



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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April 5, 2020

PALM SUNDAY

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

✚ Staff has been busy planning a meaningful Holy Week experience that you can participate in from home. .

✚ While the downtown Passion Walk has been cancelled, we offer two alternatives. See p. 7 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! .

TODAY

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

It's 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*.

We'll involve the choir to put together a special virtual presentation of the Palm Sunday processional, and we invite you to 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.”

Fun Palm Making Family Activity

Make **hand palms** to celebrate as you have your own Hosanna parade. Each person can trace their hand on green paper (or color it green) and cut out the print. Wave the “palm” as together you shout, “Hosanna to the King!”

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 ~ 105 YouTube ~68

Total Engagement/Views:

Facebook ~ 726 YouTube ~ 171

Total Time Watched:

Facebook ~ 106 hrs YouTube ~ 81 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)

Giving in support of our Spending Plan \$ 3,320.00
Giving to Other Designated Funds \$ 803.53
Total Giving for the Week \$ 4,123.53

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.muhenbergglutheran.org, or mail your check to the church at 281 E. Market Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.



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 are emailing hands-on liturgies that can be used by individuals/families and providing live worship experiences online. Hard copies are being mailed to those shepherds identified as not having online access or those who requested them.

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) ~
Evening Prayer, 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 Hope You Will Join Us!

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 “**Minnick School 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.

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.

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.

MUHLENBERG NEWS

BASKETS OF PROMISE

Collections for Personal Care Kits postponed.

CREATION CARE TIP



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

Now, as a part of your online shopping experience, you can donate household items in an easy and convenient way. It's a great way to recycle, support and strengthen your own community. The online commerce companies are attempting to recycle shipping containers and cardboard boxes. They ask their customers, when donating household items and clothing to charities, to place the donations back into the cardboard boxes, for which they provide a pre-paid shipping label to big charity houses. To get involved search "Give Back Box Program."

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.

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 are 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.

COFFEE HOUR

We offer an online "coffee hour" 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=VUYraGFZMEZTTDk5ekRQZUx1Q3pSQT09>



DAILY DEVOTIONALS AVAILABLE Online: The daily devotional, [Christ in Our Home](#), is available free online.

Hard Copy: *Word in Season* and *Christ in Our Home* hard copy devotionals are available from the cabinet outside the MAC for anyone who lives close by. If you can't get to the church, contact Linda Depoy (434-3496 or depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org) to request a copy be mailed to 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 have taken steps to enhance our digital worship, and continue to welcome your feedback. For now the camera is 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.



HARRISONBURG PASSION WALK

Harrisonburg's community Good Friday walk has become a much-loved tradition. Unfortunately, due to physical distancing requirements, we are unable to join with our brothers and sisters from other congregations for this experience. We are, however, offering two opportunities to do a self-guided walk during Holy Week. One is through downtown, following the route usually taken by the group. The other is in Hillandale Park, and approximates the distance that Jesus would have walked on his final day. **Information on these walks is available on Muhlenberg's website.** We encourage you to find a time during the week to walk, either alone or with your family. We also encourage you not to wait until Good Friday; if everyone does it at the same time, we won't be able to do it with safe physical distancing!

SECOND HOME NEWS

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Director Krisztina Szekely and the Second Home Board have been hard at work this week to determine if it's feasible for them to re-open for children of essential personnel during this time. They appreciate your prayers and support.

LOCAL & GLOBAL MISSION

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), a new respiratory infection, has been declared a pandemic by the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO). So far, nearly 1 million people around the world have tested positive for COVID-19, and more than 50,000 people have died, according to the WHO.

[Lutheran Disaster Response](#) (LDR) brings God's hope, healing and renewal to people whose lives have been disrupted by **this virus** in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, LDR stays to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.

100% of your gifts given to LDR go directly to aid in relief. Here are ways you can give:

- **Online:** www.elca.org.
- **Phone:** 800-638-3522 (Monday-Friday, 8:00-5:00 Central Time).
- **Mail:** send checks made payable to Lutheran Disaster Response and designate **COVID-19** to ELCA, PO Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116-8009.
- **Offering:** make check payable to Muhlenberg and designate *Lutheran Disaster Response* on your check and envelope.
- **Via Thrivent:** Thrivent Financial members can direct their Choice Dollars to Disaster Relief and/or make a personal donation that will be matched by Thrivent. Visit thrivent.com Disaster Response for details.

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 p. 4.*
- The Pastors' Book Club. *See p. 4.*

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 and activities (like coloring Easter eggs naturally) 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.*

WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

April 6-12, 2020

Holy Week

- Mon. 2:00 pm** Weekly Staff Mtg.
7:00 pm Evening Prayer
- Tue. 7:00 pm** Evening Prayer
- Wed. 12 noon** Live Service
7:00 pm Evening Prayer
- Thu. 7:00 pm** Maundy Thursday Service
- Fri. 7:00 pm** Good Friday Service
- Sat. 7:00 pm** Easter Vigil Service
- Sun. Easter 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).

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](https://www.facebook.com/muhlenberglutheran).