



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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March 29, 2020

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

† Upon the recommendation of our Bishop and the guidelines of our Governor, we are continuing to suspend all in-person Muhlenberg events, including worship, through May 1. At that point, we will reassess and communicate with you. Regular worship will continue online on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#). See p. 2-3 for details. If you're not familiar with Zoom, use this link for a helpful tutorial Pastor Alex has prepared:
<https://youtu.be/NoR3axym3F4w>.

† **We now have a COVID-19 tab on our website. Visit often for regular updates and activity ideas.**

† This week, we will again livestream the Wednesday noon service and Lenten Dinner Church. See pgs. 3-4 for details,

† Staff is busy planning a meaningful Holy Week experience that you can participate in from home. See p. 5 for details.

† Governor Northam recently called on communities to provide emergency child care to young and school-aged **children of essential personnel** during the pandemic.

Strict regulations have been issued to ensure safe child care for essential personnel while minimizing the risk of additional COVID-19 spread. With that in mind, Council has approved the use of the church building for Harrisonburg Rockingham Child Day Care Center and Second Home Learning Center to run limited programs for essential workers. Visit the COVID-19 tab on our website for details.

† Have you received our emails in the past few weeks? If not, we likely do not have your current email address, or you may have accidentally unsubscribed from MailChimp (the program we use to send emails). Please provide your current email address by visiting our website or emailing your request to Linda Depoy
depy@muhlenberglutheran.org

† Both Pastor Lauren and Pastor Alex are working throughout this time to stay connected with as many people as possible. While they will not be meeting in person with anyone except those in critical situations, they are both available for phone conversations, email, and video meetings. Simply email or call the church office — they'll be happy to hear from you! .

Welcome to The Wellstream:

A DIGITAL MINISTRY OF MUHLENBERG LUTHERAN CHURCH

We are excited about our new digital opportunity for outreach and community building. **The Wellstream Project**, a play on our vision of being a *Wellspring of God's Grace*, gives us the means to livestream our 11:00 am Sunday morning worship service on [Facebook Live](#) and [YouTube](#). Even before current health concerns, we recognized that many of our members live busy lives that sometimes take them away from regular worship attendance, some members are homebound and unable to be physically in community, and many folks who don't have a church home wonder about what they would find in a new worshipping community. All of these reasons have led us to explore this option for creating a digital worship space where members and guests can feel welcome and connected to life at Muhlenberg.

When you have a need to stay home, or want to invite anyone to see what worship at Muhlenberg is all about, then **tune in LIVE at 11:00 am on Sundays via [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#)**. If you can't join us live, you will be able to find archived services in both locations at any time.

We are spending the first few weeks working out any problems, so we welcome your feedback in the meantime. For now the camera will be in the balcony, using a wide-angle shot and a zoomed shot that focuses on our worship leaders. If you have any questions or concerns about the *Wellstream*, please contact Pastor Alex.

Thanks to a generous donor, the *Wellstream* Project is a positive step toward utilizing technology for the advancement of Muhlenberg's mission, and for sharing the love of Christ with our community. This initiative 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 for greater connection with our members when life gets in the way, and it can be a hospitable first step and effective means of communicating God's grace to our neighbors.



THIS WEEK

WEDNESDAY NOON SERVICE

Wednesdays at noon, we will have a brief prayer service on [Facebook](#). Tune in live or watch the video later.

PALM/COATS SUNDAY

"A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!" -Matt. 21:8-9

Next Sunday is Palm Sunday, but you may be feeling at a loss if you don't have a palm tree growing in your yard! Worshipping in our homes, we will miss out on the opportunity to wave palm branches and sing out our loud Hosannas together. But all is not lost! Our extraORDINARY Lenten object for Palm Sunday is **coats**. As the story goes, coats were a sign of adoration as well when Jesus entered Jerusalem. So without palms in hand, we invite you to wave your **coats** as we sing the familiar words of *All Glory, Laud, and Honor* next week.

We'll involve the choir to put together a special virtual presentation of the Palm Sunday processional, and we invite you so sing out your praise wherever you are!

In the words of Jill Duffield, author of our Lenten devotional, "Palm Sunday is no time to hold back. Shout with abandon. Praise Jesus with song and prayer. Throw your coat into the mix, spread it on the road. Do not suppress your urge to be generous with your affection, your resources, your love. Jesus will not walk the earth forever. The time is now."

FINANCIAL NEWS

LAST WEEK'S "ATTENDANCE"

While we didn't meet in person last week, we were able to track our online viewership:

Peak Live Viewers:

Facebook ~ 97 YouTube ~63

Total Engagement/Views:

Facebook ~ 661 YouTube ~ 157

Total Time Watched:

Facebook ~ 93 hrs YouTube ~ 74 hrs

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through February 2020			
	Y-T-D Actual	Y-T-D Budget	Y-T-D Last Year
Gifts & Offerings	\$99,702	\$121,248	\$102,094
Total Receipts	\$123,918	\$147,401	\$126,537
Expenses	\$157,885	\$178,331	\$143,414
Excess Income/ (Expenses)	(\$33,967)	(\$30,930)	(\$16,877)

~No report available this week.~

See Connection Center notebook for details.

March Thrivent Choice Dollars: \$405

To give online, scan here →



The church is certainly not suspending its ministry through this season, and we ask you not to suspend your financial contributions either. We are committed to paying our staff and maintaining our ministries, even if they will be 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 www.muhenberglutheran.org, or mail your check to the church at 281 E. Market Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.



MIDWEEK LENTEN DINNER CHURCH THIS WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 6:00 PM

On Wednesdays during Lent, worship is taking place around the table: **YOUR** dinner table! Join us this week for the final one of the season!

With a community emphasis on social distancing, or spacious solidarity, in response to COVID-19, we have cancelled church gatherings, but we're shifting the structure of our Wednesday Evening Dinner Church services to be online! We will meet using Zoom, a video conferencing service. Not familiar with Zoom? No problem ... visit <https://youtu.be/NoR3axym3F4w> for a helpful tutorial Pastor Alex has prepared. The following link will allow you to download Zoom and login, or use the phone number to call in and hear the service:

<https://zoom.us/j/814203050>

Meeting ID: 814 203 050

Or join in by phone: 1-312-626-6799,,814203050#
or 1-929-205-6099,,814203050#

Gather your family, grab your dinner, and join us around the computer/laptop/phone/tablet as we form digital community! Dinner Church will offer a brief order of worship, a Lenten reflection, and a time for conversation as we work to maintain our family ties through this season. Together we will cultivate relationships with each other, and with God, as we explore the images and themes of our extraORDINARY Lenten journey.

We will begin each Wednesday at 6:00 pm, and all are welcome to join in the fun! Contact Pastor Alex Zuber (zuber@muhlenberglutheran.org or 434-3496) if you have any issues logging in to Zoom.

HOLY WEEK & EASTER



We recognize that the extended suspension of our in-person gathering means we will not be together for Holy Week and Easter Sunday. We grieve this missed opportunity for our community to gather during the most important days of our Liturgical year, but we also recognize this as a unique opportunity to practice our faith in new ways.

Pastors and staff are hard at work planning for meaningful Holy Week and Easter experiences at home. We will be emailing hands-on liturgies that can be used by individuals/families and providing live worship experiences online. If you need a hard copy of these resources mailed to you, please contact Linda Depoy (depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org or 434-3496) **by April 1**.

Worship services during Holy Week will be livestreamed on [Facebook Live](#) and [YouTube](#) Live:

Palm Sunday (April 5) ~ 11 am

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday of Holy Week (April 6, 7, 8) ~ 7 pm

Maundy Thursday (April 9) ~ 7 pm

Good Friday (April 10) ~ 7 pm

Easter Vigil (April 11) 7 ~ pm

Easter Sunday (April 12) ~ 11 am

We will also provide resources for worshipping at home without an internet connection and for a self-guided Passion Walk experience. Contact Linda (see contact information above) **by April 1** if you need a hard copy.

Join Us!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

WEDNESDAY AM BIBLE STUDY

Resumes April 15, 10:30 am via Zoom using this link:

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

We will study two women of the Bible: Ruth and Susanna. Contact Pastor Lauren for details.

PASTORS' BOOK CLUB

April's Pastors' Book Club selection is *Aging Matters: Finding Your Calling for the Rest of Your Life* by R. Paul Stevens. What does it mean to get older? How do we go about it fruitfully? The book delves into matters of calling, spirituality, and legacy in retirement.

Whether you're already retired, looking towards retirement, or journeying with friends or family members, you'll find this book to be a rich resource for perspective, guidance, and personal and spiritual growth.

We will meet via Zoom Wednesday, April 22, 6:30 pm. To join in, use this link: <https://zoom.us/j/335559292>. The book is available online, or you may order a copy of the book through Pastor Lauren for \$12.50.

COFFEE HOUR

We offer an online "coffee hour" experience Sundays, 10:30-11 am via [Zoom](#). Make yourself a cup of coffee and sign in to visit with your church family

before you head over to worship on Facebook or YouTube. Log in by clicking this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/388500586?pwd=VUYraGFMZMEZTTDk5ekRQZUx1Q3pSQT09>



YOUTH & CHRISTIAN FORMATION NEWS

All in-person activities and events are cancelled through May 1.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

For some of us, this time of social distancing provides an opportunity to slow down, and experience "sabbath" in a new way.

Adult faith formation continues to meet via Zoom* using the links provided:

- **Living and Learning through the Lens of Faith** continues Sundays, 9:00 am using this link: <https://zoom.us/j/430216424>.
- Pastor Lauren's Wednesday morning Bible study resumes. *See previous column.*
- The Pastors' Book Club. *See previous column.*

We also share a resource called *Prayer and Worship in our Homes*, an opportunity to "Grow closer to Christ even when you can't be in church. Learn more about the practice of prayer in its many forms from an array of studied experts." Also, there is a wonderful resource for families called *Pandemic Hope*, a 7-week devotional that has a daily Bible reading and activity for families and children to do together. Visit our website for details.

Christian Formation resources are available on our website under the COVID-19 tab. Select Resources to find activities for children, families and adults as we continue to be church together. Need assistance? Contact Diane Bayer (bayer@muhlenberglutheran.org or 434-3496).

**If you don't have a reliable internet connection for video chatting, and would prefer to call in to participate in Zoom meetings, contact Linda Depoy to get the phone number for the event.*

MUHLENBERG NEWS

BASKETS OF PROMISE

Collections for Personal Care Kits postponed.

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.

SECOND HOME NEWS

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Note: Council has given Second Home permission to open on a limited basis. See next week's issue for an update.

One of the unique aspects of Second Home Learning Center is that we are not just a child care facility for school age children. We are a *second home* for our students and staff. We are a family that takes care of each other on bad days, and celebrates together on special days. Our teachers and staff are the essence of our program. They are dedicated, compassionate, and well trained. Everybody comes to Second Home for a reason, and this reason is definitely not to get rich. While these reasons may be different for each of us, we all agree on one: we all genuinely care about the children, their families, and each other. It hurts that we cannot take care of the children right now, but it is for the community's and families' best interest.

So what CAN we do? We distributed care packages and asked families to let us know if they are in need. Muhlenberg and Second Home staff will help with food, medicine, and



other needs within safety guidelines. We have suspended fees for the time we are closed. We will check in with the most vulnerable families to make sure they are okay.

We will continue paying our teachers and staff as we know they all depend on this income. We will need them back after the shutdown. Second Home cannot serve the community without its teachers and staff.

So, for now we are social distancing and hunkering down. Our leadership continues to work online, we will hold meetings via Zoom, and we are optimistic. We are optimistic that our fundraisers - the Great Community Give, and the HWSL Golf Tournament (see article below) - will still happen and will help us with much needed funding. We are optimistic that our spring musical - *The Lion King* - can still happen, even if we have to postpone it. We keep up the work under these new circumstances, and prepare for the glorious day when the danger is over and we can re-open for our students and families. Stay well, and keep us in your heart.

CARE FOR ONE ANOTHER

Area Shepherds have been making phone calls to those in their Shepherd Group. They are asking questions about needs you may have, as well as ways you may want to serve over the coming weeks. We will be setting up phone partners to check in with one another, grocery and pharmacy runners who can help others avoid exposure, and whatever else we need to make sure we all stay safe and connected through this time.

Let us be creative and resourceful as we find new ways to care for one another. Be kind and patient with others—we're all doing the best we can. Take time to care for yourself as well.

EASTER OPPORTUNITIES

EASTER LILIES

When we are able to return worship, we will celebrate **Easter Sunday!** Want to help beautify our church and remember/honor a loved one? Cost is **\$17 per plant. Sign-up deadline is APRIL 26.** To reserve your lily (limit 30) and have information published in *The Chimes*, do the following:

1. **Sign up by emailing Linda Depoy** (depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org). Include who you want to remember/honor.
2. **Pay for lilies** by mailing your check to the church office (281 E. Market Street, Harrisonburg, 22801). Write “Easter Lilies” on the memo line/envelope.

Payment will reserve the lilies.

Lilies may be picked up after the 11:00 am service on the Sunday we celebrate. Remaining lilies will be distributed the following Thursday.



ALTERNATIVE GIVING

If you wish to remember/honor a loved one in a different way, choose a local or global opportunity in **Minnick School** or **ELCA World Hunger: Deadline: April 26.**

1. **Sign up by emailing Linda Depoy** (depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org). Include who you want to remember/honor and which agency you choose.
2. **Make your contribution** by mailing your check to the church office (281 E. Market Street, Harrisonburg, 22801) Designate “**Second Home Easter Gift**” or “**World Hunger Easter Gift**” on the memo line.

We will publish the names of loved ones remembered with Easter lilies or alternative giving.

ATTENTION MINISTRY GROUP LEADERS

We now have a Zoom video conferencing account, which allows us to hold meetings, Bible studies, and other gatherings online. If you would like to set up a Zoom meeting for your group or class during this time of *spacious solidarity*, please email Pastor Alex (zuber@muhlenberglutheran.org) and he will gladly do that.

WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

March 30 — April 5, 2020

Mon. 2:00 pm Weekly Staff Mtg. via Zoom

Wed. 12 noon Live Service on [Facebook](#)
6:00 pm Lenten Dinner Church
via Zoom

Sun. Palm Sunday
9:00 am Living and Learning
through the Lens of Faith
10:30 am “Coffee Hour” via Zoom
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@muhlenberglutheran.org/434-3496).

Additionally, requests to utilize space in the Gathering Area on Sunday or post information at the Connection Center should be made to Linda as soon as planned, but no later than Thursdays at 8 am.

Check bulletin boards for community information.

Like us at facebook.com/muhlenberglutheran.