

Manor Minutes
Volume 16 Issue 38
September 19, 2025

Calling Commission – September

- No Dartball – September 23
- Choir Practice – September 25, 6:30pm

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



September 28, 4pm

Bring your pet (on a leash or in a carrier) or a picture of your pet and join us on the front lawn for a special blessing.



October 5, immediately after worship



October 28, 2pm

The **Bethany Class** will meet at Eat'n Park on Tuesday, October 28 at noon for lunch.

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 different 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. Thank you very much!



 **RaiseRight.**
GIFT CARD PROGRAM

Gift cards available for purchase this week:

- Bath & Body Works (1)
- Dick's Sporting Goods (1)
- Eat'n Park (2)
- Jimmy John's (1)
- Old Navy (2)
- Olive Garden (2)
- Outback (1)
- Panera (1)
- Texas Roadhouse (2)

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 ☺.



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

Rev. Chris Stillwell, Senior Minister
Rev. Gena Sheller, Associate Pastor
Elders: Linda Reese, Bread
Jody Mullis, Cup

September 21, 2025 – 10:15am

Prelude

Sam Johnson, organist

Welcome

Pastor Gena

Call to Worship

Gary Ford

Leader: Sing to God for mercy and grace.

People: Sing praises to God for laughter and joy.

Leader: For our God is mighty and strong, protecting the lowly from the anger of the oppressor.

People: Our God is righteous and just, saving the weak from the cruelty of the powerful.

Leader: Sing to God for mercy and grace.

People: Sing praises to God for laughter and joy.

Opening Hymn

“They’ll Know We Are Christians”

Jody Mullis, pianist

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.

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord’s Prayer

Pastor Gena

Holy One, you sent your Son to walk among us, and you ask us to abide in him as branches connected to a life-giving vine. We give you thanks for your constant presence and unending love.

Life-giving God, we confess that we have not always borne the fruit of compassion and love as you have asked us to. We have turned the other way and ignored brothers and sisters in need. We have remained silent while injustice has roared from the sidelines. We have sometimes thought that we could bear fruit on our own and so have neglected and ignored the vine from which we stem. Forgive us, O God.

Help us to listen closely for your voice. May we love you with all our hearts, and with all our souls, and with all our might. Help us to learn your commands of love by heart, that they may be ever before us. May your love be always on our lips, at home and away, in our lying down and in our rising. Give us strength to continue to abide in you—to journey with you, to live out the call of people working together for wholeness in a fragmented world.

For all that you have given us, God of life, we give you thanks and praise. For your abiding presence and strength, we give you thanks. For opportunities to serve in your name, we give you praise. For this community of faith in which to grow in you, teaching one another, listening and learning, we give you thanks. For the yearning in us to be connected to you, the source of our life, we praise you.

Abiding God, we ask you to continue to be present with those who need you the most: those who are grieving, those in need of healing, those whose situations may feel overwhelming. We pray now for those

who need your loving care, especially those on our prayer list and those we have named aloud this morning and in our hearts ... Show us how to love in your name, O God.

Give us strength to go out into the world and serve our brothers and sisters as you have called us to. May the fruits we bear in our lives be a witness to your love. And may our invitation to others always be one that says, "come and see" the love of God, "come and see" the gift that a community of faith can be.

In the name of the source of our trust and love, Jesus the Christ, we pray as he taught us ...

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

Ephesians 4:11-16

Donna Stenski

Anthem

"Sanctus," by Schubert

Choir

Children's Message

Rev. Stillwell

It goes like this (Invite kids who know the song to sing along):

"You put your right hand in. You put your right hand out. You put your right hand in, and you shake it all about. You do the Hokey Pokey, and you turn yourself around. That's what it's all about."

This time, we'll sing the same song, but replace "right hand" with "left hand." Follow along with the hand motions as we sing:

"You put your left hand in. You put your left hand out. You put your left hand in, and you shake it all about. You do the Hokey Pokey, and you turn yourself around. That's what it's all about."

After the left hand, you follow the same instructions with your left foot, right foot, and your head. At the end, you put your "whole self" in! What a fun dance!

But can you imagine what would happen if you were doing the "Hokey Pokey," and your left hand refused to do the "Hokey Pokey" because it wanted to be the right foot?

Or what if the head said, "I don't need any of you. I can Hokey Pokey all by myself!"

This just isn't possible. The hands, the feet, and the head are all part of the "whole self." And no part can take the place of another.

Even though the "Hokey Pokey" is kind of silly, it is a good picture of the parts that make up the church. The Bible says, "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I don't need you!' And the head cannot say to the feet, 'I don't need you!'"

Every person is an important part of the church, just like every body part is important to the whole body. Together, we make up what is called the "Body of Christ."

We each have special gifts that are important to God and His church. Some of us have been given the gift to be a pastor or teacher, while others have been given the gift of healing, helping others, or leading people. Maybe you have the gift of being creative, being a great listener, or something totally different.

What is one special gift God has given you?

How can you use it to serve others?

Just as God gave us hands, feet, eyes, and ears to meet the needs of the whole body, He has given different people different gifts to meet the needs of the whole church.

Second Scripture Reading

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

“Better Together”

Rev. Chris Stillwell

There is a story I came across many years ago that I love and come back to whenever it begins to get cold. It is a reminder that we all need from time to time. A member of a certain church, who previously had been attending services regularly, stopped going. After a few weeks, the pastor decided to visit him. It was a chilly evening. The pastor found the man at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire.

Guessing the reason for his pastor's visit, the man welcomed him, led him to a big chair near the fireplace and waited. The pastor made himself comfortable but said nothing. In the grave silence, he contemplated the play of the flames around the burning logs. After some minutes, the pastor took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone. Then he sat back in his chair, still silent. The host watched all this in quiet fascination.

As the one lone ember's flame diminished, there was a momentary glow and then its fire was no more. Soon it was cold and "dead as a doornail." Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting. Just before the pastor was ready to leave, he picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it. As the pastor reached the door to leave, his host said, "Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the fiery sermon. I shall be back in church next Sunday."

I always found this illustration to be a powerful reminder of how things by themselves are not much, but together they can be great, and I think of that every time I sit around a fire watching the coals burn. In my mind it answers the question of whether or not one has to go to church to be a Christian. Remember that when Jesus died he was resurrected and he was declared to be God's new temple. We need no longer worship God in the temple now that we can worship God in Christ.

This can provoke two very different feelings. On the one hand this is liberating. We now have the belief that God is with us wherever we go and wherever we are. Through prayer and the Holy Spirit nothing can separate us from the love of God that we have found in Christ Jesus Paul tells us.

This was great because the temple was destroyed not long after Jesus ascended causing a theological emergency for the Jewish people, that Christians did not have to go through. However, this is also troubling to those of us who desire to bring people into the church, for if we don't need to worship God in the temple then do we need to worship God in church? Technically no. The thief on the cross who believed in Christ belonged to no church but was saved by his faith at the last moment. It is true now as then, that we can experience God, talk to God, and worship God anywhere. So why do we come to church?

Why do you come to church?

Answers that were given by members of the congregation include:

1. To experience the Christian community.
2. Because all of my friends are there.
3. To hear music and singing I couldn't hear anywhere else.
4. To encourage and be encouraged by others.
5. To teach the children about Christ.
6. To renew and revitalize my faith.

These reasons that have been mentioned all include a common theme. They are all benefits that come from worshiping together; benefits that we cannot enjoy on our own. Support, encouragement, sharing of gifts and resources is what makes the church unique and essential to our faith.

It is important that we know the reasons why we come to church and what we get from it, because if people can meet God on the golf course or the bike trail what reasons can we give them for meeting God here?

It is my belief that people should come to church not because they have to in order to have eternal life, but because it helps us immeasurably in this life, in a way that being a Christian alone, in the woods or in front of our TVs, cannot.

This is essential because I am sure you know how divided our nation is today. It always has been in many ways, and you can be sure that there are people who benefit from that division. This is demonic. Division has always been the work of the devil and we see this in the early church

The early church had much going against it. It was small, mostly poor, greatly misunderstood, and assailed by the power of the Empire. Persecutions took place any time an Emperor wanted someone to blame for the problems that he couldn't or wasn't interested in solving. The emperor knew that he could always count on the majority of people to unite in their hatred of a small misunderstood people who had no power.

On top of this the church itself was divided. This is why Paul speaks so much about unity in his letters. He speaks in Ephesians of people having different gifts that were to be used together for the building up of the body of Christ. That is what he calls the church.

It is a perfect illustration for we know that our bodies are wonderfully made and we know that they do not have to function perfectly to work at all. People live without two legs, or two kidneys, or without one of their senses every day, but we know that the limbs and the organs cannot live apart from the body. To use Paul's illustration, then, we are like a limb or an organ and, while the body could live without us, it would not function as well, nor could we live without it.

Remember this when we talk to our friends and many of them will say that they don't come to church because they feel close to God in their own way. Our job isn't to convince them that they can only experience God in church, but to convince people that they can experience God *even better* in church. They don't have to give up communing with nature, but joining a community gives them a more complete faith.

It gives them a place to learn more about the Bible and about God because they must discuss their faith with others who may have different viewpoints and ideas. It is here that they are supported by a community of caring individuals who come together to form the body of Christ. It is in the church where they are inspired by a cloud of witnesses from the past, and where they receive a tradition that has been passed on from generation to generation. It is also here where each person is challenged to do their part and share their gifts to continue that tradition.

Our denominations slogan is: “We are a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world.” If we live up this idea then we can help the church help the world to heal from its many divisions.

Ultimately, we must remember that while we can be a Christian outside of the church we can always be a better Christian in it. When Jesus was resurrected and shortly after he ascended his disciples began worshiping together in their homes.

They didn’t have to. They could have gone their separate ways and worshiped Christ in their own manner, but they would not have accomplished alone what they accomplished together. Because they did not allow their bad experiences with organized religion to spoil them on the idea of it forever, they became a part of something that was larger than themselves and they became larger than life.

There is trouble in the church today to be sure, and many people you talk to about coming to church will cite this as a reason why they don’t come, but ultimately, if the church is as God wants it to be it is a place that we will want to be as well. It is to be a place where people use their gifts diverse in many ways to build up the body. It is to be a place where each one finds a place and does their part. It is to be a place where the flame of faith is fanned by each other so that we burn bright together rather than burn out alone. I am convinced that the greatest Christian in the world who is not in the church could be an even better Christian if they were. It is our job to show them why.

Call to Offering

Von Lacock

With hearts filled with singing, let us bring forth our gifts and offer our lives to Christ, that God might work miracles of hope through our giving and our living.

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, transform our gifts into gifts of hope and joy for a world acquainted with despair. Receive our very lives, and fashion us into instruments of your grace, that we may become love and laughter in places of sorrow and mourning. Mold us into your people—a people of promise and hope, a people who live and die in the Lord.

Invitation to Communion

Rev. Stillwell

We are one in the Spirit and we are one in the Lord. That is what is required of each of us. When our church coalesced around certain principles we said, “In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, and in all things charity.” Such a wonderful rallying cry until we began to have arguments over what were the essentials, but as we come around this table we should think of how different Jesus’ Disciples were. In the twelve there was a zealot and a tax collector. There was Peter who was bold and Thomas who doubted. Even the brothers fought over who would be at his right and left.

They were disparate and argued, but they were united by their love of Christ. Each week we observe the Lord’s Supper to remind ourselves that, whatever else we are, we are the Body of Christ. We are one in the Spirit and we are in the Lord, and they will know us by our love. Let this meal therefore increase our love of one another and our love of the Lord so that our body will grow

Communion Hymn

“In This Very Room”

Sam Johnson, organist

In this very room there’s quite enough love for one like me, and in this very room there’s quite enough joy for one like me; and there’s quite enough hope, and quite enough pow’r to chase away any gloom, for Jesus, Lord Jesus, is in this very room.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Linda Reese

Creator God, you said to Israel, Shema! Hear! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. At this table we hear that call. At this table we become aware of your gift of unmerited grace that is revealed to us through the death and resurrection of your Son. Bless this bread and cup, the emblems of that sacrifice. As we leave this table, let us obey your call for us to use our gifts for the building up of the body of Christ. 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

“Blest Be the Tie That Binds”

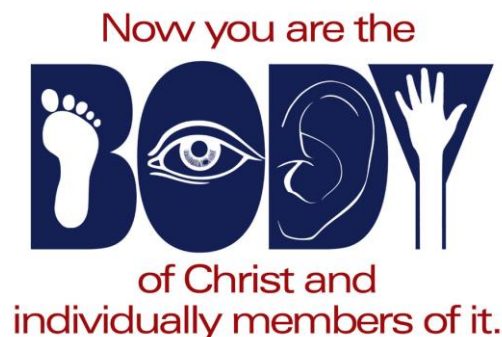
Sam Johnson, organist

Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love:
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

Just as God’s Word was sent into the world to heal and redeem, so God sends you into the world this day to be light and love, healing and hope. Go now to be light for the world!



1 Corinthians 12:27, NRSV

Fairhill Manor extends its sympathy to Anna and John Berg on the passing of their friend, Edmond Dunn on 9/13. Please keep Edmond's family and friends 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 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
Doris Sorice, Apt 336
Chuck Wiseman, Apt 214

Premier Residents

36 Old Hickory Ridge Rd
Washington PA 15301

Carol Brown, Rm 213

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
Barb Graff
Doris Haniford
Irma Harper
Sheila Harris
Alberta Haught

Aryn Hess
Danni Iams
Ed Jackman
Kari Johnson
Brandon Keenan
Von Lacock
Marylee Lawrence
David Leonard
Pastor Dave Mansfield
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
Dee Ryan
Mike Ryan

John Samida
Gene Sheller
Valerie Shetler
Doug Smith
Darci Spowls
Wayne Starnes
Cathy Stewart
Jan Stillwell
Beth Teagarden
Jane Teagarden
Ginger Throckmorton
Candy Wasalasky
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.