bigger than it seems. That is why I hope we will spend the fall coming home to our church.

Each Christian each Sunday is called home. Not in the past away sense, but in the sense that we have all gathered around this table where we get to come home for a while. Just like a homecoming celebration we will not stay, but let us take this time to celebrate and rejoice with one another, and connect with the Christians who are scattered throughout the world, and with those who now reside in our Heavenly home eternally.

Our lives are busy, and they take us all over the place, and that is why it is good to know that for each of us we can come home, not to the place where we live, but to the place where we belong. For Christians each Sunday is a Homecoming. Let's celebrate it like one.

Communion Hymn

"My Shepherd, You Supply My Need"

Sam Johnson, organist

My Shepherd, you supply my need; most holy is your name; in pastures fresh you make me feed, beside the living stream. You bring my wand'ring spirit back, when I forsake your ways; you lead me, for your mercy's sake, in paths of truth and grace.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Gene Sheller

Dear God, we come to this service of remembrance as often as we are able to praise you for sending your Son, Jesus, to be the sacrifice for our sins. We are sorry that we needed that sacrifice. We thank you for the Holy Spirit being with us constantly. Please bless this bread, representing his body, and this cup, representing his blood, and bless us as we together take them in remembrance of him. In Jesus Christ's precious name we pray. Amen

Words of Institution

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

You will receive the bread and cup together. Please hold them; we will take each together as one body. Disciples of Christ believe in an Open Table. All who profess Christ and follow Him are welcome to share His meal. Gluten free wafers are available in the Narthex.

Call to Discipleship

If you need a community to belong to, if you are thirsty for the word of life and want to live as a disciple of Jesus, join us in his ministry and mission. You are welcome and needed here. If in the work and worship of this congregation you are being nurtured and fed in Christ our Lord, we invite you to join us in his service. There is a place for you in this family of faith.

Closing Hymn

"He Lives!"

Jody Mullis, pianist

I serve a risen Savior, he's in the world today; I know that he is living, whatever others say. I see his hand of mercy, I hear his voice of cheer, and just the time I need him, he's always near. He lives, he lives, Christ Jesus lives today! He walks with me and talks with me along life's narrow way. He lives, he lives salvation to impart! You ask me how I know he lives? He lives within my heart.

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

In all of your sorrows, may you find comfort. In all of your silence, may you find peace.
In all of your striving, may you find strength. In all of your successes, may you find fulfillment.
In all of your gathering, may you find God.



**NOMINATIONS
Due by
October 15**

Nominations for 2027 church officers are now being accepted. You are encouraged to vote for more than one individual for the position.

Please place any officer suggestions in the Nomination Box in the Narthex, the Church Secretary's mailbox or you can send an email to the Church Office: fairhillmanor@yahoo.com.

You can also call the Church Office at 724-225-8610.

I would like to nominate the following person/people:

Moderator: _____

Vice Moderator: _____

Secretary: _____

Church Clerk: _____

Historian: _____

Personnel Committee: _____

Asst. Financial Secretary: _____

Deacons: _____

Elders: _____

Trustee: _____

If you need more space for nominations, please use back of this form.



Do you have a prayer request or need help? Please feel free to contact Rev. Chris (412-956-6590) or 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. We are One Body in Christ!

Homebound Members

Mrs. Mary Lou McDonough
949 Bruce Street
Washington PA 15301

Alice Cokeley
900 N Cass Lake Rd, Apt 324
Waterford MI 48328

Southminster Residents

880 S Main St
Washington PA 15301
Patty Pryor, Apt 102

Evergreen Personal Care

336 N Main Street
Washington PA 15301
Donna Bakaitis, Room 224

Premier Resident

36 Old Hickory Ridge Rd
Washington PA 15301
Carol Brown, Room 213

Transitions Healthcare Resident

90 Humbert Lane
Washington PA 15301
Doris Haniford, Room 121

Mary Allison
Barb Bailey
Terry Bailey
Donna Bakaitis
Todd Barnhart
Vanessa & John Berezney
Jacquie Best
Gary Blackhurst
Jeff Caldwell
Macy Caster
Wanda Chicone
Jim Cope
Angel Corbett
Jane Correll
Ruth Cox
Mickey Cunningham
Benjamin Dube
Kathy Moninger-Ford
Raymond Fraley
Terry Gahagen
Barb Graff
Judy Hanning
Irma Harper
Sheila Harris
Aryn Hess

Danni Iams
Dave Kania
Charlie McConnell
Pam McCord
Norm McDonough
Barb Moninger
Dick Moninger
Joe Neckerman
Carmen Oliverio
Peggy Oliverio
Michelle Oneal
Sandy Petry
Jeannie Riffle
Joan Riffle
Lori Riffle
Perry Riffle
Mike Ryan
Valerie Shetler
Doug Smith
Darci Sprowls
Kristie Sprowls
Wayne Starnes
Cathy Stewart
Beth Teagarden
Ginger Throckmorton
Cece Watson

In the Military

Lance Dague	Andrew Gregg
Terrell McClain	Zachary Keene
Brandon Lipscomb	Sarah Lipscomb
Travis Ringer	Emily Chase
Dylan Demain	Noah Rudolph

The brave men and women who serve our country make incredible sacrifices every day. We are forever grateful for their service and dedication. Please remember the military members that are deployed and away from their family that they may return to their homes safely.