



The CHIMES

MUHLENBERG: A WELLSPRING OF GOD'S GRACE

Muhlenberg Lutheran Church strives to be a Wellspring of God's Grace in Jesus Christ.

Open ✚ Authentic ✚ Relational ✚ Serving

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January 2, 2022

SECOND SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

PASTOR ALEX AWAY

I will be on vacation through January 15, traveling with family to Egypt. I will not be accessible by phone or email during this time, so please contact Pastor Lauren or Linda Depoy with any urgent needs. I'm excited to see you again when I return! +*Pastor Alex*

DECEMBER COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

- Voted to hold the Annual Congregation Meeting on January 30 at 9:45 am
- Voted to install Council members at both services on January 9
- Voted to authorize the Personnel Committee to appoint interim candidates to the Administrative Assistant and Finance Manager positions until permanent candidates can be found
- Welcomed new Council members
- Heard all Council members share their thoughts regarding Focus Areas of the Strategic Plan that they are most passionate about

- Elected Council officers for 2022:

President - Greta Willis

Vice President - Kevin Stees

Secretary - Meg Wightman

Treasurer - Sarah Sunde

- Thanked the outgoing officers for their service this past year

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Thomsen

Congregation President 2021

TODAY AT MUHLENBERG

RECOGNITION OF CRYSTL WHITMIRE

We are so grateful for our Administrative Assistant Crystl Whitmire's nearly 13 years of service at Muhlenberg! Today during worship, we give thanks for her service and invite you to greet Crystl in the Gathering Area between services. Thankfully, we'll still see Crystl here as a member at Muhlenberg, so this is not a farewell — but we recognize and celebrate her today in this transition to retirement!

TODAY AT MUHLENBERG (CONT'D)

WELCOME TO THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

The Narrative Lectionary (the four-year cycle of readings which we follow) dedicates the time between Christmas and Easter this year to the gospel of John. This unique gospel opens up an experience of grace through stories of signs pointing us to God. Throughout the next few months, we'll dive deep into this gospel to meet a relational, deeply intimate Christ.

You are encouraged to take time to read the gospel in its entirety, and find opportunities to study it further outside of Sunday morning worship. Consider joining in adult Sunday school or the Wednesday morning Bible study in order to learn more about this fascinating gospel. We'll have small group study opportunities during Lent, as well. If you'd like to study in-depth on your own, the commentary *John* by Karoline Lewis is fantastic. We look forward to exploring the gospel of John together!

FOOD COLLECTION



TODAY (1/2) in the Gathering Area, we collect non-perishable food for Patchwork Pantry. No glass jars please. The Pantry is also in need of paper products (paper towels, wraps, food storage bags, toilet tissue, etc.), cleansers (dish, laundry, all purpose), diapers, and all types of personal hygiene products. Please check the [Giving Page](#) on Muhlenberg's website to see a full list of acceptable items. Monetary donations are also appreciated; you can make checks payable to Muhlenberg noting *Patchwork Pantry* on the memo line. Thank you for your support!

CHRISTIAN FORMATION CLASS LOCATIONS

There will be no Children's classes today – they will resume next Sunday, January 9. Adult classes will meet as usual.

Pre-K – 5th Grade meet in the Muhlenberg Activities Center [MAC] (behind the church)

These classes meet downstairs in the church:
Grades 6 -12 ~ Campus Room

Devotional Classics Adult Class ~ Nielsen Room

Faith Lens Adult Class ~ Kairos Room

To attend virtually, use this Zoom Link:

[HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/84731416878](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84731416878)

VILLAGE TO VILLAGE

Village to Village is an organization that welcomes refugee families to our area. **Today is our last day for collecting new or gently used toys, backpacks, school supplies, home items, and coats.** Please donate gently used items as there is limited storage space and the need is for “like new” things. These items will be used to welcome refugees to our community in the coming months.

You can also make a monetary donation at www.hope4villages.org.



THIS WEEK AT MUHLENBERG

WEDNESDAY AM BIBLE STUDY

Join us each Wednesday at 10:30 am for Bible study via [ZOOM](#):

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/200491556>

COMFORT MAKERS

Please join us **Thursdays, January 6 - April 7 anytime between 8 am - noon!** No sewing skills required. *For more information, contact Linda Morrison (glenm778@comcast.net or 383-5085).*

GUEST PREACHER NEXT SUNDAY

With Pastor Alex away next Sunday, former Muhlenberg Interim Pastor Mark Radecke will be our Guest Preacher with Pastor Lauren serving as Presiding Minister. Join us and say a special hello to Pastor Mark between services.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

WELCOME TO MUHLENBERG!

If you are new to the Muhlenberg community, or would simply like to learn more about the congregation, please save the date and join us for a *Welcome to Muhlenberg* experience **Sunday, January 16 at 9:45 am.** Meet leaders, hear about ways to get involved, and take a tour of our campus. We'll also share information about membership at Muhlenberg. If you're interested but unable to attend, please contact Pastor Lauren (eanes@muhlenberglutheran.org or 434-3496) so you can receive an invitation to our next event later in the spring.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE NEWS

FINANCE MANAGER NEEDED

We are renewing our search to hire a paid part-time Finance Manager. We need a staff member who can manage our financial affairs, while also working with our Parish Administrator and volunteers.

If you or someone you know may be interested in exploring this opportunity, you can find the job description and application instructions by clicking [HERE](#). Please lift up our search in your prayers.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT NEEDED

As you know, Crystl Whitmire is retiring. We are so thankful for her service, and she will be dearly missed. As a result of her retirement, we are beginning a search for an to fill the open position. The Administrative Assistant will report to Parish Administrator Linda Depoy.

If you or someone you know may be interested in exploring this opportunity, you can find the job description and application instructions by clicking [HERE](#). Please lift up our search in your prayers.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY NEWS

For more information, contact Financial Secretary Gary Calleo (vnccall@yahoo.com or 540-421-5463).

OFFERING ENVELOPES

Offering envelopes are available in the Gathering Area. If you wish to have yours left in the Connection Box (outside the Gathering Area), please email Gary or call the church office. Envelopes not picked up and still being utilized will be mailed early January 2022.

DESIGN OUR BULLETIN COVERS IN 2022

Do you have artistic gifts or an eye for photography? Your gifts can help tell God's story! One of our congregation's strategic initiatives over the coming year is to "Become a Congregation of Storytellers." While our lectors and Biblical Storytellers do a wonderful job of proclaiming God's story each week in worship, there are other means of storytelling. Whether you use your own art, photography, or any other visual medium, you have the opportunity to pick a week this spring with the corresponding biblical story, and use your gifts to design our Sunday worship bulletin cover! Storytellers of all ages are welcome to sign up here to claim your favorite stories from the Gospel of John this Spring: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D45ACAB2DAAFDC34-bulletin>.

Contact Christian Perritt (perritt@muhlenberglutheran.org) with any questions about ways you can use and share your gifts to help us become a congregation of storytellers!

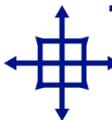
--- Sunday of the Liturgical Season

The Date, 2022

YOUR VISUAL
STORYTELLING
GOES HERE

Story of the Day Here

John #:#-#



MUHLENBERG
LUTHERAN CHURCH

MUHLENBERG NEWS

CREATION CARE TIP



Just say 'no' to plastic produce bags. About 1 million plastic bags are used every minute, and a single plastic bag can take 1,000 years to degrade. If you're already bringing reusable bags to the grocery store, you're on the right track. Purchase some reusable produce bags and help keep even more plastic out of the landfill.

We give thanks to Ramona Sanders for providing Creation Care Tips for many years. Ramona is taking a step back, but we will use our archives to continue providing weekly tips for your education and consideration. Thank you for your dedicated service, Ramona!

MATERIALS AVAILABLE

Printed sermons are available on the table in the Gathering Area and upon request from Linda Depoy in the church office.

Devotionals for January-March 2022 are available from the Connection Center or the Connection Box.

OPEN DOORS

Save the date! Muhlenberg will feed homeless guests at Open Doors **January 31-February 6**.

We will provide dinner, and a few volunteers will be needed to serve the food each night. Use this link to sign up:

<https://tinyurl.com/yyv6cvmt>

More information will follow in the coming weeks!



LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

TORNADO RELIEF

An outbreak of at least 30 tornadoes recently swept through six states. So far, 94 people are reported dead across five states. Lutheran Disaster Response is collaborating with the Indiana-Kentucky Synod and other partners in the area to assess the damage and develop an immediate and a long-term response plan. Your gifts to support these response efforts will empower our partners to meet survivors' immediate and long-term needs. Given the extent of the damage, recovery will take years as thousands of homes will need to be rebuilt or repaired. With your support, Lutheran Disaster Response can accompany survivors on the long road to recovery.

We have an opportunity to share hope with our neighbors in their time of greatest need. Please pray for those impacted by the tornadoes and consider giving as you are able. **100% of your gift goes directly to help response efforts.**

- **Online:** click [HERE](#) or visit elca.org.
- **Phone:** 800-638-3522 (Monday-Friday, 8:00-5:00 Central Time).
- **Mail:** make checks payable to Lutheran Disaster Response and send to ELCA, PO Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116-8009.
- **Offering plate:** make check payable to Muhlenberg and designate Lutheran *Disaster Response* on your check and envelope.
- **Via Thrivent Financial:** Thrivent members can direct Choice Dollars to Disaster Relief and/or make a personal donation that will be matched by Thrivent. Visit thrivent.com Disaster Response for details.



MIDWINTER POWER IN THE SPIRIT

Our second annual midwinter Power in the Spirit online gathering is coming soon! Once again centered on Candlemas (February 2), this is our time after Christmas and before Lent to “rest, renew, and rise!” Power in the Spirit first met online because we had to. Now we gather online in the midwinter because we want to!

Join us for live sessions online from **Monday, January 31, to Wednesday, February 2.** We’ll open our virtual doors at 5:30 pm each night, and by 5:45 we’ll be enjoying lectures and workshops from a variety of leaders. At 7:00 pm we’ll close with worship. Registration opens January 3. Click [HERE](#) for more information or visit vasynod.org/power-in-the-spirit.

The Rev. Kevin Strickland, Bishop of the Southeastern Synod of the ELCA, joins us as our keynote speaker! Bishop Strickland brings a wealth of knowledge regarding worship practices and how our worship forms us for mission.

And while you are saving dates, plan to join us at Roanoke College for our summer Power in the Spirit gathering: July 14 - 16!

WINTER CELEBRATION RETURNS!

Winter Celebration is the Virginia Synod’s annual weekend faith-formation retreat for **youth in 9th - 12th grades and adult leaders.** This year we are gathering in person **January 21-23** at Eagle Eyrie Retreat Center in Lynchburg. There will be Large Group experiences with singing, skits and fun and Small Group experiences with new friends, games, conversation, more games, and faith sharing!

You can register online [HERE](#) or email Pastor Lauren (eanes@muhlenberglutheran.org) if you have any questions or need assistance in covering the registration costs. There is also the option of attending the event via Zoom for those who are concerned about COVID safety or have other mobility limitations. The cost is \$35 for online participation.

RECENT ATTENDANCE

12/19	8:30 Holy Communion	53
	11:00 Holy Communion	72
	11:00 Wellstream Worshippers	38
	Total Views this Week.....	185
	Hours Viewed this Week.....	99.8
12/22	Choral Evensong	30
12/24	2:00 Fireside Service	83
	4:30 Holy Communion	83
	6:30 Holy Communion	97
	6:30 Wellstream Worshippers	61
	9:00 Holy Communion	33
	TOTAL Christmas Eve Attendance...	357
12/26	10:00 Holy Communion	44

FINANCIAL NEWS

NOTE FROM OUR TREASURER

As we celebrate Christmas and the spirit of joy and giving that the season elevates in a special way, *The Chimes* includes an updated Treasurer's Report, providing for you our actual year-to-date experience through December 21. Also, to offer a comparative reference, the report includes year-end totals (through Dec. 31) for our 2021 Budget and our 2020 actual experience. This updated 2021 Report reveals good news and a special opportunity. As you review the report, you'll see that, with the appropriation to 2021 revenue of part of a very generous testamentary gift, our net deficiency for the year is now down to **\$14,137**. As we give prayerful consideration to our final gifts for 2021, a strong finish this year can send us into the new year in a healthy fiscal position. Merry Christmas! *Ted Sudol*

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through December 21, 2021

	Year to Date Actual (thru 12/21/21)	Year-End Totals Budget (thru 12/31/21)	Year-End Totals 2020 Actual (thru 12/31/20)
Gifts/Offerings	\$587,118	\$867,332	\$651,830
Total Revenue	\$706,217	\$966,562	\$739,727
Total Expenses	\$799,450	\$966,562	\$814,339
Income/ Expenses	(\$93,233)	\$0	(\$74,612)
Testamentary Gift	\$79,095	—	—
Gov. Subsidy (Payroll Protection Prog.)			\$85,989
(Deficiency)/ Surplus	(\$14,138)	\$0	\$11,380

Giving in support of our Spending Plan \$ 14,152.03
 Giving to Other Designated Funds \$ 90.00
Total Giving for the Week \$ 14,212.03

To give online, scan here →



WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

January 3-9, 2022

If viewing electronically, you can click the links below to access meetings and services.

- Mon 2:00 pm** Weekly Staff Meeting
- Tues 6:30 pm** Celebration Singers
- Wed 10:30 am** Wed. Morning Bible Study via [ZOOM](#)
- 6:30 pm** Sanctuary Choir
- Sun** Baptism of Our Lord
 Congregation Council Installed
- 8:30 am** Holy Communion in person
- 9:45 am** Christian Formation Classes
- 11:00 am** Holy Communion in person and Livestreamed via [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)

The weekly deadline for routine articles for *The Chimes* is **Thursday at 8 am**. Requests for a series, inserts or full-column articles should be made two weeks in advance. *Submit information to Parish Administrator Linda Depoy:*

depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org/434-3496

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Christmas Eve at Muhlenberg Lutheran Church

