

Manor Minutes
Volume 16 Issue 12
March 21, 2025

- Bible Study – March 24, 6-7pm via Zoom
- Personnel Committee – March 26, 6pm
- Choir Practice – March 27, 6:30pm

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

Important Dates

March 24 – **Lenten Bible Study**, 6-7pm via Zoom. The third session of the Lenten Bible Study will be centered on **Mark 8-10 and Chapter 3** in Amy-Jill Levine's book, "The Gospel of Mark: A Beginner's Guide to the Good News." Feel free to join the study this week even if you were unable to join last week. The Zoom information will be sent on Monday via the Manor Minutes email list. If you do not receive the Manor Minutes via email, contact the Office to receive the link.

March 30 – **Easter Flower** order deadline.

April 11, 12, 13 – **"He's Alive!"** presented by Heaven Bound Ministries, Inc. at the Capitol Theatre, Wheeling. Admission is free.

April 13 – **Palm Sunday**

April 17 – **Maundy Thursday** "Living Last Supper," 7pm at First Christian Church, Beau Street Washington

April 18 – **Good Friday** service at FMCC, Noon

April 20 – **Sunrise Service**, 7am
Breakfast following Sunrise Service
(No Sunday School)
Easter Worship Service – 10:15am

April 22 – **Bethany Class Luncheon** @ Noon,
Eat'n Park



Order forms for **Easter Flowers** can be found in the Narthex, bulletin and Manor Minutes. You can order tulips, hyacinths, mums, or Easter lilies in memory of or in honor of someone. Paid orders need to be returned to the Church Office by **March 30**. All flowers are \$10/each.



16 Units of blood were collected during FMCC's Blood Drive on March 17.

Awesome Job!!



Save your items for the Rummage Sale that will be held on **May 8-10**. All items donated will be put out for sale with the proceeds going to the FMCC General Fund.



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

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Minister
Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor
Elders: Jackie Nelson, Bread
Sheila Harris, Cup

March 23, 2025 – 10:15am

Prelude

Sam Johnson, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Serena Dube

Leader: Come from the busyness and the business of the day.

People: We come to let go of the ways of the world.

Leader: Come and turn aside the temptation to do the things that are only done in the shadows.

People: We come to embrace what God offers us, God's presence and unconditional love.

All: Come to find refuge and the way to live in Christ's great love.

Opening Hymn

"Morning Has Broken"

Jody Mullis, pianist

Morning has broken like the first morning, blackbird has spoken like the first bird. Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning! Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word!

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Pastor Gena

Great Shepherding God, we gather as your flock, seeking comfort and nourishment within your fold. You know each one of us by name, and we are learning to know the sound of your voice so that when you call us forth, we can follow. We praise you, for you never leave us alone; you walk in front of us to show us the way.

We know that all of our ways are visible to you, that our life is an open book before you. Sometimes that makes us feel painfully vulnerable; sometimes that makes us feel greatly relieved. When we work hard to follow your ways, keep us from being too proud of ourselves and too quick to judge others. Keep us from believing that we deserve more of your love, that we can earn more of your favor. Increase our gratitude for your never-ending, more-than-enough love; increase our joy for even those who come late to your party of love.

We give thanks for the way you shepherd us. Teach us to yearn for your instruction, to love your guidance, to wait for your counsel. You are the beginning of every blessing; tune our hearts to sing of your ceaseless grace. Your mercy flows over us in a never-ending stream; may our songs lift our loudest praise to you.

We pause on our journey to recognize that we are here because you have helped us along the way. We are prone to wander, Lord, we know that. We are prone to leave you, the God we love. But whether lost or far from you, you know where we are and are always seeking us, calling us home. If only your goodness could bind our wandering hearts to you. But choice is always ours, and in your mercy, nothing can ultimately keep us from returning to you.

What a blessing it is to know that our cries come right into your presence, O God. We are amazed that you give your attention to our requests. And so we ask for you to be with those who are lost to us. Assure us that you see them and care for them, even if we cannot right now. We pray for those who are watching and waiting for the return of loved ones. Be with us while we wait. We ask your mercy on those who are looking for someone who will love and welcome them, who are looking for a better way to live. Shepherd them into your arms, we pray. May our welcome be as warm and gracious as yours. Hear now our prayers for all those we have named aloud this morning, for those on our prayer list, and for these dear ones on our hearts and minds...

Shepherd us, dear God, beyond our wants, beyond our fears, from death into life. We pray this in the name of your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ, who taught us to pray, 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:

“Glory Be to the Father”

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

First Scripture Lesson

Psalm 119:167-176

Gene Sheller

Anthem

“Deep Waters,” by Pepper Choplin

Choir

Children’s Message

Pastor Gena

This morning we will read another part (pp. 10-11, 14-15, 17, 20-21) of *Make Room: A Child’s Guide to Lent and Easter*, written by Laura Alary and illustrated by Ann Boyajian, © 2016, published by Paraclete Press.

Lent lasts for forty days and forty nights plus six Sundays. It takes time to get ready. Each week we snuff out one purple candle.

During Lent, we make space in our hearts by saying sorry when we have done wrong, by opening our hearts wide to all people (not just the ones we like), by forgiving others who hurt us. We make space by sharing what we have. We make space by making our lives more simple – eating plain meals, giving up some of our favorite treats and buying groceries for the food bank instead.

There are times for filling up and times for emptying out. Lent is a time for emptying, for sharing, for giving away. It is good to make space.

Second Scripture Reading

Luke 15:1-32

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

“Finders, Keepers”

Rev. Stillwell

Losing things is the worst. I hate when it happens, it is a feeling like none other, because you don’t know where it is and you don’t know where to look, and so you search back in your mind and think of all the places you have been, and you search and when you find it (if you do) you feel good but you never get back that time that you spend searching for something you thought you had.

The things I have lost most often are the things I carry with me the most, my phone, my iPod, my wallet. Of these the phone is the easiest since you can usually call it, but as my children will tell you, my phone is usually out of power too, so there's that. I once had the great misfortune of having lost my wallet and iPod at the same time.

I searched everywhere for my wallet knowing it should have been in the church but worrying it might have fallen out of my pocket in a parking lot, and just as I was about to call and cancel my credit card I got message on Facebook from someone who had found my wallet which had fallen out of my pocket in a gas station.

Meanwhile I actually bought a new iPod knowing I would probably find the old only after purchasing a new one. Two days later on Easter Sunday and before the service someone told me that there was a blue phone found by the lights and she wondered whose it was. Afterwards I walked into my office to see my iPod which had been missing for a month sitting on my desk.

These two things together were valuable in that they would cost a good bit of money to replace and that they gave me great pleasure and convenience. I was overjoyed to have found that which I had lost, so much so I did a couple of things. I breathed a sigh of relief. I smiled and laughed. I thanked God that those who found my lost object did not subscribe to the ancient law of finders keepers. I gave one of my iPods to my wife since I now had two. One thing I didn't do, however, was throw a party.

Who throws a party? Think of the most important thing you lost and then found and ask yourself did you throw a party. Now imagine all the coins you have lost. I for one have lost and found many coins in my life, and I cannot say that any of those moments occasion even a passing memory. But Jesus chooses this as a source of inspiration for his story. Assuredly there is not an actual woman who did the things he suggests in his parable. Here we can safely assume that is a hypothetical question when Jesus asks:

Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, "Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost."

It is a hypothetical question because the answer should be obvious. No one throws a party after finding a lost coin. No one calls their friends together to rejoice over finding a coin that was lost. Here, Jesus tells three parables with more or less the same point in which the lost are found and in the first two, the lost sheep and the lost coin the man who finds the sheep and the woman who finds the coin call their friends together to celebrate with them. In the next one that we call the parable of the prodigal son the father explicitly throws a party to celebrate his son who was lost and now is found.

In each parable a person finds something, or someone that they lost and call their friends to rejoice with them. They throw a party. I get why the father throws a party, I can kind of get why the shepherd throws a party on finding the lost sheep, but who throws a party for finding a lost coin?

Many commentators suggest that the ten coins was all the woman had therefore, if any of us lost a tenth of our wealth and found it we would be pretty happy, but considering how little she had throwing a party would surely have cost more than the coin was worth.

Others suggest that the coin was valuable because it made up an ornament for her head. It was customary for Jewish women to wear a headdress made of ten coins as a sign that they were married like a wedding ring for us today. There is no evidence that this is what is going on here, at least as far as anything Jesus says, and if he wanted us to think that he probably would have said. Attempts to explain it that way are attempts to work backward. To look at the action, the woman sweeping her house and searching for this

coin and throwing a party when she finds it, and explain it, because who throws a party for finding a lost coin? Attempts to explain the parable in this way miss the point. Who throws a party for finding something so seemingly insignificant? We do not, but God does.

We judge things by their rarity and we find coins all the time and don't think much of it. Often we see coins on the ground and pass them up. No one throws a party when they are found, but God does, because God is not finding coins. God is finding us, and despite the feeling that humans are everywhere, God does not overlook us. None of us are insignificant or of little value in the eyes of God.

We hold within us a gift more valuable than any treasure and no matter how many souls there are each and every one is of infinite value to God. We are all pearls of great value, sheep of the fold, coins in the purse and the grief of God cannot abide our loss.

The Interpreters Bible comments on this parable that "the mind of Jesus moved in direct vitality not in complicated patterns" meaning that we must not over think or over interpret this parable, or any really. The character being a woman, the number of coins being ten, the light that is needed are not representative of anything. They are just parts of the story needed to convey the message that God does not value the way the world value. The world steps over coin after coin, doesn't even think it is worth bending over for but God seeks like a shepherd, rejoices like a father, sweeps like a woman in search of one more. God always wants one more.

Finally, there is one thing more to learn from this parable. Jesus continues saying:

When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, "Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost." ¹⁰Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.'

There is joy over one sinner who repents but it is not enough that God alone feel that joy. God must call the angels together and celebrate with them just as the woman called her friends to rejoice. God rejoices when a sinner is saved, and so should we. We should not ignore it or be cynical or be jealous that someone might get the same rewards as us despite our having been found first. This is a recurring motif of the parables.

We are obsessed with the word fair as we learn that the world isn't fair, but one thing we can rejoice over is that God is not fair. It isn't fair that God gives the kingdom, and forgiveness, and mercy. It isn't fair that a person who believes all their life gets the same as those believe in the 11th hour. It isn't fair it is grace, and let us be thankful for it. For we do not throw a party when we find what we have lost but God does, and that's what the church is. That's what our communities of faith are called to be. We're the spaces where we hold one another in our losses, and encourage one another in our searching, and in our believing, and in our hoping, and where we celebrate with one another in the things that we have found.

We don't just come to worship or pray, but celebrate, to rejoice, dare I say to party. We celebrate and throw a party because the one who has found us, God, does indeed want to keep us. I hope it feels that way every Sunday.

Call to Offering

Von Lacock

As we come to the time of offering, let us give in the spirit of gratitude. Let us give with a prayer on our lips. Let us give with confidence that God will use our gifts.

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

Merciful God, we come each week to celebrate that in you our debts have forgiven. What we give today is not in repayment for we know we could never repay your grace. Rather we present our offerings as tools that you can use to build your Kingdom. Receive our gifts as we receive your grace. Amen

Invitation to Communion

Rev. Stillwell

Marilyn Robinson wrote a novel named "Home", which in many ways is a retelling of the prodigal son. As the title implies, the theme of home, runs throughout its pages. In it there was one particular line that I found compelling that says, "Weary or bitter or bewildered as we may be, God is faithful. God lets us wander so we will know what it means to come home."

I found that line to be powerfully true for it strikes at the nature of God and the issue of free will. I wonder if we had Heaven all the time, and we lived in a paradise that God kept and tended, but we could not leave for our own protection, would we love it? Would we enjoy it? Would we consider it home or would we begin to see it as a prison?

When I was a kid during winter I would find my childhood home stifling. It was small and cramped and we only got three TV channels, and I would get a little stir crazy, so I would go sled riding and play in the snow, and, as much fun as that was, what I enjoyed most is that when my hands got cold, when my legs began to get numb, when my face was flush and my nose frosted, I could go home, and then home was warm, cozy, and comfortable.

As we gather at this table we in many ways are like a prodigal child that has lost our way and we're trying to find our way back, or we are like a little boy in the cold longing to get warm again. Let us give thanks that not only is God faithful by always leaving a home open to us, let us also take time to appreciate what it means to come home. We don't appreciate heat until we're cold. We don't appreciate cool until we're hot. We don't appreciate being found until we realize that we've been lost, and we don't appreciate being home until we have been away. Let us come now to this table. Let us come now to this meal. Let us come home.

Communion Hymn

"Softly and Tenderly"

Sam Johnson, organist

Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling, calling for you and for me; patient and loving, he's waiting and watching, watching for you and for me. Come home, come home, ye who are weary, come home; earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling--calling, "O sinner, come home!"

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Jackie Nelson

Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit please hear our prayer. Our Lenten journey with bible studies at home, readings, songs and sermons have been a treasure trove of nuggets of gold to hold, and ponder. During this time of preparation for Holy Week we recall that after His 40 days in the wilderness, Jesus "set His face" to go to Jerusalem. He was determined to go, no matter what, knowing full well what was going to happen there. He was not going back.

We remember Jesus' determination now with this bread and this cup. Jesus went through it all because He was obedient to the Father, He loved us and we were worth suffering and dying for. Holy Spirit, speak and show us the way as we "set our faces" to following Jesus. We are determined to go, no matter what, no turning back. In Jesus Holy name we ask this. 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

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

Rev. Stillwell

This is the promise of the gospel: God already knows you. God already loves you. God has already gifted you. God has already called you. You are invited—to deepen this knowledge, to feast in this love, to cultivate these gifts, and to follow this calling. There is a place for you among the people of God in this community of faith.

If you have come to know Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior and you would like to profess that you intend to begin a life of faith, learning to walk in his way of Love, you are welcome to contact one of the Pastors to take this step. If you would like to join this part of the Body of Christ at Fairhill Manor Christian Church, to covenant to journey together in this life of faith, please reach out to one of the Pastors to learn more. We all take these moments to rededicate our lives to following Jesus.

Closing Hymn

"His Eye Is on the Sparrow"

Sam Johnson, organist

Why should I feel discouraged, why should the shadows come, why should my heart be lonely and long for heaven and home, when Jesus is my portion? My constant friend is he: his eye is on the sparrow, and I know he watches me; his eye is on the sparrow, and I know he watches me. I sing because I'm happy, I sing because I'm free, for his eye is on the sparrow, and I know he watches me.

Benediction


Rev. Stillwell

May the joy of the Lord warm your hearts; may the peace of the Lord calm your spirits; and may the word of the Lord direct your ways.

?? ? Bible Quiz ? ?

In Luke 15 Jesus tells three parables. Which of the following is not one of them?

- A. The Parable of the Lost Sheep
- B. The Parable of the Lost Son
- C. The Parable of the Lost Pearl
- D. The Parable of the Lost Coin



Answer: C (See Luke 15:1-32.)

THIS WEEK'S PRAYER REQUESTS

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 McDonough
949 Bruce Street
Washington PA 15301

Chuck and Mary Wiseman
880 S Main St, Apt 214
Washington PA 15301

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

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

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

Doris Sorice
880 S Main St, Apt 336
Washington PA 15301

Nolmy Aguille & Family
Terry Bailey
Bob Bakaitis
Donna Bakaitis
Todd Barnhart
Vanessa & John Berezney
Jeff Caldwell
Bryan Carter
Wanda Chicone
Ruth Cox
Sue Donaldson
Benjamin Dube
Connie Faust
Kim Fleissner
Gary Ford
Kathy Moninger-Ford
Barb Graff
Irma Harper
Sheila Harris
Paul Harton
Alberta Haught

Aryn Hess
Danni Iams
Ed Jackman
Von Lacock
David Leonard
CJ Martin
Pam McCord
Norm McDonough
Dick Moninger
Joe Neckerman
Carmen Oliverio
Peggy Oliverio
Michelle Oneal
Sandy Petry
Dick Pilgun
Rick Rafferty
Betty Riecks
Jeannie Riffle
Joan Riffle
Lori Riffle
Nelly Rodriguez

John Samida
Elvia Mery San
Valerie Shetler
Doug Smith
Pat Sorice
Darci Sprowls
Cathy Stewart
Jane Teagarden
Beth Teagarden

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.

If you would like to send Donna Bakaitis a card:

Donna Bakaitis
c/o TownView
300 Barr St, Room 300A
Canonsburg, PA 15371



Please fill out this order form and return to the Church Office with **payment** by March 30. Indicate the number of flowers you would like. Make checks payable to “**Fairhill Manor**” and indicate “Easter Flowers” in the memo.

#_____ Tulips (6” pot) @ \$10/each

#_____ Hyacinths (3 bloom) @ \$10/each

#_____ Easter Lily @ \$10/each

#_____ Mum (assorted colors) @ \$10/each

Orders with payment are due by March 30, 2025.

Given by _____

In Memory/Honor of _____
(circle one)

In Memory/Honor of _____
(circle one)

In Memory/Honor of _____
(circle one)
