

Manor Minutes
Volume 16 Issue 22
May 30, 2025

- Choir Practice – June 5, 6:30pm

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



Gift cards available this week:

- Applebee's (2)
- Bath & Body Works (2)
- Bob Evans (3)
- Cracker Barrel (2)
- Dairy Queen (2)
- Dick's Sporting Goods (1)
- Eat'n Park (3)
- Kohl's (1)
- Olive Garden (2)
- Outback (2)
- Panera (2)
- Red Lobster (2)
- Texas Roadhouse (3)

Each gift card has \$25 loaded on them. The church earns an average of 10% on each card sold. Please see Pastor Gena after worship if you would like to purchase a card (or 2).



We need help baking a few batches of Communion Bread. There's an easy-to-follow recipe. If you can help fill this need, contact Rev. Chris or the Church Office.



Graduate Sunday – June 8 – If you are graduating or you have a family member who is, please contact the Church Office to let us know. You can call the office (724) 225-8610 or send an e-mail to fairhillmanor@yahoo.com with the name of the graduate, school they are graduating from, and their relationship to Fairhill member. Information is needed by **June 1**.



Pentecost – June 8

- Last day of Sunday School and CW&W
- Sunday School Teacher and CW&W Volunteer Recognition
- Pentecost Picnic after Worship (sign-up sheet in the Narthex)
- Wear **RED**

Bethany Class Luncheon – June 9 - The **Bethany Class** will meet at Eat'n Park on **MONDAY**, June 9th at Noon for lunch. Everyone is welcome.



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
Gary Ford, Cup

June 1, 2025 – 10:15am

Prelude

Sam Johnson, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Kevin Puskarich

Leader: Once we were not a people, but now we are God's people.

People: Once we were alone, but together we are the household of God.

Leader: Here in this time of worship, and later when we go forth to serve,

People: Christ is our cornerstone, strengthening us for the journey.

Leader: In our living and in our dying,

People: Christ is our sure foundation, strengthening us along the way.

Opening Hymn

"Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

Sam Johnson, organist

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, who rules all creation. O my soul, worship the well-spring of health and salvation. All ye who hear, now to God's temple draw near. Join me in glad adoration.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Pastor Gena

O God, you are hope, you are salvation, you are shelter. As ones who know this good news, hear us as we put all of our confidence in you, pouring out our hearts to you, knowing that you hear us as we gather to worship and to praise you.

Merciful God, forgive us when we are quicker to listen to those who are trying to sell us something for their own profit, when we are more likely to trust and emulate those who appear successful in the eyes of the world. Forgive us when we are slow to listen to you, the one who created us and loves us without end. Renew our trust in you and help us to use this time of worship to deepen our relationship with you and to re-align our priorities with yours.

Forgive us when we are reluctant disciples. Renew our desire to follow you even if it means having the direction of our lives changed or loving those who the world has pushed aside, condemned and forgotten. Forgive us when we forget that we do not have to do everything in our own power when you challenge us to take risks of faith. Instead, you give us just what we need to do your work.

Loving God, thank you for the gift of prayer, through which we hold one another in our hearts and in your care. Hear now our prayers for the leaders and people of every nation; for the church and all who share your love; for those who are suffering in sorrow or pain; for refugees and travelers far from home; for those who sit in darkness or in the shadow of death. Hear now our prayers for those we have named aloud this morning and those in our hearts who need your special care...

Gracious God, this is our prayer: may your love overflow more and more in our lives, in your church and in all the world, until all know just how deep and how wide your love and mercy are. We pray this in the name of Jesus the Christ, our Savior and Lord, in whose name 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:

“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 97

Gene Sheller

Anthem

“Sanctus”

Choir

Children’s Message

Pastor Gena

I need to have a private conversation up here with the kids for a minute. We have some decisions to make.

There are definitely some important people here today. If you have to choose, who is more important? People who have been a part of this congregation for a really long time or people who have been here just for a little bit of time? How many years do you think makes you more important?

Now, I also think some people are more important because of where they are sitting in the Sanctuary. Do you think the people on the right side or the left side are closer to God? Or maybe the people sitting in the back are closer to God than the people sitting in the front? Oooh, how about the people sitting up here on the platform? They must be really close to God.

I also think that God loves people who wear cool shoes to church a lot more than people who wear boring shoes. What kind of shoes do you think God loves the most?

Ok. Let’s see who is important and close to God and loved most by God in here....

We are always trying to find ways that some people are better or more important to our church than other people are. We like to compare ourselves. We like to decide who is a better Christian and who God might love more.

People in the church a very long time ago seemed to have the same problem. Paul was writing to a church in Galatians that seemed to be finding ways that some people were more important and closer to God than others. Do you know what Paul wrote to them about this? He said, when we love Jesus and decide to follow him, we realize that nothing can make us more important to God; nothing can make God love us more. Each one of us is God’s child, and that makes us very important to God. God cannot love some of us more than others because God already loves each of us more than we can possibly imagine. Some of us cannot possibly be closer to God than others because God is already as close to us as possible. God is in each of our hearts.

So, I wonder, according to what Paul says, who is the most important, the most-loved here, the closest to God here?

Sermon

“Comfortable Clothing”

Rev. Chris Stillwell

Some of my earliest and most vivid memories are of clothes. Specifically, clothes that my mother would dress me in that I did not like. Sometimes I didn't like the way they looked but mostly these types of childhood memories involved uncomfortable clothes. There are a lot of reasons for this. A parent might pick out an outfit based on how it looks and not know if it is uncomfortable because they are not the ones wearing it. Perhaps what one person thinks is comfortable another person does not. Most often is that fact that little kids grow fast, and what was comfortable at one time begins to feel less so as time goes on; especially if the child in question really liked to eat pepperoni rolls as this child did (and still does).

Ironically, the last such memory I have is on the day of my baptism, and it is one of the only memories I have of that day. I just remember being dressed up in clothes that I hardly ever wore, and that didn't fit all that well. The reason I say that this is ironic is because according to the apostle, Paul, I was about to put on something completely new. I am not talking about the robes used in baptism but he says, “As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.”

What does that mean, to be clothed with Christ? To me it means caring less about outward appearances and more inward, which is something I could have used a lot more when adolescence came and I worried so much about my appearance. I say this because of what Paul says next when he writes to the Galatians:

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.

These were the divisions of the day and in many ways they were outward divisions based on appearances. Therefore, being clothed in Christ meant not caring about division and the things that separated us in this world. That's a radical notion to be sure. The Galatians were divided over the law and the need to adhere to it or not adhere to it. While Paul was gone others came and told the new Christians that they were wrong not to follow the tenants of the law especially in regards to circumcision, food, and clothing. Paul explains, again that the law led to Christ and was fulfilled by him and tries to reconcile the division amongst the Jewish and Gentile Christians by saying, “if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.”

Gentile Christians are children of Abraham, and in the next chapter he will call them children of God through adoption. What a perfect metaphor Paul adopts by using adoption to explain how Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians are one in Christ. I have known many people who were adopted and raised by parents that were not their biological parents, and I have no doubt that those parents love those children every bit as much as my parents love me. Still, it is not uncommon for a person who is adopted to go through a period of time when they struggled with what it means to be adopted. They wondered if their adoptive family could really love them the same way as their friends' family.

As far as I know everyone who was at one time or another uncertain came to *trust* how truly, deeply, and completely their adoptive parents loved them. As soon as that happened there were no adoptive parents, but simply mom or dad.

Paul prayed that the Galatians would soon come to this realization. For they were not trusting in their adoption. They had a hard time believing that God could love them just as they are without trying to become like their Jewish brothers and sisters. They were taught by other teachers and so came to believe that they must follow the law in order to win God's love, but there was a problem with this logic.

The first problem is that is not why the law was created. No amount of ritual or cleansing or strictness can win God's love. God already loved the people and when Yahweh called Abram to go to the Promised Land, there was no mention of law. The law was not given to the Jewish people until they **were** a people. When they numbered in the thousands, and they were wandering aimlessly in the desert God gave them the law to create a sense of community. With the customs, habits, and rituals of the law the Hebrew tribes became the Jewish people. Now, with the advent of Jesus Christ, that community had been expanded into a blended family that included Jews by birth and Gentiles by adoption.

Secondly, the law was created precisely to humble us by showing us that we cannot attain perfection and righteousness on our own. Even if a person follows each law strictly and obediently, he or she cannot be like as to God. Paul showed the Galatians that no amount of adherence to the law could make them righteous or holy. Instead, it is the love of God in Christ that can make them so. They must learn to trust this amazing grace that comes from adoption in Christ.

In this way they would learn to love themselves as they were. They did not need to become someone else before God would love them. They did not need to pretend to be someone else. This went both ways. Gentiles did not have to pretend to be Jewish, but neither did Jewish Christian have to pretend to be Gentiles. They were free to keep their practice and rituals so long as they did not demand it of others.

In short both groups were free to be themselves, and so are we. Being yourself is without a doubt the most important thing a person can be, and the best way I have ever heard it described is by saying that a person is comfortable in their own clothes. Now as I have gone through life, like most people I have had a love hate relationship with clothes. There are many things I have bought that looked good but I hardly wear because they don't feel good, and there are the old, familiar, comfortable clothes that I wouldn't be caught dead in public, but I can't give up because they are so inviting.

Being able to pick out and purchase your own clothes is one of the first sings and privileges of growing up and often we pick the clothes that we think will impress others even if it means making ourselves uncomfortable. To my mind true happiness comes not from being the most fashionable person with the best wardrobe, but being comfortable in your clothes because what someone is like on the outside is not nearly as important as what they are like on the inside, and this is especially means yourself. If you are like this then you have clothed yourself in Christ which means that outward appearances are not important.

When we clothe ourselves with Christ, we look differently, we act differently, we speak differently, because we not only wear Christ on the outside, we are filled with Christ from the inside, and it shows. People notice. They become curious, and want to know why our lives are different from theirs, why we have peace and joy in abundance, whatever the circumstances are, why we aren't greedy like others, why we aren't angry all the time, why we don't resort to slander and gossip.

We can be comfortable in who we are because we know whose we are, and we know this because we have been adopted in the faith through grace. We can be thankful for that as well as knowing that our Heavenly parent clothes us with Christ, which I imagine is lot more comfortable than how our own parents clothed us.

Communion Hymn

"Come and Find the Quiet Center"

Sam Johnson, organist

Come and find the quiet center in the crowded life we lead, find the room for hope to enter,
find the frame where we are freed: clear the chaos and the clutter, clear our eyes, that we
can see all the things that really matter, be at peace, and simply be.

Invitation to Communion

Rev. Stillwell

One of the great joys of life is when I stopped caring about looking like other people and started wanting to look like myself. It's not that I didn't want style I just wanted my style; whatever that was, and one of

the great ways I did that was by going to thrift stores. The great thing about thrift stores is that they had a lot of styles that you wouldn't find other places, mostly because they were out of fashion but still it was nice to see different things. The other thing that was great is that everything was cheap so you could try something different and it wasn't a big deal if you didn't end up liking it after all. In this way I discovered my love for corduroy pants, guyabera shirts, Merrell shoes, and cardigan sweaters.

It might seem strange finding a style in a place that is mostly filled with other people's castoffs, but it is true what they say, "One person's trash is another person's treasure." This is especially true if you go to the outlet goodwill store where they have bins of items and you must sift through them to find a treasure.

I know the truth of finding worth in what others consider junk because just about every week I have come to this table, where I am reminded of two things. First, Jesus Christ was considered trash to the point that he was thrown out, but the stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the cornerstone to our worship, and the cornerstone to our life.

Second, I am reminded that, no matter what I look like to others, I am not worthless to Him, and he has done much more than descend into some bins to find me and save me, he descended into Hell itself to show me my worth.

To some people I am a middle aged, overweight, thrift store cowboy, but to him I am a pearl of great worth, and so are you. Come to this table, therefore, and cloth yourself with Christ, and know that to God you are always in fashion.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Chuck Riggle

Dear Heavenly Father, we come to you on this beautiful Spring morning with utmost humility and appreciation for your presence in our lives each and every day. We thank you for the wonderful privilege of being in this house of worship and the opportunity to partake of the bread and the cup which represent your son's broken body and shed blood on the cross so many years ago. Now, we ask for your blessing on us as we observe the very special significance of communion. In Jesus' 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

All are invited to share in this meal. Please come forward down the center aisle, as you are able, take a piece of bread, dip it in the cup, and partake. Place your offering in the trays as you return to your seats by the outside aisles. If you are unable to come forward, the meal will be brought to you. Gluten-free wafers & individual servings 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

"They'll Know We Are Christians"

Sam Johnson, organist

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord, we are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord, and we pray that all unity may one day be restored: And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love, yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

As children of God, live gratefully and responsibly, at peace with the family of God. Know that the grace of Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit go with you. Now go forth to share these blessings with the world now and forevermore.



WHO AM I?

*Did you know that some Old Testament books are named after prophets?
Use the clues to figure out each prophet's name and write it on the lines.
Then unscramble, use the circled letters to complete the sentence at the bottom.*

1. I was called to preach to Nineveh, but I ran from God instead. My book is number 32 in the Bible.
I am ____○____.
2. I spoke God's message when the temple was being built. My book is number 37.
I am ____○____.
3. Israel's unfaithfulness to God is compared to my unfaithful wife. My book is number 28.
I am ____○____.
4. My book predicts punishment for wickedness and promises of comfort. It is book 23.
I am ____○____.
5. I had dreams and visions. My book is number 27.
I am ____○____.
6. I was often in danger because of my prophecies. I angered officials. My book is number 24.
I am ____○____.
7. I was a shepherd from Judah who called people to turn to God and leave their selfish lives. My book is number 30.
I am ____○____.
8. My book contains descriptions of strange visions. My book is number 26.
I am ____○____.

Prophets are ____.

Answers: Jonah; Hosea; Isaiah; Daniel; Jeremiah; Amos; Ezekiel. Messengers.

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!

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Barb Graff
Irma Harper
Sheila Harris
Alberta Haught

Aryn Hess
Danni Iams
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Von Lacock
David Leonard
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Pam McCord
Norm McDonough
Dick Moninger
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Carmen Oliverio
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Jeannie Riffle
Joan Riffle
Lori Riffle

John Samida
Valerie Shetler
Doug Smith
Darci Spowls
Wayne Starnes
Cathy Stewart
Beth Teagarden
Jane 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.