

Manor Minutes
Volume 16 Issue 44
October 31, 2025

- Vacation – Pastor Gena will be on vacation November 2 – November 9
 - No Dartball – November 4
 - Board Reports Due – November 5
 - Choir Practice – November 6, 6:30pm
- Stay up to date at www.fairhillmanorchurch.org/calendar



November 9 – Notes of Thanks, 6pm

This is a free concert featuring Pastor Betty Riecks, Sam Johnson, Dan Baker, and the Ambassadors for Christ. A free-will offering will be collected to assist families in our congregation and community when they reach out for help. Cookies will be served after the concert.

November 16 – Appreciation Dinner

Join us, following the worship service on November 16, as we celebrate the amazing generosity of our congregation. It's tailgate season, so plans are underway for a tailgate-type dinner. Hot dogs, hamburgers and buns will be provided. Sign up in the Narthex with how many people you will be bringing and if you can bring a snack (potato chips, pretzels, cheese puffs) or a dessert. Invite your family and friends to join the fun and fellowship. **Steelers game on TV included!**

November 17 – Red Robin fundraiser

On Monday, November 17, FMCC will receive 20% of food sales when the attached flyer is mentioned. Feel free to send this flyer to all your family and friends. Just mentioning the flyer will work too. Please let me know if you cannot open the flyer or if you have trouble forwarding it.

November 23 – Blessing Box Offering

The Disciples Women's Ministries will collect and dedicate the **Blessing Box** offering on Sunday, November 23. 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.

Delay

The new bricks ordered for the **memorial garden** have been delayed. They are currently in the production phase and will be shipped to us as soon as the entire order is completed. A dedication service for the new bricks will be announced and held after they are received. Apologies for any confusion and inconvenience.

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.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

Thank you so much for the generous donations for the food pantry. On October 22 Rev. Chris took 9 PB, 3 Jelly, 9 rolls of TP and 138 other items to the food pantry plus another 100 items that were donated from the Fall Crop. This week Rev. Chris took 5 PB, 4 Jelly and 146 other items to the food pantry some of this was collected at the Trunk or Treat. These items will be of tremendous help to the Community Circle Food Pantry.

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.

All
Saints'
Day
Celebrating those who
have gone before us

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

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

November 2, 2025 – 10:15am

Prelude

Sam Johnson, organist

Welcome

Rev. Stillwell

Stewardship Campaign Minute

David Keefer

Call to Worship

Gene Sheller

Leader: Come into the presence of God, who provides everything we need.

People: God's faithful love lasts forever.

Leader: Let us praise the Lord, who makes a way where there is no way.

People: God's faithful love lasts forever.

Leader: Follow the Shepherd, who leads us into life in beloved community.

People: God's faithful love lasts forever.

Leader: Come and worship our loving, Triune God, who calls us to live in God's glory.

People: God's faithful love lasts forever.

Opening Hymn

"Give Thanks"

Sam Johnson, organist

Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One, give thanks because he's given Jesus Christ his Son. And now let the weak say "I am strong"; let the poor say "I am rich" because of what the Lord has done for us. Give us. Give thanks!

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Rev. Stillwell

We give you thanks, O Lord, for you are good; and your steadfast love endures forever.

We called to you and you rescued us from trouble, gathering us from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south. We give you thanks, O Lord, for you are good, and your steadfast love endures forever.

Thank you for your steadfast love, for your wonderful works to humankind. You satisfy the thirsty, and the hungry you fill with good things. May we be your agents of abundance in a world of hungry and thirsty people. We give you thanks, O Lord, for you are good, and your steadfast love endures forever.

You turn a desert into pools of water, a parched land into springs of water. Rain down your mercy into the dry and dusty corners of our lives. Quench our souls, and let your justice flow as a river through our lives, our communities, our world.

We give you thanks, O Lord, for you are good, and your steadfast love endures forever.

God of all goodness and steadfast love, receive the prayers we offer, and let your will be done in our world; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

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 51

Kevin Puskarich

Anthem

“In This Very Room,” By Ron Harris

Choir

Children’s Message

Rev. Stillwell

Today we are celebrating “All Saints’ Day.”

Do you know any saints? (If they don’t think of them, I’ll name St. Patrick and St. Valentine and St. Nicholas.)

What makes them saints?

A saint is anyone who responds to the love of God. That means you are saints. We are all saints. We remember some saints more than others because of the way they responded to God’s love, but anyone who knows God loves them and who decides to love God back is a saint.

There are 69 times when saints are referred to in the Bible. But no one person is ever called a saint. That’s because the word saint never occurs in the singular – it’s always plural.

That means the only saints are those who gather with other saints. It also means we cannot be a saint on our own. We need other Christians to help us be saints, and other Christians need us for them to be saints.

Let’s pray: God, thank you for calling us your saints. Help us to join with all your saints as we gather in your presence and as we seek your will for each of us and for all of us. Amen.

Second Scripture Reading

James 5:13-16

Rev. Stillwell

Sermon

“Shame to Joy”

Rev. Chris Stillwell

*Shame, boatloads of shame
Day after day, more of the same
Blame, please lift it off
Please take it off, please make it stop*

This is a song by one of my favorite bands, The Avett Brothers, called “Shame”. It was one of the first songs of theirs that I had ever heard, and I knew as soon as I heard it that I was going to love them, because the song resonated so completely with me.

It resonated with me, because I have been there, I have felt the overwhelming burden of shame and the gut-wrenching turmoil of blame that can cling to a person’s soul unlike anything else, and I think everyone has felt that at one point or another.

It makes me think of my deck. We have a railing on our deck that the previous owners thought would be a good idea to paint white, and a deck floor that they also thought would be good to paint beige, and so what happens is that, no matter how much we try, the deck gets dirty every year. We paint it every spring, and by September it looks dirty. That’s just the result of being outdoors. Likewise, any person, no matter

how good or upright, no matter how much they may try to do the right thing, inevitably has moments, where they make a mistake and sin dirties their heart. That's just the result of living in this sinful world.

It is just what happens when we live in a sinful world. At some point shame comes to us all, and the particularly pernicious nature of shame is that it feeds on itself. It grows, and causes us to believe that we cannot overcome it. So, the feeling of shame which is often caused by sin, can easily lead to wallowing in it and making our situation worse. Often times we are incapable of freeing ourselves from shame. It takes someone else.

The writer, Flannery O'Connor, knew that, so she turned to God. A recent issue of The New Yorker included some intriguing excerpts from a journal written by the young Flannery O'Connor under the title, "My Dear God." Here is part of the first excerpt:

Dear God, I cannot love Thee the way I want to. You are the slim crescent of a moon that I see and my self is the earth's shadow that keeps me from seeing all the moon. The crescent is very beautiful and perhaps that is all one like I am should or could see; but what I am afraid of, dear God, is that my self-shadow will grow so large that it blocks the whole moon, and that I will judge myself by the shadow that is nothing. I do not know you God because I am in the way. Please help me to push myself aside....

Oh God, please make my mind clear.

Please make it clean....

I wonder if she had Psalm 51 in mind when she wrote that? Psalm 51 is a confession, "a cry for God's mercy and compassion," as one writer put it. Read the first few verses:

¹ Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. ² Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. ³ For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. ⁴ Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment. . .

Psalm 51 is attributed to King David of Israel, and David had one of most notorious experiences in mind when he considered God's mercy. It's recorded in 2 Sam. 11-12. While taking an afternoon nap on the roof of his royal palace, the story goes, David saw a beautiful woman bathing in the courtyard of another building across the way.

Immediately, he had to have her. And though he and the woman were married to other people, he did have her. He was the king, after all, and this is then precise reason why God got angry at the Israelites when they asked for a king

Back then God said to the prophet Samuel to tell the people what life under a king would be like saying:

This is what the king who will reign over you will claim as his rights: He will take your sons and make them serve with his chariots and horses, and they will run in front of his chariots. ¹² Some he will assign to be commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and others to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and still others to make weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. ¹³ He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers . . . He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his slaves. ¹⁸ When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, but the Lord will not answer you in that day.

So, David acts like kings are wont to act, and, after a thwarted attempt to cover up his impregnating of Bathsheba, David ultimately conspires to have her husband killed in battle to get him out of the way. The prophet, Nathan, knew what the king had done, so he went to David and told him a story about the beloved pet lamb of a poor man which was taken by a ruthless rich man and cooked up for some company. David was incensed by that rich man's actions in that story, but he was shamed when Nathan charged, "You are the man!" In light of all he had done, David was far worse than the rich man of Nathan's little story.

David faced a major turning point here. He could easily have reacted in anger and defensiveness. He could have tried to explain "his side of the story." As king he could have expelled Nathan from the

kingdom or imprisoned him forever, even put him to death, in order to protect himself and maintain his reputation.

In other words, David could have gone over to the dark side, but David immediately responded out of a tender, honest heart. He realized how he had made a mess of things out of his poor choices and his selfish will. So, he confessed and begged for God's mercy. He was indeed one after God's heart. And the psalmist attempts to capture the emotion of his heartfelt confession.

We all need to be cleansed from something. Perhaps it's a relationship that's unhealthy, or one we're misusing or even abusing. Maybe it's forcing some figures at work to make our balance sheet look better, or over billing some customers. Maybe it's cheating on our course work in school. Whether it's a stupid mistake that we're not willing to own or the result of our total rebellion from God's ways, there's some area of life that we know we have let get out of control, and we're getting to the point not of fixing it but of covering it up.

This is the time to learn from David's humble, honest response--before it's too late. This is the time to turn to God for cleansing. Of course, though David was forgiven and cleansed by God, he still suffered the ramifications of his choices, including the death of the son that resulted from his affair. This is harsh. It's hard to take in at times. But if we're honest, each of us knows what it's like.

God has high standards. God wants us to be honest and authentic, true to ourselves, to each other, and to God. God hopes for us that we will be positive and giving and loving, not selfish and hurtful and deceptive. That's not always easy, and it certainly isn't as easy as messing up in the first place.

Confession allows us to take responsibility for our actions, which is a necessary step for change and growth. It is not a punishment, it is not torture; it can be painful, but it can also lead to comfort, renewal, and progress.

We need to keep connected to God, and to God's goals for us, day by day. We need to acknowledge too that we don't have to do it all in our own power. God has given us everything we need to live this way. It starts by asking God, just as David did, to:

¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.... ¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit. ¹³ Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

Or, as the Avett Brothers sang, "Please lift it off, please take it off, please make it stop." Or as Flannery O'Connor wrote, "Please make it clean.... Please help me to get down under things and find where You are."

Winter is near, but it won't be long before I will have to get under that old peeling gross looking paint on my deck. I have to scrape it off. Sometimes I use a heat gun to peel it off so that for a brief time in spring it looks fresh and new. God does that for our soul, every time we confess.

God can scrape away the sin that stains us. God alone, can use the refiner's fire to burn away our impurities. God can lift our shame, take our shame, and make our shame stop. God can renew and refurbish our spirits, our hearts, our drive, our attitudes. God can give us a positive, willing, and steadfast spirit to live and learn from mistakes and to change direction. God can do all of this, but it starts with the humble, honest response of our heart.

James tells us to confess to one another in order to be healed and concludes that the prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. It is so ironic that when we confess the things that make us unrighteous we become righteous not because we have never sinned, but because we have repented and we take to heart what Jesus says in the parable of the Prodigal Son, "Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

Let us confess and repent so that Christ can take our shame and turn it into joy.

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: clearing 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

November is a quiet time in the midst of excitement. Before we had the changing colors of the fall the excitement of Halloween, and soon we will have Christmas and all the rush of excitement that season brings, but now is the time to pause, to breathe, to rest. It is also a time to remember for this month begins with All Saints Day, continues with Veteran’s Day, and culminates with Thanksgiving, all of which are times that we set aside to remember. We as Christians have just such a time for pause, remembrance and Thanksgiving. For this is what communion is for us.

In the midst of work, family, stress, entertainment, worry . . . communion is a chance to breathe, pause, and rest. While we are doing those things we also remember. We remember the saints who have gone before, and who are with us now at this table, and when we remember we then give thanks. We give thanks for the faith that has been shared and the one who has inspired it and who has invited us to this table

So as you take this bread and this cup take a deep breath. Breathe out all your anxiety and breathe in the presence of Christ.

Prayer for the Bread & Cup

Gary Ford

Lord, our prayer today is simple: Father, we do believe in our hearts that Jesus is Your Son and You raised him from the dead. We take this bread and cup and we remember His sacrifice. We are saved by our faith, not our works, and everyone, no matter who they are, no matter where they are, everyone who believes is saved. 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

“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!”

Benediction

Rev. Stillwell

Clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony, and let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.



A wondrous washing

David’s prayer of repentance reveals a desire to be cleansed of his sin.

Directions: Unscramble the words on the left. Then match them with the correct phrases from Psalm 51 (NIV) on the right.

ETRC AE _ _ _ _ _	_____	out my transgressions (v. 1)
HS AW _ _ _ _	_____	away all my iniquity (v. 2)
RSEER OT _ _ _ _ _	_____	me with hyssop, and I will be clean (v. 7)
WNER E _ _ _ _	_____	me, and I will be whiter than snow (v. 7)
TLBO _ _ _ _	_____	your face from my sins (v. 9)
DIHE _ _ _ _	_____	out all my iniquity (v. 9)
NATRG _ _ _ _ _	_____	in me a pure heart (v. 10)
LNSECAE _ _ _ _ _	_____	a steadfast spirit within me (v. 10)
LBTO _ _ _ _	_____	to me the joy of your salvation (v. 12)
WHS A _ _ _ _	_____	me a willing spirit, to sustain me (v. 12)

Answer: blot, wash, cleanse, wash, hide, blot, create, renew, restore, grant



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

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
Alberta Haught
Aryn Hess
Danni Iams
Ed Jackman
Kari Johnson
Brandon Keenan
Von Lacock
Marylee Lawrence
David Leonard
Charlie McConnell

Southminster Residents

880 S Main St
Washington PA 15301

Bo & Patty Pryor, Apt 102
Doris Sorice, Apt 336
Chuck Wiseman, Apt 214

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

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

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.