



# UNEXPECTED

Lent 2021

Learn more about our Lenten Theme at  
[www.muhlenberglutheran.org/Lent2021](http://www.muhlenberglutheran.org/Lent2021)

Muhlenberg Lutheran Church



A Wellspring of God's Grace

# Third Sunday in Lent ~ MARCH 7, 2021

## WELCOME TO WELLSTREAM WORSHIP

We welcome you in the name of Christ to this digital form of worship. The Wellstream is a digital ministry that allows Muhlenberg Lutheran Church to **livestream our 11:00 am Sunday morning worship services** through our Social Media platforms. You are encouraged to join in all parts of worship, responding and worshipping as you would in person. Everything you need is printed in this worship booklet so that you may follow along with the worship leaders. Portions of worship in bold print are to be spoken/sung by the whole congregation, wherever you are. We stand for portions of our worship service, and invite you to do this as it is comfortable. ***If you are watching this service LIVE, we encourage you to engage with other members of the community in the comments on either Facebook or YouTube—responding to prayers, offering prayer requests, or sharing the peace.***

We recognize that **Worship** and the formation of **Community** are central to living out our mission in the world. Worship is where we gather around the true Wellspring of God's Grace—the Word and Sacraments of Jesus Christ—in order that we might find renewal, and become a source of this same grace in our daily living. Worship, and the community we find there, is at the heart of who we are. However, in this season of Social Distancing in the midst of COVID-19, the best way to be community, is to not be *in* community. This service is not meant to replace face-to-face community, and digital worship cannot provide the sacramental nature of worship to those who engage online. However, this can be a powerful tool in this difficult season for connecting God's people when life gets in the way and *equipping all people to live out Christ's love.*

## CONNECT WITH US LIVE AT 11:00 AM

To access the service LIVE, visit our [Facebook Page](#) or [YouTube Channel](#) at 11:00 am. Both are also accessible from the homepage of our website.

## SUNDAYS AT MUHLENBERG VIA ZOOM

Join us for fellowship via Zoom each Sunday from 8:30-11:00 am. We'll use "Breakout Rooms" via Zoom to ensure that everyone has a space to participate in this time together! We begin with a communion service at 8:30. Sunday School classes begin at 9:30 am, and all are welcome to join classes or stay in "The Gathering Area" for conversation. Full group Coffee Hour begins at 10:30 am. If you'd like a private word with the pastor on call, or would like a room to catch up with a small group, we have private breakout rooms for that! You're welcome to join whenever you'd like! Join each week at this link: <https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/84731416878>.

## GIVE ONLINE

While we aren't meeting in person, the work of the church has not ceased. Please don't forget your financial gifts to God's mission in this place. You may mail your check to the church (281 E. Market St, Harrisonburg, VA 22801) or give online at [www.muhlenberglutheran.org/give](http://www.muhlenberglutheran.org/give).

## BEST PRACTICES FOR 'ATTENDING' CHURCH ONLINE

- Get out of bed and get dressed—*it will put you in the right mindset to worship*
- Go through your normal Sunday routine—*minus the "hurry up we're running late" part*
- Gather your family together—*avoid distractions and make worship something for all*
- Project the feed on your largest screen—*it will feel more like you're "there"*
- Sing along loud and proud—*yes, it feels weird, but it feels weird for those leading worship in an empty room too!*
- Engage in the message—*let this hour be the beginning of a conversation with your friends and family, call and check in with others who "went to church"*

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## MUHLENBERG LUTHERAN CHURCH: A WELLSPRING OF GOD'S GRACE

Open ✚ Authentic ✚ Relational ✚ Serving

Pastor Lauren Eanes

Pastor Alex Zuber

281 E. Market Street  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

(540) 434-3496  
[www.muhlenberglutheran.org](http://www.muhlenberglutheran.org)

# SERVICE OF THE WORD

## GATHERING

*We come from our homes, our labor, our struggles, and our joys – which we share in fellowship as a Christian community. We are gathered together as God's people to worship. In this first part of our worship, we share together honestly – our sins in confession, our joy in forgiveness.*

### WELCOME

**CHILDREN'S TIME** *Children are invited forward for a brief message with the pastor.*

### PRELUDE

*The Water Is Wide* (arr. S. Zylstra)

Piano Duet

(We stand)

### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*The congregation turns and faces the baptismal font.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who gathers us in the wilderness to redeem us, anoint us, and make us new.

**Amen.**

In these forty days, let us be honest, confess our sin, and receive God's promise of mercy.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

God at the margins,

**we have wandered far from your home; again and again, we lose our way. We turn inward, afraid of the world around us. We forget that you have saved your people before and promise to do so again. Do not remember the deeds of our past, but turn our faces toward the future, where your forgiveness is sure, your welcome is clear, and your love overflows.**

**Amen.**

We name our sins and expect vengeance and fury, and yet God meets us with unexpected grace. Like a hen who gathers her chicks, God embraces you in tender care. Like manna in the desert, God feeds you with surprising mercy. Like a loving parent, God runs to meet you again this day, forgiving your sins for the sake of † Christ, leading you from death into life.

**Amen.**

### GATHERING HYMN ~ Change My Heart, O God

*The congregation turns and faces the cross as the procession approaches the altar, reminding us that Christ leads us into the presence and love of God.*

~see next page~

# Change My Heart, O God



Change my heart, O God; make it ev - er true.



Change my heart, O God; may I be like you.



You are the pot - ter; I am the clay.

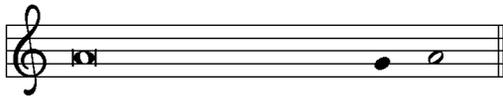


Mold me and make me; this is what I pray.

## GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

## KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

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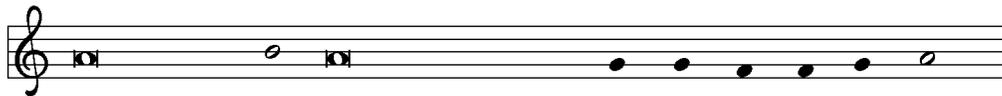
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



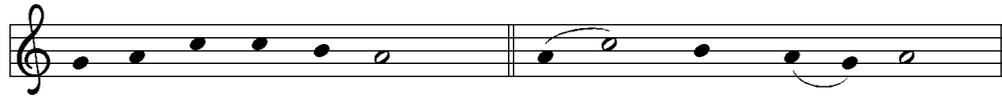
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de-fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

**PRAYER OF THE DAY** God of compassion, you welcome the wayward, and you embrace us all with your mercy. By our baptism clothe us with the garments of your grace, and feed us at the table of your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

(We sit)



## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

### Unexpected and Mysterious



1 Un - ex - pect - ed and mys - te - rious is the gen - tle  
word of grace. Ev - er - lov - ing and sus - tain -  
ing is the peace of God's em - brace. If we fal - ter  
in our cour - age and we doubt what we have known, God is  
faith - ful to con - sole us as a moth - er tends her own.

## GOSPEL ~ Luke 15:1-32

Diane Bayer, Biblical Storyteller

*We invite you to put your bulletin down and listen to the Biblical Storyteller.*

### The Holy Gospel according to ... **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. <sup>2</sup>And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

<sup>3</sup>So he told them this parable: <sup>4</sup>Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? <sup>5</sup>When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. <sup>6</sup>And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' <sup>7</sup>Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

<sup>8</sup>Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? <sup>9</sup>When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' <sup>10</sup>Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

<sup>11</sup>Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup>The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. <sup>13</sup>A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. <sup>14</sup>When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup>So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to

his fields to feed the pigs. <sup>16</sup>He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. <sup>17</sup>But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! <sup>18</sup>I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; <sup>19</sup>I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands." ' <sup>20</sup>So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup>Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' <sup>22</sup>But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe — the best one — and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup>And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; <sup>24</sup>for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

<sup>25</sup>Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup>He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. <sup>27</sup>He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' <sup>28</sup>Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. <sup>29</sup>But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. <sup>30</sup>But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' <sup>31</sup>Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. <sup>32</sup>But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'"

*After the reading:*

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

(We sit)

## **SERMON**

Pastor Lauren Eanes

*Silence for reflection follows.*

(We stand)

**HYMN OF THE DAY** ~ Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways *we sing verses 1, 3 & 4*

*~see next page~*

## Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways



- 1 Oh, that the Lord would guide my ways to keep his stat - utes still!
- 2 Or - der my foot-steps by your word and make my heart sin - cere;
- 3 As - sist my soul, too apt to stray, a strict - er watch to keep;
- 4 Make me to walk in your com-ands, 'tis a de-light - ful road;



Oh, that my God would grant me grace to know and do his will!  
let sin have no do - min-ion, Lord, but keep my con-science clear.  
and should I e'er for - get your way, re - store your wan-d'ring sheep.  
nor let my head or heart or hands of - fend a - gainst my God.

### APOSTLES' CREED

Let us confess our faith:

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

### PRAYERS

*After each petition:*

... Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

*The prayers conclude:*

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy;  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

*Have a prayer concern to share? Share it live or email it to [info@muhlenberglutheran.org](mailto:info@muhlenberglutheran.org).*

## PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

The congregation may greet one another with a gesture of peace, using these or similar words:  
“**Peace be with you.**”

(We sit)

## THANKSGIVING

*We give thanks for the saving word and all the gifts of God, who then sends us to share the good news we have received and to care for those in need.*

**OFFERING** ~ *Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound* (W. Walker, Southern Harmony)

Flute Solo

### OFFERING PRAYER

Faithful God, **you walk beside us in desert places, and you meet us in our hunger with bread from heaven. Accompany us in our journey, and transform our giving, our fasting, and our prayer into reflections of your grace, that all may see and delight in the unexpected mercy of your son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

### THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

God of the unexpected, you speak to us again through your Word, calling us your beloved children. You know the secrets of our hearts. When we sin and stray from your paths, you astound us with your saving grace. For this Word of life,  
**we give you thanks.**

Loving Jesus, living Word, in you the kingdom of God has come near; through you all that was lost has been found. Help us to boldly follow wherever you may lead, delighting in your abundant mercy, and witnessing to your compassion in unexpected places. For this Word of life,  
**we give you thanks.**

Holy Spirit, the mystery in which we dwell, into our scarcity, your abundance flows. Enliven all communities with your good news. Guide us to love and serve Jesus, surprising the world with hope. For this Word of life,  
**we give you thanks.**

All glory to you, God of the unexpected, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and forever. Amen.**

## SENDING

Our worship does not end, but continues in the world. In our daily lives we are called to be ministers of God's love and mercy as we live and serve by the power of the risen Christ.

### SENDING HYMN we sing verses 1 & 3

The congregation turns and faces the cross reminding us that we follow Christ into the world and our daily lives.

## Lead Me, Guide Me

Refrain

Lead me, guide me, a-long the way, For if you  
lead me, I can-not stray. Lord, let me walk each  
day with thee. Lead me, oh Lord, lead me.

Verses

1. I am weak and I need thy strength and pow'r to  
2. Help me tread in the paths of right-eous-ness, Be my  
3. I am lost if you take your hand from me, I am  
help me o-ver my weak-est hour. Help me through the  
aid when Sa-tan and sin op-press. I am put-ting  
blind with-out thy Light to see, Lord, just al-ways  
dark-ness thy face to see, Lead me, oh Lord, lead me.  
all my trust in thee. Lead me, oh Lord, lead me.  
let me thy ser-vant be. Lead me, oh Lord, lead me.

### BLESSING

May the God of unexpected blessing turn your world around,  
May Christ delight you with new hope where there seemed to be none,  
May the Holy Spirit lead you in unimagined paths toward a way of +peace.

**Amen.**

## **DISMISSAL**

We have been renewed at the Wellspring of God's grace! Now, go in peace!

**We go to be: Open + Authentic + Relational + Serving. Thanks be to God!**

## **POSTLUDE**

*Toccata in A Minor* (J. P. Sweelinck, 1562-1621)

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## **PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE**

**PREACHING MINISTER** ~ Pastor Lauren Eanes

**PRESIDING MINISTER** ~ Pastor Alex Zuber

**LAY ASSISTING MINISTER** ~ Kristee Trumbo

**MUSICIANS** ~ Elizabeth Williams, Music Minister  
Kathy Thompson, Cantor  
Alice Wightman & Elizabeth Williams, Piano Duet  
Rachel Peters, Flute Soloist

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Printed music for today's service is from the ELW and OneLicense.net and reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-701538.  
Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from One License with license # A-701538,  
CCLI license # 20104877, and Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License: SAS014720.

## ABOUT OUR WORSHIP...

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS:** + All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins, but no one should feel compelled. Both our confession of sin and God's promise of mercy are rooted in our baptism. We come before God recalling our brokenness, but even more God's great grace.

**GATHERING HYMN:** We sing as the Spirit gathers us for worship and this hymn sets the tone for the day.

**KYRIE:** The Kyrie is an ancient piece of service liturgy that may date back to the second century. Kyrie Eleison is Greek for "Lord have mercy" and is in reference to both New and Old Testament scriptures which use the same words and pattern.

**PRAYER OF THE DAY:** The Prayer of the Day collects the themes from today's scripture readings.

**READINGS AND PSALM:** Liturgy, from the Greek, means "the work of the people." Our worship is designed so we all take part. We are far more than just spectators. The scripture readings follow a four-year cycle called the Narrative Lectionary. We are connected with other Christians all over the world, in many denominations, reading the same texts. The Psalms were the original Hymns in Holy Scripture, used by God's people for personal and corporate devotion. They continue to be prayed, sung and read by God's people all over the world as a rich and honest expression of faith. We stand during the gospel because we believe our Lord is present with us in the reading.

**HYMN OF THE DAY:** This hymn complements the day's scripture readings and sermon.

**NICENE & APOSTLES' CREEDS:** The creeds (statements of faith) date back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century and contain the basics of what Christians around the world hold to be true. The use of the non-capitalized word "catholic" means simply worldwide or universal.

**PRAYERS:** We pray as a community. The assisting minister leads this time to gather the prayers of all, and at his/ her invitation you may add others aloud or silently in your heart.

**PEACE:** Much more than a pleasant greeting — we do this to proclaim God's promise of peace to one another.

**OFFERING:** Our offerings are collected and dedicated to our Lord's service. They support the ministries of Christ's church in this congregation, the Virginia Synod, ELCA, and our global mission partners.

**OFFERING SONG:** This song becomes our prayer as our gifts are collected and dedicated to our Lord's service.

**GREAT THANKSGIVING & HOLY, HOLY, HOLY:** The Great Thanksgiving is an ancient part of the worship that proclaims our thanks for the gifts of God in the meal. The "Holy, Holy, Holy" echoes the heavenly chorus in Isaiah 6:3 and the crowds of Mark 11:9 as Jesus enters Jerusalem. This reminds us that we are in the presence of a God identified both by holiness and humility. Some will make the sign of the cross at the announcement of God's presence: "Blessed is He..."

**EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER:** Eucharist is the Greek word for thanks. These are the words and actions, the commands and promises of Jesus at the last supper with his disciples as recorded in scripture: 1 Cor. 11:23-26, Matt. 26:26-29, Luke 22:15-20.

**THE LORD'S PRAYER:** Jesus taught his disciples this prayer. In this prayer, all our needs and concerns are addressed. See ELW page 1163 for Martin Luther's explanation of this prayer in the small catechism.

**COMMUNION:** The "last supper" was a meal that Jesus shared with his disciples before his crucifixion. He invited them to share this meal in the future to remember him and he promised to be present in a mysterious, but very real sense. All who desire to participate are welcome to receive Holy Communion. Feel free to remain seated if you prefer.

**RECESSIONAL HYMN:** We gather once more in song as our worship concludes, and we prepare to take this good news into the world.

**BLESSING:** In this blessing we are reminded we bear God's name as we depart to live out our baptism, serving our neighbor and spreading the gospel. It reaffirms our mission and reminds us that if we are to be a Wellspring of Grace, we need to be renewed first through Water, Word, and Meal—the means of grace God has given to us.