



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 25, 2021

FOURTH 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

A five-week series focused on the book of Acts and Muhlenberg's new Strategic Plan, *Equipping the Saints* began April 18. You can learn more about the plan on page 3 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 ...



Become a congregation of storytellers.



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.

CALLING ALL GRADUATES!

We would like to recognize all high school and college graduates in the Muhlenberg community. If you or your child will be graduating this year, please contact Pastor Alex (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.

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.

NEW DATE: Also starting on May 23, we will begin an outdoor 10:00 am service. More details are coming soon. 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.

FINANCIAL NEWS

RECENT ATTENDANCE

Here are some interesting statistics from our recent online viewership:

4/11	8:30 Communion	21
	11:00 Total Live Views	75
	Total Views this Week	305
	Hours Viewed this Week	104.4
4/18	8:30 Communion	18
	11:00 Total Live Views	87

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through March 2021			
	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
Excess Income/ (Expenses)	(\$64,614)	(\$8,488)	(\$26,724)

Giving in support of our Spending Plan	\$ 3,415.00
Giving to Other Designated Funds	\$ <u>8,260.02</u>
Total Giving for the Week	\$ 11,675.02

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.

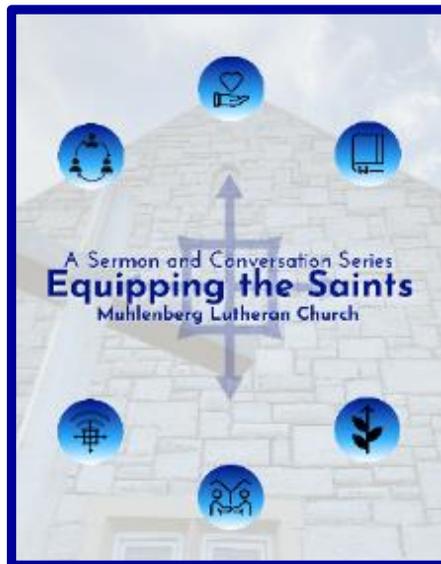
You can make a one-time or recurring donation through the [donation page](#) on our website, or mail your check to the church: 281 E. Market Street, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.

MUHLENBERG NEWS (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 a casual after-church coffee hour chat about the weekly theme via the Sunday morning [ZOOM](#) link. You may also join by phone: dial 301-715-8592 (Meeting ID: 847 3141 6878.)



Wednesdays, April 21—May 26 (note new end date), 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](#) or by phone: dial 301-715-8592 (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.

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. The remaining sessions are:

- April 28 Become a Congregation of Storytellers
- May 5 Engage All Ages in Learning
- May 12 Know Our Neighbors, and Serve Together With Them
- May 19 Center Our Community Life Together Around Worship
- May 26 Be Good Stewards of the Gifts We Have Been Given

Expect these conversations to be dynamic and energizing! Plan to attend one, or attend all. This is OUR work together as a faith community!

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 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 Congregation 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 or 433-1165).



Earth Day 2021

Five ways to help the planet today:

1. Ditch The Glitter: glitter is still plastic, and it goes down the drain into our waterways.
2. Be Food Smart: we throw away 30 - 40% of our food supply, 219 pounds per person in the U. S. every year.
3. Embrace Earth Friendly Fashion: in 2018, 11.3 million tons of textiles went into landfills.
4. Try A New Way To Compost: food scraps and yard waste make up more than 30% of what we throw away. Composting is one of the biggest ways to have an impact and reduce waste.
5. Quit The Plastic Habit: we eat, swallow or breathe 2,000 particles of plastic a week, about the weight of a credit card. Try products that are made with non-plastic or biodegradable materials or use containers that can be refilled or reused.

LOCAL & GLOBAL MISSION

Contact Karen Thomsen
(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 & Global Mission Committee. 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 & Global Mission meets the second Monday each month at 7:00 pm as part of Muhlenberg's Ministries Night. Come check us out!

HABITAT FAITH BUILD

UPDATE



The Habitat Faith Build duplex at 658 and 660 Virginia Ave. (Route 42) continues to move along. Windows and doors have been installed and drywall is up. Painting will begin this week.

A huge thank you to Muhlenberg member Neil Alexander for helping with the electrical rough in. Neil was a valued member of the team that did this work. Thank you, Neil!

Several of you have asked if we have reached our funding goal for this Faith Build. Our goal was \$10,000 and **we are currently at \$9,315**, so we are very close. If you would like to contribute to our Faith Build, please make your check payable to Muhlenberg Lutheran Church and note *Habitat Faith Build* in the memo line.

Upcoming work opportunities include electrical finishing and yard seeding at the end of May and flooring at the beginning of June. If you have not already spoken to me about these volunteer opportunities and wish to help, please let me know by call, text, or email.

Karen Thomsen

540-421-4431 or kethomsen25@gmail.com

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.



YOUTH NEWS

VIRGINIA SYNOD YOUTH ASSEMBLY Saturday, June 12, 4:00 - 6:00 pm

Full details and registration information can be found at the [youth ministry tab of the Virginia Synod website](#). Any 7th - 12th grade member of a Virginia Synod congregation can attend at no cost. This is the Virginia Synod's event where they update youth on the work of the church beyond their home congregations, elect the LYO Board for the coming year, and announce other plans for synodical youth ministry.

CONFIRMATION/ALPHA TEENS

Save these dates: **TODAY (4/25) and Sunday, May 16.** We will gather at Hillendale 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.

REMINDERS

NEW NICHEs AVAILABLE

An additional 24 Columbarium niches have been added to the Caring Corner. The Property Committee has made upgrades to this room with new lighting, including eternal spotlights shining on the niches. If you are interested in a niche or want additional information, please contact Bill Compton (437-8933 or compton1080@gmail.com).

CONTACT INFORMATION

With our ever-changing lifestyles, it's sometimes difficult to be sure everyone has your correct contact information. Have you recently ...



- **moved?**
- **cancelled your home phone?**
- **changed your cell phone number?**
- **changed your home/work email address?**

If so, please be sure we have your updated information by contacting Parish Administrator Linda Depoy (ldepoy@muhlenberglutheran.org or 434-3496).

COMMUNICATING WITH THOSE WITHOUT ONLINE ACCESS

Those cannot read *The Chimes* online can request a copy be mailed to them weekly. If you know someone without online access, contact Parish Administrator Linda Depoy (ldepoy@muhlenberglutheran.org or 434-3496).

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 - 3rd Grade Class
9:30 – 10:00 4th - 5th 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 26 — May 2

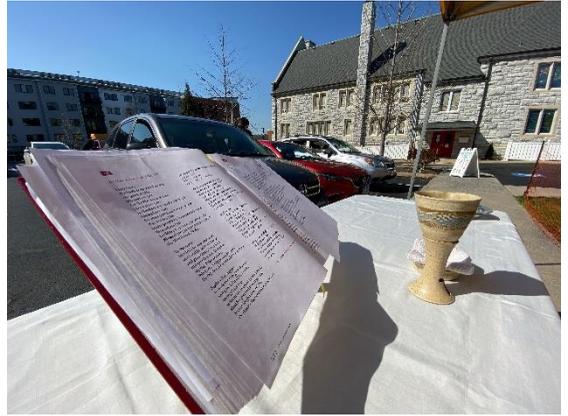
If viewing electronically, you can click the links below to access meetings and services.

- Mon. 2:00 pm Weekly Staff Meeting
- Tue. 5:00 pm Tweens and Teens
- 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. Fifth 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 – 3rd Grade Class
9:30 am 4th - 5th 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](#)

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)

Like us at [facebook.com/muhlenberg.lutheran](https://www.facebook.com/muhlenberg.lutheran).



And now, Lord ... grant to
your servants to continue to
speak your word with all

BOLDNESS

Acts 4:29, ESV

