

Manor Minutes
Volume 16 Issue 46
November 14, 2025

- Appreciation Dinner – November 16, following worship
- Red Robin Fundraiser – November 17, 11am-7pm
- Stewardship/Finance Ministry – November 17, 5:30pm
- Dartball – November 18, 7pm @ Chartiers Crossroads
- Choir Practice – November 20, 6:30pm

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

November 23 – Congregational Meeting

There will be a Congregational Meeting following worship on November 23 to discuss and approve the 2026 FMCC operating budget and church officers.

November 23 – Blessing Box Offering

The Disciples Women's Ministries will collect and dedicate the **Blessing Box** offering. You may keep your box and write a check for your amount to: Church World Service or just bring your change. Thank you for participating in this ministry.

November 23 – Hanging of the Greens

Decorate the Sanctuary for the Christmas Season at 5pm and join in the fun, food and fellowship. Everyone is invited.

November 30 – 1st Sunday of Advent

Advent Devotionals will be available in the Narthex on November 23 & 30. If you are unable to pick one up, please contact the church office and we will make arrangements to have one sent to you.

DRIVE-THRU NATIVITY

It's time to **sign up** to be a character for the Drive-Thru Nativity. The sign-up sheet is in the Narthex. Our **Drive-Thru Nativity** will be Saturday and Sunday, **December 13 and 14**. Please mark your calendars now to save both dates. We will need 50 people to be characters and more people to help in many ways to make this a great community event. Please ask relatives, neighbors and friends to participate. Give Connie their contact information if they can help.

There is also a sign-up sheet in the Narthex for **food** that is needed to feed the cast and crew during the Nativity.

Christmas Party

The Bethany Class will hold their **Christmas Party** on Friday, December 19 at noon in the Small Fellowship Hall. RSVP to the Church Office by December 15. Everyone is welcome to join the party for food, fun and fellowship.

POINSETTIA ORDERS

Order your **poinsettias** for our Christmas Eve display in memory of or in honor of a loved one. Order forms can be found in the Narthex, the bulletin and at the end of the Manor Minutes.

Angel Tree

The **Salvation Army Angel Tree** tags are available in the Narthex. When you take a tag, please write your name on the sheet on the credenza. This is helpful when gifts are returned. Do not wrap gifts, but place them in some type of bag (reusable bags work the best) All gifts need to be returned to the Church by **November 30**. This is a short turnaround time. The Salvation Army was running behind this year on tag distribution. Disregard the return date on the tag as the Salvation Army will pick up the gifts here.

Snow plowing and salting of the parking lot bids are being taken for the 2025-2026 winter season. If you know anyone that does plowing/salting please contact Ed Palfreyman or the Church Office.





Thank you to everyone that came out to the **Notes of Thanks** concert last Sunday. Over \$800 was raised. This money will be used to buy gift cards to help the needy in Washington.

Donna Stenski would like to thank everyone who donated cookies. An extra thank you to Deb and Russ Knight and Patty McConnell for their help setting up and cleaning up after the program. Containers from donated cookies are in the kitchen.



Rev. Chris took 10 jars of peanut butter, 8 jars of jelly, 9 rolls of toilet paper and 319 other assorted items to the **Community Circle Food Pantry** on Thursday. He definitely had a full car 😊

The generosity of Fairhill always shines through when there is a need.



The Trustees are looking for **help** setting up the scenes for the Drive-Thru Nativity. They are hoping work day will be Saturday, November 29 around 10am. If you would be able to give a little bit of time they would appreciate it. Please contact Ed Palfreyman or Von Lacock if you can help.



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
Gary Ford, Cup

November 16, 2025 – 10:15am

Prelude

Sam Johnson, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Linda Reese

Leader: Rejoice and be glad, people of God.

People: God is making all things new.

Leader: Sing for joy, sisters and brothers in Christ.

People: God bathes us in the well of salvation.

Leader: Dance with delight, heirs of the Spirit.

People: God has turned our sorrow into laughter.

Leader: Rejoice and be glad, people of God.

People: God is making all things new.

Opening Hymn

"Come, Ye Thankful People, Come"

Sam Johnson, organist

Come, ye thankful people, come, raise the song of harvest home; all is safely gathered in,
ere the winter storms begin; God, our Maker, does provide for our wants to be supplied;
come to God's own temple, come, raise the song of harvest home.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Rev. Stillwell

Eternal God, your anger may last for a moment, but your mercy endures for a lifetime. We come before you with joyful hearts, longing to draw living water from the well of your salvation. We come this day to worship with thankful spirits, yearning to abide in the new world you are creating in our midst. As we sing your praises, touch us with the love of your new heaven, that we may be fit to dwell in your peaceable kingdom.

God of hope and promise, speak again your words of life and death, for reports of violence and bloodshed are all around us. In a world where refugees have nowhere to turn, bless us anew with visions of heavenly shalom, that the world may be healed and your people may live in safety and peace. Teach us the joy of sharing simple acts of kindness and heartfelt gifts of tender mercy, that we may be people of your kingdom and children of your love.

Living, loving God, breathe among us this day. Breathe new life into our midst, that we may remember and reclaim our place as children of the resurrection. As we sing our praises and offer our prayers, speak courage and hope to us, that our voices may grow in confidence and our hearts may grow in faith. In your living presence, we offer our prayers and praise. Amen.

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

Isaiah 58

Gary Ford

Anthem

“Thanks Be to God,” by Sheldon Curry

Choir

Children’s Message

Pastor Gena

We have been talking about how sometimes we find ourselves off the path of love, going away from the path that God has for us, a path of loving God and loving others. And when we realize we are off the path, we can repent, or “turn around,” and ask God to help us find the way back to the path of love. So we might have been going “this way,” perhaps hurting other people or ourselves, perhaps hurting our relationship with God, and we make a turn so that we do things differently in the future.

You know, sometimes we find that we need to repent, to turn around, as one person. But sometimes we see something around us, that maybe many of us are involved in, that we need to turn around from. For example, you might see a person sitting on the side of the road under a bridge. He has a coat and hat on, but he is still rocking back and forth in the cold. In the past, maybe you walked right by the man without saying hi or asking his name or finding out what you could do to help. Now maybe you ask someone to go with you and you talk to him, and you find out his name is Edward, and he says his gloves just aren’t very good, and he sleeps under the bridge at night, and his stomach is upset from some food he ate recently, and he could use some hand warmers. You decide that one way to be loving might be to buy him a good pair of gloves, but he asked for hand warmers, so you get him some of those and some body warmers too, and you get him some crackers that might calm his stomach down. Maybe that is loving Edward as a child of God a little more than maybe you did before. Maybe knowing his name means you will think about him and pray for him. Maybe your having actually talked to him makes him feel encouraged and a little more like a person. There are all kinds of repenting, turning around, happening here. Building relationships, showing love. You are doing things differently than before. That’s repenting.

But as you walk away, you ask yourself, “Why?” Why is Edward in this situation? You don’t know. Maybe you can find out one day. That question, “Why?” often leads us to the second kind of repentance, turning around. Sometimes things are bigger than just us, just one person. Sometimes things that all of us do together aren’t very loving. We can keep giving Edward hand warmers and crackers, but maybe something isn’t right here, is it? Why is Edward in the situation he is in, living and sleeping under bridges? Maybe there is something bigger going on that we all could do differently that might make it so people aren’t in those situations. Or maybe Edward needs help that we don’t know how to give but someone else might know how to give. Sometimes asking “why” is the first step to repenting as a community, as a whole group, and finding ways back to the path of love all together.

Dear God, thank you for helping us to see when things aren’t right, when things aren’t so loving. Help us to turn around, to become more loving. Help us to ask “why” things aren’t loving and why people aren’t loved, and show us all how we can all turn around and become more loving together.

Sermon

“A Just, Kind, and Humble Sacrifice”

Rev. Chris Stillwell

Any time a person wants to be a part of something there is always the question of what will it cost. It makes sense that we would expect some type of payment, some type of offering, some type of sacrifice to be a part of a group, club, or organization, otherwise everyone could be a part. My son is currently applying to colleges and that requires grades, test scores, transcripts, applications, and a lot of money, but this is not an issue for only high school seniors. This is the case in any stage of our lives.

A professional organization usually involves a fee and a commitment to attend meetings. A social fraternity requires the same. In fact, I once was asked to be a reference for a friend of mine who wanted to be a Shriner. I vouched for him that he would make a good Shriner, but only after asking the gentlemen on the phone what Shriners do.

Oftentimes we are required to sacrifice a good deal of our time and money to be a part of some club or other and we do it because we believe the sacrifice will be worth it. This type of thinking can be defined as you get what you pay for, so of course anything that advertises great benefits at little cost is suspect, but what if I told you that you could buy 12 cassette tapes for only a penny?

I am speaking of my favorite club as a teen-ager; the Columbia House Record Club. I loved that club so much I joined it at least a half dozen times, but I understood that the obligation did not stop at a penny. I made sure to send back the card when I didn't want the monthly selection, and I bought the required 5 albums at club price in order to fulfill my obligation. I knew it was a good deal so long as the requirements were fulfilled, but many of my friends sent in that card to get 12 tapes for penny and left their parents paying for all the rest.

Despite this one exception, it is generally true that the greater the benefits of an organization the greater the requirements for entry and we can see that no more clearly than in the Old Testament. One might surmise that the entire theme of it is sacrifice. Cain kills Able in a disagreement concerning their sacrifice to God. Lambs were sacrificed to protect the first born of the Israelites. A very detailed, and bloody set of laws were given to the Israelites to define them as a people and a nation. A building was built for the sole purpose of performing these sacrifices and this building, the temple, was the center of Israelite life, politics, and religion.

Christianity is also familiar with sacrifice as it began with one person giving himself up as a ransom for many, and the early church argued over whether the sacrifices of the law were still required. Ultimately, they were not but you can see how people thought it too good to be true that they could get something so great as forgiveness and eternal life without having to make a major sacrifice and over the years many have with some going so far as to emulate Jesus Christ by giving their life as martyrs in a time of persecution.

This, combined with people who would give up the pleasures of the world as a sign of their faith and preachers who would claim that your prayers will not be answered unless you give a big donation, have left many to believe that Christianity takes great sacrifice. In this context we come to the prophet, Micah, who is described as a minor prophet because his book is short, but who gives us a major revelation when he condemns the sacrifice of Israel and says,

With what shall I come before the Lord
and bow down before the exalted God?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?
⁷ Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,

with ten thousand rivers of olive oil?
Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?
⁸ He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.
And what does the Lord require of you?
To act justly and to love kindness
and to walk humbly with your God.

That is so simple, and so beautiful. All the Lord requires of us is to act justly, love kindness, and walk humbly. Micah's words were a condemnation of the hollow religious rituals that many of his hearers believed would please God. Micah cries out that God does not want blood offering rituals but rather the hearers' blood, sweat and tears in offering God righteous lives. We also don't have to look too far into the Christian Scriptures to find Jesus' validation of Micah's challenge. That challenge is at the core of the Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount, or Jesus' plea that whatever we do to the least of these we do to him. Elaborate and difficult sacrifices are thrown away by these three easy to understand commands, that seem so simple, but we should know, they are harder than they appear.

To do justice - What does that mean in our lives? Could it mean speaking up when something is said that is harmful or prejudicial toward another human being? Does it mean having a mindset that is always concerned about the community good over the welfare of a few? Is it simply the command to treat every person fairly as if they were your equal or even God? It is all of this and more. To do justice isn't to make sure everyone has the same but that no one lacks the basic means to live, and we see that throughout the prophets. While Israel continued the ritual sacrifices time and again, they forgot those in need and worried about the letter rather than the spirit.

Justice in the Old Testament is anything from the command to allow the needy to glean the fields, Ezekiel condemning Sodom because they were "overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy," Nathan rebuking David for stealing another man's wife, or Solomon showing wisdom in the dispute of two mothers who claimed to be the rightful mother of a child. It is easy to want justice but doing justice can often be hard and carry with it real risks.

Next is to love kindness - What might this mean? Could it mean speaking and acting with compassion and not out of anger? Does it mean always having the heart of a peacemaker? When we think of Micah's call to love kindness it seems easy. Who would not love kindness? Other translations say love mercy, and again who wouldn't love that? Who doesn't love it when someone opens a door for you, picks up something you drop, gives you some of their food, smiles at you, compliments you, who does not love these things?

It is one thing when we receive mercy and kindness but extending it can be hard and to some people harder than others. For to love kindness means also to show it. This is harder. Most of us are acutely aware of our own struggles and we are preoccupied with our own problems. We sympathize with ourselves because we see our own difficulties so clearly, but the Scottish author, Ian Maclaren once said "Let us be kind to one another, for most of us are fighting a hard battle."

Some of the Christians that amaze me the most aren't the ones who can quote every passage of the Bible but who show kindness even when things are tough, and extend mercy even to those who not merciful to them. When Jesus was asked to summarize the gospel he said, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart with all your soul and all your mind and you shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Finally, there is the command to walk humbly with God - How might this be lived out? Could it mean not passing judgment on others? Does it mean listening in order to understand the soul of the other person? The final command to walk humbly may be the hardest command of the three. If the maker of

Heaven and earth sent his own son so that we could be saved, and our sins our forgiven, and we have the Holy Spirit with us, it is tempting to let that go to our heads.

Many people walk with God very proudly and want you to know how faithful they are. This was a clear problem in Jesus' time as he admonished the Pharisees for making a big show of their faith and claiming righteousness so he reminded his disciples that "not all who say Lord, Lord, will enter into the Kingdom of Heaven:" and "there are none righteous, not one".

I once spoke with a person who attended the weekly AA meeting at my church and he said with alcoholism comes great guilt. Sometimes he said "you do such terrible things that you think that God doesn't want anything to do with you, but then you come here and you learn that God does. No matter how terrible you have been, God will forgive you and love you. That made it possible for me to forgive myself and to love myself."

This type of humility is the difference between merely walking with God and following God. It is the difference between pretending to know God and being arrogant about our faith and truly knowing God and letting that humble us. Let us remember this distinction, for if we want God to "cast all our sins into the depths of the sea." as Micah promises we must remember what it is that God requires, to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our god.

So, God does still demand sacrifice, but a different kind of sacrifice. We sacrifice our desires or our selfish wants, even if it simply means the ways that we would treat people. Instead, we are called to treat one another that way that God treated us, by offering forgiveness for our sins, and righteousness for our shortcomings. The more I think of it, outside of offering my firstborn, giving thousands of rams and rivers of oil would be a whole lot easier.

Let us pray, Glorious God, you are just, you are kind, and you, who are holy, humble us by walking with we who are lowly. When we are lost, or questioning, or wondering remind us that your will for our life is not hard to find: do justice, love kindness, walk humbly with you. Creator God, turn our hearts toward justice. Saving Jesus, show us how to love kindness. Holy Spirit, guide us as we walk with you in humility, now and forever. Amen.

Call to Offering

Gene Sheller

One servant said to the master, "Sir, you gave me five thousand coins, and I have earned five thousand more." Another said, "Sir, you gave me two thousand coins, and I have earned two thousand more." When we receive God's gifts and then offer them back in gratitude, God responds with abundance. God invites us to offer our gifts to the world, trusting in God's unending generosity.

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 and Dedication of Stewardship Pledges

Pastor Gena

- L: Almighty and Everlasting God, we give you thanks this day as we gather the pledges of support for your Church in the coming year. We bring them before you with eager anticipation and hope.
- P: Hear us, O God, as we give you our thanks and praise.
- L: For those whose lives have been touched by your Spirit and who have increased their commitment,
- P: We give you thanks and praise.
- L: For those who are responding to your creative grace by pledging for the first time,
- P: We give you thanks and praise.

- L: For those who are tithing, and even exceeding a tithe,
P: We give you thanks and praise.
L: For those whose lives are in transition or turmoil and who feel they cannot pledge, but who continue to be a vital part of this congregation,
P: We give you thanks and praise, and we pray for calm in our lives.
L: For all who pledge their time and energy in service to your Church in the coming year,
P: We give you thanks and praise.
L: For Ministry members who have labored in this effort to enable your people to make a pledge of support for your Church,
P: We give you thanks and praise.
L: That each one of us, and your whole Church, might become more faithful to the call of service in the Christ Jesus,
P: We ask your continuing guidance and care.
L: Grant that these pledges may emerge as real gifts of love in action, enabling the mission and ministry of Jesus the Christ to move forward through this congregation and through the Church in all times and places.
P: We ask your blessing on our pledges and commitments, and on our congregation as we gather to grow. In the name of Jesus the Christ, we commit ourselves to these actions. Amen.

Adapted from Linway United Presbyterian Church, linwaychurch.org

Invitation to Communion

Pastor Gena

You have heard of “turning the tables on someone” – changing a situation so that you have an advantage over someone who previously had an advantage over you, reversing a situation so that you have the upper hand. Apparently this phrase comes from board games played on a surface called a table in which players could literally reverse the board to switch positions with their opponent, thus changing the state of the game. Imagine if you are about to lose a game and you can just turn that table around and all of a sudden be winning!

When we come to this table, there is no need to “turn the tables on someone” because we are all welcome here and are all at the same advantage. No one’s welcome is better or worse than ours. We are in the presence of someone who loves each one of us and extends the same mercy and grace to us all.

It is not the table that we are turning here. Instead, this is the table where we turn ourselves. If we realize that we are veering off the loving path, hurting others or ourselves, not seeking to live in God’s ways, the ways of love, we can repent...we can turn around. Week after week, we have this opportunity. To turn, to try again. This is the table of turning.

So let us welcome each other to this table where Christ is our host and where he loves to see nothing more than people turning around to follow his commandment more closely, to love one another just as he has loved us.

Communion Hymn

“For the Bread, Which You Have Broken” Sam Johnson, organist

For the bread, which you have broken, for the wine, which you have poured,
for the words, which you have spoken, now we give you thanks, O Lord.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Jackie Nelson

Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth and each one of us inside these walls and outside these walls. Each one is created unique and in Your image. It is amazing and hard to understand. We are truly thankful to be able to gather at this sacred place to worship You together. This is not just another day. This is Your day. We have heard the warning words of the prophet Isaiah and the instructions from Micah. At this sacred table we believe Jesus taught with His words and actions to love You Lord with our whole heart and to treat others as ourselves. Holy Spirit, come, be with us as we share this bread and wine, our commitment to Jesus. Help us to show others Jesus. Amen.

Words of Institution

Pastor Gena

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

Pastor Gena

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

“Blessed Assurance”

Sam Johnson, organist

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! O what a foretaste of glory divine! Heir of salvation, purchase of God, born of his Spirit, washed in his blood. This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long; this is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

As children of the living God, we go forth with the promise of new life, the hope of resurrection in our world, and the passion to keep our hearts focused on your love and life.



If you do not need a specific color poinsettia, please make a note of “no preference” on your order. We will order the color needed to complete the Poinsettia Tree Display.



The beautiful poinsettia tree that adorns our sanctuary each Christmas Eve is a tradition that we all look forward to every year. Please fill out this form and return it to the church office by **November 30 with payment**. Indicate the color and number of poinsettias you would like to order. Cost per plant is \$12. Please **make checks payable to “Fairhill Manor” and indicate “Poinsettias” in the memo line**. Plants may be picked up following the Christmas Eve service.

#_____RED Poinsettias

#_____WHITE Poinsettias

ORDERS are due by November 30

Given by

In Memory/Honor of (circle one)

In Memory/Honor of (circle one)



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

Bo & Patty Pryor, Apt 102
Chuck Wiseman, Apt 214

Southmont Resident

835 S Main Street
Washington PA 15301

Doris Sorice

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, Room 121

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

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