



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

Published Weekly by Muhlenberg Lutheran Church

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January 16, 2022

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

GATHERING TOGETHER TASK FORCE UPDATE

Muhlenberg's Gathering Together Task Force continues to meet periodically to assess our practices and safety procedures in light of local COVID transmission and CDC guidelines. This week, we reviewed our current procedures and concluded that in-person worship will continue with ongoing safety measures in place (e.g. distancing our seating in the sanctuary, everyone wearing masks, communion in prepackaged containers, etc.) The congregation has responded well to these safety practices, and they are working.

One addition to our safety precautions is that Pastor Lauren and Pastor Alex will each take rapid COVID tests every Sunday morning before 8:30 am worship to ensure that they are not unknowingly infected before interacting with the congregation.

We strongly encourage everyone who has ANY symptoms of illness to stay home and worship online. In addition to COVID, we have influenza, RSV (Respiratory syncytial virus), stomach bugs, and other illnesses circulating in

our community and we want to all do our best not to share!

If you have COVID symptoms, or have been exposed to someone who has tested positive, please visit this website to find a testing site: <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/protect-yourself/covid-19-testing/covid-19-testing-sites/>. Getting tested, and following guidelines for quarantine and/or isolation helps to stop the spread.

In addition, we continue to strongly recommend that everyone who is eligible be vaccinated and boosted before attending worship in person.

We welcome questions and feedback from the congregation! While we are all ready for these pandemic restrictions to be over, we are grateful to be part of a community that cares for one another, and especially the most vulnerable, through this time.

Task Force Members: Erin Burke, Kevin Stees, Crystl Whitmire, Greta Willis, Pastor Lauren Eanes, Pastor Alex Zuber

TODAY AT MUHLENBERG

WELCOME TO MUHLENBERG!

If you are new to the Muhlenberg community, or would simply like to learn more about the congregation, please join us for a *Welcome to Muhlenberg* experience **TODAY (1/16) 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 (434-3496 or eanes@muhlenberglutheran.org) so you can receive an invitation to our next event later in the spring.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION CLASS LOCATIONS

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 Rm

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)

Today's issue of *The Chimes* is printed on green paper to coincide with Epiphany being a "green" liturgical season. We give special thanks to Muhlenberg member Bob Crittenden for donating the paper. Bob retired and closed his printing business and has donated a lot of special paper to us that we will use in the coming months and even years. Thank you, Bob!

THIS WEEK AT MUHLENBERG



OFFICE CLOSED

The church office will be closed tomorrow (1/17) in recognition of the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.

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 through April 7 anytime from 8 am - noon!** No sewing skills required. *For more information, contact Linda Morrison* (glenm778@comcast.net or 383-5085).

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), or do not see any with your name on them, please email Gary or call the church office. Envelopes not picked up and still being utilized will be mailed early January 2022.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

You are invited to a ...

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, January 30

**beginning at 9:45 in person and
via ZOOM**

(same Zoom link we use Sunday mornings)

Annual Meeting Agenda:

- ✦ Review 2021 Year-End Reports*
- ✦ Elect Nominating Committee
- ✦ Elect Synod Assembly Delegates
- ✦ Recognize Outgoing Council President
- ✦ New Business

*Reports will be sent electronically. Hard copies will be available from the Connection Center and Connection Box (outside the Gathering Area). Contact Linda Depoy (depy@muhlenberglutheran.org or 434-3496) to have a hard copy mailed to you.

See next week's issue of The Chimes and watch your mail/email for more information and participation instructions.

CREATION CARE TIP



The frigid temperatures make a hot bath sound soothing, but it takes a lot of water to fill the tub. While it takes at least 20 gallons to fill the tub, a seven-minute shower with a low-flow shower-head uses approximately 14 gallons of water. Replacing one bath a week with a shower will help a family of four save more than 300 gallons of water per year.

LOCAL & GLOBAL MISSION

OPEN DOORS

Muhlenberg will provide food for homeless guests at Open Doors **January 31-February 6**.

Open Doors' mission is to engage the community of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County in partnership to provide shelter, compassionate support, and access to services for people who are homeless. The shelter has a maximum capacity of **60** guests, but depending on the weather, numbers can fluctuate a great deal. **In the last few weeks they have been averaging 55-60 guests daily.**

The shelter is available daily from 6:30 pm - 7:00 am and is currently located at 677 Chicago Avenue, Harrisonburg (formerly Red Front Supermarket).

We need prepared food, hot and ready to serve! Food will need to be dropped off at the former Red Front supermarket at 6:30. Volunteers are needed each night to serve in the kitchen (plating food) from 6:30-8:00. Sign up online at https://tiny_url.com/yyv6cvmt. Thanks to all who have already signed up!

Contact Susan Lawrence (540-908-0073 or lawrensj@comcast.net) if you have questions or need assistance dropping off food.



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!

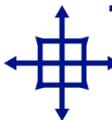
--- Sunday of the Liturgical Season

The Date, 2022

YOUR VISUAL
STORYTELLING
GOES HERE

Story of the Day Here

John #:#-#



MUHLENBERG
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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 has retired. We are so thankful for her service, and she will be dearly missed. As a result of her retirement, we are beginning a search 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.

PERSONNEL UPDATE

Great news! We are very pleased to announce that Jane Eanes has accepted the Interim Finance Manager position. Jane comes to this position with years of experience as a Finance Manager at another church. Her expertise will be valuable to us during this transition, as we conduct a search for a permanent Finance Manager. We are very appreciative of her willingness to share her gifts. Please help us extend a warm welcome to Jane as she begins her new role this week!

We also want to thank Kathy Thompson for her willingness to help by significantly increasing her hours as an office volunteer as we conduct our search for a permanent Administrative Assistant. Kathy has a history of going above and beyond to serve, and this is just one more example. Thank you so much Kathy!

Mark Warner, Personnel Committee Chair

JOYS, THANKS & CONCERNS

This is the space for sharing joys, thanks, and concerns of our congregation, our synod, and the wider church. Please lift these up as a part of your daily prayers. To share joy, thanks, or concern (e.g. birth, illness, injury, or death of an immediate family member; thank-you and congratulatory notes, etc.), contact Parish Administrator Linda Depoy (434-3496 or depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org). Submissions will be printed with consideration for space and appropriateness at the discretion of the pastors and editor.

✚ Congratulations to Bryce & Ansley Kiser on the birth of their daughter Scarlett Elizabeth Kiser. Scarlett is also little sister to Cooper and granddaughter of Teresa and Keith Kiser.

✚ *To Our Friends at Muhlenberg:*
In 2013, we found a church home that has been very kind and welcoming. However, in the past year, events have occurred that made us re-evaluate our needs, primarily to be closer to our families who live in Louisa County. On February 1, we will be moving into our new home in Palmyra, VA. We will miss Muhlenberg and the friends we made. It has been a pleasure serving this church.

In Christ, Dennis and Darlene Baugh

VIRGINIA SYNOD NEWS

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.

YOUTH NEWS

WINTER CELEBRATION CANCELLED

Here’s a message from Dave Delaney...

*I am so sad to have to report that we **have cancelled in-person Winter Celebration** due to the current out-of-control positivity rate and highly infectious nature of this omicron variant. This was a gut-wrenching decision that as recently as last week we sincerely thought we would not have to make, but as a Synod we have striven to be consistent since the start of the pandemic with prioritizing safety in all of our synodical and congregational ministries.*

*We determined at the same time that we will also not attempt to hold our rescheduled **Lost & Found** that had been planned for March 4-6. Our hope and current plan is instead to hold a series of one-day, in-person rallies at several locations around the Synod as we get closer to Spring to give us a chance to gather under safer circumstances.*

Full refunds of registration fees that have been sent in for Winter Celebration will be returned to congregations and participants.

REMINDER

CONTACT INFORMATION

With our ever-changing lifestyles, it’s sometimes difficult to be sure everyone has your correct contact information. Have you recently ...

- moved?
- cancelled your home phone?
- changed your cell phone number?
- changed your home/work email address?

If so, please be sure we have your updated information by contacting Parish Administrator Linda Depoy (depoym@muhlenberglutheran.org or 434-3496).

ABUNDANCE TASK FORCE

WHY I GIVE ~ *Conversations about giving and abundance*

As part of our Abundance Task Force's efforts to share the story of why members give to the ministries of Muhlenberg, then Congregation Council President Karen Thomsen sat down for some conversations with Muhlenberg members about giving their time, talents, and treasure to help live out Muhlenberg's mission.

For our most recent "Why I Give" interview, Karen Thomsen sat down with long-time Muhlenberg member and volunteer, Tassie Pippert!



Karen: Thank you for chatting with me today, Tassie! To start, please tell me how you came to Muhlenberg, and what keeps you coming back.

Tassie: I've been a member here for 45 years! Tom and I were even married here. I was brought up Catholic and, when I first started coming to Muhlenberg, I realized the joy of being in church, not just the "necessity" of it. I suddenly realized that it was God's grace that brought me here - and that's why we keep coming back. We even moved away and then came back - Muhlenberg is like a magnet for me, and I just love this place.

Karen: You give in so many ways here - please share with me why it's important to you to give to the ministries of Muhlenberg.

Tassie: Tom and I have been very blessed. For us, giving is something that God has done to us - He's given us everything that we have. So, we believe it's important to give back to others. Whether it's time, treasure, or just conversation - if it's important to someone, it's important to us. That's one of the things Muhlenberg is great at - the people here don't make you feel forced to give, but you want to because the opportunities are there. We started increasing our giving when we were youth ministry directors, and we saw the importance of that ministry for our children and others. As we grew and the church grew, we were able to give more. There have been times when we've had to give less simply because we had less. But, during those times, we still knew it was important to give to Muhlenberg. This place reaches this entire community and the world - it's not just within these walls. For us, for family, for community - it's important to give back.

Karen: That's great! You and Tom are extremely talented and you both give of your time many Sundays. Talk a little about giving your time at Muhlenberg.

Tassie: Tom is a gifted engineer and has always given his time at the church - whether it's as Property Chair, Council member, or running sound on Sundays. He helped redesign the Gathering Area and the Nielsen Room, etc. - those are just things that are important to him. And I love seeing him give back with all the skills he has. For me, it's always been more musical or through lay assistant ministry. For us, giving of our talents is important because that's what God gave us first, before the funds. Being there to minister to people in some way - whether it be singing in the choir, being the lector or lay assistant minister - I look at my role as very important, and so does Tom.

FINANCIAL NEWS

1/2	8:30 Holy Communion	37
	11:00 Holy Communion.....	48
	11:00 Wellstream Worshipers.....	46
	Total Views this Week	187
	Hours Viewed this Week	55.6
1/9	8:30 Holy Communion	38
	11:00 Holy Communion	48
	11:00 Wellstream Worshipers.....	61

NOTE FROM OUR TREASURER

While all 2021 gifts and offerings have been posted and all expenses have been paid, an updated Treasurer's report was in progress at the time of this issue of *The Chimes* being printed. The numbers below have not changed from last week. Please see next week's issue of *The Chimes* for the final 2021 report.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through **December 31, 2021**

	Year to Date <u>Actual</u> (thru 12/31/21)	Year-End Totals Budget (thru 12/31/21)	Year-End Totals 2020 Actual (thru 12/31/20)
Gifts/Offerings	\$582,646	\$867,332	\$651,830
Other Gifts & Revenue	\$150,896	\$99,230	\$87,897
Total Revenue	\$733,542	\$966,562	\$739,727
Total Expenses	\$830,837	\$966,562	\$814,339
Income/Expenses	(\$97,295)	\$0	(\$74,612)
Testamentary Gift	\$79,095	—	—
Gov. Subsidy (Payroll Protection Prog.)			\$85,989
(Deficiency)/ Surplus	(\$18,200)	\$0	\$11,380

Giving in support of our Spending Plan	\$ 17,524.00
Giving to Other Designated Funds	\$ 4,373.00
Total Giving for 1/3-9/2022	\$ 21,897.00

To give online, scan here →



WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

January 17-23, 2022

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

- Mon** Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
Church Office Closed
6:30 pm Congregation Council Mtg.
- Tues** 6:30 pm Celebration Singers
- Wed** 10:30 am Wed. Morning Bible Study via [ZOOM](#)
6:30 pm Sanctuary Choir
- Thu** 8:00 am Comfort Makers
- Sun** Third Sunday after Epiphany
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 8:00 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

Like us at [facebook.com/muhlenberglutheran](https://www.facebook.com/muhlenberglutheran)

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.