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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

281 East Market Street, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801 ✠ Phone: 540-434-3496

E-mail address: info@muhlenberglutheran.org ✠ Website: www.muhlenberglutheran.org

Senior Pastor Lauren Eanes: eanes@muhlenberglutheran.org Associate Pastor Alex Zuber: zuber@muhlenberglutheran.org

March 24, 2024

PALM / PASSION SUNDAY

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

FROM PALM SUNDAY TO EASTER

This week is one of striking contrasts: Jesus rides into Jerusalem surrounded by shouts of glory, only to be left alone to die on the cross, abandoned by even his closest friends. We wave palms in celebration today as Christ comes into our midst, and we follow with trepidation as his path leads to death on the cross. Amid it all we are invited into this paradoxical promise of life through Christ's broken body and outpoured love in a meal of bread and wine. Today, we begin this week that stands at the center of the church year, anticipating the completion of God's astounding work.

Join the Muhlenberg community for worship this week on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil, and Easter morning to experience this journey with Jesus.

See pages 4 - 5 for more details!

Note: On Palm Sunday if you prefer to take a seat in the Sanctuary during the procession, you are welcome to do so.



ABOUT OUR PALMS

Worship today begins with a procession from the Gathering Area to the Sanctuary to reenact Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. The palms we are using are "Eco-Palms," sustainably grown and harvested in Guatemala and Mexico. All of the harvesting communities either have or are in the process of obtaining an outside sustainable certification from SmartWood, a division of Rainforest Alliance. They are grown in the rainforest without any chemicals or other barrier from the environment, and harvesters are fairly compensated. The forests in which these palms reside are being protected from agriculture and logging because of the palms' residence. Lutheran World Relief partners with the Presbyterian Church USA *Enough for Everyone* program, the *United Methodist Committee on Relief*, and other organizations to support this program.

WHAT'S THE BUZZ? (CONT'D)

COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

At the March meeting, our Congregation Council:

- Voted to **charter an inclusive Cub Scout Pack** at Muhlenberg. This meets the need in the community, as there is currently no cub scout pack in Harrisonburg City. Interested in learning more? Look for more information in the coming soon from Sarah Sunde and Matt Phillippi.
- Continued our campus needs discussion - particularly regarding concerns for the increasingly malfunctioning organ and possible replacement solutions.

Peace be with you,

Meg Wightman, Congregation Council President

mlccouncilpres@gmail.com

Note: Approved February Council minutes and back-up documentation are available in the Resource Notebook at the Connection Center.

THIS WEEK AT MUHLENBERG

LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY (LCM) Tuesdays, 6:00 pm

We gather for dinner in the Campus Room. It's a free meal and time of fellowship and prayer for any college student. For details, contact Peer Minister Haley Tabor (haleyntabor@gmail.com). If you're interested in supporting LCM or helping to provide a meal, contact Sarah Orem (oremse@gmail.com).

WEDNESDAY AM BIBLE STUDY Wednesdays, 10:30 am

Led by Pastor Lauren, this study gathers each week to look ahead to Sunday's lessons. Meets via Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/200491556>

LET'S LUNCH TOGETHER

Friday (3/29), 11:30 am

The last Friday of the month is a time to gather for fellowship and lunch at Our Community Place (OCP) Friday Restaurant. The Restaurant is open 11:30 - 1:30 and serves a delicious 3-course meal for just \$12.50. **We will meet at OCP** (17 East Johnson Street, Harrisonburg) **at 11:30**. Questions or need a ride? Call or text Karen Thomsen (540-421-4431).

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

PRAYER SHAWL KNITTING CIRCLE Saturday, April 6, 10:00 – 11:30am

Join us in the Gathering Area to create a prayer shawl through knitting or crocheting. No experience necessary. For more information, contact Jackie Wells (540-434-6283 or jswells62@verizon.net).

MUHLENBERG NEWS

CREATION CARE TIP

Going on a spring hike is a great way to experience nature. Ensure that your hike has as little impact on the environment as possible by following "leave no trace" principles: take nothing but photographs, leaving nothing but footprints.



CHURCH ENTRY SYSTEM Outside Doors Are Rekeyed!

All outside doors of the church building have been rekeyed. "BCK" and all previous keys that unlocked outside doors no longer work. If you need routine access to the church and have not received a PIN, contact Linda Depoy (depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org/540-434-3496).

PLAN FOR PASTOR ALEX’S PARENTAL LEAVE



We are pleased to announce that during Pastor Alex’s parental leave, **Kathy Thompson is now serving as our Interim Worship and Care Assistant.** This is a 10-hour a week position, focused on pastoral care and worship support. Kathy and Pastor Lauren are working closely together to ensure these areas of ministry remain strong.

Faithful, gifted volunteer leaders have stepped up to oversee other areas of Pastor Alex’s responsibilities. Please don’t hesitate to reach out to these coordinators if you have questions or would like to get more involved in these ministry areas, either on a temporary or long-term basis. The church office can help connect you with these leaders; simply call 540-434-3496 or email info@muhlenberglutheran.org.

Area of Ministry

Middle School Youth
Senior High Youth
Lutheran Campus Ministry
Young Adults

Congregation Coordinators

Rachel Peters
Gibsons, Moyers, Kolodinskys
Haley Tabor and Sarah Orem
Jenna Guenther

Staff Liaison

Pastor Lauren
Pastor Lauren
Ashley Saunders
Pastor Lauren

We pray for many blessings on Pastor Alex’s and Renna’s growing family, and we look forward to welcoming Pastor Alex back in late May/early June!

MINISTRY REVITALIZATION

In the past, ministry teams have gathered in person or on Zoom the second Monday of the month for Ministries Night. Due to varying schedules, some committees have chosen to meet at different days/times, and sometimes it’s hard to keep up with when and where ministries are meeting.

Vice President Kristee Trumbo is heading up a Ministry Revitalization Task Force to envision a new way for ministry teams to connect together, with Congregation Council, and with the entire congregation. A gathering of all ministry teams is being planned for **Saturday, May 4, 8:30 - 10:30, in the MAC – *May The 4th Be With You!*** There will be food, visioning, team-building, and relationship-building among our ministry teams. **Everyone from the congregation is invited to attend and consider being a part of the ministries at Muhlenberg.**

So, instead of our past Ministries Night on the second Monday of each month, we’ll be creating a new way to communicate and work together in doing God’s work in our ministries at Muhlenberg! Put May 4 on your calendar!



The Triduum (The Three Days) is the ancient observance of the mystery of our salvation, which plunges the faithful into the death of Jesus and brings them with him to resurrection life. The Three Days is one liturgy, extending from Thursday evening through the Easter Vigil. You are invited to conform your life to the worship rhythms of the church on these three days:

Maundy Thursday, March 28, 7:00 pm*

We heed Christ's commandment to love one another as we wash each other's feet and share the meal he instituted. Pastor Paul Weber (former Muhlenberg Interim Pastor) will be our guest preacher and his wife Florence will be our guest organist. The nursery will be open and staffed.

Good Friday, March 29, Ecumenical Walk, 12 noon

The 37th annual Harrisonburg downtown ecumenical Good Friday prayer walk, based on the "Stations of the Cross," begins at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church and ends at St. Stephens United Church of Christ, stopping at a total of 10 downtown churches and public buildings. At each station a member of the Biblical Storytellers Guild will tell a passage from the Gospel of Mark and a local pastor responds with a prayer. (Pastor Lauren and a number of Muhlenberg members will be praying/telling.) The walking route is accessible for wheelchairs/strollers.

Good Friday, March 29, Worship, 7:00 pm*

We hear the passion of Christ, the narrative of Jesus crucified and reigning from the cross. The nursery will be open and staffed.

Easter Vigil, Saturday, March 30, 8:00 pm

This is the high point of the church's year, the night, the very night, the Passover of Christ from death to life. This year's Vigil will be a simplified version of the traditional liturgy. We'll begin with the lighting of the new fire, and process into the sanctuary for the reading of the Word. Readers will share with us the entirety of the Gospel of Mark, for a truly epic experience of the Gospel story. We'll then gather around the communion table to celebrate the first resurrection meal. Following the service, we'll extend the celebration of Easter with food and fellowship.

*Services marked with an asterisk will also be live-streamed on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

Visit our Lenten Webpage for links and our Holy Week schedule:

www.muhenberglutheran.org/Lent2024

EASTER SUNDAY ~ NEXT SUNDAY, MARCH 31

Worship ~ 8:30 & 11:00 am



The ultimate r(evol)ution of love came about through the death and resurrection of Jesus. Christ is risen, and through him all creation is made new! On Easter Sunday, in word and feast, we celebrate God's unending love.

Join us for worship with Holy Communion at 8:30 and 11:00 am.

Easter Brunch ~ 9:30 - 10:45 am

Join us in the Muhlenberg Activities Center (MAC) for an Easter Brunch! The Fellowship Committee will provide breakfast meats, coffee, juice and tea. Please bring food to share as suggested below, or feel free to bring your favorite signature dish:



Households with the last name:

A – K Breakfast Casserole

L – O Fruit

P – Z Breakfast Breads

Everyone is welcome, with or without something to share!



Photos ~ 9:30 - 10:45 am

There will be an opportunity to have an individual or family picture taken and printed.

Easter Egg Hunt & Activities ~ 9:45 am

The Children's Ministry team needs your help. Volunteers are needed to set up the Easter Egg Hunt Saturday, March 30 after the Easter Vigil. Extra adults will also be needed in the nursery at both services on Easter Sunday, March 31. If you are available to help, please contact Ashley Saunders (saunders@muhlenberglutheran.org).



The Easter Egg Hunt will be inside the MAC Easter Sunday at 9:45 am. In addition to the hunt, we will play games and enjoy activities for kids of all ages.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE NEWS

LAWN MAINTENANCE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

During peak season, lawn maintenance is needed weekly. Please volunteer to mow and trim the grass on Muhlenberg's campus. Less than two hours of volunteering your time can make a difference. Bring a buddy and complete the task even faster. We need volunteers to perform lawn maintenance from April through October. All equipment and training are provided, along with flexible scheduling. Please sign up for a week or multiple weeks in the *Sign-Up Notebook* in the Gathering Area or contact Sexton Jeff Williams (sexton@muhlenberglutheran.org) or text/call 804-931-2274).

YOUTH NEWS

CONFIRMATION CORNER

From "Five Key Lutheran Principles" by Mark Allan Powell. Here are key principles that Lutherans follow when they study or interpret the Bible.

1. Law and Gospel. Lutherans say that the Word of God speaks both law and gospel and that both must be held together for God's Word to be fulfilled. One way to describe these important terms is: the *law* is that which accuses and judges us; the *gospel* is that which comforts us and saves us. This message of law and gospel is at the heart of Scripture. One common misunderstanding sometimes equates "The Law" with the Old Testament and "the Gospel" with the New Testament. This is not right. The whole Bible is both law and Gospel. Lutherans look for both messages in the Bible: law *and* gospel. This is part of what makes us love the Bible. We don't just believe the Bible; we treasure it - promises and commandments alike.

YOUNG ADULTS GROUP NEWS



MORE MUHLENBERG NEWS

COMFORT MAKERS

Comfort makers have concluded their weekly gatherings for the season and will resume activity in September. However, cotton fabric of any kind is needed. If you or anyone you know has fabric that could be donated, please contact Margie Miller (540-820-3995) or Linda Morrison (lindamm778@gmail.com) or 540-383-5085).

*Devotional booklets for
April - June are
available at the Connection Center
and in the Connection Box outside.*

REMINDERS

ADDITIONAL PARKING

On special days like Palm and Easter Sunday, we are blessed with more people in attendance. Sometimes, it can be challenging to find a parking spot in the lot surrounding the church. We have agreements with our neighboring businesses for additional Sunday parking, so remember you can always park in the following locations as well:

- **The Ott Street Parking lot** behind the MAC beside the Ott Street House (which we share with Michael Layman Law Group). Do not park in Urban Exchange's lot with numbered spaces on the corner of Ott & Water St. You may be towed!
- **Gary's Piano** lot next to the church.
- **Farm Credit lot** across East Market Street.
- **Michael Layman Law Group lot** across from the Water Street entrance to our parking lot (note: parking cones may be moved for church parking use).
- **Wharton, Aldhizer & Weaver Law Offices lot** between West Water Street & Newman Avenue.

Visit the Connection Center for a parking map.

PARKING COURTESY

From young families juggling little ones to older members and all those in between, there are many folks whose lives could be made a little easier or safer by parking closer to the church entrances. If you usually park closer, maybe take a spot a little further back so others who need it may have a safer spot. Thank you for your consideration.

THANK YOU

Special thanks to Rev. Richard Early of Linville, VA who lent us his beautiful Muhlenberg memorabilia on March 10. It was delightful to have this stained glass window from Muhlenberg's late 19th century Main St. location on display.



Above: Sexton Jeff Williams picked up the window from Rev. Early's home and they take a moment to document the special moment.

Below: Pastor Lauren poses with the special window.



TIME, TALENT & TREASURE

RECENT ATTENDANCE

Here are some interesting statistics from our recent in-person and online viewership:

3/10	8:30 Holy Communion	55
	11:00 Holy Communion	92
	11:00 Wellstream Worshippers.....	36
	Total Views this Week	234
	Hours Viewed this Week	86.2
3/17	8:30 Holy Communion	58
	11:00 Holy Communion	119
	11:00 Wellstream Worshippers.....	33

NOTE FROM OUR TREASURER

Moving into February, the deficit remains similar to January. We see this stability because expenses were less in February. If we can hold expenses stable at \$60,000 each month and steadily increase gifts and offerings, then we will begin to see a shift in the deficit. The good news, gifts and offerings did increase slightly in February. Let's keep working together to reach our stretch budget for 2024. Continue to prayerfully consider your giving strategy.

Sarah A. Sunde, Treasurer

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through February 2024			
	2024 YTD Actual	2024 YTD Budget	2023 YTD Actual
Gifts & Offerings	\$67,036	\$125,833	\$87,491
Total Income	\$94,932	\$147,463	\$105,245
Total Expenses	\$127,901	\$150,521	\$125,220
Excess Income/(Deficit)	\$(32,969)	\$(3,058)	\$(19,975)

Giving in support of our Spending Plan	\$ 10,676.00
Giving to Other Designated Funds	\$ 295.00
Total Giving	\$ 10,971.00

February Thrivent Choice Dollars - \$521

To give online, scan here →



WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

March 25 - 31, 2024

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

Tues	6:00 pm	Lutheran Campus Ministry Dinner
	6:00 pm	Celebration Singers
	7:00 pm	Gloria Dei Ringers
Wed	10:30 am	Bible Study via Zoom
	6:30 pm	Sanctuary Choir
Thu	7:00 pm	Maundy Thursday Service
Fri	12 noon	Ecumenical Good Friday Walk
	12 noon	Our Community Place Lunch
	7:00 pm	Good Friday Service
Sat	8:00 pm	Easter Vigil Service
Sun	Easter Sunday	
	8:30 am	Holy Communion in person
	9:30 am	Easter Brunch Potluck & Photos
	9:45 am	Easter Egg Hunt & Activities
	11:00 am	Holy Communion in person and Livestreamed via Facebook and YouTube



Each week, we will lift up in prayer five households from our congregation. Our prayer families for this week are:

*Bob and Barbra Humphrey
Jon and Beth Jarrells
Marilynn Jarrells
Louise and T. W. Johnson
Buddy Jones*

Please note: if you notice an unintentional omission in our list or prefer your name not be listed, please contact Parish Administrator Linda Depoy (540-434-3496 or depoym@muhlenberglutheran.org)

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: (depoym@muhlenberglutheran.org /540-434-3496)*