



# 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 18, 2021**

**THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER**

## WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

### STAFF UPDATE

Diane Bayer's time of service as Muhlenberg's Christian Formation Minister has come to an end. We thank her for her ministry over the years with Christian formation, and wish her the best in future endeavors!

### SERMON SERIES

Today we begin a five-week series focused on the book of Acts and Muhlenberg's new Strategic Plan, *Equipping the Saints*. You can learn more about the plan on page 2 or by clicking [HERE](#). We are excited to explore the Holy Spirit's movement in the early church and in our congregation today.

Following worship, we invite you to join the pastors on [ZOOM](#) to share initial insights and raise questions about each of the focus areas of the Strategic Plan. For more in-depth exploration, join the community conversations happening **Wednesdays at 7:00 pm via [ZOOM](#)**. This week's topic is ...



**Create a culture of welcome, hospitality, and care.**

## TODAY AT MUHLENBERG

### WELCOME TO MUHLENBERG!

Have you been worshipping with Muhlenberg online? Pastor Lauren and Pastor Alex would love to get to know you! Join in our *Welcome to Muhlenberg* session **TODAY, April 18, 1:00 pm via [ZOOM](#)**.

Learn more about our community of faith and ways to get involved and connected no matter where you live. We will also provide information on joining Muhlenberg, but all are welcome to attend whether you're interested in becoming an official member or not.

### CALLING ALL GRADUATES!

We would like to recognize all high school and college graduates in the Muhlenberg community. If you or your child are graduating this year, please contact Pastor Alex ([zuber@muhlenberglutheran.org](mailto:zuber@muhlenberglutheran.org)) so we can be sure you're included in the celebration!

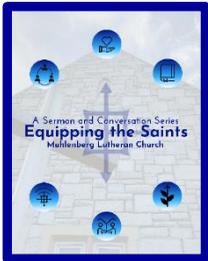


*Sunday morning information has been moved to the back page. Please check there for options to connect to our Sunday worship services. The calendar on the back page also provides information to participate in all services and activities.*

## TODAY AT MUHLENBERG (CONT'D)

### *EQUIPPING THE SAINTS:*

#### MUHLENBERG'S STRATEGIC PLAN



Congregation Council has been thoughtfully and prayerfully developing a Strategic Plan over the past year and a half. While COVID slowed the process down, it also gave church leadership the opportunity to further consider how we are called to be the church in a changing world. The whole congregation is invited and encouraged to engage with the first draft of the plan, which is available [HERE](#). Printed copies are available from the Connection Box.

**Sundays, April 18—May 23**, our worship will focus on a sermon series from Acts, paired with initiatives from our strategic plan. Together, we'll consider the work of the Holy Spirit in the early church and the work of the Holy Spirit in our congregation today. Following worship, all are welcome to join in an after-church coffee hour conversation about the weekly theme via the Sunday morning [ZOOM](#) link.

**Wednesdays, April 21—May 19**, all who are a part of our Muhlenberg community (whether you're "officially" a member or not) are invited to conversation at **7:00 pm** via [ZOOM](#). You may also join in by phone. Dial 301-715-8592, then enter Meeting ID: 812 2682 5160 and Passcode: 212430.

Each week we will focus on a different goal of the Strategic Plan with opportunity for questions, brainstorming, and big dreaming about our life together. Expect these conversations to be dynamic and energizing! Plan to attend one, or attend all. This is OUR work together as a faith community.

## FINANCIAL NEWS

### RECENT ATTENDANCE

Here are some interesting statistics from our recent online viewership:

4/1	<b>Maundy Thursday on Zoom</b>	<b>71</b>
4/2	<b>Good Friday Total Live Views</b>	<b>59</b>
4/3	<b>Easter Vigil Total Live Views</b>	<b>42</b>
4/4	<b>8:30 Communion</b>	<b>24</b>
	<b>11:00 Total Live Views</b>	<b>107</b>
	<b>Total Views this Week</b>	<b>385</b>
	<b>Hours Viewed this Week</b>	<b>158.8</b>
	<b>4:00 pm Parking Lot Service</b>	<b>40</b>
4/11	<b>8:30 Communion</b>	<b>21</b>
	<b>11:00 Total Live Views</b>	<b>75</b>

### FINANCIAL REPORT

Through <b>March 2021</b>			
	Y-T-D Actual	Y-T-D Budget	Y-T-D Last Year
Gifts & Offerings	\$134,994	\$217,607	\$150,102
Total Receipts	\$166,778	\$248,436	\$189,604
Expenses	\$231,391	\$256,924	\$216,328
<b>Excess Income/ (Expenses)</b>	<b>(\$64,614)</b>	<b>(\$8,488)</b>	<b>(\$26,724)</b>

Giving in support of our Spending Plan	\$	7,032.00
Giving to Other Designated Funds	\$	1,000.00
<b>Total Giving for the Week</b>	\$	<b>8,032.00</b>



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

### HOLDEN EVENING PRAYER

Holden Evening Prayer has returned to livestreaming on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) **Wednesdays, 8:00 pm (note time change)**. You're invited to this beautiful evening prayer service and worship with the gathered virtual assembly. It can also be accessed at any time during the week. If you'd like a copy of Holden Evening Prayer so you can follow along at home, please contact Pastor Lauren or Pastor Alex.

## MUHLENBERG NEWS

### GATHERING TOGETHER UPDATE

The Gathering Together Task Force is hard at work, putting together plans for a return to in-person worship! As the rate of infection continues to decrease, and the rate of vaccination increases, we will begin to offer opportunities for both indoor and outdoor worship.

**Starting May 23, Pentecost Sunday, our 8:30 am Zoom worship will become a hybrid service.** You can worship online via Zoom, or attend the service in person! This service of Holy Communion will require precautions such as mask-wearing, assigned seating, and no singing. It is strongly encouraged (but not required) that those attending be fully vaccinated.

Plans for outdoor worship beginning in June are coming together, so watch *The Chimes* for details. And our 11:00 am Facebook/YouTube worship isn't going anywhere—online worship will continue even as we begin to provide in-person gatherings.

In-person baptisms, weddings, and funerals for up to 25 guests (masked and distanced) will resume, as well. Contact either of the pastors if you've been waiting to schedule a baptism!

While we are excited to look ahead to these opportunities to gather, we will also be keeping a close eye on local COVID rates and the impact of variants, and adjust plans as needed.

The team meets again on April 29, so feel free to contact any of the members during this month if you'd like to be involved with helping in-person worship happen, or if you have any additional feedback. Members of the team are Neil Alexander, Erin Burke, Cynthia Page, Kevin Stees, Crystl Whitmire, Greta Willis, Pastor Lauren and Pastor Alex.



Here's what Bishop Bob Humphrey said to congregational leaders recently:

*"While there is certainly hope on the horizon, **only 17% of Virginians are fully vaccinated** [that number has increased to 22% this week] and new strains of COVID-19 are emerging which pose a significant risk for another spike in infections. The Virginia Synod Office of the Bishop, therefore, **strongly urges congregations to continue to gather predominantly in the digital space and to avoid in-person gatherings.**"*

To learn more about the Virginia Synod's guidance on COVID-19, click [HERE](#).

## MUHLENBERG NEWS (CONT'D)

### FINANCIAL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Do you like numbers? Do you have a basic understanding of finances? We need you! While the bulk of the heavy lifting for Muhlenberg's finances will be faithfully done by our new Finance Manager Elizabeth Fletchall, we still need to fill two volunteer positions to provide accountability and team-based oversight as we continue to be good stewards of our finances. Training is provided, and responsibilities average about 1-2 hours a week. Contact Congregation Council President Karen Thomsen ([kethomsen25@gmail.com](mailto:kethomsen25@gmail.com) or 540-421-4431) if you'd like to learn more!

### Financial Secretary Responsibilities

(shared with Assistant Financial Secretary)

- Oversee the counting of offerings: organize, schedule, and train tellers
- Oversee depositing receipts: schedule people to pick up the offerings after each service to deposit in safe, and to deposit cash in bank
- Report to the Finance Manager the total offerings each week and any special-purpose breakdowns
- Report on levels of giving to the church council and congregation
- Prepare check requests for money donated to outside organizations (e.g., People Helping People, Patchwork Pantry, World Hunger)

### Treasurer Responsibilities

(shared with Assistant Treasurer)

- Serve as financial officer of the congregation and member of Congregational Council
- Serve as chairperson of the Finance Committee

- Effectively partner with Finance Manager to maintain accurate financial records for the congregation
- Initiate monthly remittance of benevolence to the Virginia Synod
- Lead the preparation and presentation of the annual spending plan

### 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](mailto:rsanders97@verizon.net) or 433-1165).*



The Interfaith Power & Light's week to encourage nationwide action on climate is April 16 - 25. We are experiencing three great challenges in our country's history: a pandemic causing more families to go hungry, racial injustice awareness rising, and the climate crisis worsening. We have the opportunity to address all of these issues with one focus -- our food practices. IPL invites congregations to examine how our food systems contribute to injustice and to climate change, and how our faith traditions call us to respond through practical solutions. Get involved in gardening and/or food access justice. Growing your own food can lower your grocery bill and it cuts down emissions from food transportation. You can also volunteer at a community garden that supplies fresh produce to food pantries. Find where waste from your community goes. Waste is disproportionately disposed of in communities of color. Find ways to reduce your own waste through reducing consumption, composting, and refusing to acquire products that will end up in landfills.

## LOCAL & GLOBAL MISSION

Contact Karen Thomsen  
([kethomsen25@gmail.com](mailto:kethomsen25@gmail.com) or 540-421-4431) for more  
information about the Habitat Build or to volunteer.

### HELP WANTED

Do you have a passion for helping others? Would you like to experience the joy of knowing you have made a positive difference in the lives of others? If you answered yes, we'd love to see you join our Local and Global Ministry. Our mission is to address the unmet needs of food, water, clothing, housing, health, and education both locally in our community and globally around the world. Our ministry is re-energizing and we want you to join us as we plan to work with and support our neighbors near and far. Local and Global Ministry meets the second Monday each month at 7:00 pm as part of Muhlenberg's Ministries Night. Come check us out!

## HABITAT FAITH BUILD

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



Semi-skilled volunteers are still needed for our Habitat Faith Build. Thanks to everyone who has already signed up to help with an aspect of the construction! Please contact Karen Thomsen if you can help with any parts of the build listed below.

Electrical plugs and switches ~ May 10-13

Vinyl flooring ~ June 8-12

## PEACE POLE

The four churches involved with the Habitat Faith Build have each been asked to provide a decorated Peace Pole. Our confirmation class met Sunday to design and begin painting Muhlenberg's pole. Once completed, the poles will be planted in the front yard of the Habitat houses as a reminder of our continued love and support for the families who live there. Below are some photos of the kids working on our Peace Pole.



## SECOND HOME NEWS

### MEET OUR STUDENTS Great Community Give

*"Blessed is the one who is kind to the needy." (Prov. 14:2)*

Mark (not real name, but real child) has been with Second Home Learning Center for 3 years. His mother, a single parent, is a nurse and has been an essential worker during the pandemic. Mark was one of the first students who returned on April 15, 2020 when we re-opened to a small number of students. He enjoyed playing with friends, building with Legos and got help with his learning activities from school. Mark took part in field trips, special enrichment activities including art, crafts, music, and learning about different aspects of diversity. He was able to complete his online summer school activities from Second Home.

At the beginning of the school year, Mark's younger sister joined Second Home's kindergarten team. She was learning social skills, small and large motor skills alongside completing her virtual classes and assignments. Second Home staff advocated for these students so they could receive the best care in cooperation with Harrisonburg City Public Schools. The children's confidence bloomed throughout the months. Both of them returned to in-person education on March 22 and easily reintegrated to the school environment.



Now they attend Second Home before and after school, and all day on Wednesdays. We are delighted to have been able to serve this family with low cost yet high quality care.

We thank you for your continuing support that makes all this possible. Second Home Learning Center is one of the agencies in the Great Community Give on April 21.

Please help us reach our goal of \$15,000. Visit <https://www.greatcommunitygive.org/organizations/second-home-learning-center> to donate online. Cash and check donations can be dropped off at the Second Home office until April 21. We are open 6:00 am - 6:00 pm on weekdays.



*Krisztina Szekely  
Executive Director of Second Home*



## MUSIC MINISTRY NEWS

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

### ADULT CHOIRS

Celebration Singers & Sanctuary Choir meet via Zoom **April 20, May 4 & 18, 7:00 pm.**

### TWEENS AND TEENS

Meets **Tuesdays, 5:00 – 5:30 pm** via Zoom. No rehearsal on 4/27.

## YOUTH NEWS

### CONFIRMATION/ALPHA TEENS

Save these dates: **NEXT Sunday, April 25 and Sunday, May 16.** We will gather at Hillandale Park, **1:00 - 3:00 pm**, Shelter #1 like we did in the fall. Bring your Bible and notebook. We are looking forward to being together again!

### YOUTH MINISTRY AT MUHLENBERG

In updating our Strategic Plan, Congregation Council examined the staffing needs to accomplish our spiritual development goals. One very important component of the plan is to uplift our focus and attention on youth ministry.

We are pleased to announce that we will be hiring a part-time Youth Minister. This person will provide dynamic leadership and oversight for youth ministry at Muhlenberg. In addition, our new Youth Minister will nurture a vibrant and growing Christian faith in young people grades 6 - 12 and their families.

If you, or someone you know, may be interested in exploring this opportunity, you can find the job description and application instructions on our website by clicking [HERE](#).

Please lift up our search in your prayers.

## 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 (434-3496 or [depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org](mailto:depoy@muhlenberglutheran.org)). Submissions will be printed with consideration for space and appropriateness at the discretion of the pastors and editor.*

✚ Please pray for Alan Hiner and his family following the death of his brother Brigadier General William L. Hiner. General Hiner died in February at the age of 84 and was a highly decorated officer in the Air Force.

## FAITH IN ACTION

### GREAT COMMUNITY GIVE

Muhlenberg is a member of Faith in Action and supports their current campaign on establishing a housing trust fund in our community. They are investing their energies in strengthening the relationships within Rockingham County and the City of Harrisonburg to advance housing justice for our community.



**Wednesday, April 21, 6:30 am - 8:00 p.m.**, you have a chance to help by donating to Faith in Action via the Great Community Give using this link: <http://bit.ly/fia/gcg>.

For more information contact our congregational representatives:

Nancy Martin-Finks

[nanmart777@comcast.net](mailto:nanmart777@comcast.net) or 540-421-8199

Cathy Copeland

[catherineblose@gmail.com](mailto:catherineblose@gmail.com) or 317-670-1086

## CONNECTING TO SERVICES

### 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 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Class  
9:30 – 10:00 4<sup>th</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> 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**

## WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

April 19 - 25

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

- Mon. 2:00 pm Weekly Staff Meeting  
6:30 pm Congregation Council Mtg.
- Tue. 5:00 pm Tweens and Teens  
7:00 pm Adult Choirs
- Wed. 10:30 am Wed. Morning Bible Study  
via [ZOOM](#)  
7:00 pm Strategic Plan Discussion  
via [ZOOM](#)  
8:00 pm Holden Evening Prayer  
via [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)
- Sun. Fourth Sunday of Easter  
[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 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Class  
9:30 am 4<sup>th</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Class  
9:30 am Faith Lens Class  
9:30 am 40-Day Journey Class  
11:00 am Service Livestreamed  
via [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#)  
After worship ~ Coffee Hour to discuss  
Strategic Plan via [ZOOM](#)  
1:00 pm Confirmation/Alpha Teens

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:

[\(depoy@muhlenberg.lutheran.org/434-3496\)](mailto:depoy@muhlenberg.lutheran.org/434-3496)

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