

Manor Minutes
Volume 17 Issue 3
January 16, 2026

- Congregational Meeting – January 18, following worship
- Dartball – January 20, 7pm @ Taylorstown
- Stewardship/Finance Ministry – January 21, 5:30pm
- Celebration of Life for Carol Daniels – January 22, 6pm

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



If you're driving past the church in the evening, take a moment to admire the new light illuminating the **stained glass** at the front. Special thanks to Terry Houston and Ed Palfreyman for making it shine so beautifully. (see last page for pictures)

Karen Thomas will be taking orders for daffodils and tulips for the American Cancer Society's Daffodil Days 2026. Spring is right around the corner and what better way to celebrate than with a bouquet of fresh flowers. Order forms are in the Narthex or you can call the Church Office (724) 225-8610 to order. All paid orders are due by February 17 and the flowers will be delivered to the church during the week of March 23.

Bunch of Daffodils: \$15

Bunch of Tulips: \$15

Mini-Potted Daffodils: \$20

Gift of Hope: \$25

A "Gift of Hope" is a bouquet of flowers that are delivered to a local cancer center/hospital/nursing home facility in our community.

Thank you for your support of the American Cancer Society.

Celebration of *Life*

There will be a **Celebration of Life** for Carol Daniels who passed away January 13. Her sons, Todd and Troy, encourage everyone from the church to attend this celebration as her church family was her "second" family.

SouperBowl Lunch & 2-Person Team Cornhole Tournament

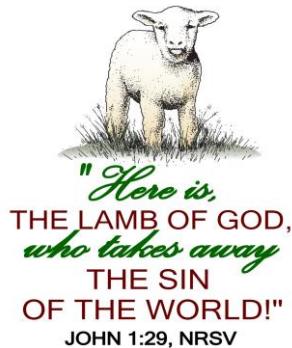
Sunday, February 8, 2026
Large Fellowship Hall
following worship

Sign up in the Narthex to bring a soup for lunch and to enter your team in the tournament. Donations of canned soup or cash will be accepted and donated to the Community Circle Food Pantry.

Since 1990 this event has been held on the same Sunday as the football Super Bowl to raise awareness about hunger in our community.

You do not have to bring soup OR enter the cornhole tournament to attend. Just come for the fellowship!





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

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Minister
 Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor

Elders: Chuck Riggle, Bread
 Jody Mullis, Cup

January 18, 2026 – 10:15am

Prelude

Sam Johnson, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Charlotte Stillwell

Leader: Holy, loving Creator of all, the heavens declare your goodness each day
 and night proclaims your love.

People: You call us to witness to your power and grace.

Leader: You give us mouths to sing your praises, hands and feet to do your will.

People: You call us to proclaim the good news of your reign.

Leader: We yearn to become your people, the body of Christ, living for the sake
 of the world.

People: Let us worship the God who calls us.

Opening Hymn

"This Is the Day"

Jody Mullis, pianist

This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made, that the Lord has made; we will rejoice,
 we will rejoice and be glad in it, and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made;
 we will rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Pastor Gena

O Lord, sometimes when you are leading us into new freedom and hope, what lies behind seems so much
 better – more familiar, more predictable, even if it is more constricting and harmful. Give us eyes to see
 what you have for us on the next leg of this walk with you.

We pause to grieve because walking ahead means leaving something behind. So we remember and give
 thanks for the good that has come before, the growth through the trials and pain, the ways we have
 encouraged and sustained one another. As you have in the past, show us your presence as clear as a beam
 of light, as comforting as a friendly cloud. We need courage and energy to step out with you into the next
 chapter.

We don't always understand when the fight is not our fight. Sometimes you need our presence, our
 attention, our trust in you, our stillness. Give us the courage to be faithful in following your voice even
 when that following isn't impressive or outrageous or full of hype. For we are here to praise and honor
 you, not just to farm aura for show.

It's hard to recognize what you are doing and where you are leading. Every now and then we can look
 back and realize how you have redeemed the pain and difficulty in our lives, how we have grown, how

you have used us to care for someone else. But that doesn't make the journey today any easier, so please be with us. Steady us when we are weak. Spawn in some manna from heaven to satisfy our deep hunger. Bring a friend when we are lonely, a listening ear when we are sad, a blessed relief when we are overwhelmed, a release when we have been bottled up for too long, a moment to lay our burden down when it's too heavy for us. May we look up and see you, the one who saves us, coming to our aid, the Lamb of God!

We thank you for those who have formed the solid foundation of our faith. We thank you for those who have been our rocks, firm when everything is shifting. Those who have been through the struggle and been to the mountaintop and seen the Promised Land, and those who from a mountain of despair have hewn a stone of hope. Give us that hope, that we might work together until every person is seen as a child of God, until every person has what they need, and until all of creation is at ease in health and wholeness.

We pray all of this in the name of the Lamb of God, who is always coming to take away our sins and to leave us in deep shalom, Jesus the Christ, who teaches 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:

“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 Lesson

Exodus 14:10-31

Linda Reese

Anthem

“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing,” by Stan Pethel

Choir

Children's Message

Pastor Gena

Excerpts from *I am Martin Luther King, Jr.* by Brad Meltzer, illustrated by Christopher Eliopoulos, part of the “Ordinary People Change the World” series, Rocky Pond Books, 2016.

Second Scripture Reading

John 1:29-42

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

“Crossing the Divide”

Rev. Chris Stillwell

As we continue to talk about baptism this month, the text for my sermon is from the old testament. Jewish people did not baptize as we understand it and still do not, but there are some antecedents of it in the Hebrew scriptures. The liturgical use of water was common in the Jewish world. The Law of Moses required ritual cleansing on the part of priests following certain sacrifices and on certain individuals who were unclean because of physical conditions. While the natural method of cleansing the body by washing and bathing in water was always customary in Israel, the practice of baptism for the remission of sins as taught by John was not based in any way on the Mosaic law, but I dare say that there is a story of baptism very early in the Bible. What is unique about this story is that it is a story in which the ones baptized were not the ones who got wet. This is the story of the exodus, and, although the word, baptism, appears nowhere in the story, its result is similar.

Baptism represents a crossing-over experience. Crossing through the waters of baptism changes things. That is certainly what happened in the remarkable story of the exodus from Egypt. Enslaved people escaped the pharaoh's army by passing through the parted waters to freedom.

The book of Exodus tells the story of the Israelites who were enslaved in Egypt for four hundred years. Moses followed God's instructions and repeatedly asked the pharaoh to let the people go. God tried to convince the pharaoh through many signs and wonders, including plagues. Finally, on the night that would become known as the Passover, when every Israelite household was passed over and saved from death, the pharaoh let them go free.

All looked good for them as Moses led them into the desert right up to the shore of the Red Sea, but the pharaoh changed his mind and sent his chariots after the fleeing Israelites, trapping them between the sea and certain death. The climax of the story is found in today's text, where God parted the sea and the Israelites escaped. It was a key event for the people of God to never forget—an experience of the redeeming work of God. In subsequent seasons of struggle and distress, generations would turn to this story to remember who God is and what God does for those whom God has created, claimed, and called by name.

Whenever Jewish people gather to celebrate the Passover they ask the question, "Why is this night unlike all other nights?" It is because God instructed them to celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread, because it was on this very day that God brought their divisions out of Egypt. Their divisions were a way to say their tribes, their ancestry from Jacob's twelve sons. Once they crossed the sea God would lead them to a new land, and they would be one nation. Their tribes still existed, but their divisions were less important than their unity.

Throughout scripture water often accompanies a rite of passage, and just as a new people were born coming dry out of the Red Sea, Jesus showed God's power to accompany and change people coming out of the waters of baptism wet. Like the story of the exodus, baptism is a story of liberation, one that takes place literally "through the water." God repeatedly calls people to cross over or through water as they make their way into the future promised for them.

On the other side of the Red Sea, the people of God moved toward the Promised Land. Likewise, our movement as baptized people is through the water into life as a community of faith, a new creation, where all divisions are dissolved and boundaries are broken down. Jesus repeatedly showed people what a boundary-crossing life is like for those who follow him. He challenged the conventions of social class and gender roles, and intentionally crossed cultural and geographical barriers as he invited people to follow him.

Like the Israelites we do not practice our baptism by doing it again, but by remembering it and allowing that memory to change how we live. We practice our baptism by sharing in the reconciling mission of God, reaching across racial biases, cultural traditions, political parties, economic status, and gender identity. The apostle Paul described the community of the baptized in these ways: "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus".

This showstopping scene from the book of Exodus came to be a nation building story for the people of God, a root experience of the redeeming work of the Lord, and a key to interpreting God's action throughout the history of salvation. In subsequent seasons of struggle and distress from Pogroms to the

Holocaust, generations would turn to this story to remember who God is and what God does for those whom God has created, claimed, and called by name.

In the exodus God makes a way where there is no way. God breaks through boundaries and barriers, demonstrating that nothing can separate us from the love of the Lord. God reaches across the great divide, and this is how Christians have come to understand the sacrament of baptism. Baptism is our passage through the waters, following Christ, the liberator who leads us from slavery to freedom. In Christ, God reaches across the divide between divinity and humanity to claim us as beloved children.

Baptism is aptly described as our deliverance—or exodus—from captivity to sin and death. The exodus from Egypt is also a kind of creation story: God’s creation of the covenant community as “a priestly kingdom and a holy nation”. The Lord calls the people out of bondage and claims them as chosen and beloved, set apart for a holy purpose in the world.

Similarly, baptism is the creation of the church as a new people, a covenant community, summoned from captivity to serve God alone. The people of God are transformed by their passage through the waters. As 1 Peter states, echoing the prophets: “Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people.”

Remember that God said at Jesus’ baptism, “This is my son the beloved”. That is why we welcome you each Sunday as God’s beloved because when you emerge from the waters of baptism you take your place as a beloved child of God.

The church, therefore, is called out to be a new creation, following Christ across the divide between this world and the world to come. Indeed, the things that divide us should pale in significance to the thing that unites us which is that we are God’s beloved.

As followers of Jesus, how do we transcend division? For some, this means renouncing power and privilege or using it to help others with less; for others, it means claiming a vision and a voice. Remembering the captivity of ancient Israel, we are called to seek liberation for all who are oppressed. Remembering the ministry of Jesus, we are called to feed, heal, teach, and welcome. Remembering the early church, we are called to create new communities where divisions of race, class, and gender are dissolved by the water of baptism. We practice our baptism, then, by sharing in the reconciling mission of God, reaching across racial biases, cultural traditions, political parties, economic status, and gender identity, and saying you are God’s beloved.

Call to Offering

Serena Dube

The former things have come to pass, and now new things are springing forth. Let us share in the new thing God is doing by offering our gifts and lives to the Lord.

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

Persistent, embracing giver of life, use these gifts and offerings to bring good news to all who suffer or are oppressed. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Rev. Stillwell

Perhaps there is no place where we remember more that Jesus crossed the divide for us than here at this table. While he often crossed the divide of political and social convention in his life, it was crossing the line of life and death for which we love him he most. In fact, you could say that if a divide is like drawing a line and saying you must stay on one side and never cross over, then crossing that divide looks exactly like the shape of a cross, hence the name, cross.

Jesus was a great teacher and a great person. His words have inspired many to better lives but his greatest action was to cross the divide between life and death and between divinity and humanity so that we mortal humans may live eternally with him and God.

At this table we remember the betrayal and the pain and suffering that went into crossing that divide, and our natural reaction should be one of gratitude. We come each week asking for our sins to be forgiven and remember that the reason that this meal is unlike other meals is because shortly after it was finished Jesus showed us that there was no length to which he would not go to cross the divide between us and God. So let us share in this meal and make our most concerted effort to show gratitude by overcoming the division in our life and doing our world.

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

Chuck Riggle

Most gracious Heavenly Father, we come to you this morning with a deep sense of reverence and humility. We thank you for the privilege of being in this sacred house of worship and especially for the opportunity, once again, to participate in this holy observance of communion. As we partake of the bread which represents your son's broken body and sip from the cup which represents his shed blood, let us be reminded that his death on the cross so long ago was not in vain. Now, we ask for your blessing as we partake of these holy elements and pray that we will be encouraged to live more Christlike lives. In Jesus's name we pray, 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

“My Jesus, I Love Thee”

Sam Johnson, organist

My Jesus, I love thee, I know thou art mine; for thee all the follies of sin I resign;
my gracious Redeemer, my Savior art thou; if ever I loved thee, my Jesus, ‘tis now.

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

Rejoicing in the good gifts of our Creator, and filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit, let us go out to love and serve the world as the body of Christ. Go to be good news to all who are in need. Amen.



Fairhill Manor extends its sympathy to the family of Carol Daniels who passed away January 13. There will be a Celebration of Life here at Fairhill Manor on Thursday, January 22 at 6pm. Please keep her family in your thoughts and prayers.

Fairhill Manor extends its sympathy to the family of Chuck Wiseman who passed away January 16. At this time, plans for a memorial service are not complete. Please keep his family in your thoughts and prayers.



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

Barb Bailey
Terry Bailey
Donna Bakaitis
Todd Barnhart
Vanessa & John Bereznay
Jeff Caldwell
Bryan Carter
Maci Caster
Wanda Chicone
Angel Corbett
Ruth Cox
Sue Donaldson
Craig Dotson
Benjamin Dube
Connie Faust
Kathy Moninger-Ford
Terry Gahagen
Barb Graff
Irma Harper
Sheila Harris
Aryn Hess
Danni Iams
Kari Johnson
Shelly Kubincanek
Marylee Lawrence

Southminster Residents

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

Southmont Resident

835 S Main Street
Washington PA 15301
Doris Sorice, Rm 554

Premier Resident

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

Transitions Healthcare Resident
90 Humbert Lane
Washington PA 15301
Doris Haniford, Rm 121

Charlie McConnell
Pam McCord
Norm McDonough
Dick Moninger
Joe Neckerman
Carmen Oliverio
Peggy Oliverio
Michelle Oneal
Sandy Petry
Dick Pilgun
Betty Riecks
Jeannie Riffle
Joan Riffle
Lori Riffle
Mike Ryan
John Samida
Valerie Shetler
Doug Smith
Darci Sprowls
Wayne Starnes
Cathy Stewart
Jan Stillwell
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.



Light illuminating front stained glass.



Name: _____

American Cancer Society
Daffodil Sale

Bunch of Daffodils \$15

Bunch of Tulips \$15

Mini Potted Daffodils \$20

Gift of Hope \$25 (flowers donated to local cancer centers)

To order, please return this coupon to Karen Thomas or place in the Church Office mailbox. Orders must be prepaid and are due by February 17, 2026. Make checks payable to "American Cancer Society".