



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 31, 2021

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

WHAT'S THE BUZZ

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- Congregation Council President Karen Thomsen highlighted overall 2020 accomplishments, including the following:
 - incredible work of the pastors & staff to pivot to digital/virtual services and music & Christian Formation opportunities
 - hiring Communication Minister Christian Perritt
 - many Property Committee endeavors
 - grant received by the Care Committee and subsequent ministry to our elderly
 - work of Treasurer Bill Vance to obtain PPP funding through the CARES Act
 - Council's work to create a Strategic Plan to carry out the Mission of Muhlenberg
 - Human Sexuality & Racism Table Talks
 - heroic efforts of Parish Administrator Linda Depoy and Administrative Assistant Crystl Whitmire to keep everything moving forward as veteran leaders left and new leaders came on board in addition to navigating all of the challenges posed by the pandemic
- Bill Vance shared the financial status of Muhlenberg via video.
- Karen encouraged everyone to read the 2020 Annual Report and be aware of the incredible

work done in the past year. It is available on our website, in the *Connection Box** outside the Gathering Area, and by request.

- Bob Kolodinsky, Gary Calleo, Vicki Heitsch and Cynthia Page were elected to serve on the Nominating Committee.
- Karen Thomsen, Greta Willis, Russell Presnell, Sarah Sunde, Bruce Hamilton, Sandra Blade and Diane Bayer were elected to serve as Synod Assembly Delegates.
- Greta Willis recognized outgoing Financial Secretary Janet Simmons for over 25 years of service, outgoing Congregation Council President Gary Calleo, and outgoing Council members Vicki Heitsch and Phil Perry.
- Gathering Together Task Force update
- Looking forward, Council will have a virtual retreat February 6, we still need a Treasurer and Financial Secretary, and we will serve our neighbors in love by providing food for Open Doors February 1-7 and through our Habitat Faith Build.
- Karen thanked the pastors for their leadership in ministry and providing many meaningful faith formation opportunities.
- Pastor Lauren shared plans for Lent and for a promising year as we continue to carry out our mission of living out Christ's love.

**We have renamed our pick-up/drop-off box outside the Gathering Area. It's now called the "Connection Box."*

TODAY AT MUHLENBERG

SUNDAY MORNINGS

Join your Muhlenberg friends and family for education and fellowship via [ZOOM](#) each **Sunday from 8:30 – 11:00** using this link:

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

8:30 – 9:00 Communion Service via Zoom
9:00 – 11:00 “Coffee Hour” Fellowship
9:30 – 10:00 K - 3rd Grade Class
9:30 – 10:00 4th - 5th Grade Class
9:30 – 10:30 Adult Faith Lens Class
9:30 – 10:30 Adult 40-Day Journey Class
10:15– 10:30 Pre-K Story Time
11:00 Worship on [Facebook](#),
[YouTube](#), [Wellstream Phone](#)

- **Pastoral Care** ~ If you would like a private word with the pastor on call, we will provide a breakout room for you.
- **Small Group Fellowship** ~ Want to catch up with a small group of friends? We have private breakout rooms for that!

If you don't have a reliable internet connection, call in on Sundays at 1-301-715-8592 and enter the Meeting ID: 84731416878.

WELLSTREAM PHONE

We want all members to have the opportunity to “participate” in worship and hear The Word. **Wellstream Phone is a service that works from your home or cell phone — no internet required. Simply call the number below and select an option. Information will be available by 11 am each Sunday.** Contact Linda Depoy (434-3496) with any questions.

Wellstream Phone Number:

1-434-205-8777

FINANCIAL NEWS

RECENT ATTENDANCE

Here are some interesting statistics from our recent online viewership:

1/17	8:30 Communion	17
	11:00 Total Live Views	115
	Total Views this Week	441
	Hours Viewed this Week	123.5
1/24	8:30 Communion	20
	11:00 Total Live Views	118
	12:15 Congregational Meeting	70

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through December 2020			
	Y-T-D Actual	Y-T-D Budget	Y-T-D Last Year
Gifts & Offerings	\$650,777	\$862,300	\$725,476
Total Receipts	\$827,662	\$968,616	\$822,089
Expenses	\$814,332	\$969,616	\$825,435
Excess Income/ (Expenses)	\$13,330	(\$1,000)	(\$3,346)

Giving in support of our Spending Plan	\$	5,912.00
Giving to Other Designated Funds	\$	3,487.85
Total Giving for the Week	\$	9,399.85

To give online, scan here →



Muhlenberg is not suspending its ministry through this unprecedented time, and we ask you not to suspend your financial contributions either. We are committed to maintaining our ministries, even if they are in a different form for now. We also want to be able to continue to support the needs of the most vulnerable in our community.

You can make a one-time or recurring donation through the [donation page](#) on our website, or mail your check to the church:
281 E. Market Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.

THIS WEEK

ELDERCARE SUPPORT GROUP

Meets **THIS MONDAY (2/1), 7:00 pm** via [ZOOM](#). Negotiating the journey of eldercare together...we listen, we laugh, we cry, and we hope you'll join us! Contact Jennie Warner (476-2020 or mjwarner1@aol.com) for details.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86566714450>

Meeting ID: 865 6671 4450

One tap mobile: +19292056099,,86566714450#

WEDNESDAY AM BIBLE STUDY

Wednesdays at 10:30 am, participants study the Narrative Lectionary text for the upcoming Sunday. All are welcome to join via [ZOOM](#).

HOLDEN EVENING PRAYER

Wednesdays at 7:00 pm, this service is livestreamed on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#). It will be recorded and available to view any time.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

PASTORS' BOOK CLUB

The February Pastors' Book Club selection is *Stamped from the Beginning* by Ibram X. Kendi. It's a longer book than we normally do, but worth it! Learn more and order the book using the link below:

<https://www.ibramxkendi.com/stamped-from-the-beginning>

Watch *The Chimes* for more information.

MUHLENBERG NEWS

TREASURER NEEDED

Our Treasurer, Bill Vance, will be moving to North Carolina this spring. We are grateful for all Bill has done to manage our finances this year! We are now looking for a new Treasurer, and it would be ideal to identify this person before Bill moves so he can help train them. Duties include preparation of monthly financials, bank reconciliation and journal entries; preparation of federal and state quarterly payroll reports and annual W-2's and Form 1099; preparation and presentation of the annual spending plan; and serving as a voting member of the Executive Committee, Finance Committee, and Congregation Council. Duties are shared with an Assistant Treasurer. Ideally, the Treasurer will be someone with education and experience in accounting. The time commitment is approximately 10-15 hours a month. Contact Congregation Council Past President Gary Calleo (vnccall@yahoo.com or 540-421-5463) if you would like to learn more.

CREATION CARE TIP

 *Creation Care offers a simple tip that will help you protect God's earth. Contact Ramona Sanders for more information: (rsanders97@verizon.net or 433-1165)*

Unlike coal, oil, or nuclear power, the supply of solar energy is unlimited. Every day, the earth receives enough solar energy—free—to heat every home in the world for one year. A well-designed solar home can reduce energy bills by 75%, and because it doesn't rely on power generated by coal or oil, you can live in a solar home and produce almost no greenhouse gases or air pollution.

MUHLENBERG NEWS (CONT'D)

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTORS

We made it to 2021! However, so did COVID-19. We are in the midst of a surge in cases in the Harrisonburg/Rockingham area. Even though we are all weary of pandemic restrictions, **it is more important than ever that we care for one another** through distancing, mask-wearing, and quarantining.

We want to remind you of the important work of our Gathering Together Task Force, which has implemented thoughtful guidelines for our congregation. **Over the next few months, it's crucial for us to be aware of, and follow, these guidelines:**

- **Please do not come to the church building unless it is absolutely necessary.** All of the staff really does want to interact with you, but it must be through the phone or video conferencing as much as possible!
- **Staff is working from home as much as possible to keep themselves and others safe.** Each staff member has instructions on how to reach them on their church voice mail or are notified immediately when they receive a new message.
- If you need to come into the church building, **please DO NOT come to the office wing**. Feel free to **use the phone in the Gathering Area** to buzz back to the office to see if someone is available to assist you.
- If you need to come into the church building, **please ONLY use the glass Gathering Area doors**. Do not use the back, red doors which are reserved for the Day Care.

The Task Force also implemented NEW guidelines regarding special services. Until further notice, **baptisms and weddings are suspended. Funerals and memorial services will be conducted digitally ONLY.** Pastors will not conduct in-person services.

Though these restrictions are difficult, it is vital for us to do everything we can for the sake of everyone's safety. As vaccines become more widely available, and the COVID positivity rate decreases, we will resume in-person ministries. Until then, **we continue to love and support one another from a distance!**

In Christ,
Pastor Lauren and Pastor Alex

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

COVID-19 VACCINE

Love Your Neighbor As Yourself

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen time and time again that avoiding in-person gatherings and wearing a mask are currently the best ways to "love your neighbor" as Christ commanded. Over the coming months, many of us will have the opportunity to heed Christ's call to "love yourself" by receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. Visit the website below to sign up online for information about when a vaccine will be available to you, and also receive an email when it's time to register:

<https://vdh.jebbit.com/amkwk6m1?L=Owned+Web&JC=Vaccine>

If you qualify as a Category 1a or 1b vaccine recipient but don't have reliable internet access, contact Pastor Alex (540-309-2414) for assistance registering online.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY NEWS

STATEMENTS AND ENVELOPES

2020 contribution statements were mailed this week and 2021 envelopes were mailed in December. If you expected either mailing and did not receive it or have any questions, please contact Tim Wessel at twessel@aol.com or (803) 528-0239.

MUSIC MINISTRY NEWS

For details, contact Music Minister Elizabeth Williams (williams@muhlenberglutheran.org or 434-3496).

ADULT CHOIRS

Celebration Singers & Sanctuary Choir meet via Zoom every other **Tuesday, 7:00 – 8:00 pm** resuming **THIS Tuesday, February 2.**

February 2 & 16

March 2, 16 & 30 April 13 & 27

CHILDREN'S CHOIRS

Tuesdays via Zoom, resuming **February 2.**

Tweens and Teens ~ 5:00 – 5:30 pm

For grades 6 - 8, led by Miss Elizabeth.

Cherub Choir

The Cherub Choir is taking a break from online Zoom rehearsals until we can meet again in person, hopefully in September. I want to thank all parents for their support this past season and our awesome Director Rachel Peters for keeping our littlest of singers "singing." We will be back soon!

VIRGINIA SYNOD NEWS

POWER IN THE SPIRIT

Midwinter Session

Click [HERE](#) for details or to register today to join us for the first-ever Midwinter Power in the Spirit Online event **TODAY, January 31 - Thursday, February 4.** Our summer event went online, and we found ourselves enjoying the experience! So we thought gathering for prayer, study, worship, and conversation would be a great way to spend some of the coldest days of the year.

This winter's theme will center on the illuminating festival of Candlemas and our keynote presenter will be The Rev. Dr. Dave Delaney, Director for Youth and Young Adult Ministries of the Virginia Synod!

There is no fee to attend, but we do suggest a donation of \$25 to the Virginia Synod. One hundred percent of donations will be used to support neighbors in need around the world through the ELCA Good Gifts catalog. Our goal is to give a "family farm" to help a family break the cycle of hunger and poverty—only \$715! Please give as the Spirit leads you!



OPEN DOORS

Muhlenberg Hosts February 1–7, 2021



Open Doors provides shelter for anyone over the age of 18 who is experiencing homelessness in our community. This season the shelter is located in the old Red Front grocery store building on Chicago Avenue. Faith communities provide meals each night and grab-and-go breakfasts. This year, paid shelter staff interact directly with the guests. Muhlenberg volunteers will provide:

- **dinners**
- **grab-and-go breakfasts**
- **volunteer servers** (work behind plexiglass in the old meat department; there is no-contact with guests)

To sign up to provide food or serve, visit our Muhlenberg Members Facebook page, or visit <https://tinyurl.com/yv6cvmt> for our volunteer spreadsheet. Food must be delivered by 6:30 and should be ready to plate. Drop offs are at Red Front, 677 Chicago Avenue. You may also make arrangements to drop food off at the church* or to have the a LGM Committee member pick it up at your home!

*If you have questions, food drop off needs, or prefer a different method for signing up, contact Susan Lawrence (lawrensj@comcast.net or 540-908-0073) or Emily Wicht Carneal (emily.wicht@gmail.com or 202-805-3683).

Members who wish to participate in an alternate or additional way may consider making a donation. Make checks payable to Muhlenberg, noting Open Doors in the memo line. We will use the funds to purchase needed supplies for the week.

SOUPERBOWL COLLECTION



Traditionally we would host our annual friendly competition to see if Muhlenberg members can predict the Super Bowl winner by donating food that goes to Patchwork Pantry. We can't meet in person to physically donate, but food insecurity is still real.

We hope this year you will participate by donating funds. Indicate *SuperBowl* and the name of your team (if you like) on the memo line of your check or electronic payment. Your generous support will help feed our hungry neighbors! Thank you.



HABITAT FAITH BUILD UPDATE

We are in need of licensed electricians and plumbers for our Habitat Faith Build duplex on Virginia Avenue. Please contact Karen Thomsen (540-421-4431) if you are able to support our Faith Build as a licensed electrician or plumber. Thank You!

BRIDGE OF HOPE

Bridge of Hope is seeking a half-time case manager who will provide support for 3-4 families and foster relationships with neighboring volunteers.

Bridge of Hope seeks to engage Christian faith communities in ending family homelessness through neighboring relationships that demonstrate Christ's love.

If you or someone you know is interested, please find more information here:

hr.bridgeofhopeinc.org/job-opportunities

REMINDERS

NEW NICHEs AVAILABLE

An additional 24 Columbarium niches have been added to the Caring Corner. The Property Committee has made upgrades to this room with new lighting, including eternal spotlights shining on the niches. If you are interested in a niche or want additional information, please contact Bill Compton (437-8933 or compton1080@gmail.com).

CONTACT INFORMATION

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 your information is updated with the church. Contact Parish Administrator Linda Depoy (depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org or 434-3496).

COMMUNICATING WITH MEMBERS WITHOUT ONLINE ACCESS

Members of the congregation who cannot read *The Chimes* online can request a copy be mailed to them weekly. If you know a member without online access, contact Parish Administrator Linda Depoy (434-3496 or depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org).

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Contact Christian Formation Minister Diane Bayer (434-3496 or bayer@muhlenberglutheran.org) for more information.

STORIES & ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE

PreK – 5th Grade Students

Check out Muhlenberg's website for the stories and activities you can download and print for your child/children for January – March.

JAMERS

Meet **Sunday, February 14, 12:30-1:30, Westover Park at Pavilion #2** on the hill. We will make blankets for our homeless brothers and sisters. Masks must be worn, and we will be social distancing.

Please note: check the temperature, if it is below 40 degrees, we will not meet.

7TH DAY

All those in 5th and 6th grade, mark your calendars for **Saturday, March 6, 9:00 – 1:00** so you can take part in 7th Day, the Virginia Synod Youth event for YOU. We will gather with friends from across the state via Zoom for faith, fun and fellowship. This promises to be a good time! Watch *The Chimes* for more information to come.

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 at 434-3496 or depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org. Submissions will be printed with consideration for space and appropriateness at the discretion of the pastors & editor.

✠ We offer sympathy to the family of John Stone who passed away Wednesday, January 20 from complications with Covid-19. In John's memory, the family held a small service and a private burial. Please continue to surround the Stone family with your prayers, especially his wife Doris, his daughters Judy Jernigan and Karen Dotson.

✠ We offer sympathy to the family of Norwood Beery who passed away Saturday, January 23. Please keep the Beery family in your prayers. Pastor Lauren led a graveside service Wednesday, January 27.

From Patchwork Pantry

This letter is to acknowledge with gratitude the gift of \$250 which you made to the operation of the Patchwork Pantry during this past year. Your thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated especially during this special time of need.

Because of congregations such as yours, we are able to continue to help needy members of our community with food and non-food items when they come to us on Wednesday evenings.

Please accept our sincere thanks for your consideration and from all of us who come together as a "patchwork" of community help. We could not serve them without the support of individuals like you. Betty Hoskins

WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

February 1-7

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

- Mon. 2:00 pm** Weekly Staff Meeting
7:00 pm Eldercare Support Group
- Wed. 10:30 am** Wed. Morning Bible Study
via [ZOOM](#)
7:00 pm Holden Evening Prayer
via [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)
- Sun. Fourth Sunday after Epiphany**
[Sunday am ZOOM link](#)
8:30 am Communion Service
9:00 am "Coffee Hour" begins
8:30 am Communion Service
9:00 am "Coffee Hour" begins
9:30 am K – 3rd Grade Class
9:30 am 4th - 5th Grade Class
9:30 am Faith Lens Class
9:30 am 40-Day Journey Class
11:00 am Service 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@muhlenberg.lutheran.org/434-3496)

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