



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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July 17, 2022

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

WHAT'S THE BUZZ?

INCREASED PRECAUTIONS



Due to increased COVID exposure among the Muhlenberg community and beyond, and in collaboration with the

Gathering Together Task Force, **we are implementing precautions for TODAY (7/17). Masks are required and we will practice social distancing** by using every other pew. Thank you for doing your part!

WE'RE ALMOST THERE!

We are **SO CLOSE!** We have **75 commitments** to our *Strength for Today, and Bright Hope for Tomorrow* campaign. When we reach 80, we'll receive another \$5000 challenge grant to reach our goal! If you haven't yet made a commitment, now's the time. Learn more and submit your commitment online at



muhlenberglutheran.org/strengthandhope.

It is so exciting to see God's abundance at work in our midst!

TODAY AT MUHLENBERG

SABBATH SERMON SERIES

In the beginning, God created... And on the seventh day God rested. Today we begin a preaching series on *Sabbath*. We say Sabbath is about rest, and yet we fill our day with activities that drain our energies and leave us exhausted. We hear the commandment "Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy," and we often have no idea what that means.

Join us for a season of reorientation around this Holy practice, so that we may see Sabbath practices as life-giving gifts of grace. Daily resources—including scripture, quotes, and spiritual practices—can be found each day of this three-week series on our Facebook and Instagram profiles.

NURSERY OPEN BUT NOT STAFFED

Ms. Ashley is taking some well-deserved vacation time. The nursery is open today but not staffed. Our church policy states that two adults be present when working with children, and the nursery needs volunteers! Volunteering is a great way for adults to get to know the beautiful families and children in our congregation. If you are interested, contact Ashley (saunders@muhlenberglutheran.org).

THIS WEEK AT MUHLENBERG

CHURCH WORLD SERVICE (CWS)

Reminder: Zachary Baxter from Church World Service will be here **NEXT Sunday, July 24 at 9:45** to share information about the co-sponsoring process. Please join us in the Nielsen Room to learn what it means to be a co-sponsoring church and how Muhlenberg could help a refugee family get settled in our area.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

DESSERT FELLOWSHIP

July 31, 6:30 pm ~ Oakdale Park



Come out to Oakdale Park in Bridgewater for a pot luck dessert and evening of fellowship. Bring your corn hole boards and other outdoor games and join in the fun. See you there! Have questions? Contact Barbara Roadcap (bbroadcap@gmail.com or 540-830-1896).

BLOOD DRIVE ~ 8/21, 9:00 - 1:00

The American Red Cross will be in the MAC. If you give regularly, please time your donations to donate that day. There's currently a serious shortage, so plan to donate!

MUHLENBERG NEWS

LAY PREACHER COMMISSIONED

Last summer, Pastor Alex asked me if I would be interested in applying for the Lay Preaching Academy, a new program being offered by the Virginia Synod. Having been in the Synod's ACTS program for many years, this sounded

like an excellent way to continue to grow in learning and to explore further avenues of service to God. The Lay Preaching Academy is a gift to lay people, providing the opportunity to engage in the scriptures and grow deeper in their faith while learning to proclaim the good news of God. What an opportunity to fulfill one of our promises of Baptism: "to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed!" The second purpose of the Academy is to train lay supply preachers in the Virginia Synod. With the support and encouragement of Pastor Alex, I applied for the program, which began last September and concluded with the commissioning of lay preachers during Power in the Spirit July 15.

The program consisted of monthly small-group meetings on Zoom led by a pastor. We read and discussed Karoline Lewis' book *A Lay Preacher's Guide – How to Craft a Faithful Sermon*. We heard and discussed four sessions of *Confessions of a Lutheran: Reformation Remix*, covering basic confessions of Lutheran theology. We learned from and were inspired by recorded sessions from pastors throughout the Synod giving their reflections on Lewis' book (a chapter each month) and heard sermons from those pastors. We discussed in depth the elements of a faithful sermon and learned from each other and our pastors. We met once in person in Roanoke to deliver practice sermons and to give and receive helpful feedback.

I give thanks to both Pastor Alex and Pastor Lauren for their encouragement, support, and trust. I also give thanks to Robert Alley, who agreed to serve as a mentor for me, listening to and providing feedback on sermons and giving me additional resources to study. The program has truly been an excellent learning and growth opportunity, and I pray I can serve the Synod effectively in this new ministry.

One of my concerns was knowing what the congregation needs to hear and how to best relay that message. The answer is to trust in the Spirit to speak through the one proclaiming the Word and to open the hearts of those who are receiving it. So, trusting in the Spirit, I embark on this ministry of proclamation, and I encourage others in our congregation to consider applying for the next class of the Lay Preaching Academy! Applications are open through August 1, and information and application materials can be found [HERE](https://vasynod.org/ministries/lay-preaching-academy/).

Kathy Thompson

NEW PRAYER PETITIONS

In August, you'll notice a new petition as part of our Sunday prayers. Each week, we will lift up five households from our congregation in prayer. We'll do this using our directory of active members, going alphabetically by last name—and when we get to the end, we'll start back again at the beginning! In this way, we'll get to pray together for each person in our congregation over the course of the year. We encourage you to pray for these five households over throughout the week. And when it's your week to be prayed for, take comfort in knowing your Muhlenberg family is thinking of you and praying for you!

Why are we doing this? Prayer is at the heart of the life of faith and so prayer is also at the heart of a community of faith. We pray for each other because, in the grace of God, we have been given to each other as siblings in Christ—given to each other to love and to care for, to support and to encourage. As we pray for each other, we commit each other to the love, mercy, and wisdom of God.

We hope you find this a valuable addition to your prayer practice. *[Also, please note: if you or someone you know is inadvertently omitted from the prayer list, please contact the church office. We work hard to keep our records accurate and up-to-date, and we appreciate your assistance in helping us do so.]*

ADULT KICKBALL TEAM

Wanted: Players for Muhlenberg's very own adult coed kickball team, **The Mule 'N Bergers with Cheese!** Games will be played Tuesday evenings, **August 16 – October 18** at Ramblewood sports complex. No experience necessary; all skill levels desired. To sign up, contact Russell Presnell (540-746-3562 or Russellepresnell@gmail.com).

CREATION CARE TIP

Give your breakfast to the birds! Instead of tossing stale bagels in the trash, tie a piece of string around the bagel and hang it in a tree. Birds - and the occasional squirrel - will flock to your yard for breakfast. As an extra treat, spread peanut butter on the bagel and roll it in birdseed. Best of all, there is no waste!

FROM OUR FINANCE MANAGER

CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS

Most church members who donated funds have received an emailed contribution statement reflecting total donations for the second quarter. For those without email or those who requested paper statements, these were mailed to you. Your digital statement was sent to the email address we have on file, from finance@muhlenberglutheran.org. Any questions? Contact Finance Manager Jane Eanes at the email address above or call 540-434-3496.

TIME, TALENT & TREASURE

RECENT ATTENDANCE

Here are some interesting statistics from our recent online viewership:

7/3	8:30 Holy Communion	47
	11:00 Holy Communion	40
	11:00 Wellstream Worshippers.....	36
	Total Views this Week	229
	Hours Viewed this Week	47.3
7/10	8:30 Holy Communion	46
	11:00 Holy Communion	62
	11:00 Wellstream Worshippers.....	44

NOTE FROM OUR TREASURER

Thank you for your continued generosity to support God's work in Muhlenberg's ministries and beyond. Expenses continued to be less than last year and also less than we anticipated in the budget, while our income is still trending lower. The deficit did decrease slightly, and I am hopeful that continues. Many thanks to the staff and ministries who are being judicious in their spending. As we move into summer, prayerfully consider how you can support Muhlenberg through your time, talents, and financial resources.

Sarah A. Sunde, Treasurer

FINANCIAL REPORT

Through May 2022			
	2022 YTD Actual	2022 YTD Budget	2021 YTD Actual
Gifts & Offerings	\$207,745	\$256,250	\$241,164
Total Income	\$259,042	\$293,229	\$279,342
Total Expenses	\$277,215	\$347,617	\$351,837
Excess Income/(Deficit)	\$(18,173)	\$(54,388)	\$(72,495)

Giving in support of our Spending Plan	\$ 12,262.75
Giving to Other Designated Funds	\$ 2,064.23
Total Giving	\$ 14,326.98

June Thrivent Choice Dollars - \$61

To give online, scan here →



WEEKLY CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

July 18 – 24, 2022

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

Mon	6:30 pm	Congregation Council Meeting
Tues	1:00 pm	Weekly Staff Meeting
Sun	Seventh Sunday after Pentecost	
	8:30 am	Holy Communion in person
	9:45 am	Church World Services visit
	11:00 am	Holy Communion in person and Livestreamed via Facebook and YouTube

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:

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

Like us at facebook.com/muhlenberglutheran

VBS ~ PASSPORT TO PEACE

August 8-12, 5:45 -7:45 pm.

Children discover that there are many ways to live as peacemakers in our world. Kids are invited to see every person as part of God's family, and every interaction as an opportunity to make peace. Come and enjoy music, games, art, drama, small group times, and fellowship as we all learn to be peacemakers.

OUR KIDS NEED YOU!

We need five adult leaders who are excited to work with our children to help them develop the practice of peace making: a team of two to help with Pre-K – 2nd grade, another team to help with 3rd – 5th grade, and someone to coordinate snacks. Curriculum and training are provided so just bring your enthusiasm! Contact Children's Minister Ashley Saunders: saunders@muhlenberglutheran.org.